

WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS

If you have any concerns regarding the safety of a child or the actions of a coach, trainer or other member of the club please bring your concerns to the attention of the club Child Welfare Officer (CWO) or event CWO as soon as possible. **DO NOT** speak to the person you believe is exhibiting poor practice or abusing a child.

The CWO's contact details are given below.

HOW THE UKPA CAN HELP

The UKPA has access to professional assistance in dealing with concerns over child welfare and will give clubs and individuals advice on how to deal with any concerns.

You can contact the UKPA's Chief Child Welfare Officer (CCWO) or the Chief Executive Officer whose contact numbers and further details of the UKPA's Child Welfare procedures can be found on the UKPA's website at;

www.ukpolocrosse.co.uk

Or for less immediate concerns e-mail them at;

CCWO childwelfare@ukpolocrosse.co.uk
CEO ceo@ukpolocrosse.co.uk

Your concerns will be dealt with in confidence, but details may have to be passed on to the relevant authorities in certain circumstances.



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UKPA CHILD SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

INTRODUCTION

To provide young people with the best possible experience and opportunities in polo-crosse, it is imperative that everyone operates within an accepted ethical framework and demonstrates exemplary behaviour. This not only ensures that the sport makes a positive contribution to the development of young people and safeguards their welfare, but also protects all personnel from unfounded allegations of abuse or poor practice. It is not always easy to differentiate poor practice from abuse, albeit intentional or unintentional so it is not the responsibility of UKPA Members to determine whether or not abuse is taking place. It is, however, their responsibility to identify poor practice and *possible* abuse and to act if they have concerns about the welfare of a child. This pamphlet will help you identify what is meant by good and poor practice and some of the indications of possible abuse as well as how to voice any concerns.

GOOD PRACTICE

The following is deemed to constitute good practice for adults, coaches and clubs:

- Ensure the experience at UKPA events is fun and enjoyable
- Promote fairness
- Confront and deal with bullying
- Never condone rule violations or the use of prohibited substances.
- Be an excellent role model; do not drink alcohol or smoke when working with young people.
- Treat all young people and vulnerable adults equally; this means providing everyone in a group situation similar attention (within reason), time, respect and dignity.
- Respect the developmental stage of each young person and place their welfare ahead of winning, club or personal achievements. This means ensuring that the training intensity is appropriate to the physical, social and emotional development stage of the rider. Ensure training and competition schedules are based on the needs and interests of the child, not those of the parents, instructors or club.
- Wherever possible conduct all training and meetings in an open environment and avoid one-to-one coaching in unobserved situations.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate relationship with riders; it is inappropriate and, where under the age of 16, illegal, to have an intimate relationship with a young person. The UKPA supports the Home Office guidelines that recommend that people in positions of

authority should not have sexual relationships with 16-17 year olds in their care. One adult should never share a room with one young person who is not their child. Occasionally situations may occur when a number of young people and adults share a common sleeping area e.g. Training Camps – although this is not recommended. Always ensure that parents' permission is gained in writing beforehand and riders are given an opportunity in advance to discuss this, air any concerns and agree the logistics of the sleeping arrangements.

- Build relationships based on mutual trust and respect in which young people are encouraged to take responsibility for their own development and decision-making. Avoid situations in which the instructor or team manager uses their position and power to dictate what the rider should and should not do.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people; if contact is required; for example in demonstrating a technique, keep the contact to a minimum, in open view of others and explain to the child what you are doing. Touching can be okay and appropriate as long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the rider's permission has been given.
- Ensure separate changing facilities are available for riders. Where supervision is required, involve parents wherever possible and ensure that adults work in pairs.
- Communicate regularly with parents, involve them in decision-making and gain written consent for travel arrangements. Secure their consent in writing to act *in loco parentis*, if the need arises to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- Coaches should be aware of any medical conditions, food intolerances, existing injuries and medicines being taken. Keep a written record of any injury or accident that occurs, together with details of any treatment given. Ensure you are qualified and up to date in first aid or that there is someone with a first aid qualification in attendance.
- Keep up to date with the technical skills, qualifications and insurance issues within the UKPA.
- When children travel away from home, ensure the guidance contained in the NSPCC publication: Safe Sports Events (available from the NSPCC website <https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/2013/safe-sport-events-activities-and-competitions/>), is understood and followed. In particular, if mixed teams are taken away, ensure they are accompanied by a male and female member of staff and safeguard them from the potential of same sex abuse. Adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children alone into their own rooms.

'Protecting children from abuse is everyone's responsibility'

POOR PRACTICE

The following are deemed to constitute poor practice and are to be avoided by all adults:

- Spending excessive amounts of time alone with one child away from the others.
- Taking children to your home where they will be alone with you.
- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Sharing a room with a child (unless the adult is the child's parent or carer).
- Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Allowing children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Making sexual suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Reducing a child to tears as a form of control.
- Allowing allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Doing things of a personal nature for children or vulnerable adults that they can do for themselves.
- Taking children alone on car journeys.
- Chastising a child's behaviour without the parent's permission unless an immediate safety issue is of concern.

If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of the person in charge, the child's parent or the CWO.

INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND BULLYING

Indications that a child may be being abused include the following:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- The child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/herself.
- Someone else (a child or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another child.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper).
- Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour.
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty in making friends.
- The child is prevented from socialising with other children.
- The child displays variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
- The child loses weight for no apparent reason.
- The child becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt.