

Irish Topper Class Association Child Protection Policy and Guidelines

Code of Ethics & Good Practice

For

YOUNG PEOPLE

In Sailing.

Updated April 2018

Contents

YOUNG PEOPLE.....	1
Irish Topper Class Association (ITCA).....	3
Child Protection Policy Statement 2018.....	3
Designated Liaison Person:	3
ITCA Core Value and Protection Policies	4
Core Values.....	4
Integrity in relationships	4
Quality atmosphere and ethos	4
Equality	4
Fair Play.....	4
Competition.....	4
Complaints Procedure.....	5
Guidelines on General Issues.....	6
General adult advice.....	6
Safety	6
Touching	7
Use of photographic equipment	7
Anti-Bullying Policy	8
What is Bullying?.....	8
How would you know if a child is being bullied?	8
Dealing with bullying?	8
How can it be prevented?.....	8
Meet with all involved	10
Explain the problem.....	10
Share the responsibility.....	10
Rumours.....	12
Confidentiality	12
Anonymous Complaints	13
Safeguarding and protection procedures	14
Response to a Child Disclosing Abuse.....	14
Reporting Suspected or Disclosed Child Abuse.....	15
CHILD ABUSE	16
Categories of Abuse.....	16
Child Neglect	16
Emotional Abuse	16
Physical Abuse.....	17
Sexual Abuse	17
Recognising Abuse	19
Response to a child reporting any form of abuse – <i>This is not necessarily a Designated Officer</i>	19
Reporting Child Abuse.....	20
Grounds for Concern	20
Child-to-Child Abuse	21
Some points of importance	22
Procedures within <i>ITCA</i>	22
APPENDIX 4: Useful Contacts	30

Irish Topper Class Association (ITCA) Child Protection Policy Statement 2018

As defined in the Children Act, for the purpose of this policy anyone under the age of 18 should be considered as a child.

ITCA, as an organization is fully committed to safeguard the wellbeing of its members taking part in sailing from any physical, emotional or sexual harm. We recognize that the safety and welfare of the child is paramount and that all the children, whatever their age, gender, disability, culture, ethnic origin, religion or belief, social status or sexual identity, have a right to protection from abuse.

Every individual should at all times, show respect and understanding for members' safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of ITCA and the guidelines contained in our *Code of Conduct*.

Designated Liaison Person:

ITCA has appointed the Designated Topper Safeguarding Officer (Hilary Crichton) as Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and the current ITCA chairman to act as Deputy Designated Liaison Person in her absence. The role of the DLP is to liaise with all relevant agencies, whether in seeking advice, reporting or in follow up consultations.

Hilary Crichton

Mobile: +44 (0) 7710493928

Email: hilarycrichton@gmail.com

ITCA Core Value and Protection Policies

Core Values

The work of ITCA is based on the following principles that will guide the development of the sport for young people in this organization. A Young Person'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 activity provided within the organization. Adults will need to have a basic understanding of the needs of young people, including physical, emotional and personal.

Integrity in relationships

Adults interacting with young people in sport should do so with integrity and respect for the child. There is a danger that sporting contexts can be used to exploit or undermine children. All adult actions in sport should be guided by what is best for the child and in the context of quality, open working relationships. Verbal, physical, emotional or sexual abuse of any kind is unacceptable within sport.

Quality atmosphere and ethos

Sport for young people should be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere. A child-centered ethos will help to ensure that competition and specialization are kept in their appropriate place. Too often competitive demands are placed on children too early and results in excessive levels of pressure on them and as a consequence, high levels of dropout from sport.

Equality

All children should be treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of age, ability, sex, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion. Children with disability should be involved in sports activities in an integrated way, thus allowing them to participate to their potential alongside other children.

Fair Play

Fair play is the guiding principle of the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport. All children's sport should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play. ITCA (IRL) has contributed and is committed to the European Code of Sports Ethics, which defines fair play as: "much more than playing within the rules". It incorporates the concepts of friendship, respect for others and always playing with the right spirit. Fair play is defined as a way of thinking, not just behaving.

Competition

A balanced approach to competition can make a significant contribution to the development of young people, while at the same time providing fun, enjoyment and satisfaction. However, often competitive demands are placed on children too early, which results in excessive levels of pressure on them. This can contribute to a high level of drop out from sport. Leaders should aim to put the welfare of the child first and competitive standards second. A child-centred approach will help to ensure that competition and specialisation are kept in their appropriate place.

Complaints Procedure

- Complaints may be lodged by all members of ITCA
- They should be received in writing by the Honorary Secretary
- The complaint should outline all relevant details about other parties involved
- The complaint should be brought to the attention of the Chairperson who will convene a sub-committee. The Designated Officer to report to this Committee
- If the complaint involves a criminal offence the chairperson should disband the disciplinary committee and talk to the children's officer or designated person. The statutory authorities will then be informed
- The disciplinary committee should hear the case of all parties involved and decide if a rule or regulation has been infringed
- They should, in writing, inform those involved of the sanctions to be imposed. Written notification should be given to parents if the complaint is against a junior member
- Keep all records on file in line with current GDPR Policy
- If any party does not agree with the disciplinary committee they can appeal the decision in writing within 10-day period
- The appeals committee is convened, and chaired by the vice-chair of the ITCA. The remainder should be taken from the executive committee and those who have not been on the original disciplinary committee
- The appeals committee should confirm or set aside or change any sanction imposed by the disciplinary committee.

Guidelines on General Issues

General adult advice

- Avoid being alone with one participant, if you need to talk separately do so in an open environment, in view of others
- In changing rooms, ask parents to take responsibility and supervise in pairs of appropriate gender
- Coaches/instructors should not have to enter the changing rooms unless children are very young or need special assistance, where supervision should be in pairs of appropriate gender
- Clearly state time for start and end of training sessions or competitions.

Safety

All sailing clubs where ITCA hold events should have a safety statement, including specific and potential risks attached to their sport. They should also have procedures in place for safeguarding against such risks. A safety guidance document is available from the ITCA website. In addition, clubs should:

- Keep a record of any specific medical conditions of the participants in line with GDPR Policy
- Keep a record of emergency contact numbers for parents / guardians
- 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 occurs, make a brief record of injury 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 conduct of the events
- Coaches/instructors should hold appropriate qualifications required by the governing body
- Ensure there is adequate insurance cover for all activities

- Ensure parents / guardians are present at finishing time of sessions or events

Touching

Sailing can require a hands on approach i.e., assisting in a capsize or helping a child onto a rib. The following must be taken into consideration:

- Avoid unnecessary physical contact.
- Any necessary contact should be in response to the needs of the child and not the adult. Avoid fitting buoyancy aids; try to get the sailors to put on their own.
- When lifting a child into a safety boat, avoid making contact with sensitive parts of the body

Use of photographic equipment

- Use of camera phones in changing rooms is not permitted and will be regarded as bullying.
- Before videos or photographs are taken for use in teaching or for advertisement consent must be obtained from child and parent before the image can be used. All competitors must be members of the ITCA and will have already consented as part of this process.
- Before publishing images make sure they are appropriate and do not include any information that could enable a person to contact the child.
- Only use images of sailors in suitable attire.
- Anyone concerned about any photography taking place at an event should contact the event organiser or designated officer.

Anti-Bullying Policy

What is Bullying?

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression be it verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others.

It is behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating. It includes behaviours such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting, and extortion and exclusion behaviour by one or more children against a victim.

How would you know if a child is being bullied?

All bullies operate using furtiveness, threats and fear. Bullying can therefore only survive in an environment where the victim does not feel empowered to tell someone who can help or in which it is not safe to do so.

The following indicators are warning signs that a young person might be getting bullied.

- Reluctance to come to a venue or take part in activities
- Physical signs (unexplained bruises, scratches, or damage to belongings)
- Stress-caused illness – headaches, and stomach aches which seem unexplained
- Fearful behaviour (fear of rigging or changing near others)
- Frequent loss of, or shortage of, money or gear with vague explanations
- Having few friends
- Changes in behaviour (withdrawn, stammering, moody, irritable, upset, distressed)
- Not eating
- Attempting suicide or hinting at self-harming
- Anxiety (shown by nail-biting, fearfulness, tics)

Dealing with bullying?

While the more extreme forms of bullying would be regarded as physical or emotional abuse and are reported to the Health Board or PSNI / An Garda Síochana, dealing with bullying behaviour is the responsibility of all officials within ITCA

How can it be prevented?

- Ensure that all members follow the code of conduct, which promotes the rights and dignity of each member.
- Deal with any incidents as they arise.

- Use a whole group policy or ‘no-blame approach’, i.e., not ‘bullying the bully’ but working with bullies and the group of young people, helping them to understand the hurt they are causing, and so make the problem a ‘shared concern’ of the group, (see below)
- Reinforce that there is ‘a permission to tell’ culture and encourage openness & trust.
- Encourage young people to negotiate, co-operate and help others, particularly new or different children
- Offer the victim immediate support and put the ‘no blame approach’ into operation
- Never tell a young person to ignore bullying, they can’t ignore it, it hurts too much. The same applies to cyber-bullying
- Never encourage a young person to take the law into their own hands and beat the bully at their own game
- Tell the victim there is nothing wrong with them and it is not their fault

How We Handle Issues?

The Designated Topper Safeguarding Officer may not necessarily be on site at an event and the Club’s Welfare Officer should then follow the procedure below. Officers should adopt a positive mind set when responding to bullying concerns.

They should be prepared with options for how to respond to incidents of bullying in a planned, deliberate and positive way. Confronting children who have bullied requires a high amount of self-control as well as preparation to know what to say and do. The following are important factors when managing a bullying situation.

1. **Be calm.** It is important to be clear thinking and emotionally in control.
2. **Be positive.** Have in mind the importance of maintaining a positive relationship with the child.
3. **Be assertive.** Adults should directly and clearly express their thoughts, feelings and expectations concerning the need for the pupil to not only stop bullying, but also make restitution with the child who has been bullied.
4. **Be confident.** It is important to trust that you will be successful in implementing practices that can have an impact on the child’s future behaviour. It is always helpful to focus on the behaviour, not the child.

Ensure that the specific behaviour is in fact bullying behaviour which conforms to the agreed definition of bullying as identified in this document.

Assess the situation and its severity level. Determine the appropriate level of response required to manage the situation effectively.

Procedure

Once an alleged bullying incident has occurred:

1. Gather and clarify the facts:

Talk to the victim

If you find that there has been an incident of bullying, first talk to the victim. At this stage find out who was involved and what the victim is now feeling. Try asking the following questions:

- Was it verbal or physical intimidation?
- How hurt is the victim?
- Was it within his/her own peer group?
- Ensure the victim that his/her name will not come out in the investigation
- Actively listen

Meet with all involved

Arrange to meet with all those involved; this should include some bystanders, those who may have colluded, those who joined in and those who initiated the bullying.

- Have a maximum of six to eight in the group – keep the number controllable
- Make a point of calling a ‘special’ meeting
- Ensure the severity of the topic is understood by all
- Speak only of the hurt caused in general terms with no reference to the victim
- Play on the conscience of all – ask questions like: How would you feel? Would you like it done to you?

Explain the problem

The distress being suffered as a result of the bullying incident is explained. At this stage the details of the incident or the allocation of the blame is not discussed.

Explain the feelings of loneliness, feeling left out, rejected, laughed at. Try asking questions:

- Would they like it if it happened to them?
- “Someone here in this group was bullied by someone within the group, what could we do to see it does not happen again?”
- Listen, watch out for reactions, and pick up on any without isolating anyone?

Share the responsibility

Explain what steps / controls may have to be introduced to prevent further incidents and how everyone will lose out as a result.

Again enforce the idea of the ‘team’ looking after each other at regular intervals to ensure that no bullying or intimidating behaviour will not be tolerated.

2. Check that the behaviour constitutes bullying behaviour as defined in this document.
3. Complete the **Bullying Concern Assessment Form** and forward to the Designated Topper Safeguarding Officer. (Appendix ?)
4. Appropriate intervention(s) will take account of:
 - The level of severity according to the Intervention Levels
 - The legal status of the act e.g. assault
 - The age and ability of those involved
 - Whether an individual child or a group is involved
 - The agreement and support of the parents/carers in adopting a restorative, behaviour changing approach

- Whether the child(s) displaying bullying behaviour acknowledge(s) the unacceptable behaviour and can be enabled to feel empathy for the child experiencing bullying, and act appropriately
 - Whether it is realistic to expect that the bullied child can be strengthened adequately to deal with the situation
 - Whether or not the pupil experiencing bullying has acted provocatively
5. Where the relevant person has determined that a child has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the Topper Association's Policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the child being bullied.
 6. Ensure effective communication amongst all parties e.g. Welfare Officers, the child who has been bullied, the child who is displaying bullying behaviour, parents, CPSS, Social Services, PSNI etc. *(This list is not exhaustive.)*
 7. Monitor and evaluate the on-going effectiveness of your chosen intervention/strategy by updating the **Bullying Concern Assessment Form**. (Appendix 2) *(Timescale should be no longer than three to four weeks.)*
 8. In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant person must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
 - i. Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased
 - ii. Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable
 - iii. Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable and
 - iv. Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents etc.
 9. Record outcomes achieved, again using the **Bullying Concern Assessment Form**. (Appendix 1)

Working in Partnership with Parents

As a 'Telling' organisation we need the support of parents to help this policy succeed. Please encourage your child to report any incident of bullying.

Indeed, bullying incidents might not always be detected by the Association and may be reported to us by parents, almost exclusively of the child who has been bullied. Obviously we will listen to such concerns sympathetically and investigate them accordingly and in line with what has been detailed in this Policy.

Parents and children are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible. As a parent, it is not pleasant to be told that your child has been accused of bullying. Needless to say however, it is imperative that parents co-operate with the Designated Topper Safeguarding Officer, if their child is accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth, point out the implications of bullying and remedy the issues.

We ask parents to play a role in discouraging behaviours which might be considered as bullying.

We also ask parents not to encourage their child to retaliate, but to stress to their children that retaliation is not helpful.

We recognise that there may be times when parents feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying and invariably this will be brought to the Designated Topper Safeguarding Officer's notice. If the Principal himself cannot resolve these concerns, parents can raise their concerns more formally through the Chairperson of the Topper Association, who will initiate the Association's Complaint Procedure.

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 Designated Topper Safeguarding Officer, and checked out without delay

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 the 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, coaches) 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 manner.

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 designated child protection co-ordinator. The information should be checked out and handled in a confidential manner.

Safeguarding and protection procedures

ITCA accepts that organisations, which include young people among its members, are vulnerable to the occurrence of child abuse. Below are the procedures for dealing with any welfare or protection issue that may arise. Child welfare 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 about the safety or welfare of a young person you should react to the concern. In the first instance, contact the club Welfare Officer or the ITCA designated officer who will provide support & advice. In their absence or if the complaint is of a serious nature then contact the appropriate social care team. Grounds for concern include a specific indication from a child, a statement from a person who witnessed abuse or an illness, injury or behaviour consistent with abuse.

A report may be made by any member in the club but should be passed on to the Club's Welfare Officer who may in turn have to pass the concern to the local Statutory Authorities. It is not the responsibility of anyone working within ITCA (IRL) in a paid or voluntary capacity, or those working in affiliated organisations, 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.

Response to a Child Disclosing Abuse

When a young person discloses information of suspected abuse you should:

- 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
- Stay calm and not show any extreme reaction to what the child is saying. Listen compassionately, and take what the child is saying seriously
- Understand that the child has decided to tell something very important and has taken a risk to do so. The experience of telling should be a positive one so that the child will not mind talking to those involved in the investigation
- Be honest with the child and tell them that it is not possible to keep that information a secret
- Make no judgmental statements against the person whom the allegation is made
- 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"
- Check out the concerns with the parents/guardians before making a report unless during so would endanger the child

- Give the child some indication of what would happen next, such as informing parents/guardians, health board or social services. It should be kept in mind that the child may have been threatened and may feel vulnerable at this stage.
- Carefully record the details
- Pass on this information to the Designated children's co-ordinator
- 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:

- Observe and note dates, times, locations and contexts in which the incident occurred or suspicion was aroused, together with any other relevant information
- Report the matter as soon as possible to the designated children's co-ordinator with responsibility for reporting abuse. If the Designated Person 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 health board/social services who have statutory responsibility to investigate and assess suspected or actual child abuse
- In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk and the Designated Person 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
- If the Designated Person is unsure whether reasonable grounds for concern exist s/he can informally consult with the local health board/social services. S/he will be advised whether or not the matter requires a formal report.

A Designated Person 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 an investigation

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 Board or the Gardai (See 5.13.1 – ISC. Code). The act also covers the offence of 'false reporting'.

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 arrestable offences has 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'*

CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse is a term used to describe ways in which children are harmed, usually by adults, often by people they know and trust. It refers to damage done to a child's physical or mental wellbeing.

Categories of Abuse

All coaches, instructors, volunteers and parents should be familiar with signs and behaviours that may be indicative of child abuse. Though a child may be subjected to more than one type of harm, abuse is normally categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. The categories of abuse may be summarised as follows:

Child Neglect

Neglect is normally defined in terms of omission, where a child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, or medical care. It may also include neglect of a child's basic emotional needs.

Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific point. For instance, a child who suffers a series of minor injuries is not having his or her needs for supervision and safety met. The threshold of significant harm is reached when the child's needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well-being and /or development is severely affected.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the relationship between an adult and a child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child's need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. It is rarely manifested in terms of physical symptoms. For children with disabilities it may include over protection or conversely failure to recognise or understand a child's disability. Examples of emotional abuse include:

- Persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming;
- Where the level of care is conditional on his or her behaviour
- Unresponsiveness, inconsistent or unrealistic expectations of a child;
- Premature imposition of responsibility on the child
- Over and under protection of the child
- Failure to provide opportunities for the child's education and development
- Use of unrealistic or over-harsh disciplinary measures

- Exposure to domestic violence; adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose children to emotional abuse

Children show signs of emotional abuse by their behaviour for example, excessive clinginess to or avoidance of the parent/guardian, their emotional state (low self-esteem, unhappiness), or their development (non-organic failure to thrive). The threshold of significant harm is reached when abusive interactions dominate and become typical of the relationship between the child and the parent/guardian.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury that causes significant harm to a child, including:

- Shaking, hitting or throwing
- Use of excessive force in handling
- Deliberate poisoning
- Suffocation or drowning
- Munchausen's syndrome by proxy (where parents/guardians fabricate stories of illness about their child or cause physical signs of illness)
- Allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a child
- For children with disabilities it may include confinement to a room or cot, or incorrectly given drugs to control behaviour
- Burning or scalding

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others. For example:

- Exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child
- Intentional touching or molesting of the body of a child whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification
- Masturbation in the presence of a child or involvement of the child in the act of masturbation
- Sexual intercourse with the child, whether oral, vaginal or anal

- Sexual exploitation of a child

It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation for personal gain. It may manifest itself e.g. Child labour, slavery, child trafficking.

Extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable - including the young - by seeking to: sow division between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justify discrimination eg. towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society.

Grooming

Grooming is when someone develops a relationship with a child over a period of time to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation. Children and young people can be groomed online or face-to-face, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional. Sometimes the perpetrator grooms the entire family, building a relationship with the child's parents/carers so that they are allowed more access to the child than would normally be the case.

Some facts about abuse:

- Abuse occurs across all social classes, education, professions and ethnic groups
- Children and young people mostly know and trust their abuser
- A child will rarely be moved from the home, it's usual to remove the abuser from the situation
- Both boys and girls are abused.
- Disabled children are more vulnerable to abuse, less able to speak about it and more dependent on adults for their care
- Both men and women abuse children and young people
- Most cases of abuse do not go forward for criminal prosecution

Recognising Abuse

It is not always easy to recognise when a child has been abused. Some of the more typical symptoms which should arouse your suspicions include:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- Sudden changes in behaviour.
- Changes occurring over a period of time i.e.: weight loss/gain, unkempt appearance.
- Distrust of adults.
- Difficulty in making friends.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE

A child could be displaying some or all of these symptoms or behaving in a way which is worrying without necessarily meaning that the child is being abused.

Response to a child reporting any form of abuse – *This is not necessarily a Designated Officer*

Where a child decides to disclose information to an adult or member of the club the following points should be taken into consideration:

- It is important to 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
- It is important to stay calm and not to show any extreme reaction to what the child is saying. Listen compassionately, and take what the child is saying seriously
- It should be understood that the child has decided to tell something very important and has taken a risk to do so. The experience of telling should be a positive one so that the child will not mind talking to those involved in the investigation
- The child should understand that it is not possible that any information will be kept a secret
- No judgmental statement should be made against the person whom the allegation is made
- The child should not be questioned 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”

The child should be given some indication of what would happen next, such as informing parents/guardians, health board or social services. It should be kept in mind that the child may have been threatened and may feel vulnerable at this stage.

Reporting Child Abuse

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

- Observe and note dates, times, locations and contexts in which the incident occurred or suspicion was aroused, together with any other relevant information
- Report the matter as soon as possible to the designated person with responsibility for reporting abuse (a senior officer holder, or the children's officer). If the Designated Person 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 health board/social services who have statutory responsibility to investigate and assess suspected or actual child abuse
- In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk and the Designated Person 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
- A report should be given by the Designated Person to the Statutory Authorities in person by phone and in writing.
- It is best to report child abuse concerns by making personal contact with the relevant personnel in the Statutory Authorities.
- The Protection for Persons Reporting Act, 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to persons who report child abuse "reasonably and in good faith" to a designated officer within the health board or any member of the Guards / PSNI.

Grounds for Concern

Consider the possibility of the need to make a report if there are reasonable grounds for concern. Examples of reasonable grounds are:

- A specific indication from a child that he or she has been abused, (a disclosure)
- A statement from a person who witnessed abuse
- An illness, injury or behaviour consistent with abuse
- A symptom which may not itself be totally consistent with abuse, but which is supported by corroborative evidence of deliberate harm or negligence, (e.g., a broken arm results from a fall but injuries re-occur through a constant lack of supervision)
- Consistent signs of neglect over a period of time

It is important to realise that children may be subjected to abuse by parents/guardians or other family members, persons outside their family, other children or those who have responsibility for their care for one reason or another for short or long periods of time.

Children in certain situations may be especially vulnerable to abuse. These include children who, for short or long periods of time, are separated from parents or other family members and depend on other adults for their care and protection. Children with disabilities may also be more at risk as the nature of their disability sometimes limits communication between themselves and others and they may depend more on a variety of adults to meet their needs, for example, for care and transport.

Child-to-Child Abuse

In some cases of child abuse the alleged perpetrator will also be a child and it is important that behaviour of this nature is not ignored. Grounds for concern will exist in cases where there is an age difference and/or difference in power, status or intellect between the children involved. However, it is also important to distinguish between normal sexual behaviour and abusive behaviour.

If there is a concern, normal procedures in the document will apply.

Some points of importance

1. All adults have a responsibility for the protection and welfare of children, all adults whether paid, voluntary, in a position of authority, on a committee, a member or non-member of a club.
2. The Designated Topper Safeguarding Officer does not have the responsibility of investigating or validating child protection concerns within the association and has no counselling or therapeutic role. These roles are filled by the Statutory Authorities.
3. It is possible that child protection concerns will be brought to the attention of the Designated Topper Safeguarding Officer or any other party, as young people will confide in those that they trust. In this event it is essential that the correct procedures are followed, i.e. that reports are passed on immediately to the designated person with responsibility for reporting within the association and/or to the Statutory Authorities. It is also important not to disclose or discuss any aspect with non-relevant parties
4. All adults have the option to go directly to the Statutory Authorities as a concerned individual.

If you are unsure about whether or not certain behaviours are abusive, and therefore reportable, should contact the duty social worker in the local health board or social services department where they will receive advice.

Procedures within *ITCA*

- ITCA has procedures for responding to reports or concerns relating to the welfare and safety of children.
- All coaches, children and parents/guardians should be aware of how to report and to whom concerns should be reported within ITCA.
- Copies of the Code of Conduct are available on the web site, www.topperireland.com
- Everyone involved in child protection matters should be aware of their responsibility to work in co-operation with the statutory child protection authorities.

If you wish to pass on a concern or to consult informally with a social worker you can contact the duty social worker in each area. You should go directly to the police for assistance in emergency cases.

APPENDIX 1.

ITCA (IRL) Code of Conduct

It is the policy of the Irish International Topper Class Association that all participants, coaches, instructors, officials, parents and volunteers show respect and understanding for each other, treat everyone equally within the context of the sport and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the club/class. The aim is for all participants to enjoy their sport and to improve performance.

Abusive language, swearing, intimidation, aggressive behaviour or lack of respect for others and their property will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action.

Sailors

- Listen to and accept what you are asked to do to improve your performance and keep you safe
- Respect other participants, coaches, instructors, officials and volunteers
- Abide by the rules and play fairly
- Do your best at all times
- Never bully others either in person, by phone, by text or online
- Take care of all property belonging to other participants, the club/class or its members

Parents

- Support your child's involvement and help them enjoy their sport
- Help your child to recognise good performance, not just results
- Never force your child to take part in sport
- Never punish or belittle a child for losing or making mistakes
- Encourage and guide your child to accept responsibility for their own conduct and performance
- Respect and support the coach
- Accept officials' judgements and recognise good performance by all participants
- Use established procedures where there is a genuine concern or dispute
- Inform the club or event organisers of relevant medical information
- Ensure that your child wears suitable clothing and has appropriate food and drink
- Provide contact details and be available when required
- Take responsibility for your child's safety and conduct in and around the clubhouse/event venue

Coaches, Instructors, Officials and Volunteers

- Consider the welfare and safety of participants before the development of performance
- Encourage participants to value their performance and not just results
- Promote fair play and never condone cheating
- Ensure that all activities are appropriate to the age, ability and experience of those taking part
- Build relationships based on mutual trust and respect
- Work in an open environment
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people

- Be an excellent role model and display consistently high standards of behaviour and appearance
- Do not drink alcohol or smoke when working directly with young people
- Communicate clearly with parents and participants
- Be aware of any relevant medical information
- Follow RYA/IS and club/class guidelines and policies
- Holders of RYA/IS Instructor and Coach qualifications must also comply with the RYA/IS Code of Ethics and Conduct
- Holders of RYA/IS Race Official appointments must also comply with the RYA/IS Race Officials Code of Conduct.

APPENDIX 2: Bullying Concern Assessment Form

Section 1 – Assessment of Concern		
Date:		
Name of Person Compiling this Section:		
Main Location of Incident:		
	Name(s)	Class(es)
Target of Bullying		
Child(ren) Displaying Bullying Behaviour		
Does the Behaviour Involve:		
1. Individual to Individual	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Individual to Group	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Group to Individual	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Group to Group	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Type of Bullying Incident:				
Emotional: <i>being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. threatening gestures, dirty looks, malicious gossip etc.)</i>				
Physical: <i>pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence</i>				
Verbal: <i>name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing</i>				
Indirect: <i>getting someone to bully on your behalf, isolation, refusal to work/play with</i>				
Racist: <i>racial taunts, graffiti, gestures</i>				
Cyber: <i>all areas of the internet, such as email & internet, gaming or chat room misuse. Threats by text messaging & calls and/or misuse of associated technology i.e. camera & video facilities</i>				
Sexual: <i>unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments</i>				
Homophobic/Transphobic: <i>because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality</i>				
Disablist: <i>because of, or focusing on a disability</i>				
Educational: <i>because of, or focusing on special educational needs</i>				
Is there persistence/recurrence of this behaviour?	Yes		No	
Is it targeted behaviour?	Yes		No	
Is there a power imbalance?	Yes		No	
Is it intentionally hurtful behaviour?	Yes		No	
Does this incident meet the agreed definitions of bullying?	Yes		No	
Are there previously recorded incidents from either party?	Yes		No	
What Level of Intervention are you attaching to this incident?	1	2	3	4

Outline of incident(s): Write a synopsis to clarify the facts of the incident as told by both parties. Attach all written accounts/drawings of incident(s) completed by bullied child, witnesses (i.e. other children, adults) including date(s) of events, if known.

Section 2 – Interventions to be Implemented

Date:

Name of Person Compiling this Section:

Outline action/support to be implemented for child who has been bullied:

Is the support individual peer group ?

On-going support and monitoring by _____
and will be formally reviewed by _____ (date)

Have parent(s) been informed and/or involved? (Give details)

Referred to other agencies? If yes, give details.

Any other details?

Section 2 – Interventions to be Implemented (Continued)

Date:

Name of Person Compiling this Section:

Outline action/support to be implemented for child who has been displaying bullying behaviour:

Is the support individual peer group ?

On-going support and monitoring by _____
and will be formally reviewed by _____ (date)

Have parent(s) been informed and/or involved? (Give details)

Referred to other agencies? If yes, give details.

Any other details?

--

Section 3 – On-Going Record of Support & Interventions		
Date	Details of Intervention & Outcome	Signed

Section 4 – Status of Concern

Date: _____ (Please note this should be completed within two to three of the bullying being reported or sooner if required.)

Name of Person Compiling this Section: _____

This concern is now resolved

This concern is not resolved

Refer to Designated Topper Safeguarding Officer

Reassess Level of Intervention and implement other strategies

Report to Topper Association Committee to determine further action steps.

Date and time of incident	
Name and position of person about whom report, complaint or allegation is made	
Name and age of child involved	
Name of club or organisation (if relevant)	
Nature of incident, complaint or allegation (continue on separate page if necessary.	
Action taken by organisation (continue on separate page if necessary)	
If Police or Children's Social Care Services contacted, name, position and telephone number of person handling case	
Name, organisation and position of person completing form	
Contact telephone number and e-mail address	
Signature of person completing form	
Date and time form completed	
Name and position of organisation's child protection/welfare officer or person in charge (if different from above)	
Contact telephone number and e-mail address	

APPENDIX 4: Useful Contacts

Revised Feb 2018

NSPCC 24 hour free helpline

0808 800 5000

E-mail: help@nspcc.org.uk

Website: www.nspcc.org.uk

Children 1st (Scotland) free helpline

08000 28 22 33

E-mail: parentlinescotland@children1st.org.uk

Text: 07860 022844

Website: www.children1st.org.uk

Childline 24 hour free helpline

0800 1111

Website: www.childline.org.uk

Social Care Services

Your local phone book or the website for your County Council or unitary local authority will list numbers for the Children and Families Services, generally with separate numbers for Children's Social Care and for the Emergency Duty Team (out of hours service).

Royal Yachting Association

Jackie Reid, Safeguarding and Equality Manager

RYA House, Ensign Way

Hamble

Southampton

SO31 4YA

Tel: 023 8060 4104

E-mail: safeguarding@rya.org.uk

Website: www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding

RYA Cymru Wales

Phil Braden, Chief Executive Officer

Tel: 01248 670814 Mob: 07450 239152

E-mail: phil.braden@ryacymruwales.org.uk

Website: www.ryacymruwales.org.uk

RYA Scotland

Liza Linton, Development Manager

Tel: 0131 317 7388 Mob: 07770 604234

E-mail: liza.linton@ryascotland.org.uk

Website: www.ryascotland.org.uk

RYA Northern Ireland

Paul Bunting, Director, Safeguarding

Tel: 028 9038 3812

E-mail: dsc0.ryani@gmail.com

Website: www.ryani.org.uk

Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)

England

Tel: 0116 366 5590

E-mail: cpsu@nspcc.org.uk

Website: www.thecpsu.org.uk

Wales

Tel: 0116 366 5590

E-mail: cpsuwales@nspcc.org.uk

Northern Ireland

Tel: 028 9035 1135

E-mail: cpsu@nspcc.org.uk

Scotland (Children 1st Safeguarding in Sport)

Tel: 0141 419 1156

E-mail: safeguardinginsport@children1st.org.uk

Website: www.safeguardinginsport.org.uk

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS - formerly CRB) – RYA is Registered Body

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

Volunteer Scotland Disclosure Services – RYA is Enrolled Body

Website: www.volunteerscotland.net/disclosure-services

Disclosure Scotland (for referrals)

Website: <https://www.mygov.scot/pvg-referrals/>

AccessNI – RYA is Registered Body

Website: www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni

UK Coaching – provide Safeguarding and Protecting Children training

Website: www.ukcoaching.org