

GUIDANCE FOR RECOGNISING, RESPONDING TO AND PREVENTING ABUSE

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01 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to raise awareness. It does not provide a comprehensive guide to all abuse and welfare scenarios. The links shared within it are correct at the time of writing and are likely to give more in depth information. We hope to help you think about what you may be seeing, hearing or feeling, not to make you experts.

Abuse rarely takes place in isolation and several signs or symptoms may present and could indicate several risks or abuse types.

Most abuse occurs within a person's home at the hands of family. However, sport can provide opportunities for people to be abused and for trusted adults to abuse their position. For more specific guidance on abuse in Sport visit here: Child abuse in a sports setting | (thecpsu.org.uk)

The first point of contact for any concern would usually be the Club Safeguarding Officer.

Suspected abuse and repeated poor practice within a netball environment should always be reported to England Netball via the form on this page England Netball | Reporting a Safeguarding Concern or email address BeSafe@englandnetball.co.uk

Reporting your concern will allow safeguarding officers and the England Netball safeguarding team to determine whether there is any further concern or action to be taken.

It is not your responsibility to decide whether what you are witnessing is abuse, simply to alert others to what you are concerned about and allow them to take the necessary steps.

02 TYPES OF ABUSE

The following definitions of abuse have been taken from the government's Guidance document "*Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018*" and The Care Act 2014. It does not include specific types like domestic abuse, modern slavery, sexual or criminal exploitation female genital mutilation or discriminatory abuse.

1. **Neglect** - Neglect occurs when an adult fails to meet a person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, and this is likely to lead to serious impairment of the person's health or development.

Neglect IN CHILDREN may include:

- failure to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing.
- leaving a young person alone or unsupervised when they are not able to cope.
- failing to protect from physical harm or danger.
- failing to provide access to appropriate medical care and
- failure to give affection and attention.

In ADULTS AT RISK (those with care and support needs) as well as the behaviours above it may *also* include

- Self-neglect (not washing, eating or cleaning, or hoarding behaviour)
- Neglect by carers or family members

In sport, neglect may include:

- over-rigorous training regimes.
- exposure to harsh temperatures or
- failing to have regard for an injury.

2. **Physical abuse** - Physical harm or injury being caused.

Physical abuse may include:

- hitting, shaking, throwing, cutting, burning, scalding or poisoning,
- biting, suffocating or drowning.
- giving or allowing inappropriate drug or alcohol consumption or
- allowing any other person to cause physical harm.

In sport, physical abuse may include:

- the use of controlled diets or supplements which impact on the young person's development.
- extreme training regimes or assault with a ball.

3. **Sexual abuse -** Sexual abuse is the use of a young person or adult lacking mental capacity for the fulfilment of another's sexual satisfaction. Both men and women commit sexual abuse, and it may be committed by an adult or another young person.

Sexual abuse can include:

- A sexual act.
- the production or exposure to pornographic images, voyeurism or
- exposing the person to the performance of sexual activity by others.
- Sexual exploitation (involving money, gifts, transport to other places, prostitution).

In sport, sexual abuse may involve:

- inappropriate touching of a young person in a coaching scenario.
- grooming a young person for a relationship with a person in a position of trust including online contact.
- the inappropriate taking of photographs or videos of young people in a sport setting.

4. **Emotional abuse -** Emotional abuse means the ill treatment of a young person which results in severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development. Although this form of abuse may occur in isolation, it will also be part of the other forms of abuse, in most cases. It is the most prevalent form of abuse and has the longest impact on a person.

Emotional abuse may involve:

- unrealistic expectations being placed on a young person.
- persistent criticism.
- making the person feel in danger, threatened or taunted.
- over-protection and not allowing them to develop fully.
- failing to give love and affection or making the person feel they are only valued for their use to another person, rather than for their own, unique personality.

In sport, emotional abuse may mean:

- placing someone under an unrealistic level of demand for performance including weighing players.
- that there is name calling and belittling (particularly if related to disability, body shape, weight, sex, gender, sexuality, race, religion or other difference)
- failure to make reasonable adjustments for the person's needs.

5. **Bullying and harassment** (though not formally classified as a form of abuse) **–** it means deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually over a period of time, which puts the young person down. It can be:

- Verbal, written, physical.
- by gossip and spreading rumours,
- in person or via phone or social media access.

Bullying and harassment usually includes:

- name-calling.
- threats and gestures.
- stealing and/or hiding other people's belongings.
- ostracising the young person.
- unwelcome and unnecessary physical contact, such as barging and shoving.

In sport, bullying and harassment may include**:**

- a coach who uses personal criticism to put down the players.
- homophobic, disablist or racist name-calling.
- making the person feel physically awkward and victimised due to making the training too hard for their abilities or stage of development.

Harassment usually involves the same sorts of behaviours as bullying, but it would need to be repeated behaviour.

6. **Financial Abuse** – for ADULTS AT RISK only

This would be the financial exploitation of an adult at risk, typically someone lacking mental capacity to make their own financial decisions or otherwise vulnerable to fraud or deception.

03 SPOTTING THE SIGNS

This is not an exhaustive list and symptoms may be hidden or present alongside others. It is also important to understand that they **could indicate other issues in the person's life** such as anxiety, bereavement, exam pressure, identity issues or mental illness.

Signs which may give you cause for concern include:

Physical abuse

- Unexplained bruising or injury in an unusual place.
- Inconsistent explanation given for injuries.
- Reluctance to undress or uncover parts of the body
- Flinching upon physical contact

Sexual abuse

- Inappropriate explicit sexual comments, language or behaviour.
- Variations in eating patterns.
- Flinching upon physical contact

Neglect

- Noticeable loss of or gain in weight.
- Lack of personal hygiene, unkempt appearance, smelly, poor fitting clothes, nits.
- Untreated injuries or illnesses.
- Asking for or stealing food, hunger.

Potential indicators of Emotional and other types of abuse

- Sudden behavioural changes e.g. withdrawal, emotional outbursts, very quiet or very aggressive.
- A disclosure or comments from someone which cause you concern.
- Non-attendance at training or a lack of interest in activities the young person usually enjoys.
- Lack of confidence, increased anxiety or signs of depression.
- Disordered eating or eating disorders.
- Threats of suicide or sounding helpless and hopeless, self-harming.
- Bullying of other young people, including siblings.
- Reluctance to talk.
- Difficulty making friends or being prevented from socialising with other young people.
- Distrust of adults, particularly if there would usually be a closer relationship expected e.g. with parents, close family/friend or coaches.

04 WON'T THEY JUST TELL ME?

There are many barriers that some young people may face before, during and after reporting abuse. It is important that all those working in netball understand that everyone is different, and some may also be at more risk of abuse in the first place.

There are some factors that make disclosure to a trusted adult more difficult:

Personal factors - Disability, a young age, learning difficulties, English as a second language, social awkwardness, low self-esteem, sexuality, confusion, anxiety.

Abuse factors – the abuser may have accompanied the abuse with threats to the victim or their family. The victim of abuse may not even understand it for what it is.

Social factors – real or perceived differences in cultural norms, language difficulties, or social isolation.

Fear factors – of not being believed, of consequences for them, or for a loved one or the abuser (who may be a loved one too). Fear of what happens next (family, school, sports club, police, social services). Fear of being judged, or of not knowing what words to use.

In sport – needing to fit in and be part of the team and its culture. Coaches and some others in the sport hold a lot of sway over the player's future in the sport (team selection or progression). Those adults can also be supported by others in the field including parents and committee members, so the risks of not being believed or of things going against the athlete are greater.

This short video encourages us to ask the question…. NSPCC 'Say Something' 60 Secs

05 RESPONDING

The short version is simply **RECOGNISE, RESPOND, REFER, RECORD:**

RECOGNISE, - be alert to changes in behaviour from children, young people, and others around them. Look for the signs listed above.

Be vigilant, trust your gut instinct.

LOOK for 'Example Concerns and what to do' document - Safeguarding Policies and Documents - EN knowledge Centre

RESPOND, do something. Ask the obvious question – it might start with "are you ok?" or "I've noticed you are a bit [quiet, sad, angry] at the moment". Or if it is abusive, unprofessional or bullying behaviour – challenge it – publicly if possible. This demonstrates that the behaviour isn't tolerated at your club, that it is not acceptable. Others see or hear you challenging it communicates the same message to them and that it will be dealt with.

If you are not sure what to do, seek advice or a second opinion from the club safeguarding officer or EN Safeguarding team - BeSafe@englandnetball.co.uk.

Asking questions:

When asking young people or adults with learning difficulties questions it is important not to ask leading questions. Ideally use, "Tell me," "Explain" or "Describe" or open 'Wh' questions – Who, Where, When, What (avoid Why as it can sound judgemental).

Responding to a Child's Disclosure of Abuse | NSPCC (youtube.com)

REFER, - report the issue or concern to your club safeguarding officer. If necessary, report to social services (your local authority/council website will have details) or the police (usually on 101 or an online report form or if an emergency via 999).

And report to England Netball BeSafe@englandnetball.co.uk if it relates to safeguarding within a netball environment – behaviour of a coach, volunteer or other trusted adult. There is a **Safeguarding flow-chart** for decision making available on the EN website here: England Netball | Safeguarding

RECORD – it is important to keep a record of what you have noticed or been told. If a child or adult at risk makes a verbal disclosure try to write what they say verbatim.

06 CREATING THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE

The very basics are included I the 'Safeguarding Young People in Netball', 'Safeguarding Adults' policies and others on the EN Safeguarding pages here: England Netball | Safeguarding

Safe recruitment is important – more here: Putting safeguards in place for children in sport | (thecpsu.org.uk) and here: England Netball | DBS

All clubs should have a safeguarding officer regardless of whether or not you have child or vulnerable members. This should not be a coach or ideally not another committee member.

You also need to have the right training – more here: England Netball | Training and Education

But it is not enough to have a policy, training and a DBS check; '**Safeguarding is Everyone's Business'**……

Netball Clubs and organisations should ensure they create a supportive and inclusive environment where everyone is valued for their individuality and the contribution they make to the club, and where they can feel confident that their concerns will be listened to.

The following has been adapted from information taken from the NSPCC website and is useful guidance for clubs to encourage young people to seek help and support:

- Make it easier for people to take up the offer of help. Never forget what it's like to need help and support.
- Help tackle myths about those seeking help. It is not a sign of weakness. Encourage parents/carers to promote this message.
- Help promote positive messages about young and disabled people.
- Listen to your netballers – improve your club through feedback. Empower young people to find their own solutions. Involving children and young people in their sport | (thecpsu.org.uk)
- Shout about safeguarding in netball. Lack of awareness is a barrier to people seeking help.
- Involve parents/carers. Inform them of good practice, seek feedback, ensure they know who the safeguarding officer is. More info here: Parents' hub for keeping children safe in sport | (thecpsu.org.uk) or Keeping Your Child Safe in Sport campaign | CPSU includes free training.
- See the whole person, not just the player. Engage with people in terms of strengths and weaknesses.
- Adopt positive coaching practices. More info here:
  Duty to Care Hub | UK Coaching - UK Coaching including a free Duty to Care Digital Badge .
  Play Their Way - Sports Coaching Resources for Coaching Children
  Creating a psychologically safe culture | (thecpsu.org.uk)
- Build trust. Treat everyone with respect.
- Be an upstander not a bystander – saying nothing can condone behaviour and enable it to continue.
- Challenge inappropriate language or behaviour directly and quickly. Banter *could* be hurtful and lead to more engrained bullying behaviour.

Remember coaches and committee members are in a position of trust and power. Challenging harsh treatment, shouting, demeaning or harmful behaviour from them is more difficult because of that position but more important as they set the tone and culture of the club or team. Winning is important but not at all costs.

The impact of abuse or poor practice can be far-reaching. For the victim or athlete/player, for the perpetrator, their club, league or organisation and Netball as a whole. Other sports have been rocked by scandal and negative publicity.

07 MORE RESOURCES

SAFEGUARDING ADVICE AND TRAINING

Sport safeguarding training | CPSU (thecpsu.org.uk) - Free and pay-for Training, free podcasts and webinars - Including parents in sport, online safety, body image and weight, safeguarding at events…..

NSPCC – Child Protection in Sport Unit – https://thecpsu.org.uk/ - Offer advice and support around safeguarding children in sport

NSPCC 0808 800 5000 – www.nspcc.org.uk - If you are worried or unsure about a child. NSPCC also offer free, confidential advice and support whatever your worry (18 or under)

Childline 0800 1111 – www.childline.org.uk - Website offers Coping Kit Toolkits. Childline offer 1-2-1 counsellor chats about any concerns you may have.

Ann Craft Trust (ACT) 0115 951 5400– Safeguarding Adults -Provides advice to anyone who has a query about the protection of vulnerable children and adults, including professionals, parents, carers and family members.

Anti-Bullying Alliance 0808 1000 143 – www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk - Offer help or advice about bullying or cyber-bullying

MENTAL HEALTH

Samaritans 08457 90 90 90 – http://www.samaritans.org - Samaritans' volunteers listen in confidence to anyone in any type of emotional distress, without judging or telling people what to do.

Together All – www.togetherall.com - A safe, online community where people support each other anonymously to improve mental health and wellbeing.

NHS Child and young people's mental health service – NHS England » Children and Young People's Mental Health Services (CYPMHS) - NHS funded Mental health Service young people (under 18). Most regions have their own website providing information about access, referrals and contact details. CYPMHS can also be accessed through Social Services or your GP.

Mind 0300 123 3393 – www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines/ - If you or someone you know if going through a difficult time, Mind can offer support with different mental health problems.

Young Minds – YoungMinds | Mental Health Charity For Children And Young People | - Mental health charity for young people

Shout – Shout – UK's 24/7 Crisis Text Service for Mental Health Support | - 24/7 text service for adults and children

Papyrus – Papyrus UK Suicide Prevention | Prevention of Young Suicide (papyrus-uk.org) - Advice, text service, helpline for adults and children

DOMESTIC ABUSE

National Domestic Violence Helpline 0808 2000 247 www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk - Free 24hr National Domestic Violence Helpline, run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge, is

a national service for women experiencing domestic violence, their family, friends, colleagues and others calling on their behalf.

Forced Marriage Unit 0207 008 0151 www.fco.gov.uk/forcedmarriage - Part of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, provides information, multi-agency guidelines and an advice line for victims, friends, relatives and professionals.

Karma Nirvana 0800 5999 247 www.karmanirvana.org.uk - Karma Nirvana supports victims and survivors of forced marriage and honour-based abuse; support includes an advice line.

Women's Aid 0808 2000 247 www.womensaid.org.uk - Provides support and information in relation to domestic violence.

SEXUAL OFFENDING

Lucy Faithfull Foundation 0808 1000 900 www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk – Stop it Now! www.stopitnow.org.uk The Lucy Faithfull Foundation Child Sexual Abuse prevention confidential helpline for adults concerned about sexual abuse