**Child Protection Policy for NYSAA**

**(This has been produced by the Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU).**

**Their website** [**www.thecpsu.org.uk**](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk/) **contains further information and advice for organisations working with children in sports settings**

**Introduction**

All sporting organisations which make provision for children and children must ensure that:

* The welfare of the child is paramount
* All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
* All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
* All staff (paid/unpaid) working in sport have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer

**Policy Statement**

NYSAA has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in NYSAA from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. (NYSAA will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in NYSAA through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines adopted by NYSAA.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).

**Policy Aims**

The aim of the NYSAA Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice:

* Providing children and children with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of NYSAA
* Allowing all staff / volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues

**Promoting Good Practice**

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about the appropriate action to take.

Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with children in order to harm them. A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer will have regular contact with children and be an important link in identifying cases where they need protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.

When a child has been subjected to child abuse outside the sporting environment, sport can play a crucial role in improving the child’s self-esteem. In such instances the NYSAA must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the child receives the required support.

**Good Practice Guidelines**

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Good practice means:

* Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication)
* Treating all children/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity
* Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals
* Maintaining a safe and appropriate relationship with athletes and children
* Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision- making process
* Making athletics fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play
* Ensuring that if mixed teams are taken away for the day or night, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff.
* Ensuring that at tournaments or residential events, adults should not enter children’s rooms or invite children into their rooms
* Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of children
* Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
* Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of children and disabled adults
* Securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment. Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given

**Practices to be Avoided**

The following should be avoided except in emergencies.

* Avoid spending time alone with children away from others
* Avoid taking a child to an event / session or taking them home afterwards

**Practices Never to be Sanctioned**

The following should never be sanctioned.

You should never:

* Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
* Share a room with a child
* Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
* Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
* Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
* Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
* Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
* Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults, that they can do for themselves

**Incidents that Must be Reported/Recorded**

If any of the following occur, you should report this immediately to another colleague and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed:

* If you accidentally hurt a player
* If he/she seems distressed in any manner
* If a player misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done

# **Use of Photographic/Filming Equipment at Sporting Events**

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled sportspeople in vulnerable positions. All District Schools Athletics Associations should be vigilant, and any concerns should to be reported to the NYSAA Child Welfare Officer.

Videoing as a coaching aid: there is no intention to prevent coaches and teachers using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, performers and their parents/carers should be made aware that this is happening and give their permission, and such films should be stored safely.

# **Recruitment and Training of Staff and Volunteers**

NYSAA recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children.

Key parts of a safe-recruitment procedure could include:

* writing a clear job or role description (what tasks will be involved)
* also writing a person specification (what experience or attributes a supervisor or team manager needs in order to carry out the role)
* Formally advertising for the posts or roles.
* using an application form to gather relevant information about each applicant
* requiring specific written references or testimonials
* for eligible posts, undertaking a criminal records check:
  + Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) – England and Wales
* risk assessment of any concerning information
* verifying qualifications and experience
* recording recruitment decision
* induction to the role (including safeguarding policies and procedures, safeguarding training, sign up to Code of Conduct)
* probationary period

NYSAA requires:

* Non-teaching staff and volunteers to complete a recognised awareness training on child protection / safeguarding
* All supervising staff and volunteers to have undergone a DBS check
* Relevant personnel to receive advisory information outlining good practice and informing them about what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person
* Relevant personnel to gain a national first aid training (where necessary)
* Attend update training when necessary.

# **Responding to Allegations or Suspicions**

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in NYSAA, in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

NYSAA will assure all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

* A criminal investigation
* A child protection investigation
* A disciplinary or misconduct investigation

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

**Action if there are Concerns**

**Concerns about Poor Practice:**

If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice; the NYSAA Child Welfare Officer (CWO) liaise with the ESAA Welfare Officer who will liaise with England Athletics whose procedures will define the course of action to address this.

If the allegation is about poor practice by the NYSAA CWO, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the ESAA Welfare officer who will liaise with England Athletics whose procedures will define the course of action to address this.

**Concerns about Suspected Abuse**

Any suspicion that a child has been a victim of abuse by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the NYSAA CWO, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk. The official breach of welfare referral form should be used for this purpose.

The NYSAA Child Welfare Officer will refer the allegation to the Headteacher/Principal of the child’s school, who should work with the school’s Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and / or Children’s Social Care.

The NYSAA CWO should also notify the ESAA Welfare officer may need to deal with any media enquiries.

**Confidentiality**

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people:

* The NYSAA Child Welfare Officer
* The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
* The person making the allegation
* Headteacher of the school
* Social Services / Police
* The ESAA Welfare Officer
* The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child).

Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

**Allegations of Previous Abuse**

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child by a member of staff who is still currently working with children). Where such an allegation is made, the NYSAA should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the social services or the police. This is because other children, either within or outside sport, may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children. This is reinforced by the details of the Protection of Children Act 1999.

**Action if Bullying is Suspected**

If bullying is suspected, the same procedure should be followed as set out in 'Responding to Allegations or Suspicions' above.

Action to help the victim and prevent bullying in sport:

* Take all signs of bullying very seriously
* Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns (It is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide as a result of bullying, so if anyone talks about or threatens suicide, seek professional help immediately). Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority. Create an open environment
* Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully(ies) separately
* Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else
* Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when)
* Report any concerns to the NYSAA Child Welfare Officer or the school (wherever the bullying is occurring)

**Action towards the bully(ies):**

* Talk with the bully(ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully (ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s)
* Inform the bully’s / bullies’ parents
* Insist on the return of 'borrowed' items and that the bully(ies) compensate the victim
* Provide support for the victim's coach
* Impose sanctions as necessary
* Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour
* Hold meetings with the families to report on progress
* Inform all organisation members of action taken
* Keep a written record of action taken

**Concerns Outside the Immediate Sporting Environment (e.g. a Parent or Carer):**

Report your concerns to the NYSAA Child Welfare Officer, who should contact the Child’s school.

If the NYSAA Child Welfare Officer is not available, the person being told of or discovering the abuse should contact Children’s Social Care or the police immediately.

Children’s Social Care and / or the Police will decide how to involve the parents/carers.

The NYSAA Child Welfare Officer should also report the incident to the ESAA Welfare Officer.

Maintain confidentiality on a need-to-know basis only.

**Information for Children’s Social Care or the Police about Suspected Abuse**

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

* The child's name, age and date of birth of the child
* The child's home address and telephone number
* Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else
* The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information
* Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay
* A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also, any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes

**Details of witnesses to the incidents**

* The child’s account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred
* Have the parents been contacted?
* If so, what has been said?
* Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details
* If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so, what was said?
* Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details
* Where possible referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded

If you are worried about sharing concerns about abuse with a senior colleague, you can contact Social Services or the Police direct (see below), or the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000 or Childline on 0800 1111.

This Policy was formally adopted by the committee of NYSAA on 24.11.19

It will be reviewed on an annual basis, with the next review taking place on September 2020.

**Declaration:**

On behalf of NYSAA, we, the undersigned, will oversee the implementation of the Child Protection Policy and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to.

Signed: Andrew Rickard

Name: Andrew Rickard

Position within NYSAA: Chairman and Safeguarding Lead

Date: 24.11.19