

# Southern Counties Hockey Association

## CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES

November 2015

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All sports associations which make provision for under 18 year old participants must have and adhere to an active child protection policy. The Southern Counties Hockey Association subscribes to the England Hockey Child Protection Policy. Following these guidelines will safeguard the welfare of all the young players and help protect the volunteers in the sport from allegations of inappropriate behaviour where young players are involved.

As part of our **DUTY OF CARE** we need to promote **GOOD PRACTICE** by providing the young players with appropriate levels of protection and safety, and take any suspicions or allegations seriously.

It must be understood that the volunteers are not trained to deal with situations of abuse, and should never attempt to do so, but they must take responsibility for reporting concerns to an appropriate Child Protection Officer or the proper authority.

### **GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES.**

All personnel should demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false accusations. **GOOD PRACTICE** means:

- Always working in an open environment.
- Treating all young players equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the well-being of the young players first – before winning!
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance from the young players.
- Making hockey enjoyable and promoting FAIR PLAY.
- Creating a positive environment for training and competition.
- Not tolerating aggression and eliminating harassment and abuse.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback.
- Keeping abreast with technical skills, qualifications, insurance requirements, child protection guidelines and procedures, and First Aid.
- Involving parents or carers in supervisory roles where possible, preferably working in pairs.
- Gaining written parental consent to transport young players to and from training and matches.

### **GUIDANCE FOR COUNTIES AND CLUBS**

All counties, including county umpire associations training young umpires, and clubs which include young players in adult teams should, as part of their DUTY OF CARE, have a designated adult or **Child Protection Officer** who is responsible for acting as a direct contact for the parents of those young players. Their responsibilities must include:

- Keeping medical and emergency details of all the young players.
- Securing written parental consent to administer **First Aid** if the need arises, or any other emergency treatment. **NB** - It must be noted that no-one should undertake first aid treatment for which they are not qualified. It is also important that everyone is aware of the Association's Instructions regarding Head Injuries which are set out in Appendix 1.
- Keeping a written record of any illness or injury sustained by a young player whilst in their care, plus the details of any medication or treatment given.
- Ensuring the safe collection and return of young players as agreed with the parents.

### GUIDELINES FOR THE TEAM CAPTAIN; COACH AND OTHER MEMBERS

It is important that the following guidelines are observed when young players are included in match play and training sessions with adults:

- The development needs and capacity of the youngsters is recognised.
- Excessive training and competition should be avoided.
- The proper protective kit must be worn at all times including mouth guards and shin guards. Goalkeepers must be properly equipped.
- Adults must take care when playing and training alongside young players. They must always treat them with respect and dignity.
- Young players must not be left alone on the side-line without guidance or supervision, and they must wear adequate clothing in accordance with the weather conditions.

**NB** - The suspension of young players during competition should be treated as a welfare issue.

### USING CHANGING FACILITIES.

Adult players should not change or shower at the same time as the young players using the same changing room. If young players are uncomfortable changing or showering in public, no pressure should ever be placed on them to do so.

### GUIDELINES FOR YOUTH SECTIONS OF ORGANISATIONS

The following guidelines are a continuation of the good practice set out in a previous section of this policy document. **Coaches, Managers and Assessors** of representative training groups and selected squads are likely to have fairly regular contact with these young players throughout the season. They are therefore an important link in identifying situations where protection may be called for. All suspicions and **cases of poor practice** must be reported.

Sport can play a crucial role in improving a child's self-esteem. If a child has been subjected to abuse outside the sport's environment, the youth section of an association may need to work in partnership with the appropriate agencies to ensure that the youngster receives the right support. Such volunteers should be aware of the **SCHA Risk Assessment Policy**; the NGB's **Code of Conduct for Coaches**, and implement the Child Protection guidelines and procedures as set out here or issued by England Hockey. It is therefore vital to:

- Create a positive atmosphere through building balanced relationships based on mutual trust.
- Ensure that the young players participate at the appropriate level for their age and ability.
- Put the players' welfare before results.
- Make hockey fun as well as challenging.
- Promote respect for all the participants including the opposition and the match officials.
- Abide by the Rules of the Game.
- Ensure that if mixed or separate gender teams are taken away, they are always accompanied by both male and female adults.
- Ensure that at tournaments or residential events, adults are not permitted to enter children's rooms or vice versa.
- Keep medical and emergency contact details for the players as well as attendance sheets for all sessions undertaken.
- Avoid taking responsibility for tasks for which they are not qualified.

**USE OF VIDEOING OR PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT**

Associations and clubs providing activities for young players should be vigilant regarding the use of cameras used to take inappropriate photographs or video footage of young players. Although using video equipment is a legitimate coaching aid, any concerns should be reported. All film and video recordings should be stored safely.

**INCIDENTS WHICH MUST BE REPORTED/RECORDED**

- If you accidentally hurt a player.
- If a player appears distressed in any way.
- If a player misunderstands or misinterprets something you have said or done.

**RECRUITMENT & TRAINING OF VOLUNTEERS**

- All volunteers should complete an application form and enclose a CV and a DBS disclosure.
- A reference should be obtained regarding previous work with young people. This reference should be confirmed by telephone.
- Evidence must be submitted in support of qualifications required.

**INTERVIEW AND INDUCTION**

- Applicants may be required to attend an interview or undergo a coaching assessment.
- The job description should be clarified.
- Any training needs should be identified.

**RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS**

As stated earlier, it is not the responsibility of the volunteers to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. **HOWEVER**, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled on a `need to know` basis only. This includes the following people:

- The Association or Club Child Protection Officer.
- The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused.
- The person making the allegation.
- Social Services/the Police.
- NGB Child Welfare Officer.
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is also a child).

NB. It is wise to seek Social Services advice on who should approach the alleged abuser.

**Appendix 1**

**Instruction regarding Head Injuries**

This instruction applies to all junior hockey played within the jurisdiction of the Southern Counties HA and is a part of the Association's Child Protection Guidelines. It also applies to any junior player injured in a senior match.

Any player receiving a head injury **MUST** be removed from the field of play by the coach/manager as soon as it is medically safe to do so and qualified medical opinion attention sought from an A&E department or a registered medical practitioner.

Umpires officiating at junior games are instructed not to permit the match to continue until the injured player has been removed and not to allow the injured player to return to the field of play during the course of the game.

In tournament hockey it is conceivable that an injured player will receive attention and be passed fit for play. Tournament directors/organisers must be sure that proper medical treatment/advice has been sought before allowing the player to participate further in the tournament.

**Appendix 2**

**Goalkeepers in Junior Hockey**

The Southern Counties Hockey Association strongly recommends that all teams playing 11 a side matches where all, or a substantial proportion are under 18 should always use a fully equipped goalkeeper.