



# Griffithstown AFC

(Junior & Youth Football Club)

## Child Welfare Guidance



## CHILD PROTECTION GUIDE

### A GUIDE FOR ALL MEMBERS INVOLVED WITH YOUNG PERSONS THROUGHOUT THE TORFAEN FOOTBALL LEAGUE

This document is intended as a guide for people involved in the coaching, management and development of Football within the club environment. It should be read by volunteers, parents and professionals alike, and in particular a new coach. This guide introduces them to the concept of child abuse in sport, in all its forms and gives ways of both recognizing warning signs and acting on concerns. Abuse is a powerful and emotive term. Child abuse is a term used to describe ways in which children are harmed, usually by adults and often by those they know and trust. The coach often holds this trust and may be at risk of misusing their power over the young players. It is widely recognized that there are four main areas of abuse which coaches and volunteers should be aware of:

#### EMOTIONAL ABUSE –

In general terms, emotional abuse occurs when adults persistently fail to show children due protective care, where a child may be constantly shouted at, or threatened or subjected to sarcasm and unrealistic pressures (Pushing players beyond their limits).

#### NEGLECT –

In general terms, neglect as a form of abuse occurs when a child's essential needs for food, warmth and care fail to be met (Playing/Training in extreme weather conditions).

#### PHYSICAL ABUSE -

In general terms, this occurs when adults, or even children, deliberately inflict injuries on a child, or knowingly do not prevent such injuries. It also occurs when an adult gives children alcohol, or inappropriate drugs, or fails to supervise their access to these substances.

## SEXUAL ABUSE –

In general terms, girls and boys are abused by adults, both male and female, who use children to meet their own sexual needs.

## GUIDELINES FOR GOOD PRACTICE

Always be publicly open when working with children

Football by its nature is a contact sport. Situations will occur when, in order to teach or coach certain techniques it is necessary to make contact with the player. If this is the case, tell the player beforehand and ask them if they have any objections

If groups are to be supervised in changing rooms, always ensure that adults work in pairs, and that gender is appropriate.

Where mixed teams compete, they should always be accompanied by at least one male and one female adult.

Coaches must place the well-being and safety of the player above the development of performance.

## COACHES SHOULD:

- Avoid overplaying of players; use a squad system.
- Ensure development comes first, winning second.
- When coaching contact skills ensure safety first.
- Never allow injured players to train or play.
- Ensure all equipment and facilities are safe and appropriate.
- Never coach law violations.
- Never overly criticize players - their confidence is paramount.

Remember you should be a role model and mentor to young people

Everyone should also be aware that, as a general rule, it does not make sense for a Coach to:

- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with young players away from others.
- Take young players alone on car journeys, however short.
- Take young players to your home.

### **YOU SHOULD NEVER:**

- Engage in inappropriate physical contact, including horseplay.
- Share a room with a player.
- Permit any form of inappropriate touching.
- Permit players to use unacceptable or explicit language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a player, even in fun.
- Agree to meet a player on your own, outside the context of the normal coaching or mentoring process.
- Allow allegations made by a player to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.

### **RECOGNIZING THE SIGNS**

As a coach you may be suspicious that abuse is taking place:

- A. Outside the Football Club environment.
- B. Within the Football Club Environment.

### **A. CHILD ABUSE OCCURRING OUTSIDE THE FOOTBALL CLUB ENVIRONMENT MAY MANIFEST ITSELF IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:**

- Unexplained injury
- Young player describes abusive act involving him/her

- Unexplained changes in behavior
- Sexually explicit behavior
- Difficulty making friends
- Weight loss
- Dirty or unkempt
- Use of sexually explicit language

**B. AS A COACH AT A FOOTBALL CLUB YOU MAY WITNESS THE FOLLOWING SIGNS OF ABUSE BY FELLOW COACHES. MANY OF THESE SIGNS YOU WILL RECOGNISE AS “Poor Coaching Technique”:**

- Emotional - continuous negative feedback
  - ignoring young players’ efforts to progress
  - demanding unrealistic performance
  - over-emphasis on winning
- Neglect - players left without proper supervision
  - exposed to unnecessary cold or heat
  - exposed to unacceptable risk of injury
  - failing to provide basic needs
- Physical - bullying by coaches or children
  - overtraining and/or overplaying
  - exposing young players to alcohol
  - inappropriate physical involvement in training
- Sexual - inappropriate sexual language
  - inappropriate touching of young players
  - Insinuating that sexual favors can help playing career
  - exposure to sexually explicit material or activities

**REMEMBER, YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE WELFARE OF THE YOUNG  
PLAYERS IN YOUR CARE.**

**IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE YOU SHOULD REPORT YOUR SUSPICIONS TO THE  
PERSON IN CHARGE WHO WILL FOLLOW PROCEDURES LAID DOWN BY  
THE LEAGUE IN REGARD TO CHILD WELFARE.**

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