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Child Safeguarding in Sport

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Title of the practice	From research to action – Establishment of a Centre of Safe Sport
Country	The Netherlands
Organisation(s) responsible	Netherlands Olympic Committee*Netherlands Sport Confederation (NOC*NSF)
Main topic addressed	Roles within safeguarding
Type of resource/practice	Systems of Child Safeguarding Officer roles
Target group(s)	Child Safeguarding Officers
Timing	<p>Since 1998 – NOC*NSF has a policy on (sexual) harassment in sport (Schipper- van Veldhoven, N., Vertommen, T. & Vloet, L. (2015). (Sexual) Intimidation in Sports: the Netherlands. In Lang, M. & Harthill, M (Eds): Safeguarding, Child Protection and Abuse in Sport: International Perspectives in Research, Policy and Practice. London: Routledge, pp. 40-48)</p> <p>December 2017 - February 2019: Establishment of the Centre of Safe Sport Netherlands (CVSN).</p> <p>February 2019 – Present: optimisation of the roles of employees from the CVSN.</p>
Language	Dutch
Brief description of the practice	Shared responsibility of the national sports federations has been in place since 1998 but intensified following a national survey on sexual harassment and abuse in sport (2017) and the establishing of a special centre with the focus on a pedagogical approach (including safeguarding) that supports prevention at clubs and works closely with national federations.
Context and objectives	After the 2017 national survey, it became clear that in the field of a safe sports climate, there is still work to be done in the Netherlands. Recommendations from this survey included: work on prevention, create a CVSN, clarify the roles of the safeguarding officers of the CVSN and focus on co-operation of different professionals and organisations. The goal is to make safe sport possible for everyone in the Netherlands.
Steps/activities of the practice	Although there was a national survey done in 2014 which revealed alarming data on the prevalence of harassment and abuse, the single most important milestone in the entire process has been the 2017 national survey. This survey was conducted under the auspices of a special committee on request of the ministry - from which several recommendations were identified. The next milestone reached was the announcement by NOC*NSF that they would adopt and implement all recommendations.

	The most important steps in the process establishing the CVSNI were the appointment of staff, co-operation with national sports federations and the central recording of signals in the case management system sport.
Resources required	To further establish the CVSNI a number of resources were needed which includes resources for positioning the CVSNI and communicating about it. In addition, we needed resources for continued staffing. It was a challenge to match money, resources and staffing with the needs that emerged from the recommendations in the national survey. This was further complicated because we needed to anticipate the future needs of people who would want to contact CVSNI.
Achievements and outcomes	<p>Since the creation of the CVSNI, we have seen a systematic increase in the reporting of cases. We exist for athletes from federations but also for athletes who have no affiliation with a sport association. This has helped us to create a representative picture of the current situation within certain sporting disciplines as well as across the entire spectrum of Dutch sport. In addition, we have succeeded in putting together a large network of organisations that can be used for the prevention of transgressive behaviour. In addition to prevention, we also use this network for further follow-up of reports of transgressive behaviour.</p> <p>Furthermore, we see that more reports are being investigated in sports disciplinary law and little by little this ensures the sport environment is more aware of transgressive behaviour and becomes safer place. Finally, the different forms of preventive education such as presentations, webinars and e-learning have led to more education in practice.</p>
Challenges and limitations	Challenges for the CVSNI included getting the sports landscape used to and accepting of the new positioning of the CVSNI. Lack of a sports law and convincing the sporting society that a safe environment is a basic requirement to be able to play sport in a responsible way.
Follow-up ideas and future plans	<p>To take the next step forward it is important that (sport) society and politicians come to a greater understanding that a safe sport is crucial for the well-being of athletes. And as a result, greater priority, resources and policies are put into proper prevention and follow-up of transgressive behaviour in sport.</p> <p>Furthermore, in the future we hope for long-term sustainability, organisational and operational growth and stable financing.</p>
Any other comment	To prevent transgressive behaviour within the organised sport system, the establishment of a centre is a starting point. Next to rules, education of important stakeholders (coaches, management, parents) is especially important. They need to know how to guide young athletes and how to use sport in a developmental way.
Further information	www.centrumveiligesport.nl (Dutch)