

NORTHERN IRELAND VOLLEYBALL SAFEGUARDING POLICY



Policy Statement

We at Northern Ireland Volleyball are committed to good practice which protects children¹ from harm. Staff and volunteers accept and recognise their responsibility to provide an environment which always promotes enjoyment and the safety of the child. To achieve this, we will,

- Develop an awareness of the issues which may lead to children being harmed.
- Create an open environment by identifying a 'Designated person' to whom the children can turn to if they need to talk.
- Adopt safeguarding guidelines through Codes of Conduct for members and all adults (coaches, parents and volunteers) working with Northern Ireland Volleyball.
- Ensure careful recruitment, selection and management procedures are in place for all our member clubs. These procedures will include completing an AccessNI Disclosure with a Barred List Check for those in regulated activity, regular support & supervision is provided to staff/volunteers.
- Ensure complaints, grievance and disciplinary procedures are included in our constitution.
- Share information about concerns directly and without delay with others who need to know external to Northern Ireland Volleyball.
- Provide regular safeguarding updates to the management committee.
- Participate in training made available through the various agencies and strengthen links with these agencies. Require all adults to ensure they have safeguarding knowledge via training relevant to the role they are in.
- Review safeguarding policies every 3 years
- Have procedures relating specifically to bullying, away trips, transport and use of photography
- Have an induction document available for parents, coaches and children clearly outlining their rights and responsibilities

Jonathan McFadden, President, Northern Ireland Volleyball

¹ The terms children and young people will be used interchangeably through this policy to refer to anyone under 18 years of age.

The Northern Ireland Volleyball Safeguarding Statement is based on clear and consistent set of commitments with the common aim of promoting the welfare of children and ensuring they enjoy their experience in Volleyball.

Children have the right to be safe. All coaches should ensure that this fundamental principle takes precedence over all other considerations.

This policy applies to all those involved in NI Volleyball board, coaches, administrators, officials, volunteers, parents and young people.

Safeguarding or Child Protection

The term child protection has been expanded to safeguarding as it reflects the wider responsibility for health and safety and prevention as well as just protection from abuse. It may be defined as “Doing everything possible to minimise the risk of harm to children and young people.” Safeguarding is about the proactive things an organisation can do to reduce a risk to a child. It could mean having,

- safe recruitment procedures to reduce the risk of inappropriate people joining the sport
- codes of conduct to explain the standards of behaviour expected of those involved in the sport
- guidance for away trips or ratios etc.

Equality Statement

NI Volleyball aim to promote the sport for all the people who live in Northern Ireland and will be mindful of the need to carry out our functions in a manner which promotes equality of opportunity between:

- Persons of different religious belief, nationality, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status, or sexual orientation.
- Between men and women generally.
- Between persons with a disability and persons without.
- Between persons with dependents and persons without.

NI Volleyball recognises the additional vulnerability of some children and the extra difficulties they may face when seeking help, i.e.

- Dependency due to disability may make some children feel powerless
- On occasions possible limited ability to communicate their feelings
- A negative self image can make children vulnerable to manipulation by others

To address this vulnerability coaches will seek guidance on working with children with a disability from external agencies, parents / guardians and the children themselves.

Confidentiality Statement

We at NI Volleyball will never promise to keep secrets. However, information of a confidential nature will only be communicated on a "need to know" basis, with the welfare of the child paramount.

Considerations of confidentiality will not be allowed to override the rights of children or young members to be protected from harm.

What is abuse? - Awareness of the Issues

Background knowledge in relation to child abuse, the general principles of safeguarding and the ability to recognise and respond to abuse are important issues. Of primary concern for NI Volleyball is the issue of Safeguarding of our young members within the operation of the club and sport activities. However, being cognisant of the indicators of abuse in respect of young members caused by others outside the club, are of an equal importance for the safety and wellbeing of that child.

Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2017

There is no absolute definition of 'significant harm', as this will be assessed on a case by case basis. Article 50(3) of the Children Order states that "*where the question of whether harm suffered by a child is significant turns on the child's health or development, his health or development shall be compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child*".

Harm can be suffered by a child or young person by acts of abuse perpetrated upon them by others. Abuse can happen in any family, but children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol and mental health, or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens. Abuse can also occur outside of the family environment in a community or sports club setting.

Harm from abuse is not always straightforward to identify and a child or young person may experience more than one type of harm or significant harm. Harm can be caused by:

- **Physical Abuse** is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, biting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.
- **Sexual Abuse** occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via e-technology). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.
- **Emotional Abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and

inadequate. It may include not giving a child an opportunity to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may involve bullying – including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child's peers.

- **Neglect** is the failure to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter that is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse.
- **Exploitation**² is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature.

² Although 'exploitation' is not included in the categories of registration for the Child Protection Register (CPR), professionals should recognise that the abuse resulting from or caused by the exploitation of children and young people can be categorised within the existing CPR categories as children who have been exploited will have suffered from physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or a combination of these forms of abuse.

Indicators of Abuse

The following is a list of some indicators of abuse, but it is not exhaustive:

PHYSICAL INDICATORS	BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexplained bruising in soft tissue areas • Repeated injuries • Black eyes • Injuries to the mouth • Torn or bloodstained clothing • Burns or scalds • Bites • Fractures • Marks from implements • Inconsistent stories/excuses relating to injuries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexplained changes in behaviour - becoming withdrawn or aggressive • Difficulty in making friends • Distrustful of adults or excessive attachment to adults • Sudden drop in performance • Changes in attendance pattern • Inappropriate sexual awareness, behaviour or language • Reluctance to remove clothing

Reasonable Grounds for concern

Health and Social Care Trust (HSCT) Gateway teams should always be informed when there are reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been abused, or is being abused, or is at risk of abuse.

The following examples would constitute reasonable grounds for concern:

- A specific indication from the child that he or she was abused
- An account by a person who saw the child being abused
- Evidence, such as an injury or behaviour, that is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused in another way
- An injury or behaviour that is consistent both with abuse and with an innocent explanation, but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse e.g. a pattern of injuries, an implausible explanation, and other indications of abuse and/or dysfunctional behaviour
- Consistent indication, over a period of time that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.

The responsibility of deciding if a child has been abused lies with the HSCT Gateway Team, not with the people working within the sports club. However, all adults have a responsibility to protect children by reporting grounds for concern.

Responding to an Allegation of Abuse

Always

- **Recognise** – that you/others have a concern or have noticed a problem. One of the biggest challenges to child safeguarding is those providing care/coaching the young people accepting that a child they know could be at risk or an adult would deliberately harm a child. Remain sensitive and calm. Reframe 'telling' as a two-way interaction: what you do and say is vital. Give them your total attention on all channels. Explain that you must tell but will maintain confidentiality.
- **Reassure** child that they are safe, were right to tell and are being taken seriously
- **Record** - Make a written record of what the child said (using their words), what you said and what you did ASAP. Note the child's behaviour, including facial expression and eye gaze if possible. Let child talk - do not interview. Ask as few questions as possible, keep them short clear, open and age appropriate. Listen and hear, give the person time to say what they want. Ensure the experience is as positive as it can be, explain that you must tell others to ensure action is taken to increase their safety, but will maintain confidentiality and tell child what will happen next. Who you need to talk to and why.
- **Report** your concerns immediately if a child is at risk. Involve appropriate individuals within NIVA to the Designated Safeguarding Officer and externally when required.

Never

- Question unless for clarification
- Make promises you cannot keep
- Rush into actions that may be inappropriate
- Make/pass a judgment on alleged abuser
- Take sole responsibility, consult the club /NIVA designated safeguarding children officer so you can begin to protect the child and gain support for yourself

Responding to Non-Recent Allegations of Abuse

It is possible that non-recent allegations of abuse can be made several years after the actual incident. This may be because of a change in circumstances for either the survivor or the alleged perpetrator. Any non-recent allegations must follow the current NIVA safeguarding procedures. If there are grounds for concern, then statutory authorities must be informed (Police or Gateway Teams).

The following points should also be considered;

- Clearly establish with the adult complainant if there may be any children currently at risk of harm from the person they are saying abused them as a child.
- Advise the person making the complaint that they should inform the Police. Encourage them to do so while acknowledging the brave steps they have already taken in beginning to talk about their experience as a child. It is important that the person knows that there is a likelihood that an abuser will not have stopped abusing after their individual abuse ended and if the person harmed them, they could be continuing to

cause harm to others. This needs to be done without reinforcing the inappropriate guilt the survivor may already have for not coming forward earlier.

- If the complainant refuses to talk to the statutory authorities but has provided you with enough identifying factors then this information **MUST** be shared with the police. This breach of the complainants' confidence is only appropriate if there is any potential that the alleged perpetrator is still a risk to children or could face prosecution (i.e. they are alive). Remember, the welfare of any children currently at risk is paramount. This must take priority over any request of confidentiality from the person providing you with the information/complaint. This should be explained to them at the earliest possible stage
- Offer support to the complainant when they are making a formal complaint to the police.
- Signpost the complainant to support agencies that can provide counselling.

When an adult making a complaint chooses not to report the matter to the police and you have already discussed the possibility of any child still being at risk you must follow NIVA reporting procedures and inform the Police or Gateway Team immediately of any identifying features of the allegation including the name of the alleged abuser. The person making the complaint should be informed that this is the organisation's moral and legal responsibility. If the individual wishes to remain anonymous this should be respected but again explaining that without any further cooperation, there may be little action the Police can take to protect others. Encourage them to talk directly to the Gateway Teams, if not the Police, to enable social services to consider if there is any action they can take to protect children at risk, as their threshold for intervention is lower than the evidence required for any criminal justice prosecution.

Responding to Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is a pattern of behaviour which is characterised by the exercise of control and the misuse of power by one person over another by using threatening behaviour, physical violence or other controlling behaviours including psychological, sexual, financial, or emotional abuse – known as coercive control. Domestic abuse can take many forms and isn't limited to one form of abuse like physical violence.

Abusive relationships can be between intimate partners or family members, irrespective of age, gender, or sexual orientation. It affects all socioeconomic, racial, faith and cultural backgrounds. Domestic abuse is a crime in Northern Ireland and the behaviour is never acceptable. See NIVA Responding to Domestic Abuse Policy and Guidance for more information.

Duty to refer to Disclosure and Barring Service

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-referrals-form-and-guidance>

Under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order, all organisations have a duty to refer information to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in certain circumstances. In all cases there are two conditions, both of which must be met, to trigger a referral to the DBS by a regulated activity provider.

A referral **MUST** be made to the DBS if NIVA or a club in Northern Ireland:

- a. withdraws permission for an individual to engage in regulated activity, or would have done so had that individual not resigned, retired, been made redundant or been transferred to a position which is not regulated activity; because

b. they think that the individual has:

- engaged in relevant conduct;
- satisfied the criteria set out in the Harm Test; or
- received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence.

If both conditions have been met, NIVA or the club will refer the information on to the DBS.

The referral must be made to the DBS when NIVA or the club has (in following with good practice) gathered sufficient evidence as part of its investigations to support its reasons for withdrawing permission for the person in question to engage in regulated activity, consulted with the relevant social services or police if appropriate

Anti-Bullying Statement

Bullying is not an accepted behaviour towards anyone at NI Volleyball be they child, coach, volunteer or parent. Bullying behaviour will be dealt with seriously both the behaviour exhibited and the reasons for the behaviour.

NI Anti- Bullying Federation defines bullying defines bullying “as behaviour, that is usually repeated, by one or more persons intentionally to hurt, harm or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others”³.

Bullying usually has three key elements:

- It is usually repeated behaviour that happens over a period of time
- It usually involves an imbalance of power
- It is intentionally hurtful behaviour

Bullying can take many forms but usually includes elements of the following:

- **Physical** – hitting, kicking, pinching, punching, scratching, spitting or any other form of physical attack. Damage to or taking someone else’s belongings may also constitute physical bullying.
- **Verbal** – offensive name calling, insults, racist remarks, sexist jokes or comments, homophobic/transphobic or gender related jokes and comments, teasing, threats, using sexually suggestive or abusive language.
- **Sexual** – abusive sexualised name calling, inappropriate and uninvited touching, inappropriate sexual innuendo and/or proposition.
- **Indirect** – spreading nasty stories/rumours about someone, intimidation, exclusion from social groups.
- **Homophobic or transphobic** bullying can be hard to identify because it may be going on in secret. It may include a person being made to feel unwelcome, belittled, or harassed (through gossip, name-calling, jokes and other hate acts – both in the virtual e.g. online and ‘real’ world.) Sometimes athletes witness homophobic or transphobic bullying, and even if they are not lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT+) and the subject of the abuse, they may be reluctant to report it in case participants, coaches or other adults assume they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. The CPSU has produced a briefing paper on [homophobic and transphobic bullying in youth sport](#).
- **Cyberbullying** is a form of bullying which uses technology to deliberately harm or upset others. This type of bullying can happen in many ways, using mobile phones or the internet and could include:
 - Sending hurtful messages or using videos and images to humiliate
 - Leaving malicious voicemails
 - A series of silent calls
 - Creating a website about other people to humiliate them
 - Writing hurtful comments on social networking sites e.g. Facebook, Twitter
 - Excluding them from chat/messaging rooms
 - Sending video/images of people being bullied, so others can see.

³ This definition statement is based on the definition of bullying as laid out in the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016.

Children and young people with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to being bullied for a variety of reasons. These include:

- the increased likelihood of social isolation
- having fewer outside contacts than non-disabled children, and perhaps having limited access to someone to disclose bullying to
- an impaired capacity to resist, avoid or understand bullying
- being viewed as a 'safe target' for bullies.

Safeguarding reporting procedure concerns

Procedures for recording/ dealing with incidents/concerns can be broken down into 3 categories

- **the behaviour of the organisation's staff member or volunteer** (e.g. allegation about a coach or officer's behaviour towards a child)
- **the behaviour of another organisation's staff member or volunteer** (e.g. allegations reported about an individual working for a partner organisation)
- **experiences of children and young people arising outside of sport** (e.g. at home, school, church or in the community)

NIVA Designated Safeguarding Officer

Zara McFarland

Mobile: 07793 283002

Email: zara@nivolleyball.com

Zara McFarland shall be made known to young members, coaches and parents alike as the designated person to whom concerns will be addressed. If the concern is about the designated person please report to NIVA Board Safeguarding Champion Jonathan McFadden, 07754 724124 jmcfadden@nivolleyball.com

Safe Recruitment Procedures for Coaches and Volunteers

- Volunteers and coaches must be carefully selected, trained and supervised. The office bearers of the club committee must vouch for new volunteers/coaches' potential involvement and their participation must be ratified by the unanimous approval of executive group/remaining coaches.
- Individuals working or volunteering in regulated activity must complete an Access NI Enhanced Disclosure with a Barred List Check Application Form (proof of identity MUST be provided). **Contact NIVA designated officer for further information.**
- Declaration of past convictions or cases pending and agreement to have an Access NI check completed, is of course a pre-requisite to approval to coach/volunteer to work with young people.
- **ALL** volunteers/coaches must agree to abide by the NIVA Safeguarding Policy and all are required to sign the Code of Conduct
- Any concerns or objections with regard to suitability of a coach should be submitted to the Governing Body Designated officer. These matters will be raised with the Governing Body case management committee with appropriate action taken including a formal response in writing to the concerned party if required. Clubs should not deal with concerns about a coach in isolation

Training for Volunteer/Coaches

NI Volleyball will:

- Ensure our approved coaching sessions for volunteers/coaches have been scheduled during the year
- When appointing volunteers/coaches consider their current or previous experience either playing or coaching volleyball.
- Education and training in the basics of Safeguarding will apply to all coaches/volunteers/ management committee members working with the children or young members. NIVA is committed to continuous updating and review of our current safeguarding policy.
- Safeguarding training should include:
 - Understanding the potential importance of your role in the lives of children and young people and what you can do to safeguarding them.
 - How to recognise and respond if abuse/poor practice is suspected.
 - Identify best practice procedures and behaviour to safeguard children and young people in sport.
- After a maximum of 3 years coaches/volunteers should attend Safeguarding refresher training <http://www.sportni.net/resources/>
- NI Volleyball will ensure that all new coaches have attended safeguarding awareness workshop within six months of taking up their post. This opportunity should also be made available to parents and other volunteers to enable a culture of a child-focused club to prevail.
- All staff and NI Volleyball representative volunteers will receive induction, and training appropriate to their role. Training should be updated and reviewed regularly for new staff/volunteers and in line with changing legislation.

Codes of Conduct

A code of conduct let's all our staff/volunteers in our club/governing body know what behaviour is expected and what is unacceptable. It will also let all involved know what sanctions will be applied for non-compliance with the code. A written code of conduct will be communicated to everyone associated with your club/organisation. It will be applied consistently. NIVA has a Code of Conduct for [coaches/volunteers](#) and [young people](#) and a code of expectations for [parents/guardians](#).

Support and Supervision

NI Volleyball recognise that it is good practice to set up a system of support & supervision of staff/volunteers. This will enable staff/volunteers to become more effective by identifying training needs and dealing quickly with difficulties.

USEFUL NUMBERS	
NSPCC Helpline	0808 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk
PSNI Public Protection Unit	028 9065 0222 Ask for your local Public Protection Unit

Childline	Freephone 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk
Sport Northern Ireland	028 9038 1222 www.sportni.net
Child Protection in Sport Unit	02890351135 www.thecpsu.org.uk
Lifeline	0808 808 8000

Health and Social care Trusts

Health and Social Care Trust's Clubs adopting this policy should insert the number of their local HSCT.

Health and Social Care Trusts in NI - Each trust will have a Gateway team to deal with reports of abuse and also more local contacts for ongoing professional liaison for advice on concerns.

Northern HSC Trust	Tel: 03001234333
South Eastern HSC Trust	Tel: 0300 100 0300
Southern HSC Trust	Tel: 0800 783 7745
Belfast HSC Trust	Tel: 028 9050 7000
Western HSC Trust	Tel: 028 7131 4090
Regional Emergency Social Work service. Available 5.00 PM – 9.00 AM Monday to Thursday and 5.00 PM on Friday to 9.00 AM on Monday. There is a 24 hour cover over public holidays.	
028 9504 9999	