



START TO TALK



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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

This is a call to sports clubs, associations and federations to public figures and authorities to top athletes, coaches and parents and to anyone who cares for children and their rights to stop child sexual abuse in sport



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Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport
epas
Accord partiel élargi sur le sport

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1 IN 5

- About one in five children in Europe are victims of some form of sexual violence this includes sexual touching, rape, sexual harassment, grooming, exhibitionism, exploitation in prostitution and pornography on line sexual extortion and coercion...
- Sexual abuse often leaves scars for life
- Between 70% and 85% of children know their abuser.
- The vast majority of children are victims of people they trust.

Abuse happens in Sport too

In sport, children can be at risk because:

- ▶ A high tolerance of physical violence and injuries
- ▶ authoritarian leadership and unequal power relationships between coaches and athletes
- ▶ scandal avoidance: incidents are silenced
- ▶ male-dominated gender ratio
- ▶ physical contact is often required
- ▶ reward structures
- ▶ inappropriate sexual behaviour is often tolerated, discrimination and gender inequality accepted
- ▶ potential risk situations: changing rooms, showers, car-pooling, overnight stays

It's hard for children to talk

- About 1/3 of abused children never tell anyone
 - ▶ Fear of not being believed or fear of consequences (reprisals and possible impact on family, their sport career, their reputation)
 - ▶ Feelings of shame and guilt
 - ▶ Confusion : some children believe being in a true "relationship"
 - ▶ Some children are not able to recognise the abuse (very young children, children with disabilities)
 - ▶ Children do not know whom to tell
 - ▶ Athletes are supposed to be strong (vulnerability is considered a weakness)

Adults must break the silence

- ▶ Abuse is not a fate. Sport can become an empowering and protective environment for children
- ▶ It is up to adults to prevent abuse, protect children and help to fight impunity
- ▶ You can be a silence breaker. You can show how to stop abuse.

” Sport is great for children. It brings joy and healthy habits. It boosts self-esteem and creates a sense of belonging. Through sport, children adhere to key values and learn important life skills.



We can help

■ The Council of Europe Convention on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse details the measures that must be taken to prevent and respond to sexual violence, to protect children and to fight impunity. 42 States in Europe must implement it.

■ To stop child abuse in sport, the Council of Europe works with public authorities, the sport movement, academia, child protection agencies, the European Union and other international organisations. We offer our help to:

- ▶ Improve legislations and policies
- ▶ Set up child safeguarding strategies for sports structures, activities and events
- ▶ Develop codes of conduct
- ▶ Train sports professionals (coaches, sports managers and policy makers)
- ▶ Empower parents
- ▶ Empower children

Resources available:

- ▶ Standards: guidance to review policies and legislation
- ▶ A network of experts
- ▶ Examples of child safeguarding policies and codes of conduct in sport
- ▶ A training kit for coaches and sport managers
- ▶ Research results
- ▶ TV Spots and Videos
- ▶ Awareness raising material



Join our call !

Ready?

Visit our website, inform yourself

Steady?

Identify the measures that you can take. Involve others.

Go!

Break the silence. Start to talk. And tell us what you are doing!

Find out more:

Starttotalk.org

www.coe.int/sport

www.coe.int/children