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Child Safeguarding in Sport

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Title of the practice	Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in sport
Country	United Kingdom
Organisation(s) responsible	NWG Network
Main topic addressed	Raising awareness of how children can be abused through sport and prompts for coaches to understand when to report concerns.
Type of resource/practice	Educational programmes and materials
Target group(s)	Sports coaches, sports safeguarding officers, club welfare officers, sports governance committees and National Governing Bodies, young athletes, children and most importantly parents.
Timing	Ongoing
Language	English
Brief description of the practice	<p>The suite of resources can be used by sports clubs in their physical premises and facilities to educate coaches, children and parents about abuse through sport.</p> <p>The resources can be physically placed in key public and private areas of any facility including display boards and changing rooms. The resources can also be uploaded to electronic screens throughout buildings and displayed on websites and club social media feeds.</p>
Context and objectives	<p>The suite of resources was developed following research into sexualised violence in sport by the Voice for Truth and Dignity Project (see weblink below).</p> <p>It became clear during the research that awareness raising at the local level of sport was limited and there was a distinct lack of knowledge and understanding of how children can become victims of sexualised violence through sport.</p> <p>The main objectives are to help coaches identify abusive behaviour and practice and to encourage them to report abusive behaviour.</p>
Steps/activities of the practice	<p>At the conclusion of the Voices for Truth and Dignity Project we identified that a campaign to help raise awareness of abuse in sport and help identify abusive practices by sports coaches and staff was required.</p> <p>We consulted with the sports sector to ensure the messages we proposed were clear, understood and sport specific. In each of the resources we used language and terminology unique to a particular sport so that we could, catch a person's eye and highlight areas in sport where athletes and children can be taken advantage of.</p> <p>We consulted a focus group of parents to ensure the proposed resources would not put parents off sending their children to play sport and that they understood the key messages we were delivering.</p>

	<p>Following consultations with parents they identified the key sports their children participated in which are: football, cricket, rugby, tennis, martial arts, swimming, gymnastics, cycling, badminton, athletics and boxing.</p>
Resources required	<p>These resources can be freely downloaded from our website. The posters can be printed locally so access to printers and paper are the only resources required. The campaign can also be delivered digitally as all the resources can be shared electronically and hosted on plasma screen or monitors at sports facilities or other venues where sports take place i.e., schools or sport and leisure centres. The costings to participate in this campaign are minimal.</p>
Achievements and outcomes	<p>When the resources were uploaded to our website, we held an online launch event to promote the campaign. We used the NWG Networks membership to share the resources with over 300 dissemination points within children's services in the UK and our links with the sport community. This ensured the campaign was brought to the attention of a significant number of adults working in different sectors whose children participated in sport. We also shared the sports specific resources with the relevant National Governing Bodies so they could also share them within their own networks.</p> <p>This campaign has had a positive impact on the sports sector by delivering key messages via a child friendly resource to help promote sensitive discussions within the sector about abuse through sport. As the campaign has grown the NWG Network has seen an increase in the number of resource downloads. Due to a spike in downloads when a report of abuse through sport has major media coverage, we now actively reshare the link to resources when we are aware of high-profile story breaking.</p>
Challenges and limitations	<p>The challenge with resources like these is to keep the public aware of the campaign. Sexualised violence and abuse in sport is a difficult subject to keep "alive" and many people find it hard to talk openly about abuse. The subject can slip off agendas very quickly and many in sport are worried that talking about abuse may put some parents off sending their children to sports activities. This is a challenge for all of us who promote safeguarding in sport</p>
Follow-up ideas and future plans	<p>We will develop more resources for other sports such as hockey, horseracing, basketball, indoor rock climbing etc and will consult with each sport-specific sector and parents on the language we use. We will continue to publicise the campaign on a regular basis throughout the year to keep the key messages in the public realm, especially when media articles are published or reviews into abuse in specific sports i.e. the current Whyte Review into abuse in British Gymnastics.</p>
Any other comment	<p>This campaign has been welcomed by the sports sector as a unique way of getting specific information regarding child abuse into sport settings. The fact that we are a leading charity in the field of child exploitation gives credibility to the messages we are sharing and we are widely considered to be authentic in our approach to abuse in sport.</p>
Further information	<p>https://www.stop-cse.org/tackling-cse-in-sports/ http://voicesfortruthanddignity.eu/</p>