

# Safeguarding Children in Sport: from research to action

Up your game, strengthen your squad!

**28 januari 2021**

**#wewinnenveelmetsport**



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# Some history

1996:

Media coverage Dutch elite judo coach about sexual abuse three female athletes  
This case was the catalyst for national level intervention program

Since 1996

- Since 1996 'SHA policy' from NOC \* NSF and partners
- Development of various instruments, some of them:
- Confidential advisors
- Hotline (later accommodated at 'Sport Confidence Center')
- Strengthen disciplinary law
- Code of conduct,
- Communication (federations and club level)
- Cooperation with Police, Public Prosecutor and Department of Justice
- Much (research) data available from 1996-present

# End of 2016

- Publicity from England
- Publicity among others in Netherlands women's cycling (De Vries / De Bruin)

December 23, announcement NOC \* NSF: wish for independent inquiry in the Netherlands because we were not sure about prevalence, our measures and knowledge

## Why?

The suffering caused by sexual harassment and abuse is possibly still deeply underestimated

We show the beauty and social strength of sport in many different ways and can strengthen it. At the same time, it is our duty to make every effort to ensure that the abuse in sport is eliminated as much as possible so that everyone can enjoy sport.

# First steps after 23 December 2016

- More publicity in the media
- Many parties spontaneously reported willingness to contribute (Rutgers, Victim support the Netherlands, National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings and Sexual Violence against Children, those involved with 'Deetman' and 'Samsom', scientists, and many others)
- Consultation Justice and police (regular)
- Consultation Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS)
- Ask chairperson of the inquiry committee
- Insight into do's and don'ts of previous research commissions on Sexual Abuse
- (Church, Child protection)

# Organization of the research

- Client: Board NOC \* NSF
- Establishment fully independent commission
- Chaired by Klaas de Vries (Minister of Social Affairs and Employment from 1998 - 2000 and of Home Affairs from 2000 to 2002).
- Clémence Ross-van Dorp (State Secretary for Health, Welfare and Sport, 2002-2006, former president of the Netherlands Institute for Sport and Movement and former president of BV De Graafschap)
- Egbert Myjer (judge at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, 2004-2012)
- Exploration March and April 2017: design and budget
- Start: 15 May - Completion: 12 December 2017
- Co-financing: NOC\*NSF & Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport

# Conclusions & Recommendations December 2017

- Sexual harassment and abuse are very common in sports.
- The suffering caused by sexual harassment and abuse is still deeply underestimated.
- The sports world can do much more to protect athletes and save suffering.
- Any report of sexual harassment or abuse must be taken seriously and handled with care.
- There must be a duty to report all cases of sexual harassment and abuse.
- Disciplinary law must offer more possibilities and criminal proceedings must be accelerated.
- There must be a knowledge center where advice can be obtained.
- The involvement of members and parents must be promoted at local association level.

# **NOC \* NSF: we adopt all the recommendations of the De Vries committee**

## **And we do it all at the same time**

- Stand around and help victims
- End dangerous situation
- Sanction offender
- Prevent it from happening again

CVSN: Knowledge, casemanagement, registration, advice, relations with victim support

Disciplinary law tightened, improved cooperation with the judiciary

Duty to report introduced

A step-by-step plan for prevention for sports clubs

# Looking back....

## Necessary conditions:

Independent research to keep you awake

Keep unacceptable behavior on the agenda of governments, boards and management

Scale up when needed, don't get stuck only in projects

Chain approach needed: information, prevention and follow-up of incidents

Close cooperation with local, regional and national authorities!

Learning organization, mental agility, show leadership



# From research to action

## Questions?

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