



# Child Protection Policy Guidance

Effective Date 1.10.05  
Version 1

## 1. Introduction

This World Croquet Federation Policy Guidance requires all WCF Member Associations to adopt a Child Protection policy and appoint a Child Protection Officer no later than 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006. Someone with other responsibilities may hold the post. All WCF Member Associations are encouraged to have their own member associations or clubs adopt a similar policy.

The United Nations Convention on the rights of the Child requires signatories to ensure that children and young people under the age of 18 years are protected from harm and exploitation. Only two nations have so far failed to sign the convention, and one of those has passed laws that are consistent with the convention, to protect children.

As the sport of croquet develops in the world, it is inevitable that children and young people will become attracted to it. This guidance assists WCF Member Associations in identifying key aspects of the care that will be required for the safeguarding of children and young people.

The sport crosses many national boundaries where customs, culture and ethical differences are apparent, it will be impossible for the Policy Guidance to cover all local legal arrangements that may apply. However the Policy Guidance provides the basis of a concerted approach for the protection and safeguarding of children.

All WCF Members Associations must ensure that:-

- 1.1 The welfare of the child is paramount;
- 1.2 All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse;
- 1.3 All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
- 1.4 All staff (paid/unpaid) working in sport have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer.

This Policy Guidance is transferable to all those situations where children play or train with a club or, are being coached as part of a WCF approved development programme.

This Policy includes guidance on related issues for clubs.

This Policy recognises that club staff and volunteers are **not** trained to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred, nor is there any intention to circumvent other trained professionals in this field.

## 2. Scope

This will apply to all WCF Member Associations and their member clubs and associations.

## 3. Compliance

- 3.1 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- 3.2 WCF General Meeting 9<sup>th</sup> August 2005

## 4. Related Documentation

- 4.1 WCFCP Form 1 Under Age Release and Indemnity
- 4.2 WCFCP Form 2 Child Protection Medical Information

## 5. Input Responsibilities

|                                                                       |                                           |                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Appointment of Child Protection Officer                               |                                           | WCF Member Association |
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## 6. Output Responsibilities

|                              |                                                          |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Agreed and understood Policy | WCF Member Association and club Child Protection Officer |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|

## 7. Definitions and Revisions

|             |                                 |                                                       |
|-------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Definitions | Child                           | Any person under 18 years of age                      |
|             | Club                            | A club that is a member of the WCF Member Association |
|             | Local legal authority           | Police or Social Services or similar organisation     |
| Revisions   | Effective 1.10.05.<br>Version 1 | 1. Original Version                                   |

## 8. Index

9. Policy Statement and aims
10. Promoting good practice
11. Good practice guidelines
12. Use of photographic and filming equipment
13. Recruitment and training of staff and volunteers
14. Responding to allegations or suspicions
15. The Coaches Charter
16. Club Guidelines
17. Common signs of Abuse
18. Checklist for Day trips and Overnight Stays
19. Checking of Criminal Convictions

## 9. Policy statement and aims

WCF Member Associations and their own associations and clubs have a duty of care to safeguard all children involved with them from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. WCF Member Associations will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in their own member Clubs or Associations through adherence to this Child Protection Policy Guidance adopted by WCF.

The aim of the WCF Child Protection Policy Guidance is to promote good practice:

- 9.1 Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of WCF Member Association or club;
- 9.2 Allow all staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

## 10 Promoting good practice

- 10.1 Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about the appropriate action to take. Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them. A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer will have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where they need



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protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.

- 10.2 When a child enters a club having been subjected to child abuse outside the sporting environment, sport can play a crucial role in improving the child's self-esteem. In such instances the club must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the child receives the required support.
- 10.3 All WCF Member Associations MUST appoint a senior person as a Child Protection Officer who will take responsibility for the local operation of this Policy Guidance or similar locally adopted specific Directions, Policy and Guidance issued by the relevant Member Association.

## 11. Good practice guidelines

All Member Association, their clubs and their personnel are encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

### Good practice means:

- 11.1 Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- 11.2 Treating all young people/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
- 11.3 Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals.
- 11.4 Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with players (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them).
- 11.5 Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process;
- 11.6 Making sport fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.
- 11.7 Ensuring that if any form of manual or physical support is required, it should be provided openly and according to established coaching guidelines. Care is needed, as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when the child is constantly moving. Young people should always be consulted and their agreement gained. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about manual support and their views should always be carefully considered.
- 11.8 Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance in sport.
- 11.9 Involving parents/carers wherever possible. For example, encouraging them to take responsibility for their children in the changing rooms.
- 11.10 If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure parents, teachers, coaches or officials work in pairs.
- 11.11 Ensuring that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff. However, remember that same gender abuse can also occur.
- 11.12 Ensuring that at tournaments or residential events, adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms.
- 11.13 Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- 11.14 Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- 11.15 Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- 11.16 Securing parental consent in writing to act in “loco parentis”, if the need arises, to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment by use of WCF Form 2 Child Protection Medical Information.



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- 11.17 Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- 11.18 Requesting written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars.

## Practices to be avoided

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable it should be with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the club or the child's parents. For example, a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session:-

- 11.19 Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- 11.20 Avoid taking or dropping off a child to an event

## Practices **never** to be sanctioned

The following should never be sanctioned. You should never:

- 11.21 Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- 11.22 Share a room with a child.
- 11.23 Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- 11.24 Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- 11.25 Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- 11.26 Reduce a child to tears as a form of control.
- 11.27 Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- 11.28 Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults that they can do for themselves.
- 11.29 Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

Note. It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the players involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him or her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a child to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

## Incidents that must be reported/recorded

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to another colleague and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed:-

- 11.30 If you accidentally hurt a player.
- 11.31 If he/she seems distressed in any manner.
- 11.32 If a player appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.
- 11.33 If a player misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

## **12. Use of photographic and filming equipment at sporting events**

- 12.1 "Sporting events" mean matches, training or coaching sessions.
- 12.2 There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled sportspeople in vulnerable positions. All WCF Member Associations should be vigilant and any concerns should be reported to the WCF Member Association Child Protection Officer.



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- 12.3 If you are commissioning a professional photographer or inviting the press to an event, it is important that they understand your expectations of them in relation to child protection. You should:
- 12.3.1 Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of their behaviour and the content of the photography.
  - 12.3.2 Issue them with identification, which they must display at all times.
  - 12.3.3 Inform athletes and parents that a photographer will be present at the event and ensure they consent to filming and/or photography and to its publication.
  - 12.3.4 Do not allow photographers unsupervised access to child athletes or one-to-one photo sessions during the event.
  - 12.3.5 Do not approve photo sessions outside the events or at a participant's home.
  - 12.3.6 You must obtain permission for the filming/photographs to be taken both from the subjects and their parents/carers by use of WCFCP Form 1 Under Age Release and Indemnity.
- 12.4 There is no intention to prevent club coaches and others using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, children and their parents or carers should be made aware that this is part of the coaching programme and such films should be stored safely.

## **13. Recruitment and training of staff and volunteers**

WCF Member Associations must recognise that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children.

Pre-selection checks must include the following:

- 13.1 All club staff that will be appointed to posts after the adoption of this Policy Guidance and who will have substantial or unsupervised access to children should complete an application form.
- 13.2 The application form will elicit information about an applicant's past and a self-disclosure about any criminal record. (see 19 below)
- 13.3 Two confidential references, including one regarding previous work with children. These references must be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact.
- 13.4 Evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo).

### Interview and Induction

All employees (and volunteers) must be required to undergo an interview carried out to acceptable protocol and recommendations. All employees and volunteers should receive formal or informal induction, during which:-

- 13.5 A check should be made that the application form has been completed in full (including sections on criminal records and self-disclosures).
- 13.6 Their qualifications should be substantiated.
- 13.7 The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified.
- 13.8 They should sign up to the organisation's Code of Ethics and Conduct.
- 13.9 Child protection procedures are explained and training needs are identified.

### Training

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:

- 13.10 Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations.



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- 13.11 Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.
- 13.12 Respond to concerns expressed by a child or young person.

## Work safely effectively with children.

The WCF Policy Guidance requires:

- 13.13 All relevant staff to attend a recognised good practice and child protection awareness training workshop, to ensure their practice is exemplary and to facilitate the development of a positive culture towards good practice and child protection.
- 13.14 Non-coaching staff and volunteers to complete recognised awareness training on child protection.
- 13.15 Relevant personnel to receive advisory information outlining good practice and informing them about what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person.
- 13.16 Relevant personnel to gain a national first aid training certificate where necessary.
- 13.17 Attend update training when necessary.

## **14 Responding to allegations or suspicions**

It is **not** the responsibility of anyone working in WCF Member Associations, in a paid or unpaid capacity, to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place.

However there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate local legal authority.

WCF Member Associations will assure all staff and volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

- 14.1 A criminal investigation,
- 14.2 A child protection investigation,
- 14.3 A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the local legal authority and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

### Action if there are concerns

- 14.4 Concerns about poor practice:
  - 14.4.1 If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice; the WCF Member Association or Club Child Protection Officer will deal with it as a misconduct issue.
  - 14.4.2 If the allegation is about poor practice by the Club Child Protection Officer, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the relevant Club Senior Manager who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate club disciplinary proceedings.
  - 14.4.3 In addition, notice must be given to WCF of the allegation so that, if necessary, this WCF Child Protection Policy Guidance can be revised.



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- 14.5 Concerns about suspected abuse
- 14.5.1 Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the WCF Member Association or Club Child Protection Officer, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
- 14.5.2 The WCF Member Association or Club Child Protection Officer will refer the allegation to the appropriate local legal authority.
- 14.5.3 The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the appropriate legal authority.
- 14.5.4 The WCF Member Association Child Protection Officer should also notify WCF.
- 14.5.5 If the WCF Member Association or Club Child Protection Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the appropriate Manager of the WCF Member Association.
- 14.6 Confidentiality
- 14.6.1 Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people:
- 14.6.1.1 The WCF Member Association or Club Child Protection Officer.
- 14.6.1.2 The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused.
- 14.6.1.3 The person making the allegation.
- 14.6.1.4 Local legal authority.
- 14.6.1.5 WCF.
- 14.6.1.6 The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child).
- 14.6.1.7 Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with local data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).
- 14.7 Internal Enquiries and Suspension
- 14.7.1 The WCF Member Association or Club Child Protection Officer will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further local legal authority inquiries.
- 14.7.2 Irrespective of the findings of the local legal authority inquiries, the WCF Member Association or Club Senior Manager will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the local legal authority. In such cases, the WCF Member Association or Club must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.
- 14.8 Support to deal with the aftermath of abuse:
- 14.8.1 Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children, parents and members of staff may need. Use of helplines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. It is recommended that support



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- groups be identified by each WCF Member Association to give assistance and counselling should it be required.
- 14.8.2 Consideration should be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged perpetrator.
- 14.9 Allegations of previous abuse
- 14.9.1 Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children).
- 14.9.2 Where such an allegation is made, the WCF Member Association or club should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the local legal authority. This is because other children, either within or outside sport, may be at risk from the alleged perpetrator.
- 14.10 Action if bullying is suspected
- 14.10.1 If bullying is suspected, the same procedure should be followed as set out in 'Responding to suspicions or allegations' above.
- 14.10.2 Action to help the victim and prevent bullying in sport:
- 14.10.3 Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- 14.10.4 Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns. Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority. Create an open environment.
- 14.10.5 Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully(ies) separately.
- 14.10.6 Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else.
- 14.10.7 Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).
- 14.10.8 Report any concerns to the WCF Member Association or Club Child Protection Officer or the school (wherever the bullying is occurring).
- 14.11 Action towards the bully(ies):
- 14.11.1 Talk with the bully(ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully(ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s).
- 14.11.2 Inform the bully's parents.
- 14.11.3 Insist on the return of 'borrowed' items and that the bully(ies) compensate the victim.
- 14.11.4 Provide support for the victim's coach.
- 14.11.5 Impose sanctions as necessary.
- 14.11.6 Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour.
- 14.11.7 Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.
- 14.11.8 Inform all organisation members of action taken.
- 14.11.9 Keep a written record of action taken.
- 14.12 Concerns outside the immediate sporting environment (e.g. a parent or carer):
- 14.12.1 Report your concerns to the WCF Member Association or Club Child Protection Officer, who should contact the local legal authority as soon as possible.
- 14.12.2 See 14.13 below for the information the local legal authority will need.
- 14.12.3 If the WCF Member Association or Club Child Protection Officer is not available, the person being told of or discovering the abuse should contact the local legal authority immediately. They will decide how to involve the parents/carers. The WCF Member





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Association or Club Child Protection Officer should also report the incident to WCF. The WCF Member Association should ascertain whether or not the person/s involved in the incident play a role in other WCF Member Associations and act accordingly.

14.12.4 Maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis only.

14.13 Information for the local legal authority about suspected abuse:

14.13.1 To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

14.13.1.1 The child's name, age and date of birth of the child.

14.13.1.2 The child's home address and telephone number.

14.13.1.3 Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.

14.13.1.4 The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.

14.13.1.5 Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.

14.13.1.6 A description of any visible bruising or other injuries.

14.13.1.7 Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.

14.13.1.8 Details of witnesses to the incidents.

14.13.1.9 The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.

14.13.1.10 Have the parents been contacted?

14.13.1.11 If so what has been said?

14.13.1.12 Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.

14.13.1.13 If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so what was said? Remember it is **not** the job of WCF Member Association or Club staff to investigate.

14.13.1.14 Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.

14.13.1.15 Where possible referral to the local legal authority should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.

14.13.1.16 If you are worried about sharing concerns about abuse with a senior colleague.

## 15 The Coaches Charter

15.1 Coaches must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat everyone equally within the context of their sport.

15.2 Coaches must place the well-being and safety of the child above the development of performance. They should follow all guidelines laid down by this Policy Guidance and hold appropriate insurance cover.

15.3 Coaches must develop an appropriate working relationship with children, based on mutual trust and respect.

15.4 Coaches must not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward.

15.5 Coaches must encourage and guide children to accept responsibility for their own behaviour.

15.6 Coaches should hold up-to-date nationally recognised croquet coaching qualifications.

15.7 Coaches must ensure the activities they direct or advocate are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of the individual.



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- 15.8 Coaches should at the outset, clarify with children, and where appropriate their parents, exactly what is expected of them and what they are entitled to expect from their coach.
- 15.9 Coaches should co-operate fully with other specialists (e.g. other coaches, officials, sport scientists, doctors, physiotherapists) in the best interest of the child.
- 15.10 Coaches should always promote the positive aspects of their sport (e.g. fair play) and never condone rule violations or the use of prohibited substances.
- 15.11 Coaches must consistently display high standards of behaviour and appearance.

## 16 **Club Guidelines**

Here are some practical ways for your organisation to help safeguard the children and young people who take part in your activities:

### 16.1 Staff ratios

Staff/participant ratios should be based on the age of the children involved, the degree of risk the activity involves, and whether there are disability needs. The lower the age of the participants, the greater the need for supervision. If the activity is mixed gender, male and female staff should be available

### 16.2 Changing rooms

16.2.1 When children and young people use changing rooms, they should be supervised by two members of staff. Adult staff should not change or shower at the same time using the same facilities. For mixed gender activities, separate facilities should be available for boys and girls.

16.2.2 If a child feels uncomfortable changing or showering in public, no pressure should be placed on them to do so. Instead, they should be encouraged to shower or change at home.

16.2.3 If children with disabilities use your club, make sure they and their carers are involved in deciding how they should be assisted. Ensure they are able to consent to the assistance that is offered.

### 16.3 Injuries and illness

All WCF Member Associations, their club and associations must complete report forms for any injuries children sustain during activities. Where a member of staff witnesses an injury the parents must be told as soon as possible. If the child needs medical attention you must arrange this immediately and inform the parents/carers as soon as possible. You should always ensure you have up-to-date contact details at sports activities or events and information about any relevant medical conditions.

### 16.4 Collection by parents/carers

Each Club MUST develop and publicise policies about the collection of children and young people from sports activities. These policies should be based on the age of the children and the location, time and type of activity. Make sure you receive permission from parents/carers for children and young people to participate in any of the games, competitions, training or practice sessions you run. You should provide a timetable of activities at the beginning of the season. You should also notify parents/carers of any changes to this timetable in writing.



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## 16.5 Late collection of children

Late collection of children by parents presents clubs and coaches with a potentially difficult situation. Each WCF Member Association Club **MUST** develop written guidelines for parents explaining your policy for dealing with late collection of children.

The guidelines should:

- 16.5.1 Make clear that it is not your organisation's responsibility to transport children home on behalf of parents who have been delayed.
- 16.5.2 Include a staff contact number and an instruction to parents/carers to phone if there is any likelihood of late collection.
- 16.5.3 Ask parents to provide an alternative contact name or number, for staff to use when they are not available on their usual number.

In cases of late collection, staff and volunteers:

### **16.5.4 SHOULD:**

- 16.5.4.1 Attempt to contact the child's parent or carer on their contact number.
- 16.5.4.2 Use the alternative contact name/number if necessary.
- 16.5.4.3 Wait with the child/young person at the sport facility, with other staff/volunteers or parents present if at all possible;
- 16.5.4.4 Remind parents/carers of the policy relating to late collection.

### **16.5.5 SHOULD NOT:**

- 16.5.5.1 Take the child home or to any other location;
- 16.5.5.2 Send the child home with another person without permission from a parent or carer.
- 16.5.5.3 Ask the child to wait in a vehicle or sport facility with you alone.

## 16.6 Discipline

When discipline is used it should be with the clear intention of teaching or reinforcing appropriate behaviour. It must not be used impulsively, to gain power, or to embarrass or humiliate a child/young person.

Discipline should be used only to:

- 16.6.1 Develop a sense of responsibility for behaviour;
- 16.6.2 Develop respect for others and their property;
- 16.6.3 Reinforce the rules or values of the sport;
- 16.6.4 Reinforce positive behaviour or attitudes;
- 16.6.5 Reinforce awareness of health and safety aspects of the activity.

## 16.7 Physical contact

Coaching croquet may require a degree of physical contact between sports staff and children or young people. Coaches and staff may need to use it to instruct, encourage, protect or comfort. Each Club should develop and publicise clear guidelines about physical contact, so that adults and children/young people understand what are the appropriate types of touching and their appropriate contexts.



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Physical contact during sport should always be intended to meet the child's needs, NOT the adult's. The adult should only use physical contact if their aim is to:

- 16.7.1 Develop sports skills or techniques;
- 16.7.2 To treat an injury;
- 16.7.3 To prevent an injury;
- 16.7.4 To meet the requirements of the sport.
- 16.7.5 The adult should explain the reason for the physical contact to the child. Unless the situation is an emergency, the adult should ask the child for permission.
- 16.7.6 The contact should not involve touching genital areas, buttocks or breasts.
- 16.7.7 Physical contact should not take place in secret or out of sight of others.
- 16.7.8 All injuries should be fully recorded by staff.

## 16.8 Sexual activity

Within sport, as within other activities, sexual relationships do occur. All WCF Member Associations should therefore be aware of the applicable law operating within their own jurisdictions relating to sexual behaviour and should develop and promote guidelines relating to sexual activity. These guidelines should address sexual activity both between children and young people and between adults and young people.

- 16.8.1 **Sexual activity between children/young people involved in sport** should be prohibited during club events, in sports facilities or social activities organised by the WCF Member Association or Club. Inappropriate or criminal sexual behaviour committed by a young person may lead to disciplinary action in accordance with the WCF Member Association rules.
- 16.8.2 **Sexual interactions between adults and young people over the age of sexual consent but under 18 involved in sport** raise serious issues given the power imbalance inherent in the relationship. Where a young person is of the age of consent the power of the adult over that young person may influence their ability to genuinely consent to sexual activity. A coach or other adult in a position of authority may have significant power or influence over a young person's career.
- 16.8.3 Sexual activity between adults and such young people involved in the same sport should be prohibited when the adult is in a position of trust or authority (coach, trainer, official). Inappropriate or criminal sexual behaviour committed by an adult should lead to suspension and disciplinary action in accordance with the sports governing body guidance.
- 16.8.4 **Sexual activity between adults and children under the age of sexual consent** is normally a criminal act in any country and immediate action must be taken to report it to the local legal authority.

## 16.9 Participants with disabilities

- 16.9.1 Children or young people with disabilities should have the same rights and opportunities as others involved in sport to have fun and be safe. Their particular vulnerability to abuse or neglect requires sports clubs/organisations to take additional steps to safeguard them.
- 16.9.2 Information relating to club policies and procedures should be fully accessible to children and young people with communication difficulties.
- 16.9.3 Specialist training or advice should be sought by clubs/organisations that involve children/young people with disabilities in sport. For example, when staff need to guide blind or partially sighted children,



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training will help ensure that they use the most appropriate methods. If training is not available, ask the child for advice or seek the advice of parents or carers.

16.9.4 When transporting child with disabilities, the vehicles used should meet the needs of the children and be roadworthy. Appropriate and trained escorts should be in attendance in the vehicle.

16.9.5 When children with disabilities are lifted or manually supported, the individual child should be treated with dignity and respect. Relevant health and safety guidelines must be followed to ensure the safety of the child and those assisting. It is recommended that those assisting do receive appropriate training.

## 16.10 Listening to Children

16.10.1 Coaches and other sports staff are in a position of trust and influence with children and young people. They are ideally placed to recognise if a child is being abused, whether during sports activities, at home, or in the community.

16.10.2 But remember it is **not** your responsibility to decide if a child is being abused. Your role is to **act** on any concerns you may have.

16.10.3 Failing to respond to concerns or responding in contravention of this Policy Guidance could have serious implications for the future handling of a case.

16.10.4 If a child tries to talk to you about something that is worrying them, it is important to listen carefully and respond sensitively:

16.10.5 If the child tells you about abuse they are experiencing, listen carefully to what they tell you.

16.10.6 Don't ask direct questions. Avoid 'Who?', 'What?', 'When?', 'Where?'

16.10.7 Encourage them to talk - 'Do you want to tell me about this?' - but do not pressurise them.

16.10.8 Keep calm and even if you find what they are saying difficult or painful keep listening.

16.10.9 Be honest with them about what you can and cannot do. Tell them you are not able to keep what they have told you secret and that you will try to find them the help they need.

16.10.10 When they have finished make a detailed note of what they have said.

16.10.11 As soon as possible, pass the information to someone in a position of authority within the WCF Member Association or Club – club secretary, chairman, or senior coach.

16.10.12 Do not contact or confront the alleged abuser.

16.10.13 Find someone you trust to talk to about the situation or to support you but remember not to name or identify those involved in the allegations.

16.10.14 If you have **serious concerns about the immediate safety** of the child, contact the local legal authority. Record the name of the person you spoke to and tell your club official what you have done.



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## 17 Common Signs of Abuse

- 17.1 Every child is unique, so behavioural signs of abuse will vary from child to child. In addition, the impact of abuse is likely to be influenced by the child's age, the nature and extent of the abuse, and the help and support the child receives. However, there are some behaviours that are commonly seen in children and young people who have been abused:
- 17.2 The child appears distrustful of a particular adult, or a parent or a coach with whom you would expect there to be a close relationship.
- 17.3 He or she has unexplained injuries such as bruising, bites or burns - particularly if these are on a part of the body where you would not expect them.
- 17.4 If he or she has an injury which is not explained satisfactorily or properly treated.
- 17.5 A deterioration in his or her physical appearance or a rapid weight gain or loss.
- 17.6 Pains, itching, bruising, or bleeding in or near the genital area.
- 17.7 A change in the child's general behaviour. For example, they may become unusually quiet and withdrawn, or unexpectedly aggressive. Such changes can be sudden or gradual.
- 17.8 If he or she refuses to remove clothing for normal activities or wants to keep covered up in warm weather.
- 17.9 If he or she shows inappropriate sexual awareness or behaviour for their age.
- 17.10 Some disabled children may not be able to communicate verbally about abuse that they may be experiencing or have witnessed. It is therefore important to observe these children for signs other than 'telling'.
- 17.11 Remember that the above signs should be seen as a possible indication of abuse and not as a confirmation. Changes in a child's behaviour can be the result of a wide range of factors. Even visible signs such as bruising or other injuries cannot be taken as proof of abuse. For example some disabled children may show extreme changes in behaviour, or be more accident prone, as a result of their impairment. However, if you are concerned about a child or young person **you have a responsibility to act** on those concerns.
- 17.12 A child or young person may also try to tell you directly about abuse. It is very important to listen carefully and respond sensitively.
- 17.13 Taking action  
You should:
- 17.13.1 Record carefully any signs of possible abuse that you have observed.  
Pass this information to a person in a position of authority within your sport – club secretary, chairman, or senior coach.
- 17.13.2 Talk to someone in your club about your concerns.



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## 18. Checklist for Day Trips or Overnight Stays

|                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Purpose of the trip        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Competition, training, social, combination</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Planning                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When</li><li>• Where</li><li>• Who</li><li>• Risk assessment of the activity</li></ul>                                                                                                                               |
| Communication with parents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pick up times</li><li>• Destination and venue</li><li>• Competition details</li><li>• Kit and equipment list</li><li>• Emergency procedures, home contact</li><li>• Consent form</li><li>• Code of conduct</li></ul> |
| Accommodation              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What type</li><li>• Catering special diets, allergies</li><li>• Suitability for group, accessibility</li><li>• Room lists</li></ul>                                                                                  |
| Transport                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Journey times and stopping points</li><li>• Supervision</li><li>• Suitability and accessibility</li><li>• Drivers checked</li><li>• Insurance</li></ul>                                                              |
| Supervision and staffing   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ratio of staff to athletes</li><li>• Male/female</li><li>• Specialist carers</li><li>• Responsibilities</li></ul>                                                                                                    |
| Emergency procedures       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First aid</li><li>• Specific medical details, allergies</li><li>• Reporting procedures</li><li>• Home contact details</li></ul>                                                                                      |
| Insurance                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Liability</li><li>• Accident</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                               |



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## Costs

- For travel
- Payment schedule – deposit, staged payment
- Extra meals, refreshments
- Spending money
- Security

## Arrival

- Check rooms, meal times, phones, valuables
- Check sporting venue
- Collect in money, valuables
- Information on medications
- Arrange group meetings
- Confirm procedures with staff
- Rules, curfews

## 19 Checking of Criminal Convictions

- 19.1 In some countries, if WCF Member Associations or Clubs knowingly appoint a person where a ban exists they will be committing a criminal offence and they are encouraged to report their concerns to the local legal authority.
- 19.2 Where a person is likely to have unsupervised access to children they must where possible, be checked with the local legal authority.
- 19.3 The following posts are automatically deemed to be posts where a criminal conviction check SHOULD take place:-
- 19.3.1 WCF Member Association or Club Child Protection Officer;
  - 19.3.2 Junior Development Officer;
  - 19.3.3 Coach;
  - 19.3.4 Assistant Coach;
  - 19.3.5 Physiotherapist.
  - 19.3.6 There may be other posts that should be assessed within the normal working practice of WCF Member Associations or clubs as posts where the holder may have unsupervised access to children.
- 19.4 Current post holders will not normally be checked unless there are compelling grounds to do so.
- 19.5 All new applicants for a post MUST be checked after they have been successful at application stage but prior to them commencing employment or undertaking their role.
- 19.6 Checks should not be speculatively carried out.
- 19.7 To assist in the advertising process the following wording is recommended for use by WCF Member Associations or Clubs:- "From (date) the [ ..... Croquet Association] or [ ..... Club] adopted a Child Protection Policy. This policy will ensure that the Association/Club takes all necessary steps to promote a safe atmosphere for all those children and young people involved in croquet. This post involves substantial access to children. As an organisation we are committed to the welfare and protection of children and all applications to work with us in either a voluntary or paid capacity will involve a Criminal Record check."

**End of Child Protection Policy Guidance**