



Handout for Members, Staff, and Volunteers

This guide only covers the essential points of good practice for everyone involved with children and young people. You should also read and be familiar with the RYA guidelines on their website.

In general you should:

- design training programmes that are within the ability of the individual child
- ensure that when you are helping a child it is in full view of another, preferably an adult
- try to have a child's friend assist you when helping a child with their wetsuit or buoyancy aid
- avoid spending any significant time with children in isolation
- avoid transporting children in a car, and place them in the back seat should it be unavoidable
- not take children away from the vicinity of the club as part of any OSC activity
- limit the volume of electronic communications with children regarding operational matters, and copy in the parent or carer should an individual child have to be contacted

You should never:

- do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves
- permit the use of inappropriate language by or in the vicinity of children
- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
- allow or engage in inappropriate physical contact
- drink alcohol or smoke when working with children
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child

Special circumstances:

It may sometimes be necessary assist children with tasks of a personal nature, particularly if they are very young or disabled. Such activity should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the child (where possible) and their parent(s)/carer(s). In an emergency situation which requires personal assistance then the parent(s)/carer(s) should be fully informed of the situation as soon as possible.

You must always act upon any allegation made by a child.

What is child abuse?

Applies equally to vulnerable Adults

Physical abuse may involve adults or other children causing physical harm:

- 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 is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs,.

- Neglect in a sailing situation might occur if an instructor or coach fails to ensure that children are safe, or exposes them to undue cold or risk of injury

Sexual abuse. Sexual abuse involves an individual forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening

- Sport situations which involve physical contact (eg. 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 is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

- emotional abuse in sport might include situations where parents or coaches subject children to constant criticism, bullying, or pressure to perform at a level that the child cannot realistically be expected to achieve.

Bullying (including cyberbullying) may be seen as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated or sustained over a period of time.

If you are concerned about a child:

Consult your organisation's designated Child Protection/Welfare Officer or the person in charge. . It is NOT their responsibility to decide if abuse is taking place, BUT it is their responsibility to act on your concerns.