



Low Fell Running Club

Safeguarding Children Policy

POLICY OBJECTIVES

Duty of care

All organisations and individuals, including clubs, coaches, paid staff, volunteers and club officials, have a duty of care to safeguard children when they are participating in athletics activities under their auspices.

These best practice guidelines are maintained by the Committee with a view to promoting the adoption of good and consistent safeguarding practices to ensure that children have a safe experience. These guidelines identify what needs to be done by individuals to demonstrate their duty of care.

Best practice in athletics benefits everyone - the sport's Home Country Governing Bodies, clubs, coaches and officials, teachers, parents, carers and athletes. Most importantly, it ensures that children who choose to participate in athletics have a safe and fun experience.

All children are entitled to be protected from abuse. Abuse can occur anywhere. With over 250,000 children involved in athletics in the UK and 100,000 adults involved, the chances are very real that there are some individuals abusing their positions in athletics.

The committee of Low Fell Running Club is committed to devising, implementing and updating policies and procedures to promote best practice when working with children and to ensure that everyone in the sport understands and accepts their responsibilities to safeguard children from harm and abuse. This includes taking action to respond to, record and report any concerns about their welfare.

POLICY STATEMENT

Low Fell Running Club fully accept their legal and moral obligations to meet their duty of care to all children and to safeguard their welfare, irrespective of age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, religion or belief, sex or gender and sexual orientation.

Key principles:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children have the right to protection from abuse
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

- All individuals involved in athletics understand and accept their responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer.

In order to meet their safeguarding obligations, all Affiliated Clubs and organisations must:

- Provide and enforce procedures to safeguard the wellbeing of all participants and protect them from abuse.
- Club policies and practices must, as a minimum, meet the requirements set out in this guidance.
- Ensure all children who take part in athletics are able to participate in a safe and fun environment.
- Respect and uphold the rights, wishes and feelings of children.
- Recruit, train and supervise their employees and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect young people from abuse, and themselves from false allegations.
- Require staff/volunteers to adopt and abide by UKA's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, Codes of Conduct and the relevant grievance, investigatory and disciplinary procedures.
- Respond to any allegations appropriately and implement the appropriate complaints, child protection, disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Designate a person in the organisation who is responsible for ensuring that all appropriate DBS checks are completed.
- Review policies regularly.

TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CPLO: Child Protection Lead Officer for UK Athletics or the nominated deputy.

CWO: Club Welfare Officer.

LSCB: Local Safeguarding Children Board.

DBS: Disclosure and Barring Service.

CRBS: Central Registered Body in Scotland.

CPSU: Child Protection in Sport Unit (NSPCC).

CPiS: Child Protection in Sport Service in Scotland (Children 1st).

A Child is anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday. 'Children' therefore means children and young people throughout. The fact a child has reached 16 years of age, living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody, does not change his or her status or entitlement to protection under the Children Act 1989.

Disabled children may be more vulnerable and at greater risk of all forms of abuse. The presence of multiple disabilities increases the risk of both abuse and neglect. Some of the common factors that can lead to increased vulnerability include social isolation, communication and learning difficulties or disability, lack of understanding of boundaries, need for assistance with personal care and more likely target for bullying and abuse. Children with disabilities have the same rights to protection as any other child and clubs working with these children need to be especially alert to

the signs and symptoms of abuse and have strategies in place to ensure the safety of the child.

BEST PRACTICE, POOR PRACTICE AND ABUSE

Introduction

To provide everybody with the best possible experience and opportunities in athletics, it is important that everyone operates within an accepted ethical framework and demonstrates exemplary behaviour.

Best Practice

Best practice means:

- Being open and conducting all interactions with children in a public place and with appropriate consent.
- Avoiding situations where you are alone with one child.
- If you have to meet or coach one child ensure it is conducted in an open environment, and where full consent and emergency contact details have been provided.
- If you are travelling alone with a child gain appropriate consent, avoid consistently having one child alone with you in the car and never sharing a room on your own with a child.
- Challenging bullying, harassment, foul or provocative language or controlling behaviour that could upset individuals or reduce them to tears.
- Never ignoring bullying by parents, coaches or children. Listening to and supporting the person being bullied.
- Maintaining an appropriate relationship with children;
- Treating children fairly, with respect and avoiding favouritism.
- Being friendly and open and ensuring that relationships are appropriate for someone in a position of power and trust.
- Avoiding unnecessary physical contact. In certain circumstances physical contact is perfectly acceptable and appropriate, as long as it is not intrusive or disturbing to the child/athlete and that consent for contact has been given by the individual and appropriate parental consent.
- Being qualified and insured for the activities you are coaching and ensuring that your licence remains valid. Ensure that your practice is appropriate for the age and development stage of each athlete.

Adopting best practice not only ensures the child's welfare, it also protects clubs and individuals from possible wrongful allegations. Children very rarely make false allegations. If they do, it is usually because they are confused or covering up for someone else's behaviour and hoping their action might scare the real abuser into stopping.

Poor Practice

The following are examples of poor practice and should be avoided:

- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games including horseplay.
- A coach shouting comments at athletes when they are not working hard enough.
- A coach using harassing and discriminatory language such as '*you run like a girl.*'
- A coach engaging in an intimate relationship with one of his/her athletes.
- A group of athletes ganging up on a new athlete and refusing to talk to him/her.
- A coach taking a group of children away to a weekend event on his/her own.

The list above is not exhaustive and many other examples exist.

If a child athlete:

- is accidentally hurt;
- appears distressed in any manner;
- appears to be sexually aroused by the actions of another; or
- misunderstands or misinterprets the actions of another

Then the incident should be reported immediately to another colleague/volunteer, a written note must be made of the incident and parents and/or appropriate adults informed. The Club Welfare Officer should also be informed. The attached UKA referral form should be used <https://www.uka.org.uk/governance/welfare-and-safeguarding/guidance-documents-and-policy/>

Abuse

Abuse can occur wherever there are children.

There are four main types of abuse:

- **Physical abuse** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.
- **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.
- **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.
- **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND TRAINING

Low Fell Running Club is committed to providing a safe environment for children in our clubs and organisations and the requirements and processes set out below will assist organisations to ensure that best practice is followed. All reasonable steps must be taken at all levels within the sport to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working in athletics, especially with children.

Recruitment

Advertising of roles, whether paid or volunteer roles, will reflect:

- This Safeguarding children and welfare policy.
- The responsibility of the role.
- The level of experience or qualifications required.
- A positive stance on all aspects of welfare and safeguarding children.

Application Process

Organisations and clubs must ensure that all applicants complete an application form that includes:

- Name and address.
- National Insurance number to confirm identity and right to work.
- Relevant experience, qualifications and training undertaken.
- Career history and/or involvement in sport (to confirm experience and identify any gaps).
- All applicants who have or are seeking to undertake a supervised role or responsibility in relation to children in athletics must complete a self-declaration form to establish whether they are known to Children's Social Care (social services) as posing an actual or potential risk of harm to children or whether they have ever had action taken against them (criminal/civil/disciplinary) that might indicate that they are unsuitable to work with or have responsibility for children.
<https://www.uka.org.uk/governance/welfare-and-safeguarding/self-disclosure-process/>
- All applicants who have or are seeking to undertake regulated activity in athletics must complete a criminal record check (enhanced level DBS, Disclosure Scotland or Access Northern Ireland). Please refer to the separate advice on criminal record checks
<https://www.uka.org.uk/governance/policies/dbs/>
- Written references will be taken up. Where the applicant is to work with children, at least one reference will be associated with former work with children or young people. Referees (not relatives) should provide written references that comment on the applicant's previous experience of, and suitability for, work with children.
- Any former involvement with athletics.

Recruitment selection and induction of staff and volunteers

Interviews and induction

Where appropriate, formal interviews will be used and a record of the interview will be made. All staff and volunteers will undergo a formal or informal induction process during which safeguarding policies and practices will be shared together with contact details of the relevant Club Welfare Officer and the UKA Steering Group.

When assessing a candidate's suitability, clubs and organisations should:

- Consider their relevant qualifications and experience.
- Establish if they have previously undertaken a role working directly with children.
- Explore their attitude and commitment to safeguarding.
- Establish if they have ever been prevented from having a role which involved contact with children.
- Test their safeguarding awareness with the use of hypothetical examples.

When making recruitment decisions, clubs and organisations must consider:

- The application form.
- The interview.
- All qualifications and experience.
- References.
- The outcome of the DBS check.

Training

Clubs and organisations must ensure that all staff and volunteers who work with children undertake relevant training⁵ on a three yearly basis in child / safeguarding procedures, procedures for taking children away and sources of education and training.

Monitoring and appraisal

Clubs and organisations must ensure that all staff should be given the opportunity to receive regular feedback through observed practice, appraisal or informal feedback to identify training needs and to set goals. Concerns about misconduct, poor practice or abuse, however must be acted on as they arise. Appropriate support will be offered to those who report concerns/incidents or complaints.

RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES, SUSPICIONS AND ALLEGATIONS

Introduction

While it is not the responsibility of UKA, the Home Countries Governing Bodies, volunteers or club members to decide whether a concern constitutes abuse, it is their responsibility to report any concerns about the welfare of a child. These concerns may arise due to:

- A child disclosing that they are being abused.
- The behaviour of an adult towards a child.
- A number of indicators observed in a child over a period of time.

How to respond to a disclosure

Don't

- Probe for more information than is offered.
- Speculate or make assumptions.

- Show shock or distaste.
- Make comments about the person against whom the allegations have been made.
- Make promises or agree to keep secrets.
- Give a guarantee of confidentiality.

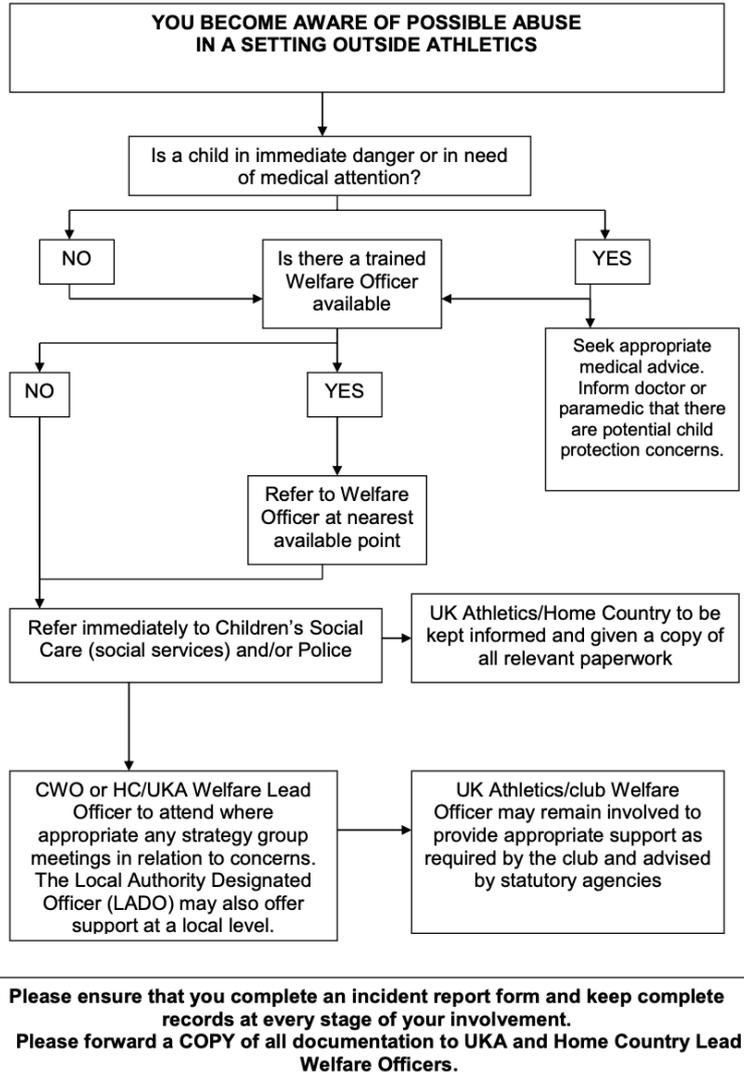
All suspicions and disclosures must be reported appropriately.

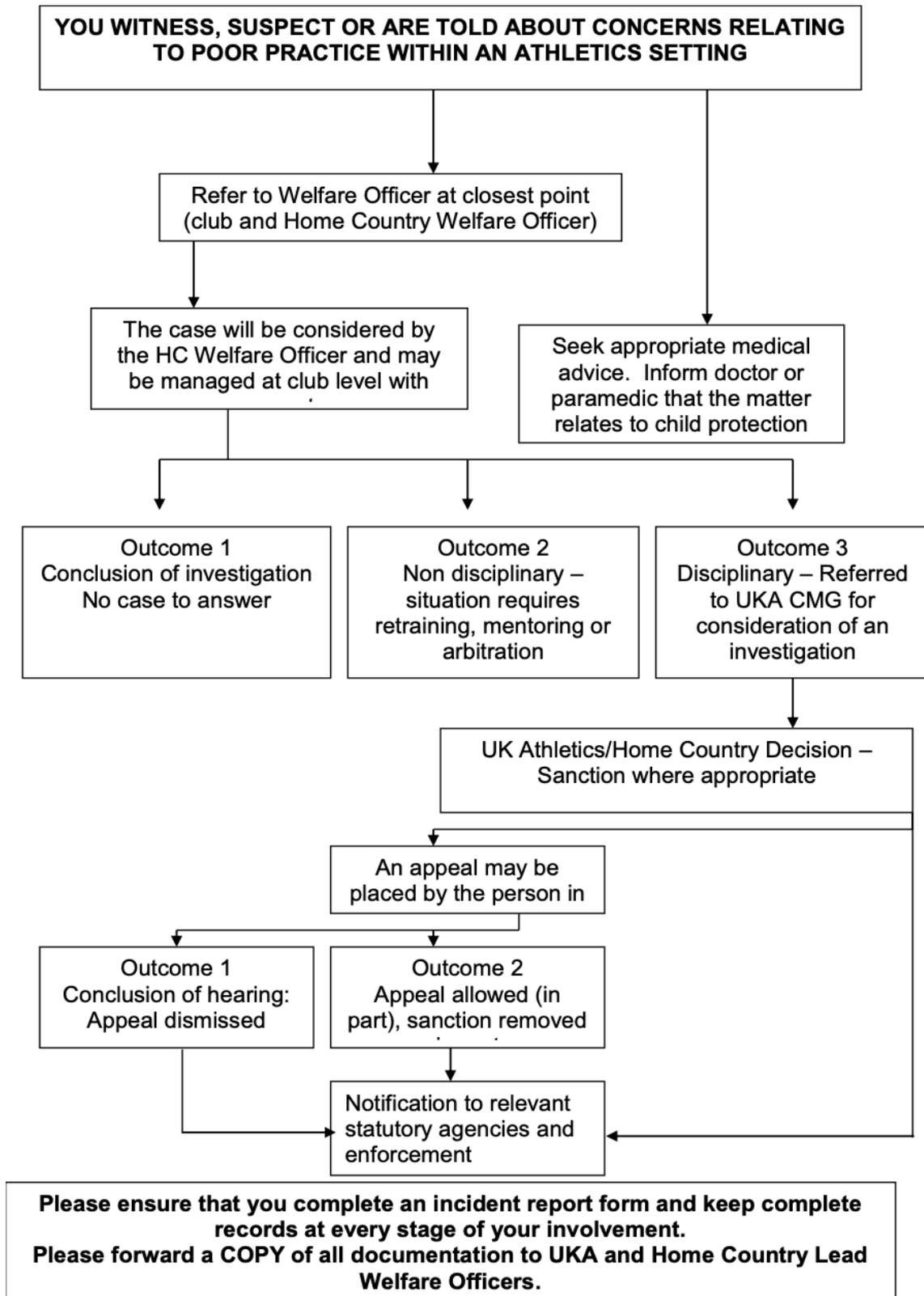
Reporting procedures

Any person with information of a disclosure, allegation or concern about the welfare of a child must immediately report this in one of the following ways.

If you are part of an Affiliated Club, you should immediately inform the club's designated Club Welfare Officer (CWO) who will refer the matter to UKA's CPLO or Home Country Governing Body lead welfare officer.

UKA has prepared the attached referral form for use by clubs, organisations and individuals to encourage the sharing of relevant and appropriate information.





A summary of the reporting procedures is provided in a flow chart format. Where there is a complaint of abuse against an employee or volunteer there may be separate and/or additional investigations which take place, namely:

- Criminal investigation: in which case the police will be immediately involved.
- Safeguarding children: in which case Children's Social Care (and possibly the police) will be involved.

Documentation and records created during an investigation should be securely kept for at least three years.

Reporting by clubs

Where a club becomes aware of an allegation in relation to a club member brought to their attention by the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or the police, they should immediately pass on these details to the UKA CPLO by email to dbrown@uka.org.uk. Assistance with how to proceed with Position of Trust meetings will then be available to you from UKA.

Dealing with Concerns and Allegations

While UKA CPLO and CWOs will have received safeguarding training, it is not their responsibility to determine whether or not abuse has taken place. If there is any doubt about whether or not the alleged behaviour constitutes abuse, the concern must be shared by the CWO with the statutory agencies which will be responsible for any subsequent action.

Any suspicion that an individual has been abused by a volunteer or employee within athletics should be reported to the CWO in the first instance using the attached referral form or to the UKA CPLO who will take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of the individual in question and any other individual who may be at risk. This will include the following:

- the UKA CPLO will refer the allegation to the appropriate social care services department who may involve the police or go directly to the police if out of hours.
- the parents of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social care services department.
- the UKA CPLO will also notify the Chief Executive of UKA who will decide how any media enquiries should be dealt with.
- pending a full investigation, the UKA CPLO and/or the Chief Executive can impose an interim suspension based on the risk of actual or potential harm to the child, an assessment of the seriousness of the allegation and initial information available.
- accreditation may be withdrawn from any UKA event venue if it is considered that the use of the venue continues to pose any risk of harm to children.
- the UKA CPLO may also make a full report to a UKA Case Management Panel. Irrespective of any findings that may be made by Children's Social Care (social services) or the Police, a UKA Case Management Panel will assess all individual cases and determine an appropriate outcome in order to manage the risk of harm to children. Decisions will be made on the balance of probability, in other words, based on whether it is more likely than not that the circumstances give rise to a risk of harm. The welfare of the child is paramount.

In circumstances where UKA does not have jurisdiction to deal with the individual, the UKA CPLO will act as the link person between athletics and Children's Social Care and/or the police and pass on all the information to the relevant governing body/organisation with disciplinary jurisdiction.

Where the police or Children's Social Care make a statutory referral and invite a club official to a case conference or professional meeting, then the UKA CPLO must be informed as soon as possible to determine whether to attend and represent UKA or the relevant Home Country Governing Body at the meeting and support the individual and club.

Dealing with Bullying

Allegations of bullying should be considered and dealt with by the relevant Home Country Governing Body under the terms of their disciplinary procedure. For specific actions to prevent and deal with bullying please refer to the separate bullying policy document. <http://www.uka.org.uk/governance/welfare-and-safeguarding/guidance-documents-and-policy/>

Records and Confidentiality

Low Fell Running Club will always follow the reporting procedure set out above.

The reports should be factual and include where possible:

- The referrer's and/or the child's name, address and date of birth.
- The date and time of the incident.
- The facts about the allegation or observation.
- Your factual observations e.g. describe the behaviour and emotional state of the alleged victim, and note any marks, bruising or other injuries.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what happened using the exact words if possible.
- Details of any witnesses.
- Any times, dates or other relevant information.
- Any action that was taken as a result of the concerns.
- A clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A copy of this information must be sent by the CWO to the UKA CPLO.

Confidentiality should be maintained at all times. Information should be handled and with access available only to UKA Chief Executive and UKA Welfare staff.

REFERRAL FORM

Your name and contact details:
Your position:
Your knowledge of and relationship to the child:
Child's name:
Child's address:
Child's date of birth:
Date(s), time(s) and location(s) of incident(s):
Nature of the concern/allegation:
Observations made by you or to you (e.g. description of visible bruising, other injuries, child's emotional state etc): NB Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay
Exactly what the child said and what you said (Remember, do not lead the child– record actual details. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary):
Actions Taken so far:
External agencies contacted:
Police Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, which: _____
Date and time: _____
Name and Contact number: _____
Details of advice received: _____
Children's Social Care Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, which: _____
Or Local Authority Designated Officer
Date and time: _____
Name and Contact number: _____
Details of advice received: _____
UKA LCPO Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, which department: _____
Date and time: _____
Name Role and Contact number: _____
Details of advice received: _____
Other (e.g. NSPCC, Children 1st) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, which: _____
Date and time: _____
Name and Contact number: _____

Adapted from England Athletics Safeguarding Children Policy 2020
Approved by The Committee May 2020. Review due May 2022

Details of advice received:

Print name: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Remember to maintain confidentiality (on a need to know basis)-only share if it will protect the child. Do not discuss the incident with anyone other than those who need to know.

A copy of this form must be sent to: Athletics Welfare, PO Box 332, Sale. M33 6XL

Email: childprotection@uka.org.uk Telephone: 0161 223 4246.

Help and advice from the Child Protection in Sport Unit

If you think you are being abused, or have been in the past, it's really important to tell an adult you trust.

This isn't easy. You may feel worried about what will happen if you do. Here are some other reasons why you may not want to tell anyone:

- they may have threatened you about what might happen to you or your place in the team if you tell
- the abuser may have told you to keep quiet and not to talk to anybody
- they may have made threats about your friends or family
- they may have said "No one will believe you" or "No one will do anything if you tell"
- you may feel guilty that you didn't stop the abuse happening
- the person may be someone who everyone in your sport looks up to - perhaps including your parents
- you may not want to let your parents down
- you may even think the problem will go away if you ignore it.

Don't let any of these things stop you getting help. By telling someone, you can stop the abuse. You'll also be helping to protect other children from the abuser.

Getting help

- Tell an adult you trust as soon as possible. This could be a parent or someone else in your family; another member of staff at your athletics club; a teacher or school counsellor; your doctor or school nurse.
- Your athletics club will have a welfare officer. Find out who they are and tell them about your worries.
- Contact one of the child protection helplines. They will know who can help you in your area.
- Make sure you are not alone again with the person who has tried to harm you.

Remember your rights!

UKA and the NSPCC believe that children have the right to enjoy sporting activities in safety. The work of our Child Protection in Sport Unit is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This Convention spells out how people should treat you. If you would like to know more, see what the Convention says about your rights.

For further help and advice, visit www.childline.org.uk



A YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO CHILD PROTECTION

You have rights – Sport should be fun. You should feel safe and enjoy your sport. You can't do this if you feel unhappy – if someone is bullying or abusing you.

When do you know if something is wrong?

Something is wrong if someone:

- Constantly teases you, shouts at you or calls you names.
- Threatens, hits, kicks or punches you.
- Touches you, or does anything in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Makes suggestive remarks or tries to pressurize you into sexual activity.
- Damages or steals your belongings.
- Does anything that makes you feel lonely, worried, unsafe, hurt or embarrassed!

If you are being bullied or abused it is not your fault.

If this is happening try to:

- Be firm and tell the person to stop – make a lot of noise to attract attention.
- Get away from the situation quickly, go to a public place to find help or call the police (999).
- Tell your parents / carers , Club Welfare Officer or an adult you can trust what has happened as soon as possible, so they can help you.
- Keep a record of the date, time and place, what happened, how you felt and the name of anyone who may have seen what happened.
- Call your Club Welfare Officer or use the 24 hr free telephone helplines - **Childline 0800 111** or **NSPCC 0800 800 5000**.

Keeping Safe

To keep safe always:

- Tell someone you can trust so they can help you.
- Trust your instincts about the people you meet.
- Avoid being alone or with just one other person.
- Travel with a friend, avoid traveling in someone else's car by yourself.

If any of the above happens to you, do not wait for it to happen again, act immediately.