

# Club/Organisation Best Practice Checklist

## *Policy*

Soccer Clubs/Organisations Policy should include:

An equity policy which includes gender, race, sexuality and anti bullying issues.

An anti harassment policy which includes:

- ❑ A duty of care statement.
- ❑ A mission statement of children's rights.
- ❑ Definitions of child abuse.
- ❑ Definitions of discrimination, bullying, harassment and abuse.
- ❑ A commitment to the spirit and philosophy of "*Fair Play*", "*Sport for Fun*".
- ❑ Recruitment procedures.
- ❑ Complaints procedures.
- ❑ Disciplinary, grievance and appeals procedures.
- ❑ Dismissal, suspension and re-instatement procedures.
- ❑ Accreditation and updating procedures.
- ❑ Referral and reporting procedures.

Codes of ethics and practice which specify proscribed behaviour including sexual relations, use of alcohol-drugs, bullying etc.

Clear codes of conduct for children, coaches/volunteers and parents?

Guidance on disclosure, allegations and confidentiality.

Advice on self-protection for coaches/volunteers.

Advice on touching norms, intimate care and interpersonal boundaries.

An up to date coaching register.

Links to the child protection agencies.

### ***Staff/Volunteer Recruitment***

Does your Club/Organisation:

- Always use an open advertisement?
- Use an application form and ask to see two forms of ID?
- Use a written job description?
- Get references from at least two people?
- Hold interviews for all positions?
- Ask for one reference which covers the applicants previous experience of working with children or young players?
- Ask applicants to complete a self-disclosure form?

- ❑ Require a full curriculum vitae (CV)?
- ❑ Note any gaps in the CV?
- ❑ Open and maintain personnel files on all coach/volunteers?
- ❑ Provide induction training to new volunteers/coaches?
- ❑ Supervise volunteers/coaches?
  
- ❑ Under FAI rules (Rule 68. The Protection and Welfare of Children, amended August 4<sup>th</sup> 2002), it is mandatory that new volunteers/coaches operate to recommended FAI codes of conduct and best practice guidelines (see FAI Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Under Age Soccer). Breaches of this code will constitute a disciplinary offence.

### ***Education and Training***

Does your Club/Organisation offer:

- ❑ Compulsory child protection modules for volunteers/coaches to be attended by all on an annual basis?
- ❑ Regular updates through training courses?
- ❑ Opportunities for further training (Coaching Courses)?

## ***Establishing an Open Climate***

Does your Club/Organisation?

- ❑ Distribute information for young players, parents/guardians, athletes and coaches?
- ❑ Use simple contracts between parents/guardians, coaches and players, setting out clear expectations of behaviour (code of conduct for players, coaches, and parents)?
- ❑ Include parents/guardians, players in decision making?
- ❑ Invite parents/guardians to attend training on a drop-in basis?
- ❑ Hold regular parents/guardian meetings?
- ❑ Encourage debate?
- ❑ Offer parents/guardians and players education about anti-harassment and child protection?
- ❑ Adopt child centred and democratic coaching styles?
- ❑ Use or commission research to increase knowledge?

## ***Managing Concerns & Allegations***

Does your Club/Organisation have?

- ❑ A designated, trained person with responsibility for child protection and welfare (Children's Officer)?
- ❑ A nominated person (designated officer) with responsibility for referring child protection and welfare concerns to the statutory authorities?

- ❑ Clear child friendly, well publicised communication and reporting channels?
- ❑ Systems for maintaining confidentiality?
- ❑ A strategy for dealing with the media?
- ❑ Maintain detailed records of complaints and actions taken?
- ❑ Clearly displayed child friendly Helpline numbers?

### ***Internal Procedures***

Does your Club/Organisation have?

- ❑ A systematic grievance procedure?
- ❑ Systematic disciplinary procedures?
- ❑ An appeals procedure?
- ❑ Clear reinstatement criteria and procedures?
- ❑ Regular reviews of your child protection policies and procedures?

## ***Referral***

Does your Club/Organisation have?

- ❑ Guidance on what constitutes a reportable child welfare concern and the statutory bodies responsible for their investigation?
- ❑ Statutory responsibility for the investigation of child abuse in Ireland lies with the Health Board/Gairdai and it is not appropriate for clubs to carry out investigations.
- ❑ Guidance on when to refer can be found in “Children First” the National Guidelines for the Protection & Welfare of Children (Dept. of Health & Children)
- ❑ Well-publicised telephone numbers and addresses for national or local agencies, criminal justice agencies, Health Boards, and support agencies (victim support groups, counselling opportunities)?
- ❑ Access to an independent listener/helpline (Childline) outside your sport?

## ***Coping with the aftermath***

Does your Club/Organisation?

- ❑ Provide support to both the victim and the alleged perpetrator?
- ❑ Publicise counselling & advice outlets?
- ❑ Maintain a record/archive of cases to help you learn from past experiences?
- ❑ Have a media policy?