

RYA Guide to Child Welfare....

This leaflet has been produced by the Royal Yachting Association to help your organisation to enable children and vulnerable adults to enjoy the sports of sailing, windsurfing and powerboating in all their forms, in a safe, friendly and enjoyable environment.

What is Child Abuse?

Abuse is a powerful and emotive term. Child abuse is a term used to describe ways in which children can be harmed by adults and other young people, and often by those they know and trust.

The coach / instructor holds this trust and may be at risk of misusing their power over a young person, quite unaware.

Sail Safe

The RYA Child Protection Policy and Guidelines provide the tools to ensure that the whole sport takes up the challenge of continuously improving the participation conditions for young people. The full policy and guidelines can be downloaded from the RYA's website www.rya.org.uk and copied or adapted to meet the requirements of your organisation.

How will child protection affect me?

Child welfare and protection in sailing, windsurfing and powerboating is everyone's concern. The RYA Child Protection Policy and Guidelines have been developed to provide a comprehensive guide to all those who participate, race, coach, officiate, assist and volunteer in sailing, windsurfing and powerboating.

How does child protection affect my Club/Centre?

Abuse can occur anywhere there are young people of any age. Sadly there are some people who will seek to be where young people are simply in order to abuse them; this includes the Clubs and Training Centres. It is therefore imperative that each and every Club/Centre adopts and implements its own robust child protection policy.

What does my Club/Centre need to do?

Child welfare and protection will not be implemented overnight. It is a long-term process. It is the responsibility of the whole Club/Centre to create an environment where young people feel safe whilst having fun. Adopting and implementing a child protection policy and procedures can help you to do this.

Club/Centre Welfare Officers

- A Club/Centre must nominate a Club Welfare Officer who will advise and ensure that child welfare and protection is being adhered to in the Club/Centre.
- They will be the point of contact for all Child Protection concerns and queries.
- The Club/Centre Welfare Officer must be CRB checked.
- The Club/Centre Welfare Officer is encouraged to attend relevant training to enable them to fulfil their role.

The RYA strongly recommends that all coaches, instructors, officials and volunteers involved with young people should read and have knowledge of the full RYA Child Protection Policy and Guidelines available from the RYA head office or download from

www.rya.org.uk/WorkingWithUs/childprotection/ Good Practice Guidelines

All those who work within the watersports environment should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour at all times in order to protect children and to protect themselves from allegations.

The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and environment within sailing, windsurfing and powerboating.

- Always be publicly open when working with young people;
- Situations will occur when in order to keep the young person safe, or to coach certain techniques, it will be necessary to make physical contact with the young person. Always inform the young person beforehand and ask if they have any objections;
- If groups are to be supervised in changing rooms, always ensure that adults work in pairs and that the gender is appropriate;
- Where mixed teams compete away from home they should always be accompanied by at least one male and one female adult;
- Coaches must place the well-being and safety of the participant above the development of performance.

You Should:

- Avoid overtraining and over competing of participants;
- Ensure development comes first, winning second;
- Never allow injured participants to train or compete;
- Ensure all equipment and facilities are safe and appropriate;
- Never overtly criticise young people – their confidence is paramount.

You Should Avoid:

- Spending excessive amounts of time working alone with children in isolation;
- Taking young people alone on car journeys, however short;
- Taking young people to your home.

You Should Never:

- Engage in inappropriate physical contact, rough, physical or sexually provocative games ;
- Share a bedroom with a young person;
- Permit young people to use unacceptable or explicit language unchallenged;
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a young person, even in fun;
- Agree to meet a young person on your own, outside the context of the normal coaching or mentoring process;
- Do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves
- Allow allegations made by a participant to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.

Remember you are a role model and mentor to young people

Abuse can be any of the following:

Physical Abuse

When adults or other young people deliberately inflict injuries on a young person, or knowingly do not prevent such injuries. It includes being kicked, punched or hit. It also includes forcing a young person to train/compete beyond his/her capabilities.

Emotional Abuse

When adults persistently fail to show young people due care, love or affection, where a young person may be constantly shouted at, threatened or subjected to sarcasm and unrealistic pressures. It includes constant criticism, name-calling and ridiculing the young person.

Sexual Abuse

Where girls and boys are abused by both male and female adults, who use young people to meet their own sexual needs. This includes making sexually suggestive comments and touching in an inappropriate manner.

Neglect

Where adults fail to meet a young person's basic needs such as food, warmth, adequate clothing and medical attention. It includes exposing your people to undue cold, heat or unnecessary risk of injury.

Bullying

Where another young person uses deliberate, aggressive, hurtful behaviour, usually over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. It can include hurtful text messages, violence, tormenting, name-calling and the spreading of rumours.

Safeguarding the welfare of our young participants is paramount. Coaches, Instructors and volunteers have a moral and at times legal responsibility to provide the highest possible standard of care to all young people involved in sailing, windsurfing and powerboating.

Acting on Concerns

It is not your responsibility to determine if abuse has taken place, however it is your responsibility to act upon and report any concerns.

If you have any concerns regarding a young person or if a young person informs you directly that he/she, or another young person, is concerned about someone's behaviour towards them.

You should avoid

- Rushing into actions that may be inappropriate
- Making promises you cannot keep
- Asking more questions than are necessary for you to be sure that you need to act
- Taking sole responsibility – consult someone else

You should

- React immediately
- Remain calm, so not to frighten or deter the young person
- Tell the young person that he/she is not to blame and that he/she was right to tell
- Follow your club / centre Child Welfare & Protection procedure
- Make a detailed note of your observations and/or exactly what was said
- Contact the Club Welfare Officer immediately, if they are unavailable or part of the concern contact the RYA Lead Child Protection Officer

You can use the 24 hour free telephone helplines for advice: NSPCC 0800 800 500
Childline 0800 11 11

Child Protection & Welfare Training available from the RYA:

The RYA has a number of tutors able to deliver 'Safeguarding & Protecting Children' awareness workshops to affiliated clubs and centres at a very reasonable cost. This 3 hour workshop encourages you to:

- Review your own, centre/club practice and ensure that it complies with recognised codes of conduct and policies.
- Explore your own values and attitudes in relation to child abuse.
- Be informed and able to recognise signs and symptoms of child abuse.
- Respond in an appropriate way to children who disclose they are being abused.
- Take appropriate action if concerns are raised which suggest a child is being abused either within a club/centre setting or outside of it.

For more information or to request a course . . .

Go to <http://www.rya.org.uk/WorkingWithUs/childprotection/> or

RYA affiliated Clubs and Centres should contact Jackie Reid 023 8060 4104

jackie.reid@rya.org.uk

Useful Contacts

NSPCC 0800 800 500

Childline 0800 1111

Police 999 (emergency) or

0845 600 8000 (non-emergency)

RYA Lead Child Protection Officer 023 8060 4104

Local Social Services*

Local Club/Centre Welfare Officer*

The Club / Centre Child Protection Policy is located in the Operations Manual in the office upstairs

Always remember, you are responsible for the welfare

of young people in your care

The RYA wishes to recognise and thank British Water Ski for their assistance in developing this leaflet.