

A PLAYERS GUIDE TO CHILD PROTECTION IN HOCKEY

Hockey provides a great opportunity for young people. Playing Hockey provides opportunities for enjoyment and achievement and it also helps develop valuable qualities such as self-esteem, leadership and teamwork in all those involved. As a player, playing alongside young people, you have a responsibility for providing appropriate role models to the young people involved in hockey. Your behaviour sets the standard for young people to emulate. You are also in a position of trust and can have great influence on young people and therefore your conduct is important in the organisation of activity.

1 CONDUCT TO BE EXPECTED

- make sport fun, enjoyable and promote fair play
- treat all children equally, with respect and dignity
- involve parents wherever possible
- build balanced relationships based on mutual trust that empower children to share in the decision-making process
- always work in an open environment. Avoid private or unobserved situations
- put the welfare of each child first before winning or achieving performance goals
- be an excellent role model including not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of children
- give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- All forms of physical contact should respect and be sensitive to the needs and wishes of the child
- provide support openly, with the child's understanding and consent
- educational instruction should be delivered verbally and by demonstration
- where necessary, 'hands on' physical contact should be proportionate to the task and accompanied with an explanation to the child
- recognise the developmental needs and capacity of children and avoid excessive training or competition and either pushing them against their will or putting undue pressure on them.

2 WHAT TO DO IF A DISCLOSURE IS MADE TO YOU

A disclosure is when a young person opens up about something personal that has happened to them. It usually involves the development of trust between the young person and the person they disclose to.

As a player, you are in a position to develop positive relationships involving trust and respect with young people. This means that children might wish to disclose something to you. As a person they trust and respect it is important how you behave if this occurs and also what you do with the information.

How to listen to a disclosure

- React calmly so as not to frighten the child/vulnerable adult.
- Listen to the child/vulnerable adult.
- Do not show disbelief.
- Tell the child/vulnerable adult that he/she is not to blame and that he/she was right to tell.
- Take what the child/vulnerable adult says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what a child/vulnerable adult says, especially if they have a speech disability and/or differences in language.
- Do not pre-suppose that the experience was bad or painful - it may have been neutral or even pleasurable.
- Always avoid projecting your own reactions onto the child or vulnerable adult.
- If you need to clarify, keep questions to the absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- If you need to clarify or the statement is ambiguous, use open-ended, non-leading questions.
- Do not introduce personal information from either your own experiences or those of other children or vulnerable adults.
- Reassure the child or vulnerable adult.
- Make a full written record of the disclosure on the day you receive the disclosure
- Sign and date the record then pass it to the Child and Vulnerable Adult Officer

If a child makes a disclosure to you, you need to try to follow the guidelines above and then seek further guidance. Initial sources of support are available from your team captain or the Clubs Child Protection Officer.

What support is available to you

Child Protection is an issue Hockey is taking seriously and as such all Clubs should have a Child Protection Officer. This should be your first point of contact in all cases where you feel you need support. Where they are not available support can be gained from Police, Social Work or ParentLine Scotland (0808 800 2222) In all cases, approaching these organisations is not suggesting that abuse has taken place but gaining support from the experts in the field.

The information contained in this leaflet has been extracted from [Insert Club Name] Hockey Clubs Child Protection Policy. A full copy of this is available from the Child Protection Officer if required.

It is not your job to decide if a child has been abused, but it is your job to report it.