



Child Protection Policy & Procedures.

Based on RYA guidelines.

April 2002
revised March 2008

Contents

Guidance Notes

Protecting children from inappropriate behaviour
Policy statement

A code of practice & procedures
 Recruitment
 Prevention of abuse
 What to do if abuse is alleged to have occurred

Recording information

Recognising abuse
 Physical abuse
 Neglect
 Sexual abuse
 Emotional abuse
 Bullying

How would I recognise if a child is being abused?

What should I do if I have general concerns?

Where can I get further help?

Templates

Application form	template A
Standard reference letter	template B
Standard reference form	template C
Self-declaration form	template D
Medical consent form	template E
Handout for all instructors and volunteers	template P
Recording information	template Q

Reporting procedures

Advice for instructors, staff & volunteers	template Y
Advice for TCs, Clubs & Class Associations	template Z

Protecting children from inappropriate behaviour

Reviewed 04/02

RYA Recognised Training centres (TCs) will be required to put a formal child protection policy in place by the 2003 season. If your club is not a TC but provides training or activities for young people, it is recommended you consider putting a similar policy in place. Even if you do not provide training, it is a good idea for sailing clubs to be aware of child protection issues. In addition many funding bodies will require you to have a working Child Protection Policy and Procedures in place. The Lottery Sports Fund has required this since April 2001.

Your organisation is advised to take the following 2 steps :

1. **A policy statement.** This will state your commitment to providing a safe place for children to take part and/or learn, and to preventing the abuse of children. You can use or adapt the RYA Policy Statement below, if you wish.
2. **A simple code of practice and procedures** governing how the organisation runs. This should cover:
 - (i) Recruitment of staff or volunteers who will be in contact with children
 - (ii) The prevention of abuse of children whilst at your site
 - (iii) What to do if abuse is alleged/suspected to have occurred, either at your site or elsewhere.

1. Policy Statement

Reviewed 04/01

This is a statement defining your organisation's stance on child protection issues. It should define what your organisation is committed to in providing a safe environment for children.

The RYA Policy Statement on Child Protection is as follows:

- The child's welfare is paramount.
- All children whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity, have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of inappropriate behaviour will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- As defined in the Children Act 1989, anyone under the age of 18 years should be considered as a child for the purposes of this document.

2. A code of practice & procedures

- 2(i) Recruitment (paid staff and volunteers)
- 2(ii) Prevention of abuse
- 2(iii) What to do if abuse is suspected / alleged to have occurred

2(i) Recruitment (paid staff and volunteers)

Reviewed 03/02

All applications for work, whether paid staff or volunteers, should be subject to some form of scrutiny. If you use application forms they should be designed to elicit information about the applicant's past career or experience (requiring explanations for any gaps) and to establish any criminal record.

See template A for sample application form

Where staff will be working unsupervised or where parents are not in attendance, references should be taken up. Normally these should include at least one regarding previous work with children. Referees should be clear about what the job entails and what information is required.

See templates B and C for sample reference request and forms

Treat all who would be paid staff and volunteers as job applicants for any position involving contact with children. Select people who have the relevant experience for the role.

Explore the applicant's experience of working with children.

Find out if the applicant has any conviction for criminal offences against children. Although positive vetting is not specifically recommended, applicants should signify their consent to checks being made with the Criminal Records Bureau, police or social services, if appropriate.

See template D for sample self-declaration form

Good Recruitment Practice

If a good recruitment policy is adopted, and the issue of child protection covered in the organisation's risk assessment, both children and staff should be adequately protected. Abusers have great difficulty operating in a well-run organisation, with good quality management and training.

The Criminal Records Bureau

Whilst being able to access criminal records can be seen as a positive move for organisations in the private and voluntary sectors, it is important not to see it in isolation. The CRB has been set up to increase access to information, in order to help provide protection for children and vulnerable people against those who might wish to harm them. The aim is to make justifiable levels of information available to people responsible for recruitment decisions so that they can decide for themselves if someone has an unsuitable background. Checks can only be accessed for the selected candidate, not to help shortlist.

On a matter of policy, having regard to the good record of the sport and the relatively low risk of child abuse within the sport, the RYA does not consider it appropriate to seek Disclosure Certificates from the CRB in all cases of new volunteers or staff being taken on. Because sailing is a sport needing years of experience, individuals tend to be reasonably well-known within the sailing community. A mismatch between a person's declared sailing history and their demonstrated sailing capability, or a newcomer to the area, may be cause for further investigation. As well as taking up references, one or two discreet phone calls through the sailing network may be all that is needed to corroborate an individual's history.

The RYA will, however, operate as a registered umbrella body with the CRB, which can provide details of a person's criminal record (with the individual's consent) in the form of a Disclosure certificate, where necessary. This policy will be kept under periodic review, and in particular we ask that all relevant allegations, complaints and their outcome are notified to the RYA Child Protection Coordinator.

Where clubs or class associations do have concerns regarding an instructor/volunteer, the instructor/volunteer should be asked to apply to the CRB for a Disclosure Certificate. The CRB will charge paid employees £12, which your organisation may choose to reimburse, but there will be no charge for volunteers. Applications must be countersigned by the RYA as a 'registered umbrella body'. The instructor/volunteer will be sent a certificate, which will be copied to the RYA. The RYA will then contact the appropriate person at the organisation concerned to let them know whether the person's record contains any relevant offences. The RYA will absorb the administration costs of providing this service free of charge to affiliated clubs and organisations and TCs.

For further guidance see the RYA's website www.rya.org.uk or contact Jackie Reid, RYA Child Protection Co-ordinator, on 023 8060 4104, e-mail jackie.reid@rya.org.uk.

Criminal Records Bureau

Information line: 0870 90 90 811

Website: www.disclosure.gov.uk

2(ii) Prevention of abuse

Reviewed 03/02

This section offers advice to organisations, instructors, volunteers and parents to ensure they do everything they can to protect children from abuse.

Good Practice Guide for Principals/Club Officers

Child abuse is a very difficult situation for centre principals and club officers. Having the right systems in place can help all concerned. Abusers have great difficulty operating in a well run organisation with good quality management and training.

- Plan the work of the organisation so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children can occur. Usually this involves taking some simple steps - see Good Practice Guide on page 6.

- Consider appointing a member of staff to fulfil the role of Child Protection Co-ordinator (see page 7)
- Train staff and volunteers, their line managers or supervisors, and policy makers in the prevention of child abuse

See template P for sample training handout for staff and volunteers

- Give all staff and volunteers clear roles
- Issue guidelines on how to deal with the discovery of abuse

See templates Y & Z for action guides

- If children tell staff about abuse, follow agreed procedures. Develop systems which allow children's complaints to be heard.

See template P (second page)

Good Practice Guide for Instructors/Volunteers/All Staff

You can reduce situations for abuse of children and help to protect staff and volunteers from false allegations being made by promoting good practice. Some common sense guidelines for everyone within your organisation:

- Do not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
- Do not take children alone in a car on journeys, however short
- Do not take children to your home
- Where any of these are unavoidable, ensure they only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the organisation or the child's parents
- Design training programmes that are within the ability of the individual child (see 'Physical Abuse' page 9)
- Do not photograph or video children, or publish their pictures, without the knowledge and consent of their parents.

You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- let allegations a child makes go unchallenged or unrecorded; always act
- do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves.

However, it may be sometimes necessary for your staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are very young or disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents. In an emergency situation, which requires this type of help, parents should be fully informed. In such situations, it is important to ensure all staff are sensitive to the child and undertake personal care tasks with the utmost discretion.

In addition, medical consent should be obtained in the event where medication or treatment is required to be administered in the absence of the parent/guardian; this includes hospitalisation. Such procedures would cover the organisation from accusations of neglect.

See template E for sample medical consent form

Child Protection Co-ordinator

A possible job description for a Child Protection Co-ordinator might be: to ensure that the organisation has an up to date policy with procedures to support it; and that relevant staff and volunteers understand the procedures and put them into practice; to receive reports of any concerns or allegations; in conjunction with the person in charge (Commodore, Principal etc), to decide on the appropriate action to be taken; to keep the RYA informed as necessary.

2(iii) What to do if abuse is suspected/alleged to have occurred Reviewed 04/01

Principals/Managers

What should I do if there are allegations of abuse against a member of staff?

See template Z for action guide

Although it is a sensitive and difficult issue, child abuse can occur and does occur outside the family setting. Child abuse has occurred within institutions and may occur in other settings. If a child has been abused in a public setting, other children will be involved.

Where there is an allegation of abuse against a member of staff, there may be three types of investigation:

- a criminal investigation
- a child protection investigation
- a disciplinary or misconduct investigation

The results of the police and social services investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

It is important that your organisation has a means to address misconduct. Disciplinary procedures should be in place.

It is important to understand that a member of staff reporting a case of child abuse, particularly by a colleague, may undergo a very high degree of stress, including feelings of guilt for having reported the matter. It is therefore important to ensure that appropriate counselling and support is available for staff in such a situation.

Instructors/Volunteers

What should I do if a child tells me s/he is being abused?

See template Y for action guide

Always:

- stay calm - ensure the child is safe and feels safe
- show and tell the child that you are taking what s/he says seriously
- reassure the child and stress that s/he is not to blame
- be honest, explain you will have to tell someone else to help stop the alleged abuse
- make a note of what the child has said as soon as possible after the event
- maintain confidentiality - only tell others if it will help protect the child.

Never:

- rush into actions that may be inappropriate
- make promises you cannot keep
- ask inappropriate questions, which may jeopardise any impending police investigation
See *template Q for guidance on recording information*
- take sole responsibility - consult someone else (the person in charge or someone you can trust) so you can begin to protect the child and gain support for yourself.

If I do something, might it make things worse?

Taking appropriate action if you are worried about abuse is never easy - it takes courage but it protects a young life.

You may be upset about what the child has said or you may worry about the consequences of your actions. Sometimes people worry about children being removed from their families as a result of abuse but in reality this rarely happens. However, one thing is certain - you cannot ignore it. The effects of abuse on children can be devastating, especially if children are left unprotected or do not receive help to cope with the abuse. The most serious effect is that children can and do die as a result of abuse. They can develop behavioural difficulties, problems at school, their development can be delayed and they can become depressed and withdrawn. Some of these problems, if left untreated, can persist into adulthood.

Recording information

Reviewed 04/01

When recording information, it is important that you do not carry the process beyond gathering information about the allegation, into beginning an investigation. Unnecessary interviews with child complainants could prejudice the integrity of evidence that may eventually have to be presented in court.

There are particular problems with regard to gaining information from children with limited communication skills. Care should be taken that appropriate means are used to find out what the allegation is about without "leading" the child.

The environment for recording information needs to be considered carefully. Try and ensure that you are in sight of another adult, but that your conversation won't be overheard. You also need to be careful about physical contact during an interview because it may not be what the child wants. The rule is to let the child initiate any actions and to remain positive and supportive throughout.

See *template Q for guidance on recording information*

Recognising abuse

Reviewed 04/01

This section explains what child abuse is, how to recognise it and what to do if you have concerns.

What is child abuse?

Child abuse is a term used to describe ways in which children are harmed, usually by adults and often by people they know and trust. It refers to the damage done to a child's physical or mental health. Children can be abused within or outside their family, at school and in a sports or community environment. Child abuse can take many forms:

Physical abuse where adults or other children:

- physically hurt or injure children (e.g. by hitting, shaking, squeezing, biting or burning)
- give children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison
- attempt to suffocate or drown children
- in sport situations, physical abuse might also occur when the nature and intensity of training exceeds the capacity of the child's immature and growing body

Neglect includes situations in which adults:

- fail to meet a child's basic physical needs (e.g. for food, warm clothing, essential medication)
- consistently leave children alone and unsupervised
- fail or refuse to give children love, affection or attention
- neglect in a sports situation might also occur if a teacher or coach fails to ensure children are safe or exposes them to undue cold or risk of injury

Sexual abuse. Boys and girls are sexually abused when adults (male or female) or other young people use them to meet their own sexual needs. This could include:

- full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, fondling
- showing children pornographic books, photographs or videos, or taking pictures for pornographic purposes
- sport situations which involve physical contact (e.g. supporting or guiding children) could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Abusive situations may also occur if adults misuse their power over young people

Emotional abuse can occur in a number of ways. For example, where:

- there is persistent lack of love or affection
- there is constant overprotection which prevents children from socialising
- children are frequently being shouted at or taunted
- there is neglect, physical or sexual abuse
- emotional abuse in sport might also include situations where parents or coaches subject children to constant criticism, bullying or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations.

Bullying

Bullying may be seen as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. The bully may often be another young person.

Although anyone can be a target of bullying, victims are typically shy, sensitive and perhaps anxious or insecure. Sometimes they are singled out for physical reasons - being overweight, physically small, having a disability or belonging to a different race, faith or culture.

How would I recognise if a child is being abused?

Reviewed 04/01

It is not always easy to spot when children have been abused even for the most experienced carers. However, some of the more typical symptoms, which should trigger your suspicions would include:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- sexually explicit language or actions

- a sudden change in behaviour (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper)
- The child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her
- a change observed over a long period of time (e.g. the child losing weight or becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt)
- a general distrust and avoidance of adults, especially with whom a close relationship would be expected
- an unreasonable reaction to normal physical contact
- difficulty in making friends or abnormal restrictions on socialising with others.

However, it is important to note that a child could be displaying some of all of these signs, or behaving in a way which is worrying - this does not necessarily mean the child is being abused. Similarly, there may not be any signs, you may just feel something is wrong.

If you are worried, 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.

What should I do in general if I have concerns?

Reviewed 04/01

If you have noticed a change in the child's behaviour, first talk to the parents or carers. It may be that something has happened, like a bereavement, which has caused the child to be unhappy. However, if your concerns are about sexual abuse or violence, talking to the parents or carers might put the child at greater risk.

If your concerns remain or you cannot talk to the parents/carers, consult your organisation's designated Child Protection Coordinator, if appointed, or person in charge. It is the responsibility of this person to make the decision to contact the police.

See templates Y & Z for action guides

Where can I get further help?

Reviewed 03/02

If you want to talk things through to gain some advice, you can phone the following 24 hour free telephone numbers. You do not have to give your name but it is helpful if you can.

NSPCC helpline:

0808 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk

ChildLine:

0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk

If you are an instructor and have had an allegation made against you, advice and support can be gained from the following sources:

Local Citizens' Advice Bureau:

Refer to Yellow Pages for contact details

RYA Legal:

023 8062 7422

Sportscoach UK (if a member):

0113 274 4802 www.sportscoachuk.org

General information is also available on the Child Protection in Sport Unit website:
www.sportprotects.org.uk.



Application form

Confidential

POSITION APPLIED FOR _____

PERSONAL DETAILS

Title:	Surname:	Other names in full:
Other name previously know by, including maiden name where appropriate:		
Age:	Date of birth:	Place of birth:

ADDRESS

Current address:
Former address (if moved within the previous 3 years):

TELEPHONE, FAX & EMAIL

Home Tel: Fax: Email:	Work Tel: Fax: Email:
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OCCUPATION

Current Occupation: Name of organisation: Address:	
Start date:	Finish date:
Previous Occupation: Name of organisation: Address:	
Start date:	Finish date:
Previous experience of working with children, either in a voluntary or professional capacity:	

EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS & TRAINING

OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

Recreational interests, hobbies, voluntary or community work

REASON FOR APPLYING

If appointed, when could you start work:

How did you hear of this vacancy?

REFERENCES

Please give names and addresses of three people to whom application for references may be made. References from relatives will not be accepted. At least one should be from a previous employer and one should have first-hand experience of you working with children.

NAME	ADDRESS	CAPACITY IN WHICH KNOWN TO YOU

DECLARATION

Data Protection Act: In order to recruit to this post the [*INSERT Organisation's name*] will (within the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998) process personal information given in connection with this application. Information relating to the successful applicant will form part of personnel records. No other use will be made of information about applicants.

Consent: I consent to the processing of personal information in the way described.

Declaration: I declare that to the best of my knowledge the information given on this form is correct and understand that misleading statements or deliberate omission may be sufficient grounds for cancelling any appointment arising from this application.

SIGNED

DATE



Brixham Junior Sailing Club
www.brixhamjsc.co.uk

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL REFERENCE

[date]

Dear

[] has applied for the position of [] with Brixham Junior Sailing Club and has given your name as a referee. A copy of the relevant job description is enclosed for your information.

I should be grateful if you would confirm how long you have known [] and in what capacity. It would also be helpful if you could give your opinion of the applicant's ability, personality, health record and the suitability for the post for which (s)he has applied, together with any other general information that you feel is relevant to this application. A form is enclosed to make this request easier.

The post may involve access to children and as an organisation committed to the welfare and the protection of children, I should be grateful if you would also complete the reverse of the attached document relating to child protection issues.

Your comments will of course be treated in the strictest confidence and an early reply would be greatly appreciated. A pre-paid envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

I am grateful for your assistance in this matter and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

enclosures



Brixham Junior Sailing Club
www.brixhamjsc.co.uk

Applicant's name:

Job title / role:

1. How long have you known the above named person?

2. In what capacity do you know the above named applicant?

3. It would be helpful if you would indicate your opinion of:

3(i) the suitability of the applicant for this post

4. along with your opinion of the following, in relation to the post:

4(i) Ability:

.....
.....

4(ii) Personality:

.....
.....

4(iii) Health record:

.....
.....

important - P.T.O.

Reference - child protection policy

This post may involve substantial access to children. As an organisation committed to the welfare and protection of children, we would be grateful if you would indicate below whether or not you have any reason at all to be concerned about the applicant being in contact with children or young people.

Please place a ✓ in the appropriate box

YES*

*If you have answered "yes"
you will be contacted **in confidence**

NO

Signed: _____

Name: _____ (please print)

Address: _____

References

Referee 1

Please contact the following person for a reference:

Name	Job Title	Contact Address & Telephone Number

Referee 2

Please contact the following person for a reference:

Name	Job Title	Contact Address & Telephone Number



Medical consent form

I, the parent / guardian * of :

.....

give permission to the coaches participating in activities during the period

..... (date of event)

to administer any relevant treatment or medication to the named participant, when/if necessary. I shall inform the organising body of any known conditions and medication requirements.

In addition, if the case arises, I authorise the members of staff to take my son/daughter to hospital and give full permission for any treatment required to be carried out in accordance with the hospital's diagnosis. I understand that I shall be notified, as soon as possible, of the hospital visit and any treatment given by the hospital.

Parent / Guardian's* consent

.....(signature)

Name..... (please print)

Relationship to participant

* delete as applicable



Handout for all instructors & volunteers

Good Practice Guide

- Do not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
- Do not take children alone in a car on journeys, however short
- Do not take children to your home
- Where any of these are unavoidable, ensure they only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the organisation or the child's parents
- Design training programmes that are within the ability of the individual child. (see "Physical Abuse" page 10)
- Do not photograph or video children, or publish their pictures, without the knowledge and consent of their parents

You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- let allegations a child makes go unchallenged or unrecorded; always act
- do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves.

However, it may be sometimes necessary for your staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are very young or disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents. In an emergency situation, which requires this type of help, parents should be fully informed. In such situations, it is important to ensure all staff are sensitive to the child and undertake personal care tasks with the utmost discretion.

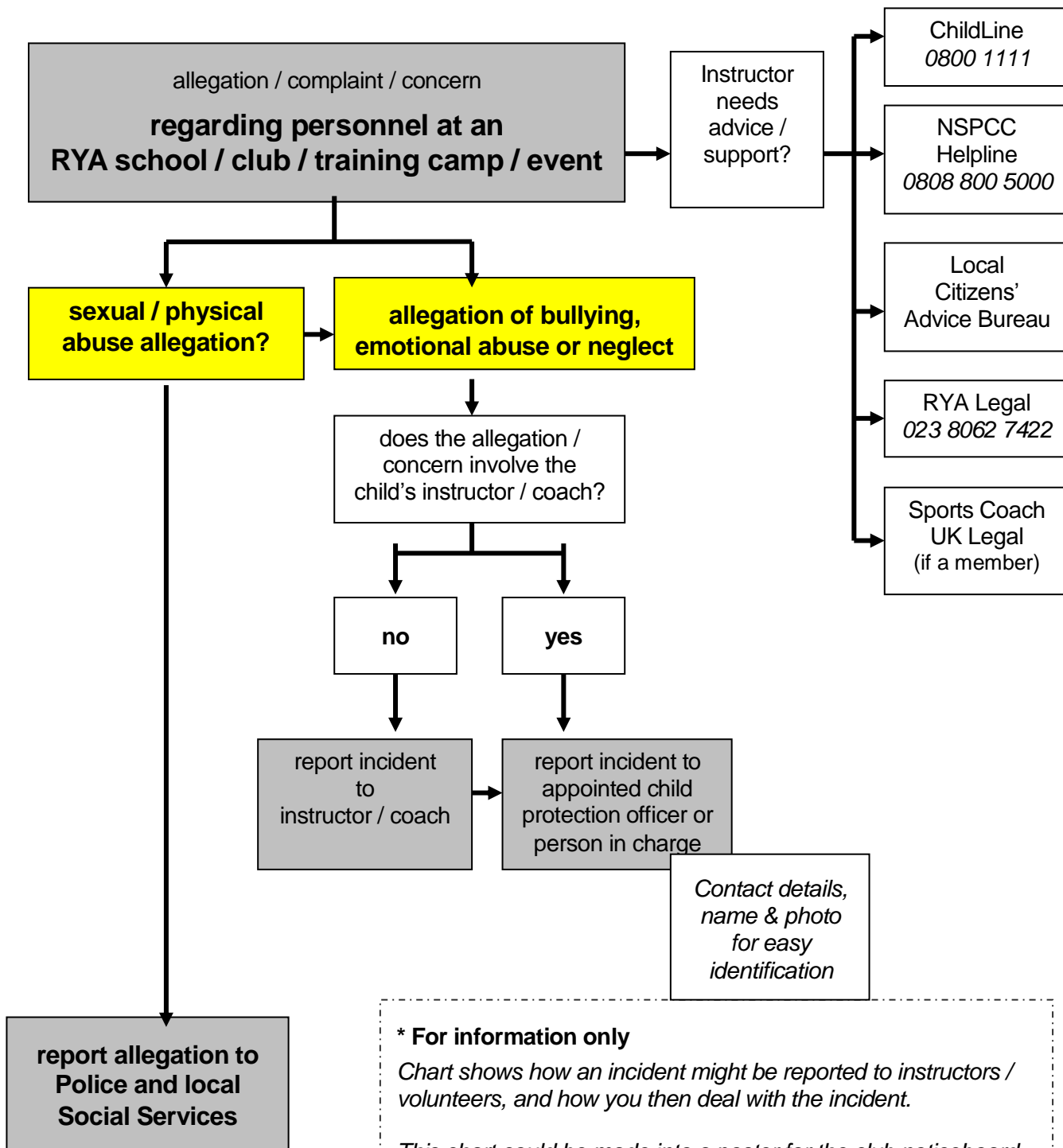
Important

All instructors and volunteers should read the organisation's comprehensive Child Protection Policy & Procedures and have access to it at all times.

Handout for all instructors & volunteers

Reporting procedure

Advice to children, parents and teachers



*** For information only**
 Chart shows how an incident might be reported to instructors / volunteers, and how you then deal with the incident.
 This chart could be made into a poster for the club noticeboard in a child-friendly style.



Recording information

In cases of child abuse the main aim is to keep calm and provide a positive, friendly attitude to encourage the child to talk.

- **DO** listen
- Do take notes
- Do tell the RYA and make sure that all information is passed onto the police
- **DON'T** ask direct questions
- Don't try to stop the child telling you about their problem
- Don't make promises
- Don't allow anyone else outside the police or social services to interview or ask questions of the child
- Don't assume!

The complexity of child protection issues means that there can never be a set of prescriptive questions. Don't try to get too much information, rather, let the child give you as much as they feel prepared to give. The adult listening should try to act as natural as possible throughout. Make notes during the interview, but only those necessary; it might be possible to gain certain contact information from existing administrative records.

COMMON QUESTIONS that could be used in some situations.

- **THE DOs - open questions/statements**
 - Would you like to tell me what happened?
 - Can you tell me where/when this happened?
 - Would you like to tell me who was involved?
 - Can you tell me what happened next?
 - Is there anything else you would like to tell me?
 - Thank you for telling me this but you do realise I will have to do something about it
- **THE DON'Ts - leading/closed questions/comments**
 - Was it your father/coach/friend that did this to you?
 - Are you sure that's what happened?
 - Why did you let them do that to you?
 - Why do you think this happened?
 - I expect you must be very upset about this.
 - This can be our little secret

Incident report form

Try and keep the process friendly rather than a formal; you want the child to feel as comfortable as possible during this stressful process.

Interviewer's details

Name: Position:

Child's details

Name: Date of birth:

Address:
.....

Parents / Carers names:

Address:
.....

Record what was said and reported (use additional paper, as required)

Action taken

POLICE: reported to which police station?

Officer reported to:

Date / time incident reported:

Details of advice received:

RYA: reported to Child Protection Officer? YES /NO

Date / time incident reported:

Details of advice received:

OTHER: contacted other organisations for advice? Date / time of call:.....

Which organisation(s):

Person advice received from:

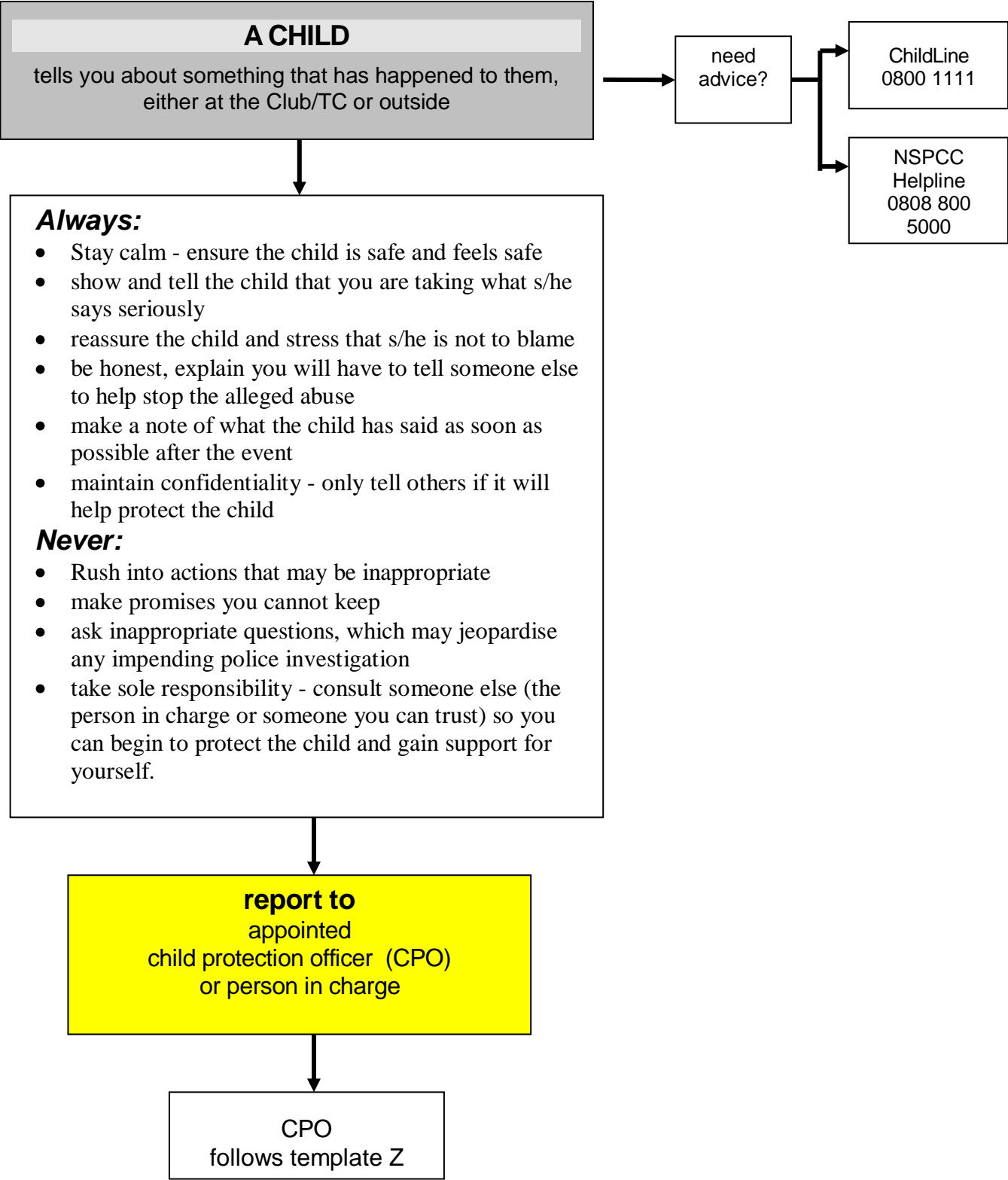
Details of advice received:

Signed by interviewer, as above: Date:
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Reporting procedure

for instructors, staff & volunteers



Reporting procedure

