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Child Safeguarding in Sport

www.coe.int/CSiS

Title of the practice	FIFA Guardians™ Toolkit for Member Associations (MAs)
Country	International organisation
Organisation(s) responsible	FIFA – International Federation of Football Associations
Main topic addressed	The toolkit is a practical handbook for FIFA's 211 member associations (national football federations) on the steps needed to develop and implement safeguarding policies and procedures to prevent and address harm and ensure the well-being of everyone in football, especially children.
Type of resource/practice	Strategy and Policy framework
Target group(s)	FIFA Member Associations, Safeguarding Staff in Sport Organisations.
Timing	It is recommended to be implemented incrementally but ideally within 24 months, depending on what stage an association is at.
Language	English, Spanish, French, German and Arabic
Brief description of the practice	This is a practical handbook for FIFA's Member Associations (MAs) to use as a guide to develop their safeguarding policy and procedures at a national level. It draws on multiple sources from MAs around the world, as well as other organisations' safeguarding policies and guidelines. It is particularly based on the practical application of the International Safeguards for Children in Sport. The toolkit is one pillar of the FIFA Guardians programme which forms part of FIFA's overall commitment to promote safe sport and is being supplemented with further guidance, templates, knowledge-sharing and training to support football associations in developing their own policies, procedures and good practices. FIFA considers the toolkit a living document that is to be updated based on feedback and practical experience from our members and based on new and emerging best practice.
Context and objectives	FIFA works with its 211 Member Associations (MA's) across the world. The FIFA Guardians Toolkit was developed as part of a proactive effort to help MAs in their safeguarding journey by providing guidance, best practice examples and the templates needed to develop, or review, their safeguarding policy and procedures in line with their national legal and socio-cultural context. It was developed to support MAs in the implementation of the FIFA Forward 2.0 Development Programme regulations which oblige member associations to "take measures to protect and safeguard children and minors from potential abuses and to protect their wellbeing within football."

<p>Steps/activities of the practice</p>	<p>Through the five principles and five steps outlined in the toolkit this practical handbook is designed for MAs to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote accountability and responsibility for keeping children safe from harm when involved in any football activity. • Self-assess and inform the development of their safeguarding policies, plans and programmes, including for human resource and training needs. • Assist safeguarding officers, co-ordinators and technical staff with risk assessments and the development of safeguarding plans and programmes. • Support practitioners, such as coaches, trainers, medical personnel, staff and volunteers who provide services, training and programmes to children to apply good safeguarding practices for effective action. <p>The five steps cover:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How are children involved in our game and what safeguards already exist? 2. Set out and define your safeguarding policy. 3. Develop procedures and guidelines to implement your policy. 4. Communication and education. 5. Monitor, evaluate and reviewing policies, procedures and guidelines. <p>Through these five steps the toolkit includes guidance for football associations on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to self-assess¹ what measures they currently have in place. • Developing a safeguarding policy, with a suggested implementation plan. • Job description for a Safeguarding Officer. • Guidance on how to deal with concerns or allegations of child abuse. • Guidance on safe recruitment and screening procedures. • Developing codes of conduct for staff, parents and children. • Guidance on how to conduct safeguarding risk assessments. • Guidance on safe supervision of children. • Guidance on planning and organising tournaments, overnight stays and away trips. • Missing child policy. • Guidance on the safe use of celebration and communication arrangements. • Guidance on the safe use of changing rooms and shower facilities. • Guidance on how to recognise and respond to abuse and standards of expected behaviour. • Guidance on monitoring and evaluating the organisation's safeguarding efforts.
<p>Resources required</p>	<p>Budget approved by the management of the association and a dedicated Safeguarding Officer.</p>
<p>Achievements and outcomes</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Football is a safe environment for children and young people where their wellbeing is promoted. 2. Member associations are informed, educated and aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and have a comprehensive safeguarding policy in place to prevent harm and appropriately respond to concerns and allegations of abuse.

¹ <https://survey.fifa.com/s/FIFAGuardians1/?lang=436103>

<p>Challenges and limitations</p>	<p>As the global governing body for football, FIFA is committed to supporting its members to implement best practice to keep children safe and ensure involvement in football is fun for all. FIFA does not however control the day-to-day operations of our 211 members, or their affiliated organisations and clubs who are independently organised. Moreover, in many countries around the world, safeguarding in sport is a relatively new topic and national structures often do not exist or are supported by governments to ensure safe sporting environments.</p>
<p>Follow-up ideas and future plans</p>	<p>The toolkit is being supplemented with further guidance, templates, knowledge-sharing and training to support football associations in developing their own policies, procedures and good practices. To complement the rollout of the toolkit, FIFA runs regional webinars together with the respective confederations and has launched the FIFA Guardians Safeguarding in Sport Diploma together with the Open University. The FIFA Guardians Safeguarding in Sport Diploma was developed to address the need to build capacity and professionalise the role of the Safeguarding Officer in football, around the world.</p> <p>In the absence of any academic pathway into the profession of safeguarding in sport, this education programme offers a foundational route by which they can develop and consolidate their skills, knowledge and expertise. The whole Diploma, courses one to five, which are launched gradually, is specifically aimed at professionalising the role of Safeguarding Officers.</p> <p>Course One- <i>the FIFA Guardians™ Safeguarding Essentials</i>- is designed for everyone in football, indeed any sport, to gain a basic knowledge of safeguarding. It was launched in January 2021. Course Two – <i>FIFA Guardians™ Starting Your Safeguarding Journey</i> - supports those who are new to their safeguarding role or wish to build on their knowledge and was launched in August 2021.</p>
<p>Any other comment</p>	<p>Some member associations have well developed policies and procedures in place, others are just starting out on their safeguarding journey. Depending on what stage of the journey the MA is at, the five steps in the toolkit, taken together, are intended to help focus current efforts and implement minimum safeguarding requirements to keep children safe in football. The steps are underpinned by recognised best practice to help football associations develop a long-term system of safeguarding. FIFA strongly recommends that each football association implement these steps working together with local experts in safeguarding and child protection stakeholders and the relevant authorities in each country.</p>
<p>Further information</p>	<p>https://www.fifa.com/social-impact/fifa-guardians</p>