

# **IRISH AMATEUR BOXING ASSOCIATION**



## **SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE IN BOXING**

# **POLICY**

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## **IRISH AMATEUR BOXING ASSOCIATION SAFEGURADING YOUNG PEOPLE IN BOXING POLICY**

This document is the IABA policy and along with the sample pro-forma should be used as a template to be adopted and used by clubs.

The guidelines in this document are based on the guidelines outlined in the following documents:

Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport, Irish Sports Council and Sport NI, 2000, (CEO reviewed in 2006)

### **For Republic of Ireland the IABA and Clubs should reference:**

- Children First : National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, Dept of Health & Children 2011
- Our Duty to Care, Dept. of Health & Children 2002
- Criminal Law (sexual offences) Act 2014
- The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998

### **For Northern Ireland the IABA and Clubs should reference:**

- Children (NI) Order, 1995
- Co-operating to Safeguard Children, 2003
- Area Child Protection Committee Regional Policy and Procedures, 2005
- Our Duty to care, DHSSPS 2009 (Updated 2011)
- Getting it Right, DHSSPS 2009 (Updated 2011)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007
- Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008
- Criminal Law (NI) Act 1967

Safeguarding or Child Protection – The term Child protection has been extended to safeguarding as it reflects the wider responsibility for health safety and prevention as well as just protection from abuse. It may be defined as: Doing everything possible to minimise the risk of harm to children and young people. Safeguarding is about being proactive and putting measures in place in advance of any contact with children to ensure that children are going to be kept safe. This could include:

- Ensuring staff/volunteers are properly checked when they are recruited
- Guidelines for people who come into contact with children as part of their role to ensure they know what they need to do to keep children safe.
- Guidelines for planning an event or activity with children and putting measures in place to minimize the risk of safeguarding issues occurring.

Date of Issue September 2015

Date to be reviewed 3 years after formally agreed by executive.

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# Glossary of Terms

## Children & Young People

A Child or young person is defined by the Law in both jurisdictions as a person under the age of 18 years. For the purposes of this document the term children & young people applies to all under the age of 18.

## Parent/guardian

For the purpose of this document when referring to parent/guardian the term is used to include parents, legal guardians, and /or carers.

## Child Abuse

**Physical-** Physical abuse is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, confinement to a room or cot, or inappropriately giving drugs to control behaviour.

**Neglect-** Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's physical, emotional and/or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate foods, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment, lack of stimulation or lack of supervision. It may also include non organic failure to thrive (faltering growth).

**Sexual-** Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children looking at or the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

**Emotional-** Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Smothering a child's development through over-protection can also be a form of abuse. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose children to emotional abuse.

## **Bullying**

Bullying is repeated aggression be it verbal (e.g. threats, name calling, discriminatory remarks), emotional (e.g. isolating, ignoring, intimidation) or physical (e.g. fighting, property damage, spitting) which is conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behaviour, which is intentionally aggravating and intimidating which can cause considerable distress to children and can seriously affect their health and development. Today the act of bullying is no longer confined to sports clubs, streets or schools the ever increasing capabilities of mobile phones and computers has led to a new form of bullying, cyber bullying (online bullying; facebook,etc). While often not as visible as other forms of bullying, cyber bullying is every bit as damaging to its victims and is extremely common amongst children today.

## **Age of Consent**

The Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008 became operational on 2 February 2009. This legislation effectively brought Northern Ireland into line with the rest of the UK in terms of the Law relating to when young people are deemed to be able to consent to sexual activity. Specifically, the age of consent has been reduced from 17 years to 16 years old. It has also introduced new offences of sexual abuse against children under the age of 13.

In the Republic of Ireland under the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2006 the age of consent is 17 years.

## **Statutory Authorities**

The Authorities who promote the protection and welfare of young people and vulnerable adults who have the responsibility for the investigation and/or validation of suspected child abuse, ie., in the R.O.I. it is An Garda Siochana and Tusla Child & Family Agency Phone number 01-7718500, and in NI it is the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and The Gateway Services Team Phone number: 028 9050 700/ 028 9056 5444

## **Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport**

This has been developed by Sport NI and the Irish Sports Council to promote the core values in Sport for Young People.

The work of the Irish Amateur Boxing Association (IABA) is based on the principals outlined in the Code of Ethics that will guide the development of sport for young people. Young People's experience of sport should be guided by what is best for the young person. The stages of development and the ability of the young person should guide the types of training provided within the club. Adults will need to have a basic understanding of the needs of young people, including their physical, emotional and personal development.

## **Policy Statement**

The Irish Amateur Boxing Association is fully committed to safeguarding the well being of its members. Every individual in the Irish Amateur Boxing Association should at all times, show respect and understanding for members rights, safety and welfare and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the organisation and the guidelines contained in the *Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport*.

The above statement was adopted into the IABA's Constitution in October 2002.

In the IABA our first priority is the welfare of the young people and we are committed to providing an environment which will allow participants to perform to the best of their ability, free from bullying and intimidation.

*A more detailed policy statement may be drawn up for a particular Club.*

The policy statement will guide all other rules and regulations for boxing for young people within the IABA. The following pages provide details of the IABA's code of conduct, rules for travelling away, supervision of young people, recruitment and selection and reporting procedures for child welfare and protection. The pages overleaf can be modified to suit the specific needs of each club but should reflect the principles outlined by the IABA and should be approved by the club management executive.

## **Code of Conduct (See Template 1-3 for more detail)**

In the IABA we want children to have fun and develop skills in a safe and **Fair Play** environment where standards of behaviour are just as important as winning.

We recognise that competition and winning is an important goal, but winning at all costs does not meet the needs of young boxers.

The IABA is aware that there are increasing numbers of children who leave sport. A number of the most common reasons given are: that sport was no longer fun; they did not get to compete and overemphasis on winning.

Therefore we have to make every effort to ensure that we keep a balanced approach to competition, make sure all boxers get a chance to compete and strive to keep the fun in amateur boxing.

## **Best Practice-Coaches**

In keeping children and young people at the forefront of planning and practice, our coaches can be confident that participants will enjoy their amateur boxing experiences and that their actions are regarded as safe and in keeping with the principle that the safety and welfare of children is of paramount consideration.

Our Coaches are given a position of trust by parents/guardians and boxers, and are expected to operate to the highest standards of behaviour whilst in the company of under age boxers (under 18 years). Our coaches are also expected not to engage in any activity that could reasonably be viewed as bringing the club or amateur boxing in general into disrepute.

The IABA have introduced codes of conducts for all parties involved in boxing please see samples 1 to 3 for more detail.

## **Specific responsibilities of coaches/leaders/officials**

- Leaders must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every child and must treat everyone equally, regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or ability.
- Coaches working with young people in boxing should be suitable and appropriately qualified. Coaches will be expected to go through appropriate recruitment and selection procedures, (see recruitment section), that apply to all persons with substantial or regular access to young people, whether paid or unpaid. References should be followed up.
- There will be a 'sign up' procedure, whereby the appointed/reappointed leaders agree to abide by the IABA Code of Conduct (see template 3).
- Coaches will be directed to a copy of the Association's safeguarding policy and they should be made aware of the procedures contained within it.
- Coaches and volunteers involved in young peoples boxing have a great opportunity to be a positive role model and help build an individual's confidence.
- All coaches and volunteers are encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to create a safe and fun environment for young people.

## **Child Welfare and Reporting Procedures**

IABA accepts that organisations, which include young people among its members, are vulnerable to the occurrence of any form of child abuse. Below are the procedures for dealing with any safeguarding or protection issue that may arise. Safeguarding and the protection of

young people is the concern of all adults at all times, irrespective of their role within the organisation.

If there are grounds for concern (see examples below), about the safety or welfare of a young person you should react to the concern. Persons unsure about whether or not certain behaviours are abusive and therefore reportable, should contact the duty social worker in the local health service executive or health and social care trust where they will receive advice.

A report may be made by any member in the club but should be passed on to the Club Children's Officer who may in turn have to pass the concern to the local Statutory Authorities. If the issue relates to the behaviour of an IABA member/coach then the Provincial Children's Officer should be informed to enable them to consider any management issue to ensure the safety of other children. It is not the responsibility of anyone working within the IABA, in a paid or voluntary capacity, or those working in affiliated clubs, to take responsibility or decide whether or not child abuse is taking place. That is the job of the local statutory authorities. However, there is a responsibility to protect children by assisting the appropriate agencies so that they can then make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the young person. Everyone should follow both procedures outlined below, firstly the procedure for responding to a child in distress and secondly the procedure for reporting the concern.

## Recognition

Signs of abuse can be physical, behavioural or developmental. A cluster or pattern of signs is the most reliable indicator of abuse. Indicators should be noted. It is important, however, to realise that all of these indicators can occur in other situations where abuse has not been a factor.

### Category indicators

<b>ABUSE</b>	<b>Physical</b>	<b>Behavioural</b>
Physical	Unexplained bruising in soft tissue areas Bites, burns and scalds	Becoming withdrawn or aggressive Reluctance to change clothing
Emotional	Drop in performance Crying	Regressive behaviour Excessive clinginess
Neglect	Weight loss Untreated fractures	Changes in attendance Reluctance to go home
Sexual	Torn or bloodstained clothing Inappropriate sexual awareness behaviour or language	Distrustful of adults Sudden drop in performance

The above is only a sample list and is not exhaustive



## **Grounds for Concern**

Consider the possibility of child abuse if there are reasonable grounds for concern. Reasonable grounds for concern (Page 38, Children First 4.3.2, ACPC Regional Policy and Procedures Appendix 2), exist when there is:

- A specific indication from a child that s/he has been abused
- An account by a person who saw the child being abused/harmed
- Evidence, such as an injury or behaviour which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused another way.
- An injury or behaviour which is consistent both with abuse and with an innocent explanation but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse. An example of this would be a pattern of injuries, an implausible explanation, other indications of abuse, dysfunction behaviour;
- Consistent indication, over a period of time that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.

## **Response to a Child Disclosing Abuse**

**If a young person discloses information of suspected abuse you should:**

- (a) deal with any allegation of abuse in a sensitive and competent way through listening to and facilitating the child to tell about the problem, rather than interviewing the child about details of what happened
- (b) Stay calm and not show any extreme reaction to what the child is saying. Listen compassionately, and take what the child is saying seriously
- (c) Understand that the child has decided to tell something very important and has taken a risk to do so. The experience of telling should as be positive as possible so that the child may be less concerned if talking to those involved in any further investigation
- (d) be honest with the child and tell them that it is not possible to keep information a secret
- (e) make no judgemental statements against the person whom the allegation is made
- (f) Not question the child unless the nature of what s/he is saying is unclear. Leading questions should be avoided. Open, non specific questions should be used such as "can you explain to me what you mean by that"
- (g) check out the concerns with the parents/guardians before making a report unless doing so would endanger the child or compromise any further investigation
- (h) give the child some indication of what would happen next, such as informing parents/guardians, Tusla Child & Family Agency or Gateway Service Team
- (i) carefully record the details (see template 4)
- (j) pass on this information to the Club Children's Officer
- (k) reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you

## **Reporting Suspected or Disclosed Child Abuse**

The following steps should be taken in reporting child abuse to the statutory authorities:

- (a) observe and note dates, times, locations and contexts in which the incident occurred or suspicion was aroused, together with any other relevant information
- (b) Report the matter as soon as possible to the Club Children's Officer with responsibility for reporting abuse. If the Club Children's Officer has reasonable grounds for believing that the child has been abused or is at risk of abuse, s/he will make a report to the Tusla Child & Family Agency or Gateway Service Team who have statutory responsibility to investigate and assess suspected or actual child abuse
- (c) In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk and the Club Children's Officer is unable to contact a duty social worker, the police authorities should be contacted. Under no circumstances should a child be left in a dangerous situation pending intervention by the Statutory Authorities
- (d) if the Club Children's Officer is unsure whether reasonable grounds for concern exist s/he can informally consult with the local statutory agencies, (clubs should ensure they have out of hours contact numbers for their local area).S/he will be advised whether or not the matter requires a formal report
- (e) In those cases where the club finds that it does not have reasonable grounds for reporting a concern to the Statutory Authorities, the member who raised the concern should be given a clear written statement by the Clubs Children's Officer of the reasons why the club is not taking action. The member should be advised that, if they remained concerned about the situation, they are free to consult with, or report to, the Statutory Authorities.

A Club Children's Officer reporting suspected or actual child abuse to the Statutory Authorities will first inform the family of their intention to make such a report, **unless doing so would endanger the child or undermine any further investigation**

In the Republic of Ireland The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to persons who report child abuse 'reasonably and in good faith' to the Health Service Executive or the Gardai. The act also covers the offence of 'false reporting'.

The main provisions of the Act are:

1. The provision of immunity from civil liability to any person who reports child abuse 'reasonably and in good faith' to designated officers of Tusla Child & Family Agency or any member of An Garda Siochana;

2. The provision of significant protections for employees who report child abuse. These protections cover all employees and all forms of discrimination up to and including, dismissal.
3. The creation of a new offence of false reporting of child abuse where a person makes a report of child abuse to the appropriate authorities 'knowing that statement to be false'. This is a new criminal offence designed to protect innocent persons from malicious reports.

This law does not exist in Northern Ireland, but an individual who reports concerns in 'good faith' is not deliberately attempting to slander another person's name. In Northern Ireland there is legislation, the Criminal Law Act (NI)1967 which places the responsibility on everyone to report offences or to forward information to the police by emphasizing the *'duty of every other person, who knows or believes, (a) that the offence or some other arrest able offences have been committed: and (b) that he has information which is likely to secure, or to be material assistance in securing, the apprehension, prosecution or conviction of any person for that offence'*

### **Allegations Against Sports Leaders**

The IABA has agreed procedures to be followed in cases of alleged child abuse against its leaders. If such an allegation is made against a leader working within the club, two procedures should be followed:

- The reporting procedure in respect of suspected child abuse (reported by the club children's officer, see previous page)
- The procedure for dealing with the leader (carried out by the club Chair or senior officer, or a person not already involved with the child protection concern)

The safety of the child making the allegation should be considered and the safety of any other children who may be at risk. The club should take any necessary steps to protect the children in its care.

The issue of confidentiality is important, information is on a need to know basis and the coach/leader should be treated with respect and fairness.

### **The reporting Procedure**

If the club children's officer has reasonable grounds for concern, the matter should be reported to the statutory agencies, following the standard reporting pro-forma (see template 4)

### **The Sports Leader**

While the club children's officer makes the report to the local statutory authorities, the Chair of the club should deal with the leader in question.

- The Chair, following confirmation/consultation with statutory agencies should privately inform the leader that (a) an allegation has been made against him/her and (b) the

nature of the allegation. He / she should be afforded an opportunity to respond. His / her response should be noted and passed on to the statutory agencies.

- The leader should be asked to step aside but it should be made clear that it is only a precautionary measure and will not prejudice and later disciplinary proceedings.

The IABA and provincial children's officer should be informed by the club children's officer that the leader has been asked to stand aside.

The IABA will consider disciplinary action against the leader but should ensure that this does not interfere with the investigation of the statutory authorities. It is important that the IABA consider the outcome of the investigation and any implications it might have. The fact that the alleged abuser has not been prosecuted or been found guilty does not automatically mean that they are appropriate to work with young people in the future.

To support the club children's officer in dealing with sensitive matters that they feel uncomfortable with, as they may know both parties so well, the IABA have appointed 4 provincial children's officers and a central IABA children's officer who will take on the responsibility of liaising with the statutory authorities if the person at club level feel unable to do so.

### **Dealing with Concerns about a Colleague**

The vast majority of people who work with children are well motivated and would never harm a child. Unfortunately a few do and it is essential that the organisation creates a culture that makes staff/volunteers willing and comfortable to voice their concerns, particularly those about someone with whom they work or whom they know. Again, the organisation's Safeguarding Procedures should be followed.

During an investigation, support should be given to the individual who voices concerns, to the suspect and too any young person/people involved. Once the investigation is completed, the organisation must decide what action, if any, is necessary to prevent a similar situation arising again.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality should be maintained in respect of all issues and people involved in cases of abuse, welfare or bad practice. It is important that the rights of both child and the person about whom the complaint has been made are protected.

The following points should be kept in mind:

- A guarantee of confidentiality or undertakings regarding secrecy cannot be given, as the welfare of the child will supersede all other considerations
- All information should be treated in a careful and sensitive manner and should be discussed only with those who need to know
- Information should be conveyed to the parents / guardians of the child in a sensitive way

- Giving information to others on a 'need to know' basis for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality
- All persons involved in a child protection process (the child, his / her parents / guardians, the alleged offender, his / her family, coach/leaders) should be afforded appropriate respect, fairness, support and confidentiality at all stages of the procedure.
- Information should be stored in a secure place, with limited access only to designated people.
- The requirements of the Data Protection laws should be adhered to.
- Breach of confidentiality is a serious matter.

### **Anonymous Complaints**

Anonymous complaints can be difficult to deal with but should not be ignored. In all cases the safety and welfare of the child/children is paramount. Any such complaints relating to inappropriate behaviour should be brought to the attention of the children's officer. The information should be responded to and handled in a confidential manner.

### **Rumours**

Rumours should **not** be allowed to hang in the air. Any rumours relating to inappropriate behaviour should be brought to the attention of the children's officer and clarified without delay.

### **Disclosing information to Others**

#### **• Northern Ireland**

If as a club who have information about an individual, who you are concerned poses a risk to children, joining another club/organisation you should seek advice from the PSNI (Public Protection Unit) before disclosing that information. Department of Justice guidance places the responsibility on the police to co-ordinate and leads the risk assessment and management process. The police have a standardised assessment method to consider the risk an individual may pose. Depending on this risk assessment the police will take the decision about sharing information

### **Duty to Refer To Disqualification Disclosure and Barring Service**

Under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Order, all organisations operating in NI have a duty to refer information to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in certain circumstances. In all cases there are two conditions, both of which must be met, to trigger a referral to the DBS by a regulated activity provider.

A referral **MUST** be made to the DBS if the club or IABA:

1. withdraws permission for an individual to engage in regulated activity, or would have done so had that individual not resigned, retired, been made redundant or been transferred to a position which is not regulated activity; because
2. They think that the individual has:
  - a. engaged in relevant conduct;
  - b. satisfied the criteria set out in the Harm Test; or
  - c. Received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence.

The referral must be made to the DBS when the club/IABA (in accordance with good practice) has gathered sufficient evidence as part of its investigations to support its reasons for withdrawing permission for the person in question to engage in regulated activity and consulted with the relevant social services or police if appropriate.

The IABA must also be informed if any club removes an individual from engaging in regulated activity for reasons outlined above to enable the IABA to consider the information and decide about the persons coaching award.

Additional information on the DBS and the referral process can be found on the DBS website:

[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/dbs](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/dbs)

#### • Republic of Ireland

In the absence of the above guidance, if a club/organisation has information about an individual, who you are concerned poses a risk to children, joining another club/organisation you should seek advice from the Garda before disclosing that information. If there is no conviction information but concerns about the individuals practice then advice about managing the information should be sought from the IABA national Children's Officer and Tusla.

#### **Registration, Dropout and Club Transfers**

Loss of club members, including adults transfer, should be monitored. Any unusual or unexpected dropout or club transfer of children or Sports Leaders should be checked out by the clubs Child Protection Officer and/or the IABA.

#### **Recruitment and Selection Policy**

The IABA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that leaders are appropriately qualified and suitable to work with young people. These procedures apply to all persons with substantial access to young people, whether paid or unpaid.

- The responsibilities of the role and the level of experience/qualifications required should be drawn up and clearly stated beforehand.
- Applicants should complete an application form which should include a self-declaration section (see template 4)
- Formal vetting procedures will be used by the IABA and available clubs in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

- References for club coaches should be verified by the club (see template 6).
- A probationary period is advisable and should be established through an informal interview/meeting, which can be used to assess the leader's commitment and interest to the club.
- Every effort should be made to manage and support appointed Leaders, including awareness of the code of conduct. Adequate supervision should be provided: a leader should not have to work alone.
- A decision to appoint a coach/volunteer to represent the IABA is the responsibility of the IABA executive and not of any one individual within it. At club level the club committee should ratify all recommendations for appointment.
- When storing information in relation to applicant's personal information it should be treated as sensitive and confidential. It should be kept in a secure place that is only accessible to nominated officers.

All coaches, managers and volunteers representing the IABA are required to complete an application/self declaration form (template 3), giving the names of two referees who will then be contacted. Written references (template 4) will then be verified and kept on file. (Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained in regard to all application and reference forms.)

All coaches, officials and volunteers will be subject to a sign up procedure in which they undertake to abide by the IABA rule and codes of conduct and good practice.

The IABA would advise all clubs to adhere to the above guidance when recruiting coaches/volunteers and the UBCIABA can administer Access NI checks along with ISA registration when required for those in Northern Ireland. The IABA will administer Garda Central Vetting Unit checks.

### **The IABA Coach, Official, Volunteer Education & Support Policy**

The Committee of the IABA are indebted to our coaches, officials and volunteers who give freely of their valuable time in providing a stimulating, challenging, supportive and fun boxing experience to children and young people in the club.

The Committee will endeavour to support these coaches, officials and volunteers in their work by providing an environment where all activities are carried out in a safe, fun manner at all times conducted in the spirit of 'Fair Play'.

The IABA will make all efforts to assist new volunteers, officials, coaches in whatever way they can.

The IABA will provide a copy of its policy to all new representative volunteers/coaches who will familiarise them with IABA rules, policies and procedures and expected codes of conduct for children, coaches and parents. The clubs should ensure that all coaches/volunteers and members are made aware of these guidelines when joining the sport and are given a copy of the code of conduct if they have not already received a copy.

The IABA Committee recognise the value of having appropriately qualified personnel in the sport, and therefore will endeavour to support any of our coaches in the coach education process.

At no time should any coach, official or volunteer be expected to work or deal with any problem alone and they will be assured of Committee assistance and support at all times. Also, coaches, officials and volunteers are encouraged to share ideas, expertise and support other club personnel in any way they can.

### **Anti Bullying Policy Statement**

Coaches/Club members should challenge bullying in any form i.e. physical, emotional, and verbal or cyber bullying. Bullying is not accepted behaviour towards anyone in boxing be they child, coach, volunteer or parent. The IABA see all forms of bullying as unacceptable and anybody found to be bullying others will be dealt with accordingly. (For more details see Anti-Bullying policy template 7 on our website or contact the IABA for a hard copy).

### **Combating Bullying**

All clubs should have an anti-bullying statement visible and adhere to the IABA policy, which includes the following measures:

- Raising awareness of bullying as an unacceptable form of behaviour.
- Creating a club ethos which encourages children, Sports leaders and parents/guardians to report bullying and to use the procedures of the complaints mechanism of the IABA to address the problem.
- Providing comprehensive supervision of children at all sporting activities.
- Providing a supportive environment for victims of bullying.
- Obtaining the co-operation of children/parents/guardians to counter bullying.

### **Transport**

There is extra responsibility on leaders when they transport young people to events. Adults should:

- Ensure that there is adequate cover on their car; they follow the rules of the road, including legal use of seat belts and booster seats if required.
- Not carry more than the permitted number of passengers
- Avoid being alone with one participant, put passenger in the back seat, have central drop off locations or seek parental permission to transport an individual participant on



a regular basis and clearly state times of pick-up and drop off. Parents should check with young people about their plans and be happy with the transport arrangements.

For more guidelines see template 8 for further details. Please see [www.iaba.ie](http://www.iaba.ie) or contact the IABA for a hard copy.

## **Supervision**

- Make sure there is an adequate adult to child ratio. Leaders should try to have more than one adult present. The number of adults needed, will depend on the nature of the activity, age of participants and any special needs of the group. As a guide a ratio of 1:8 for under 12 years of age and 1:10 for participants over 12 years of age. This is only a guide and will change depending on the circumstances, e.g. boxers with special needs or away trips.
- Where there are mixed groups there should be leaders of both genders.
- Avoid being alone with one participant, if you need to talk separately do so in an open environment and in view of others.
- Leaders should not need to enter the changing rooms unless children are very young or need special assistance, where it is required supervision should be in pairs of the appropriate gender.
- Clearly state time for start and end of training sessions or competitions, leaders should not be left alone with young people at the end of sessions. If there are late collections, leaders should remain in pairs until participants have left. Address the issue of late collections with parents.
- Keep attendance records (template 9) and record any accidents/injuries (template 10) that arise.
- Allow parents to stay to support the club activities but not take on any technical roles without appropriate training. Parents must agree to sign the parent's code of conduct.

## **Overnight & Away Trips**

- Separate permission forms should be signed by parents and participants, containing emergency contact number
- Young participants should sign a behaviour agreement
- Appoint a group leader who will make a report to the club or IABA on returning home
- Holding meetings with parents and participants is useful to communicate travel times, competition details, other activities, gear requirements, medical requirements, special dietary needs and any other necessary details
- Rooming arrangements should be planned in advance – adults should not share rooms with children, children share rooms with those of same age and gender and adults should knock before entering rooms
- All group socialisation should take place in communal areas (i.e. no boys in girls' room and vice versa)

- Alcoholic drink or illegal substances are forbidden to boxers. Leaders should act as role models in this respect
- There must be at least one adult of each gender with a mixed party, there should be a good adult to child ratio, 1:5/6, and proper access to medical personnel, and a minimum of two adults is recommended for all away/overnight trips.
- Lights out times should be enforced
- Young boxers should be under reasonable supervision at all times and should never leave the venue or go elsewhere unsupervised without prior permission.
- Written permission of parents/guardians should be obtained for all overnight away trips; this should include permission to travel, behaviour agreement and any medical/special needs of the group, (including permission to treat the participants).
- All adults who travel on away trips should be carefully chosen and agree to undergo a vetting check in advance as part of IABA safe recruitment procedures.
- The roles and responsibilities of adults participating in away trips should be clearly defined. Coaches and other adults on away trips are accountable to the group leader for all non-performance related matters.

See CPSU advice on away trips for further information and advice.

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/Search?term=away+trips>

## **Safety**

All Clubs should consider safety issues, including specific and potential risks attached to our sport. They should also have procedures in place for safeguarding against such risks. In addition clubs should:

- Ensure activities are suitable for age and stage of developments of participants.
- Request permission to participate and a record of any specific medical conditions of the participants from their parents (sample junior application from template 9).
- Keep a record of emergency contact numbers for parents /guardians (template 10 summary register).
- Ensure any necessary protective gear is used.
- Ensure First Aid Kit is close at hand with access to qualified first –aider.
- Know the contact numbers of emergency services.
- Keep first aid kit stocked up.
- Ensure easy access to medical personnel if needed and have an emergency plan.
- If an incident/accident occurs, make a brief record of the incident/accident and action taken. Make a brief record of the problem/action/outcome. Contact the participant's parents and keep them informed of all details.
- Officials should ensure the maintenance of appropriate conduct during the tournament or training.

- Participants should know and keep in line with the rules of boxing, keeping in mind that many rules are there for safety.
- Leaders should hold appropriate qualifications required by the IABA.
- Ensure there is adequate insurance cover for all activities.
- Ensure parents/guardians are aware of the finishing time of sessions or events.

## **Physical Contact**

The Irish Amateur Boxing Association supports the policy of appropriate physical contact in response to the needs of a child taking into account the child's age and stage of development, this means adults should not do what a child can do for themselves. Contact should be in an open environment and with the permission of the young person.

### **General**

The Irish Amateur Boxing Association promotes the use of appropriate physical contact between adults and children and young people. Adults involved with children and young people in boxing should **avoid unnecessary physical contact and never engage in inappropriate touching**. Misleading or inaccurate information relating to physical contact can undermine the confidence of adults working with children and young people. This can also have serious safety implications for children. For leaders, coaches, volunteers or any adults and children to feel comfortable the following should be followed:

### **Appropriate Physical Contact**

Appropriate contact is when:

**The aim is to teach or develop a skill or technique that the child cannot accomplish without help**; the nature and the reason for the physical contact must be explained by the adult to the child and must be within the scope of the qualification of the adult

**It is required by the nature of the activity** – Boxing requires a 'hands on approach', from time to time; activities which require physical contact should be identified prior to training sessions and club activities and must be kept within the rules of the sport

**An injury requires treatment** – the child should be informed about what is happening and encouraged to hold dressings etc., however for emergency first aid treatment this may not be possible

**An accident can be prevented from occurring** – this will be in reaction to an emergency situation

### **Respect for a young person**

All children must be treated with dignity and respect with any level of physical contact required. A young person's permission should be requested where any physical contact is required, the adult and child involved will feel more comfortable. Leaders should convey approval with verbal encouragement and praise, rather than the use of often repetitive physical contact.

Any contact should be in an open environment and children should be encouraged to voice any concern if they feel uncomfortable or threatened. Children should know how to voice any concerns – through their parents or the Club Child Protection Officer. Any form of physical contact as a punishment or as a response to misbehaviour is unlawful. Only necessary and appropriate physical intervention may be used to prevent a child or young person from harming themselves, others or damaging property. Misbehaviour may need to be dealt with under breaches of the code of conduct through the complaints and disciplinary procedures.

### **Managing the Young Persons Emotions**

A child in distress may require comfort and reassurance as in a manner that would normally be provided by a parent or guardian. A young person may also react to victory or success with an expression of affection to an adult, a hug for example. Adults must ensure that their reaction to the child in distress or because of a success does not become unnecessary and unjustified physical contact, particularly with the same young person over a period of time. Any contact should be in response to the needs of the child not the adult and always in an open environment.

### **Parents/Guardians**

Ensure the parents are aware of the need for physical contact from time to time and they are comfortable with what is required (examples of this includes: young boxers often become very nervous before entering a competitive bout or very despondent after a loss and can look toward their coach for reassurance and support. This can sometimes include physical contact such as an arm around the shoulder or pat on the back. Such physical contact is appropriate as long as it occurs in an open environment and is in line with the rest of the guidelines surrounding physical contact as identified in this document.)

### **Medical and Sports Science Practitioners**

Within the sport of boxing there is often a requirement for physical contact from medical staff and sports science professionals. This should only be undertaken by properly trained and qualified personal that are following the specific guidelines and codes of practice for their profession. Any queries in this regard should be directed to the National Child Protection Officer.

### **Use of Photographic and Filming Equipment**

Parents/carers want to be able to celebrate the achievements of their children when taking part in boxing activities through photographs and clubs will also want to promote their activities to encourage increased participation. The IABA does not advocate the banning of photography, but recommends that it is subject to appropriate and proportionate safeguards being in place to ensure that all the necessary steps are taken to protect children and young people from the inappropriate use of their images in resources and media publications, on the internet and elsewhere. Each club should adopt a policy in relation to the use of images of boxers on their websites and other publications, as there have been concerns about the risks posed directly and indirectly to children and young people. Remember having photographic

and filming guidelines is not about preventing parents from taking pictures, it is to ensure that only those who have a right to take photographs do so. Anyone concerned about photography taking place at events or training sessions can contact the children's officer and ask them to deal with the matter.

The IABA has adopted a policy in relation to the use of images of boxers on their websites and in other publications and would recommend that clubs do likewise. This reduces the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people within and outside the sport.

General advice to be considered in the use of photography:

- If the boxer is named, consider is it necessary to use using their photograph.
- If a photograph is used, avoid naming the boxer.
- Ask for the boxer's permission to use their image. This ensures that they are aware of the way the image is to be used to represent the sport. A boxer's permission form is one way of achieving this.
- Ask for parental permission to use their image. This ensures that they are aware of the way the image is to be used to represent the sport. A parental permission form is one way of achieving this.
- Only use images of boxers in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use. The content of the photograph should focus on the activity not on a particular child

Create recognised procedures for reporting the use of inappropriate images to reduce the risks to boxers. Follow the safeguarding procedures, ensuring either the children's officer or, if necessary, the statutory bodies are informed.

Amateur photographers/film/video operators wishing to record an event or practice sessions should seek permission/accreditation with the children's officer, team manager/coach and/or event organiser of session. The club/organisation should display /state the following information prior to the start of an event to inform spectators of the policy:

"In line with the recommendation in the IABA Safeguarding Policy, the promoters of this event request that any person wishing to engage in any video, zoom or close range photography should register their details with the organisers. If parents have any particular concern about their young person being photographed or filmed they should notify the organisers"

When commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to an activity or event we will aim to ensure they are clear about our expectations of them in relation to safeguarding.

Professional photographers/film/video operators wishing to record an event or practice session should seek accreditation with the children's officer/event organiser/team manager by producing their professional identification for the details to be recorded. We will then:

- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate content and behaviour
- Issue the photographer with identification which must be worn at all times

- Keep a record of accreditations
- Inform boxers and parents that a photographer will be in attendance at an event and ensure they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs
- Not allow unsupervised access to boxers or one to one photo sessions at events
- Not arrange photo sessions outside the events or at a boxers home

### **Videoing as a Coaching Aid:**

Video equipment can be used as a legitimate coaching aid. However, permission should first be obtained from the boxer and boxer's parent/carer.

Clubs should also be aware of the dangers of permitting camera phones in dressing rooms and should apply appropriate safety rules.

Anyone concerned about any photography taking place at events/matches or training should bring their concerns to the attention of the committee/team manager/coach/children's officer.

### **Mobile Phones**

Mobile phones are often given to children for security, enabling parents to keep in touch and make sure they are safe. Young people value their phones highly as it offers them a sense of independence. In addition mobile phones allow quick and easy contact, which can make a safe and efficient way to carry out club business. However such technology has also allowed an increase in direct personal contact with young people, in some cases used to cross personal boundaries and cause harm to young people. Therefore, we need to encourage responsible and secure use of mobile phones by adults and young people. For further guidelines see Child Protection in Sport briefing on [www.thecpsu.org.uk](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk) or contact the IABA for a hard copy of guidance on physical contact.

### **Therefore Cub Personnel Should Advise Children:**

- If you receive an offensive photo, email or message, do not reply, save it, make a note of times and dates and tell a parent or children's officer/within the club.
- Be careful about who you give your number to and don't respond to unfamiliar numbers
- Change your phone number in case of bullying or harassment
- Don't use the phone in certain locations: inappropriate use of your camera phone may cause upset or offence to another person, e.g. changing rooms
- Treat your phone as you would any other valuable item so that you guard against theft
- When using your phone to access the internet in particularly the use of social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, etc you are expected to do so in a safe, friendly and respectful manner. Cyber or online bullying will not be tolerated.

### **As a Coach/Official Remember:**

- Use only group texts for communication among boxers and teams and inform parents of this at the start of the season
- It is not appropriate to have constant communication for individual boxers
- Don't use the phone in certain locations; inappropriate use of your camera phone may cause upset or offence to another person, e.g. changing rooms.

### **Use of Social Media:**

Social Media offers great potential to promote activities and showcase success. It can be an effective way to communicate but rules should be applied by clubs and competitors to ensure positive promotion. The association expects its members to use social media in a responsible, respectful and friendly manner. When using sites such as Facebook, Twitter, etc members should not post negative comments about referees/judges/opponents/team mates/coaches or any other member of their own club or any other club. Cyber/online bullying is completely unacceptable and will not be tolerated and poor behaviour online will be treated as a breach of the Code of Behaviour in real time.

### **The risks**

With all emerging technologies there is also the potential for misuse. Risks associated with user interactive services include: cyber bullying, grooming and potential abuse by online predators, identity theft, and exposure to inappropriate content includes self-harm, racism, sexting (which is the creation or uploading of inappropriate sexual material). The capabilities of social networking services may increase the potential for sexual exploitation of children and young people. There have been a number of well-reported cases where adults have used social networking and user interactive services as a means of grooming children and young people for sexual abuse. Online grooming techniques include:

- gathering personal details, such as age, name, address, mobile number, name of school and photographs;
- promising meetings with sports idols or celebrities or offers of merchandise;
- offering cheap tickets to sporting or music events;
- offering material gifts including electronic games, music or software;
- paying young people to appear naked and perform sexual acts;
- bullying and intimidating behaviour, such as threatening to expose the child by contacting their parents to inform them of their child's communications or postings on a social networking site, and/or saying they know where the child lives, plays sport, or goes to school;
- Asking sexually-themed questions, such as 'Do you have a boyfriend?' or 'Are you a virgin?'
- asking to meet children and young people offline;

- sending sexually themed images to a child, depicting adult content or the abuse of other children;
- masquerading as a minor or assuming a false identity on a social networking site to deceive a child; or
- Using school or hobby sites (including sports) to gather information about a child's interests likes and dislikes. Most social networking sites set a child's webpage/profile to private by default to reduce the risk of personal information being shared in a public area of the site.

### **Easy rules to remember:**

If someone has their own personal profile on a social media website, they should make sure that others cannot access any content, media, or information from that profile that:

- a) They are not happy for others to have access to; and/or
- b) Which would undermine their position as sports coach/volunteer representing their organisation/club.

As a basic rule, if you are not happy with others seeing particular comments, media or information, then simply **do not post** these materials on a public forum site. When using social media sites the following should be considered:

- Change your privacy setting on the profile so that only people you have accepted as friends can see your comments. Individuals should lock down their page to non-friends;
- Review who is on your 'friends list' on your personal profile. In most situations you should not accept 'friends requests' if you do not actually know the person(s) concerned;
- Ensure personal blogs have clear disclaimers that the views expressed are personal and not representative of a particular Club or sport;
- Ensure that information published on social media sites complies with the club/organisations Code of Conduct;
- Beware of how your actions could be captured via images, posts or comments online as these will reflect on the sport or your Club;
- Respond to online bullying - what is said online should be treated as if said in real time;
- Those in authority should not have under 18's they coach as their friends and do not comment on individual players you are coaching through your personal page.

### **Principles**

- If you are representing your sport or club in an official capacity, it is important that your posts convey the same positive spirit that your club/sport would instill in all of its communications. Be respectful of all individuals, races, religions and



cultures. How you conduct yourself online not only reflects on you; it also reflects directly on your sport/club.

- When disagreeing with the opinions of others online, keep it appropriate and polite. If you find yourself in a situation that might become antagonistic, do not get defensive or disengage from the conversation abruptly. It is also important not to respond in the heat of the moment in a way you may regret later. Feel free to seek advice or disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner that reflects well on your sport/club.

For further information on social media in relation to safeguarding please contact your sport's governing body or visit the CPSU online resources.

[www.thecpsu.org.uk](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk)<https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/?topic=1104>

You may also want to visit the advice on the Safer Network site

[www.webwise.ie/](http://www.webwise.ie/)

[http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/net\\_safety.html](http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/net_safety.html)

<http://www.hotline.ie/safetytips.php>

[www.safenetwork.org.uk](http://www.safenetwork.org.uk)

[http://www.safenetwork.org.uk/help\\_and\\_advice/pages/using\\_social\\_media.aspx](http://www.safenetwork.org.uk/help_and_advice/pages/using_social_media.aspx)