



# FOOTBALL 4 PEACE INTERNATIONAL

## SAFEGUARDING YOUNG AND VULNERABLE PEOPLE

### 1. Terminology

The United Nations refer to young people as young and vulnerable people (aged 0-15) and youth (15-24). For the purposes of this policy, young people are those under the age of 18. It is also recognised that the majority of coaches and volunteers on the project (aged 16-24) may also be classified as youth and therefore subject to this policy themselves as well as enforcing it. Vulnerable people may be anyone, including young people where an additional need (mental and / or physical) or awareness of their background / situation may need to be taken into account when working with or providing activities for them.

Safeguarding in some countries is referred to as child protection.

### 2. Introduction

Everyone involved in 'Football 4 Peace International' (F4P) programmes is entitled to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment. F4P have a moral and legal obligation to ensure that, when given responsibility for young people and vulnerable people, coaches and volunteers provide them with the highest possible standard of care.

F4P is committed to devising and implementing policies so that everyone accepts their responsibilities to safeguard young and vulnerable people from harm and abuse. This means to follow procedures to protect them and report any concerns about their welfare appropriately ensuring that safeguarding concerns and referrals may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which prioritise the needs of the young / vulnerable person.

F4P also wishes to point out that many projects are run in societies with varying political, cultural, social difficulties and in areas with high potential of conflict. Often work is with young people who bring an array of issues that they have had to or are dealing with on a daily basis which would be perceived and treated differently in other societies. Indeed, in some of the places and spaces F4P works in, there is little or no concept of safeguarding issues and a fine balance has to be made in dealing with issues and creating awareness and a culture of safeguarding young and vulnerable people.

With this in mind, the aim of the policy is to promote good practice, providing young and vulnerable people with appropriate safety / protection whilst participating in F4P projects in any part of the world. Through a culture of prevention, protection and support, it seeks to allow staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific safeguarding issues. It recognises that different places and spaces have differing policy practices at national and local levels and that local culture and customs need to be acknowledged. It also seeks to move to ensuring the protection of staff and volunteers through sound training and advice.

### 3. Policy Statement

Football 4 Peace International is committed to the following:

- the welfare of the young / vulnerable person is paramount;
- everyone, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and / or sexual identity should be able to participate in F4P projects in a fun and safe environment;
- taking all reasonable steps to protect young / vulnerable people from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings;

- all suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
- all F4P staff and volunteers working with young and vulnerable people will be recruited with regard to their suitability for that responsibility, and will be provided with guidance and / or training in good practice and young and vulnerable people protection procedures;
- working in partnership with the individual, parents, teachers / coaches and communities is essential for the protection of young and vulnerable people.

## 4. Good Practice

All F4P personnel should adhere to the following principles and action:

- always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets);
- make the experience of F4P activities fun and enjoyable: promoting fair play, the F4P values and confronting / dealing with bullying, conflict and prejudice;
- treat all young and vulnerable people equally and with respect and dignity;
- maintain a safe and appropriate distance with players (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a young and vulnerable people or to share a room with them);
- Whilst F4P activities promote physical contact between individuals, avoid physical contact out of context to the task. Where any form of manual / physical support is required it should be provided openly and with the consent of the young person. Physical contact can be appropriate so long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing;
- If groups have to be supervised in changing rooms always ensure staff and volunteers work in pairs;
- gain appropriate parental consent for any significant travel arrangements e.g. overnight stays;
- ensure that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff;
- be an excellent role model, this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people;
- always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism;
- recognising the developmental needs and capacity of the young person including avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will;
- secure appropriate parental consent for the club to act in loco parentis, to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises;
- keep a written record of any injury or incident that occurs, along with details of any treatment given.

## 5. Poor Practice

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided by all personnel:

- unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with young people away from others;
- taking young people to your home where they will be alone with you;
- sharing a room with a young person;
- engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games;
- allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form;
- allowing young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- making sexually suggestive comments to a young person, even in fun;
- reducing a young person to tears as a form of control;
- allow allegations made by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon;
- do things of a personal nature that the young person can do for themselves.

If during your care you accidentally hurt a young person, the young person seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions and / or if the young person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incidents as soon as possible to another colleague and make a written note of it. Parents should also be informed of the incident.

## 6. Recruiting and Selecting Personnel with Young and Vulnerable People

It is important that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with young and vulnerable people. This applies equally to staff and volunteers. To ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with young and vulnerable people the following steps are taken when recruiting.

### Controlling Access to Young and vulnerable people:

- All staff and volunteers should complete an application form. The application form will elicit information about the applicants past and a self disclosure about any criminal record;
- Consent should be obtained from the applicant to seek information from the Criminal Records Bureau where possible from their country of residence. If then individual is from a partner organisation, then clarification is made to ensure that appropriate checks are made;
- Two confidential references are obtained and confirmed;
- Photographic evidence of identity.

### Training:

Through formal training camps, staff and volunteers undertake relevant young and vulnerable people protection training or undertake a form of home study, to ensure their practice is exemplary and to facilitate the development of positive culture towards good practice and young and vulnerable people protection.

All staff and volunteers receive advisory information outlining good / bad practice and informing them what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person.

### Use of Photographic / Filming Equipment

All parents and performers should be made aware that the use video and photographic equipment will be used and the footage / pictures will be used for publicity. Individuals can opt out if they wish.

## 7. Defining Abuse

Abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm, it commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to anyone, regardless of their age, gender, race or ability.

There are four main types of abuse: **physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect**. The abuser may be a family member, someone the young person encounters in residential care or in the community, including sports and leisure activities. Any individual may abuse or neglect a young person directly, or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person harming the young person.

Abuse in all of its forms can affect a young person at any age. The effects can be so damaging that if not treated may follow the individual into adulthood.

Those with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation and a powerlessness to protect themselves or adequately communicate that abuse had occurred.

## 8. Types of Abuse

### Physical Abuse

Where someone physically hurts or injures a young or vulnerable person e.g. hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, and drowning. Giving young people alcohol or inappropriate drugs would also constitute abuse. This category of abuse can also include when a parent / carer reports non-

existent symptoms or illness deliberately causing ill health in someone they are looking after. This is called Munchausen's syndrome by proxy.

In a sports situation, physical abuse may occur when the nature and intensity of training disregard the capacity of the young and vulnerable people's immature and growing body. This includes not conducting appropriate warm ups and cool downs for active sessions.

### **Emotional Abuse**

The persistent emotional ill treatment of a person is likely to cause severe and lasting adverse effects on the person's emotional development and well-being. It may involve telling someone they are useless, worthless, unloved, and inadequate or valued in terms of only meeting the needs of another person. It may feature expectations of young and vulnerable people that are not appropriate to their age or development. It may cause someone to be frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make them frightened or withdrawn. Ill treatment of young and vulnerable people, whatever form it takes, will always feature a degree of emotional abuse.

Emotional abuse in sport may occur when the young person is constant criticised, given negative feedback, expected to perform at levels that are above their capability. Other forms of emotional abuse could take the form of name calling, bullying or using inappropriate gender and sexual stereotypes to reinforce a negative.

### **Bullying**

May come from a peer or an adult. Bullying is defined as deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. There are four main types of bullying: physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, slapping); verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, name calling, graffiti, threats, abusive text messages); emotional (e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating, ignoring, isolating from the group); sexual (e.g. unwanted physical contact or abusive comments).

In sport bullying may arise when a parent or coach pushes the young person too hard to succeed, or a rival athlete or official uses bullying behaviour.

### **Neglect**

Neglect occurs when an adult fails to meet a young or vulnerable person's basic physical and / or psychological needs to an extent that is likely to result in serious impairment of their health or development. For example, failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect from physical harm or danger, or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. Refusal to give love, affection and attention can also be a form of neglect.

Neglect in sport could occur when a coach does not keep the young person safe, or exposing them to undue cold/heat or unnecessary risk of injury.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Occurs when adults (male and female) use young and vulnerable people to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and fondling. Showing young people pornography or talking to them in a sexually explicit manner are also forms of sexual abuse.

In sport, activities which might involve physical contact with young people could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Also the power of the coach over young athletes, if misused, may lead to abusive situations developing.

## **9. Indicators of Abuse**

Even for those experienced in working with young and vulnerable people, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. Most people are not experts in such recognition, but indications that a young or vulnerable person is being abused may include one or more of the following:

- 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;
- an injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent;
- the young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them;
- another young person or adult expresses concern about the welfare of a young person;
- unexplained changes in a young person's behaviour e.g. becoming very upset, quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper;
- inappropriate sexual awareness;
- engaging in sexually explicit behaviour;
- distrust of adult's, particularly those whom a close relationship would normally be expected;
- difficulty in making friends;
- being prevented from socialising with others;
- displaying variations in eating patterns including over eating or loss of appetite;
- losing weight for no apparent reason;
- becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

### Signs of bullying

- Behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctance to go training or competitions.
- An unexplained drop off in performance.
- Physical signs such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes, bingeing e.g. on food, alcohol or cigarettes.
- A shortage of money or frequents loss of possessions.

It must be recognised that the above list is not exhaustive, but also that the presence of one or more of the indications is not proof that abuse is taking place.

## 10. Responding to Suspicions and Allegations

It is **NOT** the responsibility of those working for F4P in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide that young and vulnerable people abuse is occurring. It **IS** their responsibility to act on any concerns and pass onto the appropriate people / authority so that they can then make inquiries and take necessary action to protect the young person. This applies **BOTH** to allegations / suspicions of abuse occurring within (Organisation / Club) and to allegations / suspicions that abuse is taking place elsewhere.

### Receiving Evidence of Possible Abuse

We may become aware of possible abuse in various ways. We may see it happening, we may suspect it happening because of signs, it may be reported to us by someone else or directly by the young person affected.

In the last of these cases, it is particularly important to respond appropriately. If a someone says or indicates that they are being abused, you should:

- **stay calm** so as not to frighten the young person;
- **reassure** them that they are not to blame and that it was right to tell;
- **listen** to them, showing that you are taking them seriously;
- **keep questions to a minimum** so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. In many countries the law is very strict and abuse cases have been dismissed where it is felt that the young / vulnerable person has been led or words and ideas have been suggested during questioning. Only ask questions to clarify what is being disclosed.

- **inform** them that you have to inform other people about what they have told you. Tell them this is to help stop the abuse continuing.
- **safety of the young / vulnerable person** is paramount. If they need urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern and ensure they are made aware that this is a young / vulnerable person protection issue.
- **record** all information. As outlined below.
- **report** the incident to the appropriate person as outlined below.

## Recording Information

To ensure that information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure / concern. In recording you should confine yourself to the facts and distinguish what is your personal knowledge and what others have told you. Do not include your own opinions. Information should include the following:

- the person's name, age and date of birth;
- the person's home address and telephone number;
- the person's parent / guardian's details (if applicable);
- whether or not the person making the report is expressing their concern or someone else's;
- the nature of the allegation, including dates, times and any other relevant information;
- a description of any visible bruising or injury, location, size etc. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes;
- details of witnesses to the incidents;
- their account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising / injuries occurred;
- have the parents been contacted? If so what has been said?;
- has anyone else been consulted? If so record details;
- has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record detail.

## Reporting the Concern

All suspicions and allegations **MUST** be reported appropriately to the project or programme co-ordinator. It is recognised that strong emotions can be aroused particularly in cases where sexual abuse is suspected or where there is misplaced loyalty to a colleague. It is important to understand these feelings but not allow them to interfere with your judgement about any action to take.

F4P expects staff and volunteers to discuss any concerns they may have about the welfare of a young and vulnerable people immediately with the appropriate person and subsequently to check that appropriate action has been taken. If there is any doubt, you must report the incident: it may be just one of a series of other incidences which together cause concern.

Any concern or disclosure of allegations of abuse are sometimes made sometime after the event. Where such allegation is made, you should follow the same procedures and have the matter reported to social services. This is because other young and vulnerable people in the sport or outside it may be at risk from the alleged abuser.

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University of Brighton



© **Football 4 Peace International 2013**

School of Sport & Service Management, University of Brighton  
Hillbrow, Denton Road,  
Eastbourne BN20 7SR  
United Kingdom

+44 (0)1273 643777

[www.football4peace.eu](http://www.football4peace.eu)

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