



Child Protection and Safeguarding

What Coaches need to know!



CHILD PROTECTION AND SPORTS

Surely it's the Safeguarding Officer's job, right?

Nope....

It's everyone's responsibility!





WHO IS A CHILD?

A child is anyone under the age of 18.

WHAT IS CHILD PROTECTION?

The term child protection is a broad term that defines the guidelines, procedures, and policies that provide protection for children from both intentional and un-intentional harm.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Child abuse is any action, or series of actions that lead to harm, the potential for harm, or any threat of harm to a child. Abuse may take several forms.

Abuse includes physical harm, emotional or psychological harm or sexual molestation or exploitation. It also includes neglect and bullying.

How can I know if a child is being abused?

There are several signs that may indicate that a child is the victim of child abuse. It is important to remember that even though a child could be displaying some or all of these signs, this doesn't necessarily mean the child is being abused.

As a coach, if you see signs in a child that are worrying, it is not your responsibility to decide if it is abuse, but it is your responsibility to act on your concerns and do something about it.

Some signs of abuse are:

- Unexplained bruising or injuries
- Sudden changes in behaviour
- Something a child has said
- A change in the child that is observed over a long period of time (eg. losing weight, becoming increasingly dirty)





How can **EMOTIONAL ABUSE** occur in sports?

Emotional abuse includes any behaviour that has the effect of psychologically harming children or young persons.

Some of the more common examples that we find in American Football may include:

- Forcing a child to participate in a sport
- Not speaking to a child after he/she plays poorly in a game or in practice
- Asking a child why he/she played poorly when it meant so much to you
- Yelling at a child for not playing well or for losing
- Giving a child a negative nickname based on their play
- Punishing a child for not playing well or for losing
- Criticising, cursing and/or ridiculing a child for his/her performance or for his or her physique





How can **SEXUAL ABUSE** occur in sports?

Sexual abuse of children includes any sexual act or sexual threat, intimidation or coercion imposed on a child

- Sexual abuse may include Inappropriate touching/fondling during coaching.
- Exposing a child to pornography or sexually explicit materials
- Sex-ting
- Showing a child your private parts or asking to see his/her private parts
- Using sexually inappropriate language to a child



How can PHYSICAL ABUSE occur in sports?

Physical abuse in sports occurs when there is non-accidental injury and/or harm to a child or young person, caused by another person such as a parent, care-giver, coach or even an older child

for example, physically punishing a young person for losing a game by hitting, throwing equipment, pushing or shoving are all examples of physical abuse

This is only a whistle-stop tour of abuse...

It is also aimed at abuse from coaches, and not abuse suffered at home...

I will send out some info about that.... But basically, if you're worried, speak to someone...



WHAT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AS A FOOTBALL COACH?

Your first job as a coach is to ensure the safety of those children in your care.

As a coach, the welfare of the child is paramount.

It is your responsibility, to create an environment where children will be safe, protected from harm, discrimination and any treatment that is degrading.

The rights and wishes of children must be respected while under your care.

For you to meet these responsibilities, there are some things that you need to know.

★ you must be able to recognise the signs of child abuse and to respond with appropriate procedures and actions.

★ you must observe and promote sound practices when working with children.





Coaches are in a unique position to be role models and mentors for young people, but there are also countless stories of coaches misusing their influence and power to take advantage of youths—harassing, manipulating, neglecting and abusing them.

Coaches have a vital role to play in safeguarding children, and will often become the focus for children and their activities. Good coaching is about providing a fun and safe environment in which children can enjoy what may be their first experience of a sport, gain some success and be motivated to want to go on playing.



As a coach, you are in a position to be able to detect signs of abuse that may occur among children in your care. As you work with children on a regular basis, you may be the person a child chooses to talk to about something happening in their life. It is important that you know how to respond to a child in danger, and how to share information appropriately with those who can help.

During the time that children are under your supervision as a coach, it is ultimately your responsibility to ensure that they are protected and not abused by you or others.



American Football like any sports, has a remarkably strong and positive impact on children and young people. There is a valid assumption that children will be protected from abuse and injury in the environments we create. This is underpinned by the existence of a moral responsibility to protect young people in any sport.



There are a few fundamentals that are useful in guiding you in the correct handling of safety when coaching young children.

**They are summed up in the acronym
C-O-A-C-H-E-S**



O

Overuse –
Avoid too
much repetition
Or not having
enough breaks



C

Conditioning –
Or warming up.
Helps prevent
injuries



A

Advance –
Plan in advance
Try to plan for all
eventualities



C

Check –
Check
on the
children
often!



H

Hydrate –
Hydrate
Hydrate
Hydrate



E

Equipment –
Check the children
have the right equipment
and that it fits



S

Safety –
Always
think
Safety!



'Dos' and 'Donts' of a coach...

(lists not exhaustive)

- **DO** put the welfare of each child ahead of "winning".
- **DO** give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- **DO** avoid pushing children against their will and putting undue pressure on them.
- **DO** take into account the environmental condition of the grounds and the pitch, including weather.
- **DO** avoid being with a child (male or female) in an isolated or unobserved situation.
- **DO** set boundaries between coaches and children that may not be crossed.
- **DO** recognise the different developmental needs and the capacity of children.
- **DO** ascertain whether children you are coaching have any medical conditions that might impact on their play.



- **DON'T** spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- **DON'T** take children to your home or transport them by car, where they will be alone with you. ****
- **DON'T** engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
- **DON'T** allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- **DON'T** take part in, or tolerate, behaviour that frightens, embarrasses or demoralises a child or affects their self-esteem.
- **DON'T** allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- **DON'T** use inappropriate language towards a child
- **DON'T** make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- **DON'T** make a child cry as a form of control.
- **DON'T** allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or ignored.
- **DON'T** do things of a personal nature for children.
- **DON'T** have children as 'friends' on social media
- **DON'T** message children without including a parent or another adult. Use Spond!





WHEN YOU HAVE A

BAD COACH



Listening 'Dos' and 'Don'ts' of Listening –

(lists not exhaustive)

- **DO** be approachable.
- **DO** listen carefully and uncritically, at the child's pace.
- **DO** take what is said seriously.
- **DO** reassure children that they are right to tell.
- **DO** tell the child that you must pass this information on.
- **DO** make sure that the child is ok.
- **DO** make a careful record of what was said. Be mindful of GDPR, use initials.

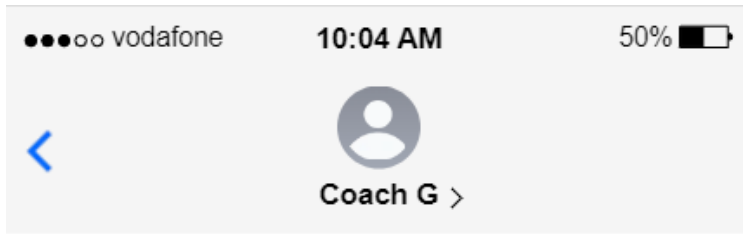


- **DON'T** investigate or seek to prove or disprove
- **DON'T** make promises about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets' to children.
- **DON'T** assume that someone else will take the necessary action.
- **DON'T** jump to conclusions, be dismissive or react with shock, anger, horror etc.
- **DON'T** speculate or accuse anybody.
- **DON'T** confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved.
- **DON'T** offer opinions about what is being said or the persons allegedly involved.
- **DON'T** forget to record what you have been told.
- **DON'T** fail to pass this information on to the correct person (the Welfare Officer).



Let's play a game of
Okay or Not Okay....





Hey Coach, am I ok to grab a lift next week pls?

Not sure pal, I don't think I am allowed to give u a lift... sorry

I've asked my mum, she says it's ok, she trusts you lol

Ok then pal, I'll pick you up about 10 at yours

Gr8 see you next week



OK or not OK?

Not OK!

Coach and child messaging alone...

No direct contact with parent

Coach giving lift, alone with child.



OK or not OK?

OK!



**Coach hugging a
child in public...
plenty of people
around, is fine.**





OK or not OK?

Not OK!

We have a zero tolerance policy for smoking or vaping at training grounds or on match days. This goes for Coaches and players.



OK or not OK?

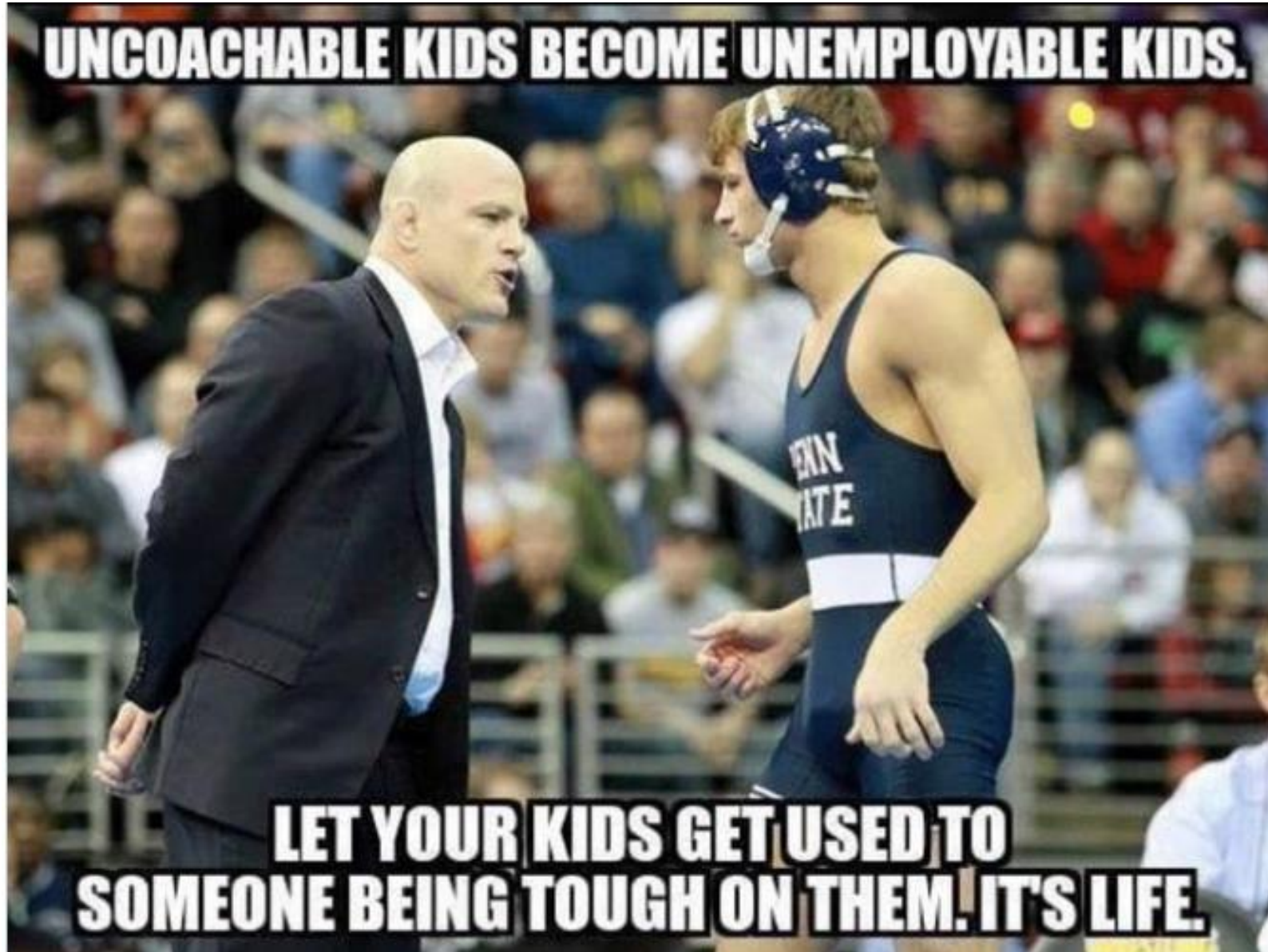
OK!



**Coaches can help put helmets on, not pants or lower pads.
But do be sensible, avoid chest pads unless chaperoned!**

OK or not OK?

Not OK!



This is
not how
we coach
at the
Giants!

OK or not OK?

Not OK!

Never OK!

**You may be comfortable
showing off your body... you
may be proud even...**

**But we do not want to see
it... nor do the children...!**

**Dress appropriately please,
And in Giants or neutral
gear...**





**You will be asked to sign to say
you have read and understood
this presentation
Please use the link below to sign.**

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1JpZLRZgvzSxOaCVywfhon7Wgfb_1MvaHrQecnpvp-k8/edit?usp=sharing

Any questions, please ask...

welfare@sheffieldgiants.com