

National Association of Swimming Clubs For the Handicapped



CHILD AND VULNERABLE PERSONS PROTECTION POLICY

NASCH recognises its legal duty to work with other agencies in protecting children and vulnerable people from harm and abuse. Incidences of physical and emotional abuse occur across all socio-economic groups. Protection is a matter of great importance and Clubs should play an important role in overseeing the welfare, health and safety of members. Clubs need to be well prepared to carry out their responsibilities for child and vulnerable person protection. It is necessary to have clear procedures in place to address situations where the Club Committee has concerns for a child or vulnerable person's welfare, or disclosures are made by a child or vulnerable person.

In order to promote the safety and protection of children and vulnerable people in the Club and to comply with current regulations, the Club Committee will refer any concerns about the well being of its members to Social Services.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. All children and vulnerable people have the right to be protected from abuse.
2. The interests and safety of the child and vulnerable person are of prime concern at all times. In instances where there is a conflict of interest between the child and vulnerable person and anyone in loco parentis i.e. the Club Committee during Club activities, the interest of the child and vulnerable person must be paramount. The Children's Act, 1989, Section 3(5) states that:-

'A person who does not have parental responsibility for a particular child but has care of the child, may (subject to the provisions of the Act) do what is reasonable in all the circumstances of the case for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare'.

3. A child or vulnerable person is considered to be abused, or at risk of abuse, when his/her basic needs are not being met, through avoidable acts or omissions. This includes neglect and physical, emotional and sexual abuse.
4. Once child or vulnerable person abuse is suspected, the aim should be to minimise damage to the child or vulnerable person and promote recovery.
5. All Clubs shall appoint a Child and Vulnerable Person Protection Officer who shall be appointed as a member of the Club Committee and be made known to all Club Members.

PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED IF ABUSE IS SUSPECTED

1. In every case of suspected child or vulnerable person abuse, the Child and Vulnerable Person Protection Officer will inform Social Services, and the Police making a clear statement of:
 - the known facts
 - any suspicions or allegations
 - whether or not there has been any contact with the child or vulnerable person's family

Out of working hours, child and vulnerable person protection referrals will be received by the Emergency Duty Service, which may also be contacted via the Police.

2. An accurate record of all that has happened must be made, stating the facts of any injury, times, explanations and actions taken.
3. The Child and Vulnerable Person Protection Officer will confirm in writing to Social Services the actions that have been taken.
4. The Club should not notify or make enquiries of anyone involved when abuse is suspected, even if the child or vulnerable person has been taken to hospital. Social Services become responsible for whatever action is taken and will advise the Club so that the Child and Vulnerable Person Protection Officer is able to respond to parents appropriately.
5. If the suspected abuse is sexual, no attempt should be made to arrange or allow medical examination until discussions have taken place with Social Services. However, when a child or vulnerable person is in need of urgent medical attention and there is suspicion of abuse, the Child and Vulnerable Person Protection Officer (CPO) should take the child or vulnerable person to the Accident and Emergency Department of the nearest hospital, having first informed Social Services.

GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH DISCLOSURES MADE BY CHILD AND VULNERABLE PERSONS

Under no circumstances should a child or vulnerable person be questioned if they have disclosed information, which raises concerns. When information is offered in confidence, the recipient will need to display tact and sensitivity in responding to the disclosure. The CPO will need to reassure the child or vulnerable person, retain his/her trust and explain the need for action, which will involve other adults being informed. If a child or vulnerable person discloses abuse, the child or vulnerable person should not have to repeat the information to different people.

The CPO who receives information from a child or vulnerable person alleging abuse must not ask questions or proffer alternative explanations for the child or vulnerable person's concerns. The child or vulnerable person's report must be listened to carefully and recorded accurately, in the language used by the child or vulnerable person, at the earliest opportunity following its receipt. Any discussions with the child or vulnerable person should adhere to the following basic principles:

Listen to the child or vulnerable person, rather than directly question him/her.
Never stop a child or vulnerable person who is recalling significant events.
Make a note of the discussion, taking care to record the timing, setting and personnel present, as well as what was said.
Record all subsequent disclosures/events.

1. In the event of a child or vulnerable person disclosing information which causes concern, the CPO should discuss this with the Social Services at the earliest opportunity. All such information should be treated as confidential.
2. Written concerns or reports of disclosures should be handed to the CPO and placed in a named, sealed envelope marked 'confidential'.
3. The CPO will ensure that all information relating to Child and Vulnerable Person Protection is retained in a secure filing system. Such information will not be released to unauthorised persons.

Approved by NASCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: 18 September 2004

National Association of Swimming Clubs For the Handicapped



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

The Association and the affiliated Clubs belonging to the Association, will not discriminate in any way against any person, for the reason of country, class, gender, ethnicity, religion or disability. Any person may join an affiliated Club providing that they abide by the Club rules as agreed by the Constitution and Club Committee.

The right to deal with anyone contraveing this policy should be dealt with via Constitution of the Club.

Approved by NASCH Committee ... 18 September 2004.....



The Health & Safety at work act Section 2 Part 3 places a statutory duty on all Clubs to provide written Information to all Club Helpers/Members.

The Normal Club Pool Operation Policy underpins this document.

HEALTH & SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

No.1. To provide a Safe & Healthy environment for your Club Session.

No.2. To provide Information, Instruction, Training and Supervision to ensure Health & Safety for all Club Members/ Members.

No3. To maintain suitable records & updating of same.

No 4 All Club Members/Helpers must follow all Health & Safety Guidelines at all times.

No 5. All Club Members/Helpers must take all reasonable care for the Health & Safety for themselves and others.

No.6. Use correctly all Equipment and follow a safe system of practices in accordance with Training & Instruction provided.

No.7. Must advise POOL manager/Club Organiser of any faults or situations, which may represent possible Problems or Danger.

23 - 3 - 03

National Association of Swimming Clubs For the Handicapped



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Bullying is behaviour which hurts, frightens or threatens an individual. This could be physical, psychological, verbal or emotional and the effects can be longstanding. Bullying can be carried out over a period of time by individuals or groups against anyone of any age or gender. **THIS BEHAVIOUR IS UNACCEPTABLE.** In order to create a happy, safe and secure swimming and club environment for all members of the club, it is essential to ensure that bullying in any form is not tolerated.

We expect all club members to support the club Committee in dealing with any bullying and or aggressive behaviour.

AIMS

1. To ensure that the ethos of the Club promotes a respectful, caring and sympathetic attitude toward the welfare of all Club members.
2. To prevent unacceptable, aggressive behaviour in support of the Club members.
3. To recognise that the prevention of bullying at an early stage is part of the Club Committee's responsibility
4. To ensure that all Club members feel secure in reporting incidents to the Committee.
5. To deal with any bullying incidents promptly, fairly and appropriately.
6. To ensure that all parties involved are notified of incidents and actions taken at the earliest opportunity.

A member of the Committee shall be appointed to investigate any reported cases of bullying.

He/she shall report to the Committee the results of the investigation. A decision on any action needed, will be taken by the Club Committee.

Approved by NASCH Committee ... 18 September 2004.....