

Irish Canoe Union Child Protection Policy

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Section 1

Irish Canoe Union Child Protection Policy

Irish Canoe Union Child Protection Policy

Introduction

Sport can have a very powerful and positive influence on young people. Not only can it provide opportunities for personal enjoyment and development, it can also help to develop valuable qualities such as self-esteem, leadership, teamwork and hopefully a lifelong passion for their chosen sport.

The ICU Child Protection Policy is an integral component of the Irish Canoe Union's overall Code of Ethics & Conduct which includes all of the Irish Canoe Union's policies and procedures relating to ethics, conduct, disciplinary, and appeal procedures.

Irish Canoe Union Ethos in relation to Young People

All young people should be treated in an equitable and fair manner irrespective of age, gender, religion, race, ability, social or ethnic background, or political persuasion, and have the right to protection at all times from physical, emotional or sexual abuse.

The Irish Canoe Union is committed to creating a child-centered ethos within its organisation which ensures that participation, competition and specialisation are kept in their appropriate place. The Irish Canoe Union is committed to maintaining the highest possible standards of behaviour and conduct at all Irish Canoe Union activities, competitions and events.

All those involved in the Irish Canoe Union are expected to respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person, treating everyone equally. In particular, they must be aware of the special needs of young people and the need to maintain their well-being.

All those involved in the Irish Canoe Union have a responsibility to ensure that every young person involved in canoeing is able to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment and to be protected from any form of abuse.

Duty of Care

The Irish Canoe Union is committed to ensuring that all canoeing activities, whether recreational or competitive, organised under the auspices of the Irish Canoe Union or in clubs affiliated to the Irish Canoe Union, operate to the highest standards and in an environment that promotes safety, equality, and fairness.

The Irish Canoe Union accepts that it has a duty of care to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of any person involved in canoeing activities run by the Irish Canoe Union and its affiliated clubs and to support all individuals placed in a "duty of care" situation through their involvement in the promotion, organisation and development of canoeing activities.

The Irish Canoe Union will maintain an ongoing risk assessment policy that will contribute to ensuring that the Irish Canoe Union makes every effort to minimise all risks involved at all participation levels within the Irish Canoe Union.

All instructors / coaches, event organisers, and clubs should have a clear understanding of operating with an appropriate code of ethics, awareness of what their "duty of care" is, and how this duty relates to their position of being responsible for others

Child Protection Policy Statement

For the purposes of this policy any person under the age of 18 years is considered a **child / young person**. The term **adult** includes any person over 18 years whether a participant, athlete, instructor, coach, official, employee, or anyone operating in a voluntary capacity within the Irish Canoe Union.

The key principles underlying the ICU Child Protection Policy are:

Responsibilities

The Irish Canoe Union will:

1. promote the health and welfare of young people by providing opportunities for them to take part in canoeing activities, whether these activities are recreational or competitive.
2. respect and promote the rights and aspirations of young people;
3. support procedures which recognise that adults have a duty of care to young people; to safeguard their well-being; and to protect them from poor practices;
4. recruit, train and supervise adults so as to encourage the adoption of best practices to safeguard and protect young people from poor practices and abuse, and themselves against false allegations;
5. require adults to adopt and abide by the ICU Child Protection Policy which form an integral component of the Irish Canoe Union Code of Ethics & Conduct;
6. aim to ensure that young people who take part in any Irish Canoe Union activities are able to do so in a fun and safe environment and be protected from neglect, bullying and any form of physical, emotional or sexual abuse;
7. respond to any allegations appropriately;
8. review and evaluate the ICU Child Protection Policy on a regular basis.

Principles

The guidance given in the following procedures is based on the following principles:

1. an adult has a moral and statutory duty for the care, custody, and control of any young person under the age of 18 under their supervision;
2. a young person's welfare is paramount;
3. all young people involved in canoeing, whether recreational or competitive, should expect protection from poor practices and abuse, whatever their age, culture, disability they may have, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual identity;
4. all incidents of poor practice or suspicion of poor practice and allegation or suspicion of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
5. every young person who takes part in canoeing activities under the auspices of the Irish Canoe Union should be able to do so in a fun and safe environment, and be protected from neglect, bullying and any form of physical, emotional or sexual abuse;
6. all young people should expect appropriate management and support with regard to their involvement in canoeing;

7. it is the responsibility of statutory authorities to determine or not if serious abuse has taken place, but it is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns;
8. confidentiality should be upheld in line with data protection legislation;
9. all those involved in the management of young people whilst involved in canoeing have a duty to ensure that they are:
 - allowed access to canoeing in a way that is appropriate for their age and ability;
 - instructed or coached by appropriately qualified instructors / coaches;
 - not required to take part in so many competitions or training sessions that their well-being is threatened;
 - not subjected to physical, verbal or racial abuse from any source;
 - not subjected to bullying or undue pressure from any source;
 - encouraged to achieve their full potential at all levels.

Review

The ICU Child Protection Policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed:

1. in accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the protection of young people or changes within the Irish Canoe Union;
2. following any issues or concerns about the protection of young people within the Irish Canoe Union; or
3. at least annually.

Monitoring and review of the ICU Child Protection Policy are within the remit of the Irish Canoe Union Board of Management who will take advice from the ICU National Child Protection Officer and the relevant Irish Canoe Union Technical Committees.

Assent

All individuals whether a participant, athlete, coach, official, employee, or anyone operating in a voluntary or professional capacity within the Irish Canoe Union must agree to abide by the ICU Code of Conduct for the Protection of Young People as outlined in the ICU Child Protection Policy. All such individuals by virtue of their involvement in canoeing run under the auspices of the Irish Canoe Union are deemed to have assented to and as such recognise and adhere to the principles and responsibilities embodied in this ICU Code of Conduct.

Section 2

Recruitment, Employment, and Deployment of Staff and Volunteers

Recruitment, Employment, and Deployment of Staff and Volunteers

Introduction

All reasonable steps should be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with young people. It is essential that the same procedures are used consistently for all posts whether paid or voluntary, full-time or part-time.

Recruitment by Irish Canoe Union Affiliated Clubs

It is recognised that there are many individuals within the Irish Canoe Union and its affiliated clubs who have worked with young people in a voluntary capacity for many years. Whilst it is not being suggested that these individuals should now have to undergo a comprehensive recruitment process, it is considered in the best interests of clubs, club management, and volunteers themselves to undergo some level of the screening as outlined in the ICU Volunteer Recruitment Procedure.

Any individual within a club not currently working with young people and who wishes to move to a post with substantial access to young people should undergo the ICU Volunteer Recruitment Procedure or alternatively a club volunteer recruitment procedure which is in line with the ICU Volunteer Recruitment Procedure should be implemented.

Recruitment by Irish Canoe Union Technical Committees

The recruitment of individuals by Irish Canoe Union Technical Committees to work directly with young people, in whatever capacity, must adhere strictly to the ICU Volunteer Recruitment Procedure.

Recruitment by the Irish Canoe Union

The recruitment of individuals by the Irish Canoe Union to work directly with young people in a voluntary capacity will adhere strictly to ICU Volunteer Recruitment Procedure.

All Irish Canoe Union staff is recruited in compliance with the recruitment policy outlined in the Irish Canoe Union HR Handbook.

ICU Volunteer Recruitment Procedure

Advertising

If any form of advertising is being used to recruit individuals whether paid or voluntary, it should reflect the:

1. key responsibilities of the role;
2. level of experience and/or qualification required;
3. the club / technical committee's open and positive stance on child protection and equal opportunities.

Pre-Application Information

Pre-application information sent to interested or potential applicants should contain:

1. a job description, including roles and responsibilities;
2. a person specification (e.g. stating qualifications and/or experience required);
3. an application form.

Recruitment Application Forms

All applicants, whether for paid or voluntary, full-time or part-time positions, should complete an application form. An application form should be designed to elicit the all the necessary information. See Appendix I for an example of a Recruitment Application Form.

A minimum of two written references should be taken up, only when the position has been offered to an applicant.

Short-listing

Short-listing by a designated committee should be made for each post in accordance with the application form and the relevant person specification.

Interview, disclosure and induction

A formal interview is always required for positions involving working with young people. The interview should be carried out according to acceptable protocol and recommendations.

All staff, paid and voluntary, should undergo a formal induction in which;

1. their qualifications / experience are substantiated;
2. they are reminded that they have agreed to abide by the Code of Conduct outlined in ICU Child Protection Policy and they may face disciplinary action if there is an allegation that the Code has been broken;
3. the expectations, roles, and responsibilities of the position are clarified.
4. child protection policy and implementation procedures are explained and training needs established;
5. if practicable, the new recruit should be mentored by an experienced person.

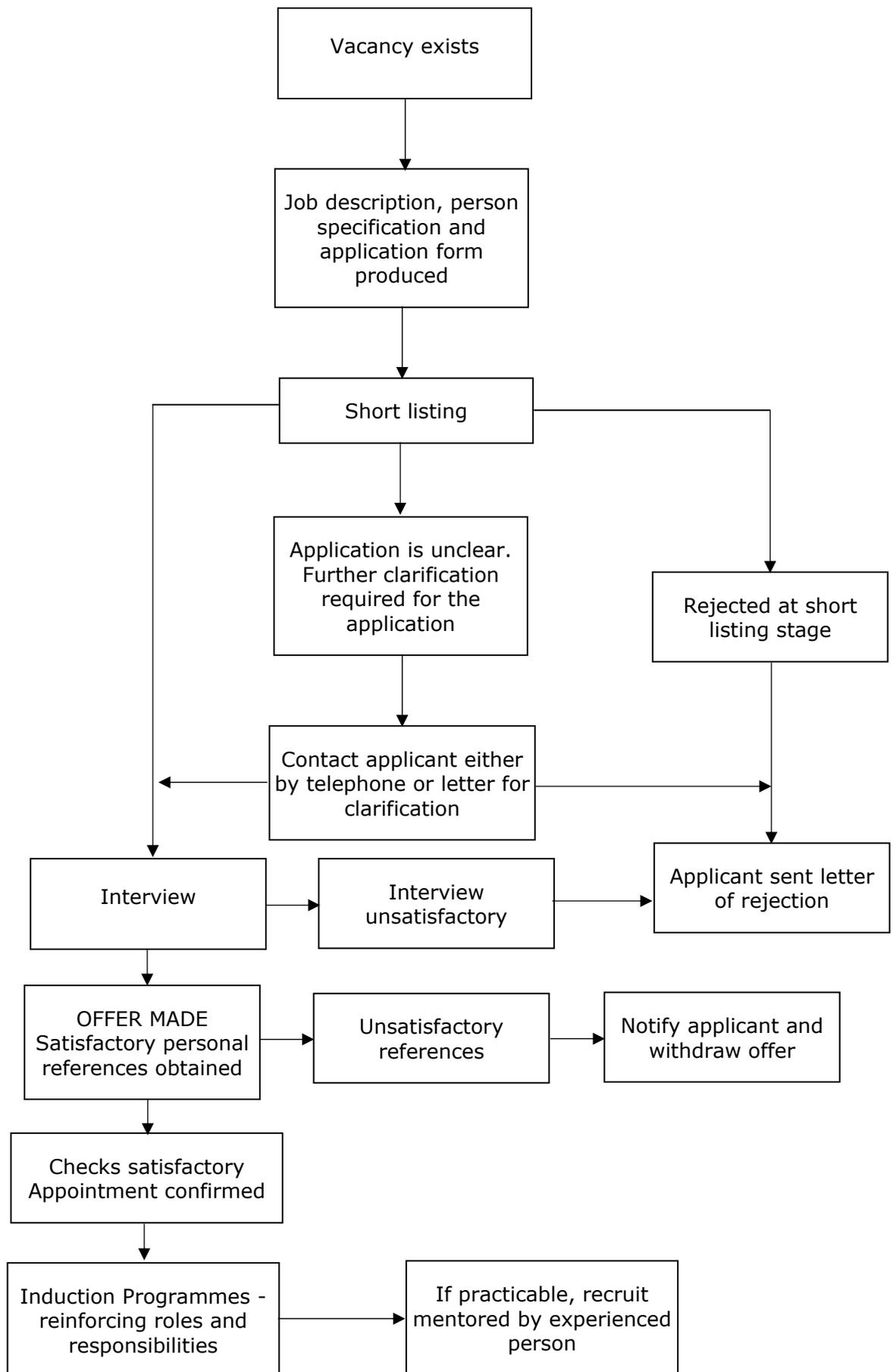
Training

Checks are only part of the process to protect young people from possible poor practices and/or abuse. Appropriate training will enable individuals to recognise their responsibilities with regard to their own good practise and the reporting of suspected poor practice / concerns of possible abuse.

Monitoring and appraisal

At regular intervals (or following a particular programme), the opportunity should exist to receive formal (e.g. through an appraisal) or informal feedback, to identify training needs and set new goals. Clubs / committees should be sensitive to any concerns about poor practice or abuse and act on them at an early stage following the guidelines in this document.

Recruitment Flowchart



Section 3

Promoting Good Practises with Young People

Promoting Good Practise with Young People

Good Practice Guidelines

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Good Practice means:

1. always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment);
2. treating all young people equally, and with respect and dignity;
3. always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals;
4. maintaining a safe and appropriate distance;
5. making canoeing fun and enjoyable, and promoting fair play;
6. ensuring that if any form of manual / physical support is required, it is provided openly and according to recommended guidelines. Young people should always be consulted and their agreement gained;
7. keeping up to date with technical skills and qualifications within canoeing;
8. if groups have to be supervised in changing rooms try to ensure that parents/teachers/coaches/officials work in pairs;
9. ensuring that if mixed teams are taken away, they are always accompanied by a male and female adult, and parents if possible.
10. ensuring that at residential events, adults do not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms. If an adult is working in a supervisory capacity, they should only enter children's rooms when accompanied by another adult;
11. being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people and promoting a healthy diet;
12. giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism;
13. recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will;
14. securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis. See Appendix I for an example of a Parental Consent Form.
15. keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given and ensuring if the need arises the administration of emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment that parental consent has been obtained;
16. requesting written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars / vehicles.

Coaching Ratios

It is extremely important for instructors / coaches to operate in accordance with the Irish Canoe Union recommended ratios.

Changing Rooms

If participants / athletes need to use changing rooms, ideally they should be supervised at all times by two adults. The ideal situation should be that adults should not change or shower at the same time using the same facility as participants / athletes. If you are involved in a mixed gender group, ideally separate facilities should be available. If a young person is uncomfortable changing or showering in public no pressure should be placed on them to do so. Encourage them to do this at home.

Opposite sex adults must not be present in the changing rooms whilst participants / competitors are getting showered or changed.

Under no circumstances should photographic equipment be used in the changing room environment. This includes cameras, video cameras, mobile phones with photographic capabilities, etc.

Treatment of young people

It is recommended that no young person should receive treatment where the young person is on his/her own.

It is strongly recommended that all treatment procedures should be "open", i.e. the door remains open, and parents are invited to observe treatment procedures. Where strict medical confidentiality is to be observed then the parents of the young person should be invited to attend.

It is recommended that treating an area of the body which is potentially embarrassing to a young person a suitable consenting adult acting as a chaperone should be present.

It is important to maintain medical confidentiality and patient dignity at all times.

Prior to medical treatment being carried out on a young person, parental consent in written form must be sought where appropriate.

It is recommended that treatment procedures are fully explained to the young person and **verbal consent** is given before they are carried out.

Practices to be avoided

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge at the club or the young person's parents. For example, a young person sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a young person up at the end of a session:

- avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with young people away from others;
- never take young people to your home where they will be alone with you.

Practice never to be sanctioned

The following should never be sanctioned. You should never:

1. engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay;
2. share a room with a young person;
3. allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching;
4. make sexual suggestive comments to a young person, even in fun;
5. reduce a young person to tears as a form of control;
6. allow allegations made by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon;
7. do things of a personal nature for young people that they can do for themselves;
8. invite or allow young people to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

It may sometimes be necessary for adults to do things of a personal nature for young people. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the participants / competitors involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk to him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a young person to carry out particular activities.

Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained. If any of the following incidents should occur, you should report them immediately to another colleague and make a written note of the event. Parents should also be informed of the incident:

1. if you accidentally hurt a participant / competitor;
2. if he/she seems distressed in any manner;
3. if a participant / competitor misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

Relationships of trust

It is recognised that genuine relationships do occur between the different levels of within a group but that no intimate relationship should begin whilst an adult is in a "position of trust" over them. The power and influence that an older adult has over someone involved in an activity cannot be over-estimated. If there is an additional competitive aspect to the activity and the older person is responsible for the young person's success or failure to some extent, then the dependency of the younger person upon the older will be increased. It is therefore vital for adults to recognise the responsibility they must exercise in ensuring that they do not abuse their position of trust.

Guidelines for use of photographic equipment at canoeing events

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled sports in vulnerable positions. See Section 8 for guidelines for the use of photographic equipment at canoeing events.

Section 4

Recognition of Poor Practice, Abuse and Bullying

Recognition of Poor Practices, Bullying and Abuse

Poor Practice

Allegations of poor practice often relates to situations where the behaviour of an adult or another young person is inappropriate and may be causing concern to a young person. In the application of this policy, poor practice includes any behaviour of a child protection nature, which contravenes the ICU Child Protection Policy, infringes an individual's rights and/or is a failure to fulfil the highest standards of care. Poor practice is unacceptable in the Irish Canoe Union and will be treated seriously and with appropriate action.

Abuse and Neglect

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. Staff and volunteers within the Irish Canoe Union, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, are not expert at such recognition, however, they do have a responsibility to act if they have any concerns about the behaviour of someone (an adult or another young person) towards a young person and to follow the procedures in this document.

Somebody may abuse or neglect a young person by inflicting harm, or failing to act to prevent harm. Young people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

Definitions of Abuse

Neglect – is when adults fail to meet a young person's physical and/or psychological needs, resulting in a serious impairment of the young person's health or development. It may also include refusal to give young people love, affection and attention. An example of neglect in a canoeing context could include an instructor / coach not ensuring young people are safe, exposing them to unnecessary risk of injury, or excluding them within the group.

Physical Abuse – is when adults physically hurt or injure young people by hitting or otherwise causing physical harm to a young person. Examples of physical abuse in canoeing may be when the nature and intensity of training and competition exceeds the capacity of the young person; or where drugs are used to enhance performance.

Emotional Abuse – is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a young person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the young person's emotional development. It may involve conveying to young people that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on young people. It may involve causing young people to feel frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make the young person nervous or withdrawn. Emotional abuse in canoeing may occur if young people are subjected to constant name-calling, sarcasm, bullying or unrealistic pressure to perform consistently to high expectations.

Sexual Abuse – is when young people are abused by adults who use young people to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, or fondling. Showing young people pornographic material (books, videos, pictures) or talking to young people in a sexually explicit manner is also a form of sexual abuse. In sport, coaching techniques that involve physical contact with young people could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. The power of a coach over young athlete, if misused, may also lead to abusive situations developing.

Indicators of Abuse

Indications that a young person may be abused include the following:

1. Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
2. An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
3. The young person describing what appears to be an abusive act involving him / her.
4. Someone else (a young person or adult) expressing concern about the welfare of another young person.
5. Unexplained changes in behaviour (e.g. becoming very quiet or withdrawn, or displaying sudden outbursts of temper).
6. Inappropriate sexual awareness.
7. Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour.
8. Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
9. Having difficulty in making friends.
10. Being prevented from socialising with other young people.
11. Displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
12. Losing weight for no apparent reason.
13. Becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

It should be recognised that the above list this is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of the indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place.

Bullying

It is important to recognise that in some cases of abuse it may not always be an adult abusing a young person. It can occur that the abuser may be a young person, for example in the case of bullying. Bullying may be seen as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

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.

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression be it verbal, psychological, physical conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating and occurs mainly in social environments such as schools, clubs, and other organisations working with young people. It includes behaviours such as teasing, taunting, threatening, extortion, and behaviour by one or more children against a victim.

The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to young people, to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm (including self-harm). The competitive nature of sport makes it an ideal environment for the bully. The bully in sport can be a:

1. parent who pushes too hard;
2. coach who adopts a “win at all costs” philosophy;
3. player / competitor who intimidates inappropriately;
4. club official who places unfair pressure on a person;
5. spectator who shouts abuse.

How would you know if a child is being bullied?

Most bullies operate using furtiveness, threats and fear. Bullying can therefore only survive in an environment where the victim does not feel empowered to tell someone who can help or in which it is not safe to do so.

The following indicators are signs that a young person might be getting bullied.

- Reluctance to come to a venue or take part in activities.
- Physical signs (unexplained bruises, scratches or damage to belongings).
- Stress caused illness - headaches, and stomach aches which seem unexplained.
- Fearful behaviour.
- Frequent loss or shortage of money with vague explanations.
- Having few friends.
- Behavioural changes such as not eating, reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, reluctance to go to school, training or sport club.
- Attempting suicide or hinting at suicide.
- Anxiety.
- A drop off in performance at school or standard of canoeing.

Who should deal with bullying?

While the more extreme forms of bullying would be regarded as abuse and consequently reportable to the statutory authorities, dealing with bullying behaviour in the context of canoeing can normally be resolved by an instructor / coach / club management.

How can it be prevented?

- Ensure that all members follow a code of conduct, which promotes the right and dignity of each member.
- Deal with any incident as they arise.
- Use a whole group policy or “no blame approach”, i.e. not “bullying the bully” but working with bullies and the group of young people helping them to understand the hurt that they are causing and so make the problem a “shared concern” of the group.
- Reinforce that there is “a permission to tell” culture rather than “might is right”.
- Encourage young people to negotiate, co-operative and help others, particularly new or different children.
- Offer the victim immediate support and put the “no blame approach” into operation.
- Never tell a young person to ignore bullying.
- Never encourage a young person to take the law into their own hands and beat the bully at their own game.
- Tell the victim there is nothing wrong with them and it is not their fault.

What is the "No Blame Approach?"

Step 1 - Interview with the victim

If you find there has been an incident of bullying, first talk to the victim. At this stage find out who was involved and what the victim is now feeling. The following questions and approach should be adopted:

- Was it verbal or physical or intimidation?
- How hurt is the victim?
- Was it with his/her own peer group?
- Assure the victim that his/her name will not come out in the investigation?
- Actively listen?

Step 2 - Meet with all involved

Arrange to meet with all those involved; this should include some witnesses, those who may have colluded, those who joined in and those who initiated the bullying.

- Have a minimum of six to eight in the group - keep the numbers controllable.
- Make a point of calling a special meeting.
- Ensure the severity of the topic is understood by all.
- Speak only of the hurt caused in general terms with no reference to the victim.
- Play on the conscience of all - ask questions like: How would you feel? Would you like it done to you?

Step 3 - Explain the problem

The distress being caused as a result of the bullying incident is explained. At this stage the details of the incident or the allocation of the blame is not discussed. Explain the feeling of loneliness, feeling left out, rejected, laughed at. Try asking questions:

- Would they like if it happened to them?
- Someone here in this group was bullied by someone with this group what could we do to see it does happen again?
- Listen, watch out for reactions, and pick up on any without isolating anyone

Step 4 - Share the responsibility

Explain what steps / controls may have to be introduced to prevent further incidents and how everyone will loose out as a result. Ask the group for their ideas. At this stage the group is encouraged to suggest ways that would make the victim feel happier. All positive responses are noted. Use phrases "if it were you" to encourage a response. Listen to all suggestions and note them.

Leave it to them

Now the problem has been identified, solutions suggested, the problem is now handed over to the group to solve. Arrange to meet again soon e.g. in a week's time. Pass responsibility over the group and give a timeframe which something must e done.

Meet them again

Each member of the group, including the bully, discuss how things are going, who is doing what and have there been other incidents. This allows for continual monitoring and also keeps all involved in the process.

Again enforce the idea of the "team" looking after each other at regular intervals to ensure it is know that bullying or intimidating behaviour will not be tolerated.

Section 5

Club Children Liaison Officer

Club Child Liaison Officer

Introduction

The welfare and protection of children and young people should be the concern of all adults at all times. In the context of a club, the welfare and protection of young people is the responsibility of all club members irrespective of their role within the club. Each club should accept this as part of their responsibility and duty of care to young people if it accepts young people as members of their club.

Any club affiliated to the Irish Canoe Union that includes young people as part of its membership should designate a person as that club's Child Liaison Officer. This person should have responsibility for liaising with the Management Committee on issues relating to child safety, welfare, and protection. A club may appoint more than one Club Child Liaison Officer to cater for particular age groups and genders if this is considered appropriate.

Each club should have clear procedures for responding to concerns expressed in relation to child safety, welfare and protection issues. All club members, children, parents/guardians should be aware of the procedures to be followed to report concerns and to whom within the club such concerns should be reported to. These procedures should be consistent with the procedures outlined in the Irish Canoe Union Child Protection Policy and the Irish Sports Council's Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children's Sport.

The Club Child Liaison Officer should be the link between young people and adults within a club and should be responsible for monitoring and reporting to the Club Management Committee on how club policies, activities, structures, etc. impact on young people within the club.

The Club Child Liaison Officer therefore needs to be perceived as being approachable, discrete, have good communication and listening skills, and a sound understanding of child protection issues and policies.

The Club Child Liaison Officer needs to be and to be seen to be fully supported by the Club Management Committee. The Club Child Liaison Officer should have a formal non elective position on the Club Management Committee. Preferably the appointment of the Club Child Liaison Officer should be done in consultation with the juvenile members of the club and their parents / guardians. The Club Child Liaison Officer should be formally introduced to the juvenile members of the club in an appropriate forum.

The focus of Club Child Liaison Officer should be child centred and have as their primary objective the establishment of a child centred ethos within the club. The Club Child Liaison Officer should act as the first point of contact for anyone within the club (staff, volunteer, parents or children) who might have a concern about a child, about poor practices, or possible incidents of abuse.

The Club Child Liaison Officer does not need to be a child protection "expert" and specifically does not have responsibility for investigating or validating child protection concerns. The Club Child Liaison Officer also has no counselling or therapeutic role. These roles are fulfilled by the statutory authorities.

It is, however, possible, that child protection concerns might be brought to the attention of the Club Child Liaison Officer. In this event, it is essential that correct procedures are followed i.e. that reports are passed on immediately to the designated person within the club (generally the Chairperson) who has the responsibility of reporting to the statutory authorities.

Club Child Liaison Officer - Job Description

The following outlines the core knowledge, skills, and tasks for the role of Club Child Liaison Officer.

Knowledge: (To be made available by the Club Management Committee through the Irish Canoe Union)

- Basic knowledge of core legislation and government guidance.
- Basic knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of the statutory authorities.
- Local arrangements for managing child protection and reporting procedures.
- Poor practice and abuse – behaviour that is harmful to children.
- The Irish Canoe Union's role and responsibilities to safeguard the welfare of young people.
- Irish Canoe Union's policy and procedures related to safeguarding young people.
- Core values and principles underpinning practice.
- Awareness of equity issues and child protection.

The Club Child Liaison Officer should have the following skills:

- Basic administration - maintain records.
- Basic advice and support provision to the Club Management Committee.
- Child focussed approach.
- Communication and interpersonal skills.
- Ability to promote Irish Canoe Union's policy, procedures and resources.
- Ability to provide information from local resources. (Doctors, Police, Emergency Services, etc.).

Tasks:

- Assist the Club Management Committee fulfil its responsibilities to the Irish Canoe Union to safeguard young people at club level.
- Be the first point of contact with the Irish Canoe Union National Child Protection Officer.
- Implement Irish Canoe Union's reporting and recording procedures.
- Maintain contact details for local social services and know how to obtain local child protection guidelines.
- Promote the Irish Canoe Union's best practice and Child Protection Policy within the club.
- Sit on the club's management committee when young peoples' issues are to be discussed.
- Promote and ensure confidentiality is maintained.
- Promote anti-discriminatory practices.

The Club Child Liaison Officer through the Club Management Committee should fulfil the following general functions:

- Promote awareness of the Irish Canoe Union's Child Protection Policy and the Irish Sports Council's Code of Ethics and Good practice for Children's Sport in Ireland within the club and particularly among children and their parents / guardians. This can be achieved by the production of a club information leaflet, the establishment of children's/age-group specific notice board, and by regular induction and information meetings for young people and their parents/guardians.
- Influence policy and practice within the club in order to prioritise young peoples' needs.
- See that young people know how to make concerns known to appropriate adults or agencies.
- Act as an advisory resource to instructors, coaches, and team managers on best practices.
- Report regularly to the club management committee.

Each club needs to decide how best to fulfil the above functions and tasks according to their own situation. Each club is different but there are common elements when focusing on the involvement of young people.

A Club Child Liaison Officer should continually monitor club policies in relation to young people and check that all activities are safe and enjoyable.

Each club needs to be aware of any issue that might cause young people harm whilst in their care. This may range from a simple injury due to faulty equipment or an unsafe facility. In some cases neglect is more serious, and may result in a breach of a child's rights.

The Club Child Liaison Officer should advise the Club Management Committee of the need for an activities safety statement in relation to the club's activities and ensure that there are policies in relation to adequate supervision, travelling with young people, recruitment and selection of team managers, instructors and coaches,.

The Club Child Liaison Officer should advise the Club Management Committee that the following documents / policies exist and are operational:

- Policy Statement
- Code of Conduct
- Disciplinary Procedures
- Bullying Policy
- Safety Statement
- Recruitment & Selection Procedures
- Reporting Procedures

Section 6

Responding to Disclosure, Suspicions and Allegations

Responding to Disclosure, Suspicions and Allegations

Responding to disclosures of Poor Practice, Bullying or Harassment

If you are told or you become aware through observation that a young person is being or has been subjected to poor practice, bullying or harassment within your club you should immediately contact your Club Child Liaison Officer. In the event that your club does not have a Club Child Liaison Officer you should immediately contact the Irish Canoe Union National Child Protection Officer.

or

If you are told or you become aware through observation that a young person is being or has been subjected to poor practice, bullying or harassment directly through involvement in an activity organised and run under the auspices of the Irish Canoe Union you should immediately contact Irish Canoe Union National Child Protection Officer.

There is no time limit to the submission of allegations or incidents of a child protection nature.

1. In the event that the incident of poor practice, bullying or harassment is alleged to have taken place within the club environment then the Club Child Liaison Officer must immediately report to the board of management of the club who will make a decision on how the allegation is to be dealt with. A decision will also be made with regard to the suspension of the individual concerned, pending the outcome of an internal or external enquiry. The Club Board of Management should inform the Irish Canoe Union's National Child Protection Officer of all confirmed incidents of poor practice, bullying or harassment.
2. In the event that the incident of poor practice, bullying or harassment is alleged to have taken place directly through involvement in an activity organised and run under the auspices of the Irish Canoe Union then the National Child Protection Officer will bring the issue to the attention of the Irish Canoe Union Executive who will make a decision on how the allegation is to be dealt with. A decision will also be made with regard to the suspension of the individual concerned, pending the outcome of an internal or external enquiry.

Responding to disclosures of Serious Abuse

If you are told or you become aware through observation that a young person is being or has been subjected to serious abuse you should immediately contact your Club Child Liaison Officer. In the event that your club does not have a Club Child Liaison Officer or the Club Child Liaison Officer cannot be contacted or is the subject of the allegation you should then report the matter as soon as possible to the most senior officer holder in the club, normally the chairperson. The chairman of a club is considered the most appropriately designated person to contact statutory authorities where there is a suspicion or allegation of serious abuse.

If the chairperson has reasonable grounds for believing that the child has been abused or is at the risk of abuse the chairperson should make a report to the statutory authorities who have the statutory responsibility to investigate and assess suspected or actual child abuse. In the case of emergency where the child appears to be at immediate and serious risk and the designated person is unable to contact a duty social worker, the Gardai should be contacted. Under no circumstances should a child be left in a dangerous situation pending intervention by the statutory authorities.

If the designated person (i.e. the most senior member of the club management) is unsure whether reasonable grounds for concern exist or not, s/he should informally consult with the local health board. S/he will be advised whether or not the matter requires a formal report.

A designated person reporting suspected or actual child abuse to the statutory authorities should first inform the family of their intention to make such a report, unless doing so would endanger the child or undermine an investigation.

A report should be given by the designated person to the statutory authorities in person or by phone, and in writing.

The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to persons who report child abuse "reasonably and in good faith" to the Health Board or the Gardai (See 5.13.1 - Irish Sport Could Code). The act also covers the offence of "false reporting".

The Role of the Health Boards

The Health Boards have a statutory duty to ensure the welfare of children. When a child protection referral is made, Health Board staff has a legal responsibility to make enquiries where a child who lives or found in their area is considered to be at risk of or actually suffering from significant harm.

This may involve talking to the young person and family and gathering information from other people who know the young person. Enquiries may be carried out jointly with the Gardai where a crime has been alleged.

The investigation of an allegation or suspension of child abuse is a matter solely for the statutory authorities.

Anonymous Complaints and Rumours

Anonymous complaints can be difficult to deal with but should not be ignored. In all cases the safety and welfare of young people are paramount. Any such complaints relating to inappropriate behaviour should be brought to the attention of the Club Child Liaison Officer and the club chairperson. The information should be checked out and handled in a confidential manner.

Rumours should not be allowed to hang in the air. Any rumours relating to inappropriate behaviour should be brought to the attention of the Chairman and checked out without delay.

How to respond to a disclosure from a young person about serious abuse

1. React calmly;
2. Listen compassionately and carefully - keep any questions to the absolute minimum, facilitating the child to tell about the problem.
3. Take what the child is saying seriously;
4. Remember the child has decided to tell about something very important and has taken a risk to do so.
5. Reassure the child;
6. If the nature of what the child is saying is unclear, use open, non specific questions such as "can you explain to me what you mean by that";
7. The child should be given some indication of what happen next. It should be kept in mind that the child may have been threatened and may feel vulnerable at this stage;
8. Reassure the young person, but
9. Carefully record the details.

Actions to be avoided - Do not

1. make promises of confidentiality which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments;
2. make a judgement or make negative comments about the alleged abuser;
3. speculate or make assumptions;
4. interview the child - do not probe for more information than is offered;
5. allow your shock or distaste to show
6. Approach the alleged abuser.

Disciplinary Procedures

Generally in all situations involving an allegation of serious abuse the accused involved should be suspended pending the outcome of any investigation by the statutory authorities. The accused should be afforded an opportunity to respond to the allegation. His/her response should be noted and passed to the statutory authorities.

In all incidents the case will be referred to an ICU Disciplinary Panel following completion of the statutory authorities' investigation.

Appeal and Reinstatement

The Irish Canoe Union Appeals Procedure is available to anyone as part of natural justice. Any Appeals Panel will operate in accordance with the ICU Disciplinary & Appeals Procedures.

Irrespective of the findings of the statutory authorities, an ICU Appeals Panel will assess all individual cases to decide whether the person under investigation can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision, particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the Gardai.

In such cases, an Irish Canoe Union Appeals Panel must reach a decision based upon the available information, which could suggest that on a balance of probability it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of young people should always remain paramount.

Records and Information

Information passed to the statutory authorities must be as helpful as possible, hence the necessity for making a detailed record at the time of the disclosure/concern.

Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a "need to know basis" only. This includes the following people:

1. Club Child Liaison Officer;
2. Parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused and only following advice from statutory authorities;
3. Person making the allegation;
4. Statutory authorities;
5. Irish Canoe Union's National Child Protection Officer, members of an Appeals Panel;
6. Alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a young person) only following advice from the statutory authorities.

Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with Irish Canoe Union Data Protection Policy.

Section 7

Child Protection Regulations

Child Protection Regulations

Child Protection

1. The Irish Canoe Union agrees to adopt the Irish Canoe Union Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
2. All individuals involved in canoeing through the Irish Canoe Union at every level, including athletes, race officials, coaches, administrators, or club officials agree to abide by the code relating to the Irish Canoe Union Child Protection Policy and all such individuals by participating or being involved in canoeing through the Irish Canoe Union in one of the aforementioned roles or in a role which comes within the intended ambit of this paragraph and the Irish Canoe Union Child Protection Policy generally, are deemed to have assented to and as such recognise and adhere to the principles and responsibilities embodied in the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children.
3. Any act, statement, conduct or other matter that harms a child or children, or poses or may pose a risk of harm to a child or children, will constitute behaviour that is improper and brings the sport into dispute.
4. In these regulations the expression "Offence" will mean any one or more of the offences which reasonably causes the Union to believe that the person accused of the offences poses or may pose a risk of harm to a young person.
5. Upon receipt by the Irish Canoe Union of:
 - notification that an individual has been charged with an Offence; or
 - notification that an individual is the subject of an investigation by the Gardai, Social Services or any other authority relating to an Offence; or
 - any other information which causes the Irish Canoe Union to reasonably believe that a person poses or may pose a risk of harm to a child or children then the Irish Canoe Union will have the power to order that the individual be suspended from all or any specific Irish Canoe Union activity for such period and on such terms and conditions as it thinks fit.
6. In reaching its determination as to whether an order under Regulation 5 should be made, the Irish Canoe Union will give consideration, inter alia, to the following factors:
 - whether a young person may be at risk of harm;
 - whether the matters are of a serious nature;
 - whether an order is necessary or desirable to allow the conduct of any investigation to proceed unimpeded.
7. The period of an order referred to Regulation 5 above will not be capable of lasting beyond the date upon which any charge under the Rules of the Irish Canoe Union or any Offence is decided or brought to an end.

8. Where an order is imposed on an individual under Regulation 5 above, the Irish Canoe Union will bring and conclude any proceedings under the Disciplinary Rules of Irish Canoe Union against the person relating to the matters as soon as reasonably practicable.
9. Where a person is convicted, or is made the subject of a caution in respect of an Offence, that will constitute a breach of the Rules of the Irish Canoe Union and it will have the power to order the suspension of the person from all or any specific Irish Canoe Union activities for such a period (including indefinitely) and on such terms and conditions as it thinks fit.
10. For the purpose of these Regulations, the Irish Canoe Union will act through an Irish Canoe Union Disciplinary Panel.
11. Notification in writing or an order referred to above shall be given to the person concerned and/or any club with which he is associated as soon as reasonably practicable.

Requirements for Clubs and Members

All clubs registered of the Irish Canoe Union must include the following wording under a Child Protection heading within their club's rules:

"The (Name of Club) agrees to adopt the Irish Canoe Union Child Protection Policy. All members are deemed to have assented to abide by the Irish Canoe Union Child Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children and as such agree to adhere to the principles and responsibilities embodied in that Code."

The following wording must be incorporated into all Club and Irish Canoe Union membership forms and all forms, contracts and/or terms of engagement regarding the appointment of coaches, officials and other individuals on a full time, part time or volunteer basis working directly with young people;

"I, (name) have assented to abide by the Irish Canoe Union Child Protection Policy and as such agree to fully adhere to the principles and responsibilities embodied in the Irish Canoe Union Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children"

Section 8

Irish Canoe Union Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children

Irish Canoe Union Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children

This Irish Canoe Union Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children applies to all those involved in Irish Canoe Union at every level. All such individuals have a responsibility to act according to the highest standards of integrity, and to ensure that the reputation of the Irish Canoe Union is beyond reproach. Allegations of a child protection nature relating to the breaking of the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children must follow the recommended reporting procedures.

All those involved in the Irish Canoe Union must respect the rights and choices of young people, treating everyone equally and sensitively regardless of their gender, ethnic origin, cultural background, sexual orientation, religion, or political affiliation. The Irish Canoe Union is opposed to discrimination of any form and will promote measures to prevent discrimination, in whatever form, from being expressed.

The following codes of conduct must be adhered to at all times so the canoeing can be enjoyed by all young people.

Coaches

All Irish Canoe Union Instructors and Coaches **MUST WORK** within the ICU Child Protection Code. The Code should be used in conjunction with other Irish Canoe Union policies and procedures. The term "Instructor / Coach" is taken to include all instructors and coaches whether they have achieved a recognised / accredited qualification or not.

Relationships

An Irish Canoe Union Instructor / Coach is concerned with:

1. the safety, well being and protection of all young people in their charge, ensuring that all training and performing demands are not detrimental to the individual;
2. encouraging independence though guiding participants / competitors to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance with training and competition;
3. ensuring their behaviour is not misconstrued or open to allegations of favouritism, misconduct or impropriety, particularly where physical contact between instructor / coach and participant / competitor is necessary;
4. ensuring participants / competitors and relevant people are aware of their qualifications and experience, respecting the rights of participants / competitors to choose to consent or decline to participate within coaching or competition situations;
5. refraining from public criticism of other instructors / coaches / race officials.

Integrity

An Irish Canoe Union Instructor / Coach:

1. abides by the rules of the Irish Canoe Union;
2. follows fair play and ethical guidelines;
3. ensures all practices are suitable and relevant dependent upon the age, maturity, experience and ability of participants / competitors;
4. promotes the prevention of and education on the misuse of performance enhancing drugs and illegal substances;

5. must accurately present and evidence, upon request, details of their training qualifications and services;
6. if claiming an affiliation, sponsorship or accreditation with any organisation should do so in a truthful and accurate manner;
7. must declare, to the appropriate body, any criminal convictions.

Personal Standards

An Irish Canoe Union Instructor / Coach must not attempt to exert undue influences and pressures in order to obtain personal benefit or reward.

Instructors / Coaches must display high personal standards that project a favourable image of the Irish Canoe Union including:

1. good personal appearance that projects an image of health, cleanliness and functional efficiency;
2. refraining from smoking in the sporting environment;
3. refraining from drinking alcohol to the extent that it:
 - is obvious they have been drinking;
 - affects their coaching competence;
 - compromises a participant's / athlete's safety.

Competence

1. All instructors / coaches must be appropriately qualified as per the requirements of the Irish Canoe Union.
2. Instructors / Coaches should regularly seek ways of increasing their personal and professional development.
3. Instructors / Coaches must be receptive to employing systems of evaluation that include self evaluation and also external in an effort to assess the effectiveness of their work.

Safety

Within the limits of their control Instructors / Coaches have a responsibility to:

1. establish a safe working environment;
2. ensure as far as possible the safety of the participants / competitors with whom they work;
3. protect young people from harm or abuse;
4. fully prepare their participants / competitors for activities and make them aware of their personal responsibility in terms of safety;
5. ensure all activities undertaken are suitable for the experience and ability of the participants / competitors and in keeping with approved practices as determined by the Irish Canoe Union.

Complaints Procedure

Any individual or organisation wishing to make a complaint against an Irish Canoe Union Instructor / Coach, within the context of this Code should follow the procedure below:

1. report the matter to the employer of the instructor / coach, and to the Irish Canoe Union. **NB (Employer in this instance refers to the organisation that commissioned the instructor / coach to do the instructing / coaching whether this engagement is paid or unpaid).**
2. complaints that refer to the protection of children should be dealt with in accordance with laid down in the Irish Canoe Union Child Protection Policy.

Participants / Competitors

1. Treat everyone equally and sensitively regardless of his or her gender, ethnic origin, cultural background, sexual orientation, religion or political affiliation.
2. Know and abide by the rules and spirit of canoeing.
3. Avoid all forms of gamesmanship.
4. Accept the decisions of race officials without questions or complaint (let your team manager or coach ask the necessary questions) and avoid words or actions which may mislead a race official.
5. Respect race officials at all times.
6. Give maximum effort and strive for the best possible performance during a race / event.
7. Learn to accept success and failure, victory and defeat with dignity and without excessive emotional displays.
8. Abide by the instructions of your coach and club officials.
9. Treat your team mates and opponents, coaches, club officials and race officials with respect and consideration at all times.
10. Do not attempt to improve individual performance by the use of banned substances or banned techniques.
11. Do not use foul, sexist or racist language at any time.
12. Work equally hard for yourself and your team.
13. Be a good sport, applaud all good performances, whether by your team or by the opponents.
14. Remember that the aim of sport is to have fun, improve your skills and feel good.
15. At the end of competition applaud and thank your opponents and race officials.

Parents

1. Teach your child to treat everyone equally and sensitively regardless of his or her gender, ethnic origin or cultural background.
2. Do not force an unwilling child to take part in canoeing activities or competition.
3. Encourage your child to always to play by the rules and to respect race officials.
4. Young people are involved in organised sport for their enjoyment.
5. Never ridicule or shout at your child for making a mistake or losing.
6. Teach your child that effort and team work are as important as victory, so that the result of each race / event is accepted without undue disappointment.
7. Support all efforts to ensure that verbal, physical and racist abuse does not exist within canoeing.
8. Turn defeat into victory by helping young people towards skills improvement and good sportsmanship.
9. Remember that young people learn best by example.
10. Do not question publicly the judgement of officials and never their honesty.
11. Recognise the value and importance of volunteer coaches and administrators.
12. Insist on fair and disciplined play - no not tolerate foul play, cheating, foul, sexist or racist language.
13. As a spectator you must never enter the field of performance.

Competition Officials

1. Must treat everyone equally and sensitively, regardless of his or her disability, gender, ethnic origin, cultural background, sexual orientation, religion, age or political affiliation.
2. Be consistent, objective, impartial and courteous when applying the rules of canoeing.
3. The Irish Canoe Union advises that officials should not travel alone with young people (under the age of 18) to events. It is advised that you always have another adult with you at all times.
4. Use common sense to ensure that the spirit of the competition is not lost.
5. Encourage competitors to act within the rules and the spirit of canoeing.
6. Show patience and understanding towards novice competitors.
7. Do not be afraid to take decisions. An official should be fair and firm and must resist any possible influence from protests on the part of competitors, team officials or spectators.
8. Show respect towards competitors and team officials.

9. Be honest and completely impartial at all times.
10. Refrain from requesting hospitality of any kind, or accepting any hospitality offered and considered to be excessive.
11. Always have regard to the best interests of canoeing, including when publicly expressing an opinion on an event or any particular aspect of it, including others involved in the event.
12. Do not tolerate foul, sexist or racist language from competitors and / or officials.
13. The powers of an official must be used with wise judgement and care. Authority and a firm approach must be combined with respect.
14. An official should show respect when speaking with competitors, even in the event of infringements.
15. In reports, an official should set out the true facts and not attempt to justify any decisions.
16. An official should refrain from publicly expressing any criticism of fellow officials.
17. An official should assist with the development of less experienced officials.

Club Officials

1. Must treat everyone equally and sensitively regardless of his or her gender, ethnic origin, cultural background, sexual orientation, religion or political affiliation.
2. Accept the special role that you have to play in the establishment of standards by setting a good example of behaviour and conduct at all times.
3. Do not manipulate the rules in order to benefit yourself personally or your club.
4. Encourage all competitors and coaches to abide by the rules and spirit of canoeing.
5. Do not use foul, sexist or racist language,
6. Use your official position to take action against spectators who harass, abuse or use foul, sexist or racist language towards performers, race officials or coaches.
7. Ensure that proper supervision is provided by suitability qualified instructors, coaches and officials who are capable of promoting good sporting behaviour and good technical skills.
8. Ensure all equipment and facilities meet safety standards.
9. Respect the rights of other clubs.
10. Show respect to race officials, instructors, coaches, competitors and others involved in canoeing.
11. Do not endeavour to influence the result of a race / event by any actions that are not strictly within the rules.

12. Remember sport is enjoyed for its own sake - play down the importance of awards.
13. Always have regard to the best interests of canoeing, including where publicly expressing an opinion of canoeing and any particular aspect of it.
14. Resist all illegal or unsporting influences, including banned substances and techniques.
15. Protect ethical principles.
16. Accept the final decisions of race officials without protest.
17. Avoid words or actions that may mislead a race official.

Away Situations

Transport

It is recognised that there are extra responsibilities taken on by instructors / coaches / leaders / managers and authorised volunteers when they travel with young people to events. This responsibility is even more onerous when overnight stays are involved.

Cars used to transport players / teams

Those who use their own vehicles to transport participants / athletes must ensure that they have adequate insurance cover and be careful not to carry more than the permitted number of passengers.

At events / competitions

- Avoid being alone with one participant / competitor (e.g. travelling to a venue or consulting/ advising in closed off room – if necessary leave the door open and be in earshot of others).
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact outside the normal coaching, technical area.
- Remember casual comment can be open to misconstruction.

At residential events the following rules should apply:

- Adults should not enter a young person's room without first knocking. Adults should not share a room with young people. If the presence of an adult is needed there should be more than one child in the room. When children are sharing a room it should be of the same sex and age.
- All group socialisation should take place in communal areas (i.e. no boys in girls' rooms and vice versa).
- Alcoholic drink, smoking or other illegal substances are forbidden to young people.
- The behaviour of the group should at all times be such that the good name of Irish Canoe Union is upheld.
- There must be at least one authorised adult of each gender with a mixed party.
- Lights out times should be enforced.

A club / technical committee should develop and publicise policies regarding the collection of young people from activities. The policies should reflect the age, location, time and nature of the activity.

A club / technical committee should provide a timetable of activities at the beginning of a season and notify parents of any changes to this timetable in writing.

Parental consent should be sought if officials are required to transport young people in their cars.

Late collection

Late collections can present clubs / technical committees / instructors / coaches with difficult situations and guidelines for dealing with late collections should be drawn up and issued to parents. Guidelines should cover how to deal with late collections and include a contact number for parents during an activity that can be used to inform of late collections. Parents should also be asked to provide an alternative contact name / number.

Parents should be informed that it is not the responsibility of the club / technical committee / instructor / coach to transport young people in the event of them being detained.

All staff / volunteer should be informed they should:

- attempt to contact the parent in the event of late collection;
- check the contact number for any information regarding the young person;
- contact the alternative contact name / number;
- wait with the young person at the sport facility with wherever possible other staff / volunteers or parents;
- remind parents of the policy relating to late collection.

Staff / volunteers should avoid:

- taking the child home or to any other location;
- asking the child to wait in a vehicle or sport facility with you alone;
- sending the child home with another person without parental permission.

Photographs/Images and online usage

There have been concerns about the risks posed directly and indirectly to young people through the use of photographs on sports websites. Photographs can be used as a means of identifying children when they are accompanied with personal information - this is X who likes music - this information can make a child vulnerable to an individual who may wish to "groom" that child for abuse. Secondly the content of the photo may be used or adopted for inappropriate use and there is evidence of this adapted material finding its way onto child pornography sites.

Sporting organisations and clubs need to develop a policy in relation to the use of images of player on their website. The sport will need to make decisions about the type of images they consider suitable and that appropriately represent their sport. They will want to ensure that parents support their policy. When assessing the potential risks in the use of images of players, the most important factor is the potential of inappropriate use of images of children.

Easy rules to remember are:

1. avoid the use of first name and surname of individuals in a photograph. This reduces the risk in inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people.
2. if the player is named, avoid using their photograph;
3. ask parental permission to use an image of a young person. This ensures that parents are aware of the way the image of their child is representing the sport. A parental Permission Form is one way of achieving this.
4. ask for the player's permission to use their image. This ensures that they are aware of the way the image of themselves is to be used to representing the sport. A Players Permission Form is one way of achieving this.

Photography/ Videoing at Events

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs of young sports people in vulnerable positions.

If you are commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to an activity or event it is important to ensure they are clear about your expectation of them in relation to child protection.

1. provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour;
2. issue the photographer with identification which must be worn at all times;
3. inform participants and parents that a photographer will be in attendance at an event and ensure the consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs;
4. do not allow unsupervised access to participants on one-to-one sessions at events;
5. do not approve / allow photo sessions outside the events without the permission of parents or guardians.
6. if parents or other spectators are intending to photograph or video at an event they should also be made aware of organisers expectations in relation to photography / videoing at events.
7. performers and parents should be informed that if they have concerns they can report these to the organisers;
8. concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography should be reported and recorded in the same manner as any other Child Protection concern.

Glossary

Child: For the purposes of this policy any person under the age of 18 years is considered a **child / young person**.

Adults: The term **adult** includes any person over 18 years whether a player, athlete, coach, official, employee, or anyone operating in a voluntary capacity within the Irish Canoe Union. All have a role to play in ensuring that procedures as described in the ICU Child Protection Code are put in place, agreed, followed and reviewed on a regular basis. The principle leadership roles (some of which overlap) include the following:

- Club / Organisations Officers: President, Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Committee Members are appointed to oversee club activities and the development of the club / organisation.
- Administrators: While administrators may not be actively involved in children's sports, they may be involved in organising activities and events.
- Coach / Trainer: A coach is a trainer who assists the young participant to develop his or her skills abilities in a progressive way.
- Manager: A manager is an individual who takes overall responsibility for a team or a group of sports people and who will often have a direct input into the nature and organisation of the activity itself.
- Mentor: A mentor is an individual who undertakes an overseeing role with a group of children, often in co-operation with other mentors.
- Selector: A selector is an individual who has responsibility for the selection of children for teams and events.
- Children's Officers: Children's Officers are appointed within clubs to act as a resource for children and to represent them at Committee level.
- Instructors: Instructors are involved in the systematic development of the core skills and abilities, usually in a non - competitive context.
- Officials: An official is an individual charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the rules of an activity are adhered to in a formal way. This category includes referees, judges, umpires, etc.
- Assistants: Assistants are those people who provide back-up to any of the roles outlined in this section and often such assistants are involved on an intermittent basis (e.g. provision of lifts to competitions; checking equipment, etc.)

Statutory Authority Guidelines on Child Protection

Children First

National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, Department of Health and Children 1999 (IRL)

Our Duty of Care

These guidelines are based on The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety.

Appendices

- **Junior Participant / Competitor Code of Conduct**
- **Volunteer Recruitment Form**
- **Consent Form**
- **Sample Reporting Form**

Junior Participant / Competitor Code of Conduct

Irish Canoe Union
Sport HQ
Park West
Dublin 12
01 6251105

All junior participants / competitors are asked to abide by the following rules at all times:

- Remember in order to canoe you must be able to swim.
- Never canoe alone.
- Buoyancy aids must be worn at all times. Other kit must be worn as directed by your instructor / coach.
- Train for your own enjoyment not to please parents, instructors or coaches.
- Never canoe beyond your ability or place other participant / competitors in danger.
- Co - operate, respect and accept the requests and decisions of made by instructors, coaches, officials, event organisers and administrators.
- Be on time for training lessons and events or inform your instructor / coach if you are going to be late.
- Always compete to win but recognise that it is not the only aim. Participation is equally important.
- Avoid behaviour that might inconvenience or upset others.
- Be considerate to other participants / competitors and water users.
- Take care of any equipment lent to you - be responsible for caring for your own equipment and clothing.
- Do not leave sessions without the permission of your instructor / coach.
- Learn the rules of your sport and abide by them
- In competition respect your opponents. Treat them, as you would like to be treated.
- Do not use foul/vulgar language, or use unfair or bullying tactics to gain advantage of another opponent.
- Always behave in a manner that reflects the ethos of the Irish Canoe Union and the ICU Code of Ethics & Conduct.
- Alcoholic drink, smoking and/or illegal substances are forbidden at all canoe activities.

Volunteer Recruitment Form

Irish Canoe Union
Sport HQ
Park West
Dublin 12
01 6251105

First Name _____

Surname _____

Address _____

Date of Birth _____

Sport Qualifications _____

ICU Registration Number _____

Home Tel. No. _____

Work Tel. No. _____

Mobile Tel. No. _____

Email Address _____

Self Declaration

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence OR been the subject of a Caution or Bound Over Order OR have you been ever asked to leave a sporting organisation. If you have answered YES to this question we will discuss your application with you directly before processing this application further.

Yes No

Are you a person known to any social services department as being actual or potential risk to children or have you had a disciplinary sanction from a sport or other organisations' governing body relating to child abuse. If you have answered YES to this question we will discuss your application with you directly before processing this application further.

Yes No

References

All volunteers are required to provide the names of two referees (non family/relative/friend), who have been known to the volunteer for at least two years, to provide a confidential reference.

Reference 1

Name & Address

Reference 2

Name & Address

Telephone Numbers

Telephone Numbers

Declaration

I understand that

Name of organisation

has a Code for the Protection of Children and I confirm that I received a copy of this Code and have read and understood the Code. I recognise my responsibility to abide by this Code at all times. I can confirm that here is no reason why I should not have unsupervised access to young people.

Waiver and Release Statement

I understand that the information I have provided may be verified and I give permission to make enquires of nominated referees to determine my suitability as a volunteer. I confirm that I have read this Waiver and Release Statement, understand it and willingly agree to it. I confirm that the information I have provided is true and complete.

Signed by the above named individual _____ Date _____

Consent Form

Irish Canoe Union
Sport HQ
Park West
Dublin 12
01 6251105

Name & Date of Event / Activity _____

Name of Child _____

Date of Birth _____

Name of Family Doctor _____

Telephone Number _____

Please give address of Name, Address and Contact Details of Parent / Guardian. Also Name, Address and Contact Details of an Alternative Contact.

Name of Parent / Guardian _____

Address _____

Home Tel. No. _____

Work Tel. No. _____

Mobile Tel. No. _____

Email Address _____

Name of Alternative Contact _____

Relationship to Child _____

Address _____

Home Tel. No. _____

Work Tel. No. _____

Mobile Tel. No. _____

Medical

Please ensure that you detail any relevant medical history or medication.

Consent

- I have had the proposed activities/trip/event explained to me and agree to my child's participation.
- I confirm to the best of my knowledge that my child's does not suffer from any medical condition other than those listed.
- I consent to my child receiving medical treatment which in the opinion of a qualified medical practioner may be necessary.
- I consent that my son / daughter traveling in any form of public transport, minibus or motor vehicle as deemed necessary by the organisers.
- I agree to be at the proposed pick up / drop off point at the agreed times.

Signed by the above named individual _____ Date _____

Sample Reporting Form

For reporting Child Protection Concerns to a Health Board

Irish Canoe Union
Sport HQ
Park West
Dublin 12
01 6251105

Name of the Person completing Report _____

Date of the report _____

Address _____

Home Tel. No. _____

Work Tel. No. _____

Mobile Tel. No. _____

Relationship to the Child _____

Name of Child _____

Address _____

Date of Birth _____

Male / Female _____

Telephone Number _____

State whether you consider your report to indicate (a) suspected or actual child abuse or (b) need for family support, giving reasons

	Physical Abuse	Emotional Abuse	Sexual Abuse	Neglect
Suspected	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Actual	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Report Details

Describe on a separate sheet as fully as possible the nature of the problem or incident being reported, giving details of times and dates of individual incidents, the circumstances in which they occurred, any other person who were present at the time and their involvement. Describe (in detail) any risks to which the child/ren in this situation is believed to be exposed. As far as possible, describe the state of the child's physical, mental and emotional well-being.

Has any explanation been offered by the child, and/or parents / guardian which would account for the current problem or incident? (give details).

If child abuse is being alleged, who is believed to be responsible for causing it? Give name, address and telephone number

How did this information come to your attention and what has prompted you to report your concern at this time? What evidence of harm exists at present?

Are the child's parents / guardian aware that this concern is being reported to the health board? Yes No

Is there a need for urgent protective action at this point? Yes No

SIGNED _____