

Safeguarding and Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults in Sport

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Safeguarding and Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults in Sport

By the end of this workshop, you should be able to:

- ▶ identify and recognise the key principles of good practice, when working with children and the implications for your teaching/coaching/management
- ▶ recognise the signs and indicators of child abuse
- ▶ identify appropriate action if misconduct and/or abuse is suspected.

Workshop Principles

▶ Each person in the group has experience and knowledge which is valuable and will be valued. Within the workshop the following principles will be adopted:

- ▶ anonymity
- ▶ privacy
- ▶ support
- ▶ confidentiality
- ▶ professionalism
- ▶ ownership
- ▶ anti-discriminatory behaviour

▶ SOME OF THE TOPICS COVERED MAY BE DIFFICULT OR CHALLENGING – IF YOU NEED ‘TIME-OUT’, PLEASE TAKE IT

Code of Conduct for Adults Working with Children – Key Principles

- ▶ **Rights**
- ▶ **Relationships**
- ▶ **Responsibilities: personal standards**
- ▶ **Responsibilities: professional**

Rights

ADULTS/LEADERS must respect and champion the rights of every individual to participate in sport

create an environment where every individual has the opportunity to participate

- ✦ create and maintain an environment free of fear and harassment
- ✦ recognise the rights of all athletes to be treated as individuals
- ✦ recognise the rights of athletes to confer with other leaders and experts
- ✦ promote the concept of a balanced lifestyle, supporting the well-being of the athlete both in and out of the sport.

Relationships

ADULTS/LEADERS must develop a relationship with athletes (and others) based on openness, honesty, mutual trust and respect

- should promote the welfare and best interest of their athletes
- should empower athletes to be responsible for their own decisions
- should clarify the nature of the coaching services being offered to athletes
- should communicate and cooperate with other organisations and individuals in the best interests of athletes.
- must not engage in or tolerate behaviour that constitutes any form of abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, bullying)

Responsibilities – personal standards

Adults must demonstrate proper personal behaviour and conduct at all times

- must be fair, honest and considerate to athletes and others in their sport
- should project an image of health, cleanliness and efficiency
- must be positive role models for athletes.

Responsibilities – professional standards

To maximise benefits and minimise the risks to athletes, **ADULTS/LEADERS** must attain a high level of competence through qualifications and a commitment to ongoing training that ensures safe and correct practice

- gain qualifications appropriate to the level at which they coach/teach/instruct
- be professional and accept responsibility for their actions
- promote safe and correct practice
- provide a safe environment that maximises benefits and minimises risks to athletes
- make a commitment to providing a high quality service to their athletes

Truths or Myths?

1. Children are abused mostly by strangers.
2. It is only men who sexually abuse children.
3. Disabled children are less likely to be victims of abuse.
4. Girls are much more likely to be abused than boys.
5. It is more acceptable in some cultures for children to be abused.
6. If social services are involved, children are usually removed from their homes.
7. Children are resilient and therefore recover quickly from abuse.
8. Children under the age of five are more likely to be abused than older children.
9. More children are abused now than 20 years ago.
10. Children often lie about abuse.
11. There is widespread reported occurrence of abuse in sport.
12. Adult leaders have many opportunities to abuse children emotionally as well as physically

Feedback

1 1. False

2 2. False

3 3. False

4 4. False

5 5. False

6. False

7 7. False

8 8. True

9 9. False

10 10. False

11 11. True

12. True

Acceptable/Unacceptable Behaviour (continue)

A twelve-year-old child being left alone in the house for the evening

A father smacking his twelve-year-old daughter because she was two hours late getting home

A male coach entering the girls' changing room to talk before the competition

A male coach physically supporting a young female gymnast during a tumbling routine

A coach having sexual intercourse with one of his fifteen-year-old athletes

A male coach expressing his delight following good performance by slapping the buttocks of one of his young athletes

A female coach working alone with a squad of male athletes

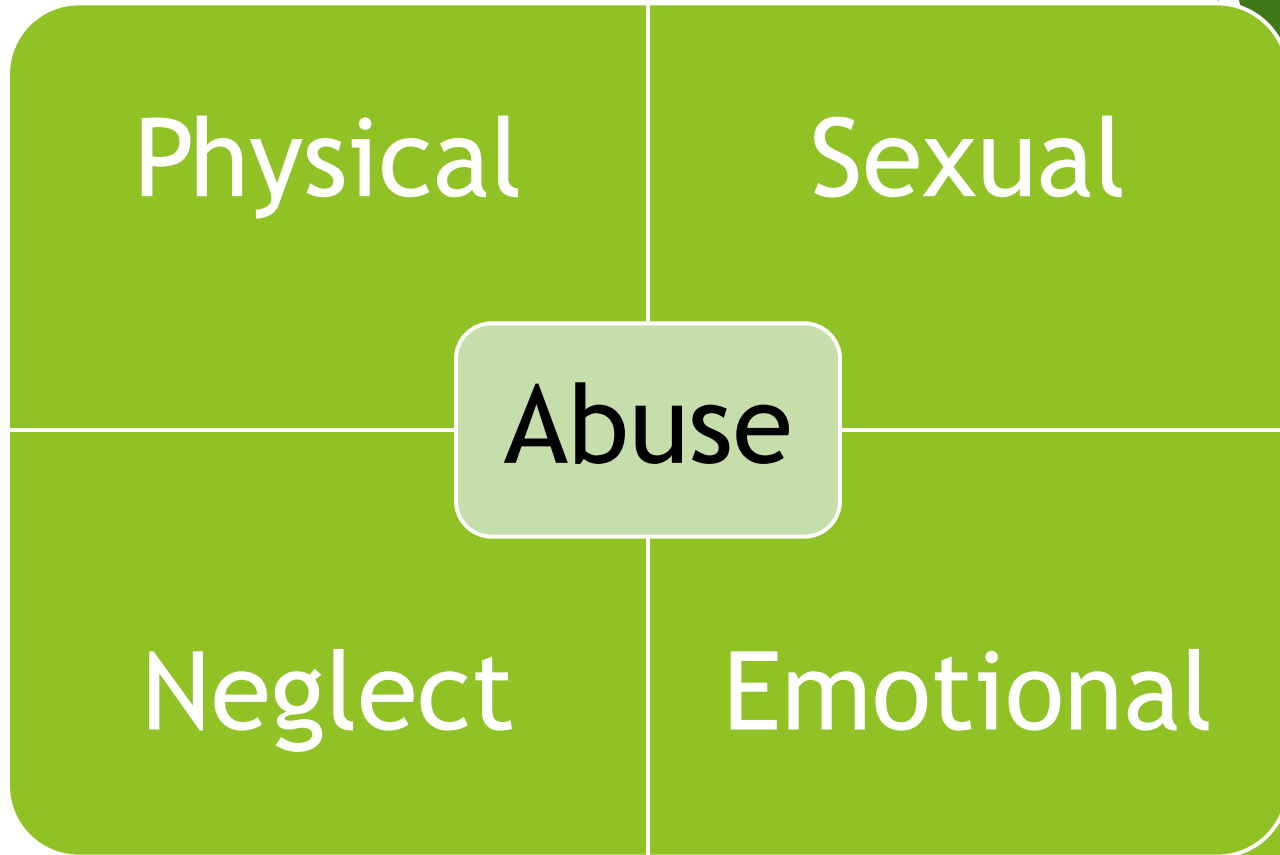
A teacher who regularly undermines the efforts of a fifteen-year-old girl and publicly reports all the errors she makes on her schoolwork

A coach driving an eight-year-old to exhaustion during training

A player calling another player names.

Initiation ceremonies within sports teams

4 types of abuse



Neglect includes situations in which adults:

- ▶ fail to meet a child's basic physical needs (eg for food, warm clothing)
- ▶ 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.

Physical Abuse, includes situations in which adults:

- ▶ physically hurt or injure children (eg by hitting, shaking, squeezing, biting or burning)
- ▶ give children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison
- ▶ attempt to suffocate or drown children.

In sports situations, physical abuse may also occur if performance enhancing drugs are used, or when the nature and intensity of training exceeds the capacity of the child's immature and growing body.

Sexual Abuse. Boys and girls are sexually abused when adults (male or female) 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
- ▶ social media!

Sports 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.

BE AWARE OF GROOMING

<https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/age-of-consent-by-country>

Emotional Abuse

can occur in a number of ways.

For example, where:

- ▶ there is persistent lack of love and affection
- ▶ there is constant overprotection which prevents children from socialising
- ▶ children are frequently being shouted at or taunted
- ▶ there is bullying, neglect, physical or sexual abuse.

Emotional abuse in sport may also include situations where parents or coaches subject children to constant criticism, bullying or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Bullying can be verbal, written or physical.

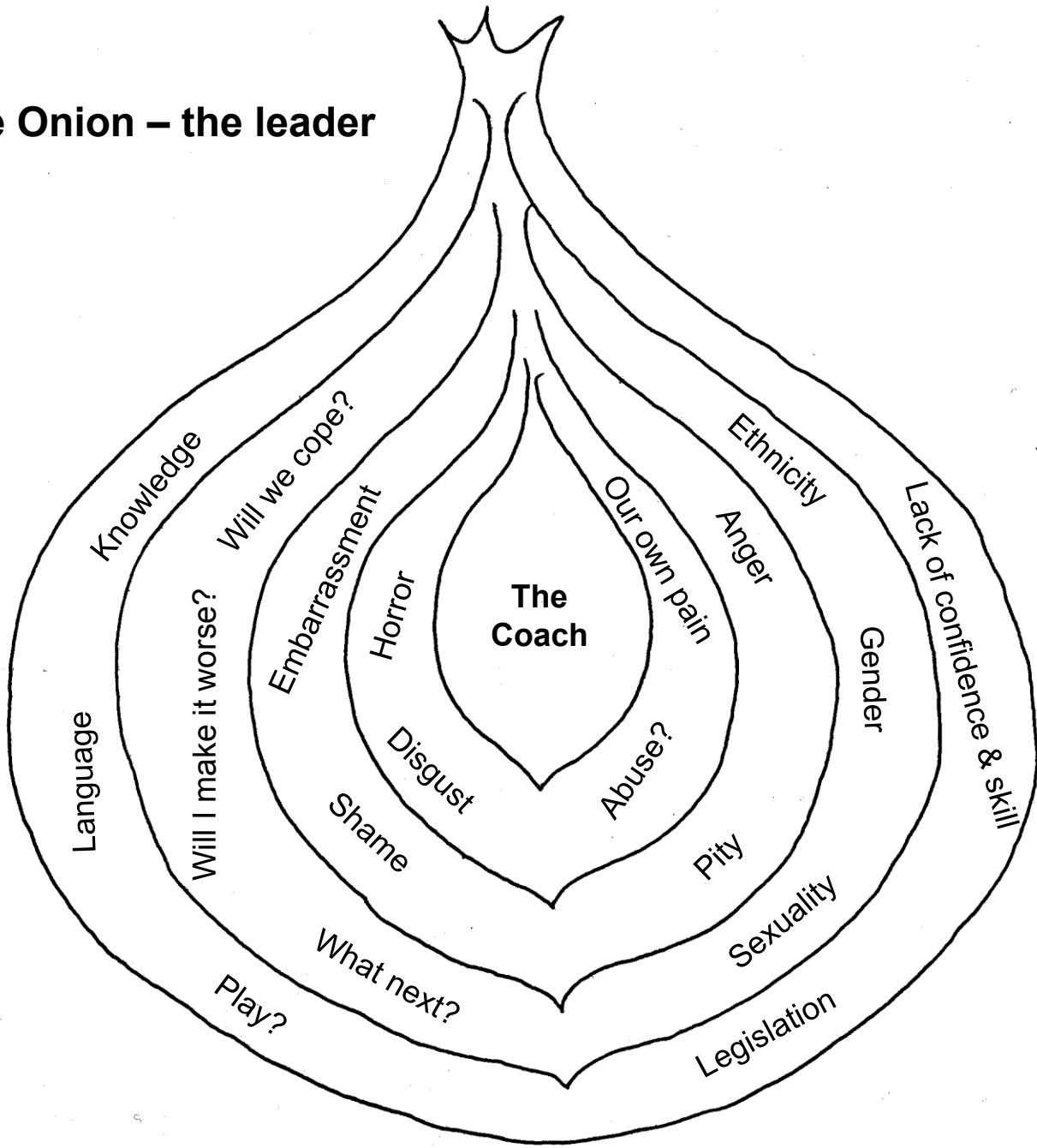
Increasingly social media involvement

Typical Signs of Abuse include:

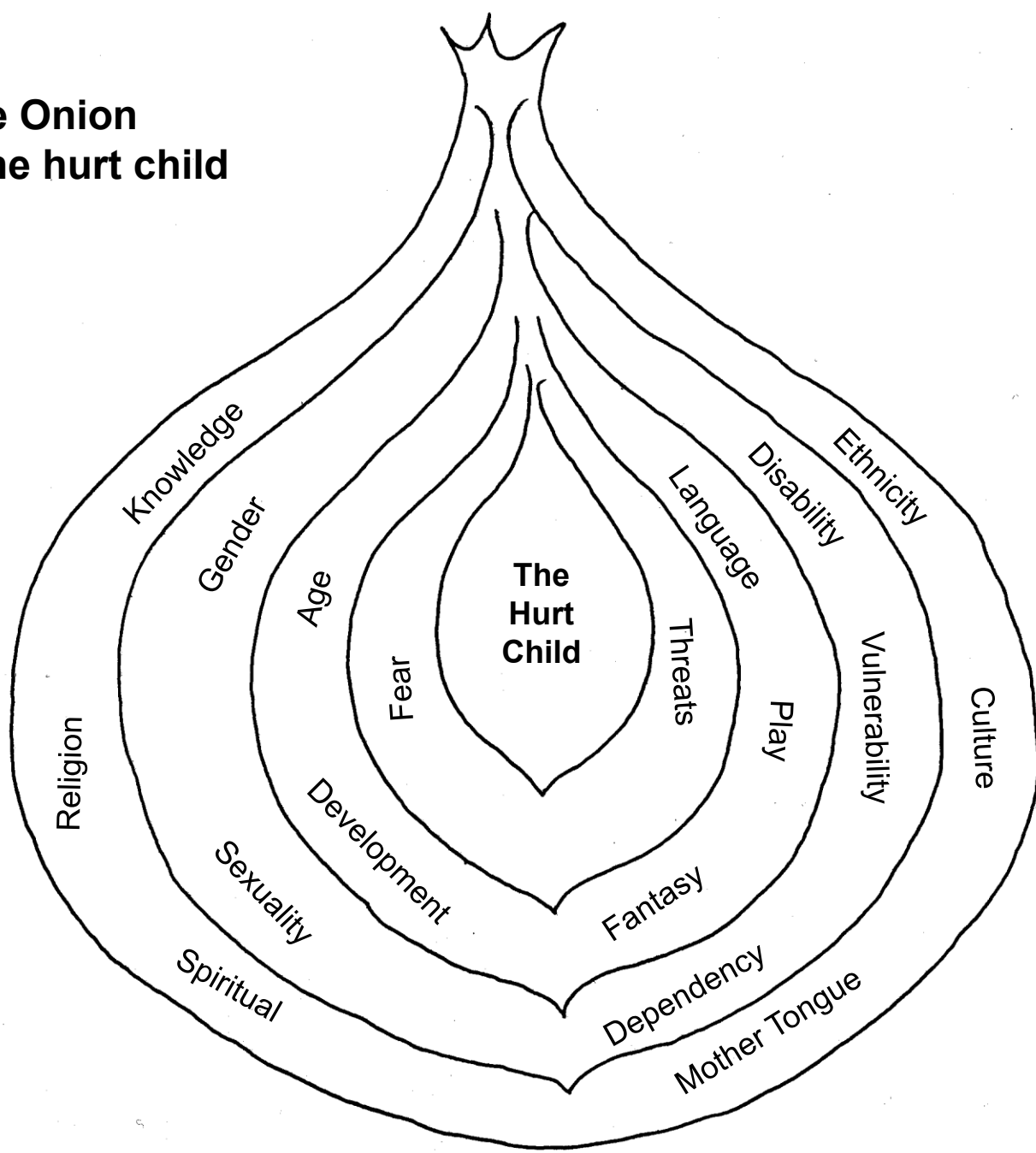
- ▶ unexplained bruising or injuries
- ▶ sexually explicit language/actions
- ▶ sudden changes in behaviour
- ▶ something a child has said
- ▶ a change observed over a long period of time.

NB These signs may not constitute abuse. In addition you should be aware of behaviour changes or for a cluster of signs.

The Onion – the leader



The Onion - the hurt child



Not your responsibility to decide whether or not a child is being abused...

- but it is your responsibility to act if you have any concerns.

If a child tells me s/he is being abused:

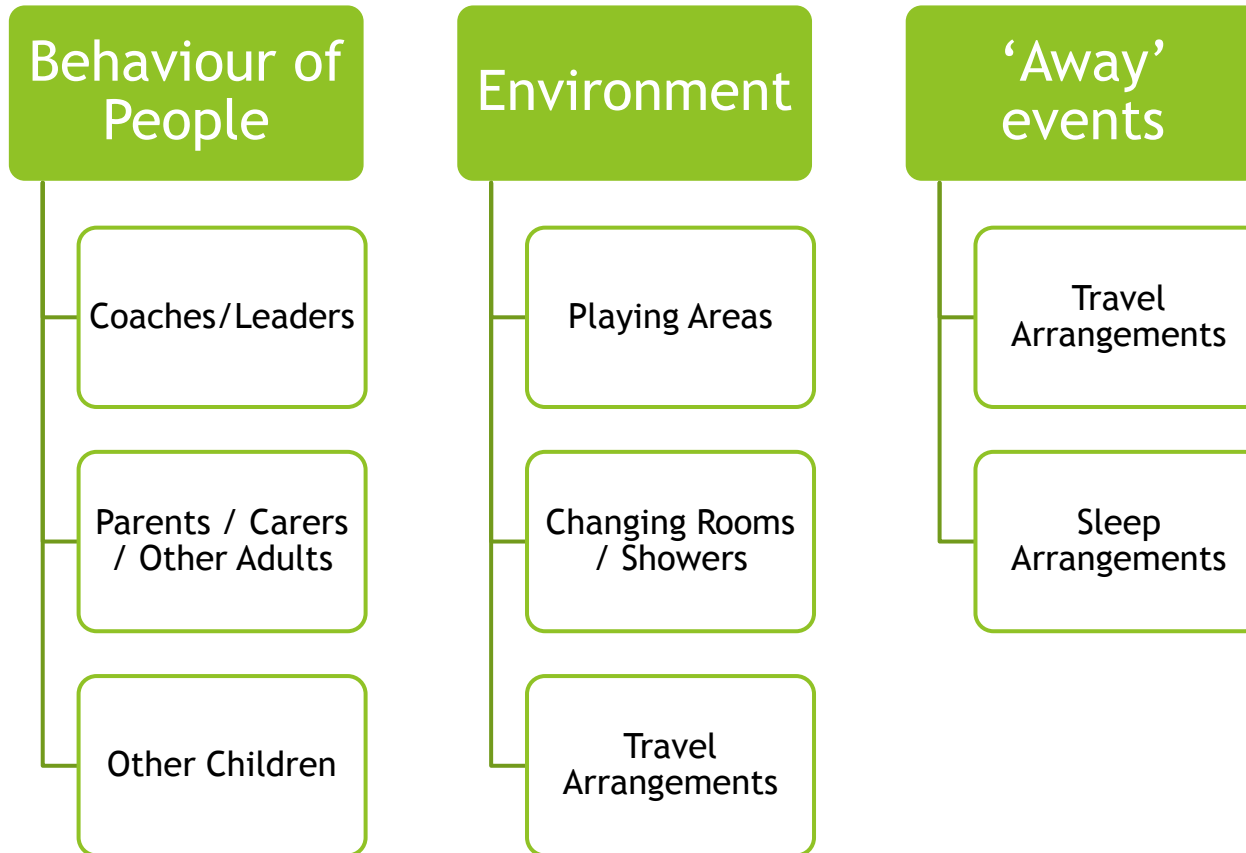
Always:

- ▶ stay calm – ensure the child is safe and feels safe
- ▶ show and tell the child that you are taking what 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 abuse
- ▶ make a note of what the child has said as soon as possible after the event
- ▶ involve parents where appropriate
- ▶ maintain confidentiality – only tell others if it will help protect the child
- ▶ follow guidelines (eg NGB, LA).

Never:

- ▶ rush into actions that may be inappropriate
- ▶ make promises you cannot keep
- ▶ 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.

Audit Your Organisation and DEVELOP a WRITTEN CODE of PRACTICE



CHALLENGE then CHANGE the CULTURE

Hodně štěstí a děkuji

GOOD LUCK and THANK YOU

Hodně štěstí a děkuji