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## Child Safeguarding in Sport

[www.coe.int/CSiS](http://www.coe.int/CSiS)

Title of the practice	<b>Roles and Responsibilities</b>
Country	Ireland
Organisation(s) responsible	Sport Ireland
Main topic addressed	All those involved in sport have a moral duty of care to report child protection concerns to help create a safer environment for children.
Type of resource/practice	System of Child Safeguarding Officer roles
Target group(s)	For National Governing Bodies, Clubs, Sport Organisations – for all roles within safeguarding
Timing	Evolving since the 2000s
Language	English
Brief description of the practice	Sport leaders play a vital role in children's sport. Sport organisations and sport groups should ensure the work of sport leaders which occurs mainly on a voluntary basis, is guided by Sport Ireland's Safeguarding Guidance.
Context and objectives	<p><b>Context:</b> Everyone in sport including children, parents/carers and sport leaders should accept the role and responsibilities they undertake in their commitment to maintaining an enjoyable and safe environment. Sport leaders play a vital role in children's sport. Interaction between children and their peers and adults should be conducted in a spirit of mutual respect, equality and non-discrimination with a spirit of fair play.</p> <p><b>Objective:</b> Sport organisations have a duty to promote the welfare and safety of children. Staff and volunteers should be alert to the possibility that children with whom they are in contact may be being abused or at risk of being abused. They should know how to recognise and respond to the possibility of abuse or neglect, to ensure the most effective steps are taken to protect a child and to contribute to the ongoing safety of children.</p>
Steps/activities of the practice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sport Ireland developed the Safeguarding Guidance for Children and Young People to be used by sports organisations.</li> <li>2. Sport Ireland developed relevant training for sports leaders and their roles.</li> <li>3. Sports leaders are then appointed or volunteer to their roles.</li> <li>4. Sports leaders become familiar with the policies and procedures within their specific sport and sign up to the relevant policies/codes of conduct.</li> <li>5. Sports leaders should undergo the relevant safeguarding training for their role.</li> <li>6. Sport leaders should also undergo any vetting required for their role.</li> </ol>

<b>Resources required</b>	<b>Documents</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sport Ireland Safeguarding Guidance for Children and Young People</li> <li>• Sport Organisations Policies and Procedures</li> </ul> <b>Training</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding 1 – Basic Awareness</li> <li>• Safeguarding 2 – Club Children’s Officer</li> <li>• Safeguarding 3 – Designated Liaison Person</li> </ul> <b>Human Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Organisational Staff</li> <li>○ National Children’s Officer</li> <li>○ Mandated Person</li> <li>○ Liaison Person</li> <li>• Club Children’s Officers</li> <li>• Designated Liaison Person</li> <li>• Relevant Person</li> </ul>
<b>Achievements and outcomes</b>	<p><b>Outcome:</b> A central goal for all involved in children’s sport is to provide a safe, positive and nurturing environment where children can develop and enhance their physical and social skills.</p> <p>Promoting a child centred ethos should go hand-in-hand with identifying and eliminating practices that negatively impact on safe and enjoyable participation in children’s sport</p> <p><b>Achievements:</b> Sport organisations will have educated and trained leaders in their sports to help with the safeguarding of children and provide the highest standards of care for children.</p> <p><b>Improvements:</b> Sport Ireland liaise directly with National Children’s Officers to help make relevant changes to the training and guidance documents to keep up with current sporting environments.</p> <p>Sport Ireland also adapts any changes made within government legislation to support the Sport Ireland Safeguarding Guidance of Children and Young People in Sport.</p>
<b>Challenges and limitations</b>	<b>Time</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Recruiting</li> </ul> <b>Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies and Procedures</li> <li>• Volunteers</li> </ul> <b>Organisational buy in</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture</li> <li>• Resources</li> <li>• Budget</li> <li>• Retention of volunteers</li> </ul>
<b>Follow-up ideas and future plans</b>	Review guidance documents and roles involved in sport and see how we can improve to ensure there is always a focus on child centred environments within sport.
<b>Any other comment</b>	We recognise and acknowledge the work being done by National Governing Bodies and particularly by National Children’s Officers to create a culture of safety that promotes the welfare of children and young people and want to continue to support and work alongside them.
<b>Further information</b>	<a href="https://www.sportireland.ie/safeguarding-guidance.pdf">safeguarding-guidance.pdf (sportireland.ie)</a>