

WORLD TAEKWONDO ASSOCIATION
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CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The WTA recognises:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

The majority of Instructors/Coaches are not trained to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred.

POLICY STATEMENT

The WTA and its Associate Members (AM) have a duty of care to safeguard all children in the WTA and its AM from harm. All children have the right to protection and the needs of Special Needs (SN), who could be particularly vulnerable, must be taken into account. The WTA and its AM will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in the WTA and AM through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines adopted by the WTA and AM.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989)

POLICY AIMS

The aim of the WTA and AM Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice:

- Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of the WTA and AM.
- Allow all instructors and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

PROMOTING GOOD PRACTICE

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about the appropriate action to take.

Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them. An instructor, coach, teacher, official or volunteer will have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where they need

protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.

When a child enters the club/class having been subjected to child abuse outside the sporting environment, sport can play a crucial role in improving the child's self esteem. In such instances the club/class must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure that the child receives the required support.

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

All personnel should endeavour to show 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

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication and no secrets)
- Treating all young people/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of the each young person first, before winning or achieving goals.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with students (e.g. it is not appropriate to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them).
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers young people to share the decision making process.
- Making Taekwondo fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.
- Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and according to guidelines provided by the instructor/coach education programme. Care is needed as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when a child is constantly moving. Young people should always be consulted and their agreement gained. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about manual support and their views should always be carefully considered.
- Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance in sport.
- Involving parents/cares wherever possible. For example, encouraging them to take responsibility for their children in changing rooms etc. Always ensure that parents instructors/coaches or officials work in pairs.
- Ensuring that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff. However, remember that same gender abuse can also occur.
- Ensuring that at tournaments or residential events adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms.

- Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the presence of young people.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occur, along with the details of any treatment given.
- Requesting written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars.

PRACTICES TO BE AVOIDED

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

PRACTICES NEVER TO BE SANCTIONED

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Share a room with a child.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control.
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults, that they can do for themselves.
- Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

INCIDENTS THAT MUST BE REPORTED/RECORDED

If any of the following occur you must report this immediately to another colleague and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed.

- If you accidentally hurt a student.
- If he/she seems distressed in any manner.
- If a student appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.

- If a student misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

USE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC/FILMING EQUIPMENT AT SPORTING 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 sportspeople in vulnerable positions. All clubs should be vigilant and any concerns should be reported to the Club Child Protection Officer.

There is no intention to prevent club coaches and instructors using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, performers and their parents/carers should be made aware that this is a part of the coaching programme and such films should be stored safely.

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

The WTA and its AM recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. Preselection checks should include the following.

- All prospective instructors/ coaches should fill in an application form providing information about the applicant's past and self disclosure about any criminal record.
- Consent should be obtained from the applicant to seek information from the Criminal Records Bureau.
- Two confidential references should be taken up and confirmed by telephone.
- Evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo)

TRAINING

In addition to pre selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training to help instructors/coaches and helpers to:

- Analyse their own practice against established good practice and to ensure that their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations.
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child or young person.
- Work safely effectively with children.

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in the WTA or its AM in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with appropriate authorities.

The WTA and its AM will ensure all instructors/coaches and helpers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is or may be, abusing a child.

Where there is a complaint about a WTA or its AM member there may be three types of investigation.

- A criminal investigation
- A child protection investigation.
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

ACTION IF THERE ARE CONCERNS

1. Concerns about poor practice:

- If following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, the Club Child Protection Officer will deal with it as a misconduct issue.
- If the allegation is about poor practice by the Club Child Protection Officer, or if the matter has been handled inadequately it should be reported to the WTA who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

2. Concerns about suspected abuse

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the Club Child protection Officer, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
- The Club Child Protection officer will refer the allegation to the social services department who may involve the police or go directly to police if out of hours.
- The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from social services department.
- The Club Child Protection Officer should also notify the WTA who will deal with any media enquiries.

- If the Club Child Protection Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the appropriate manager or in his/her absence the WTA Child Protection Officer who will refer the allegation to the Social Services.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Every effort must 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.

- The Club Protection Officer
- The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused.
- The person making the allegation.
- The WTA Child Protection Officer
- The alleged abuser (and the parents if the abuser is a child)

Seek Social Services advice on who should approach the alleged abuser.

Information should be stored in a secure location with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

INTERNAL ENQUIRIES AND SUSPENSION

- The WTA and its AM Child Protection Officer will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social service enquiries.
- Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries the WTA and its AM Disciplinary Committee will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer 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 police. In such cases the WTA and its AM Disciplinary Committee 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 the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.

Support to deal with the aftermath of abuse:

- Consideration should be given to the kind of support children. Parents and members of staff may need. Use of help lines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. The British Association for Counselling Directory is available from 1, Regent Place, Rugby, CV21 2PJ.
- Consideration should be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged perpetrator.

ALLEGATIONS OF PREVIOUS ABUSE

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event. Where such an allegation is made, the club should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the social services or the police. This is because other children, either within or outside sport, may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children. This is reinforced by the details of the Protection of Children Act 1999.

ACTION IF BULLYING IS SUSPECTED

If bullying is suspected, the same procedure should be followed as set out in "Responding to suspicions or allegations" above.

Action to help the victim and prevent bullying in sport:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns. Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority. Create an open environment.
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure that the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully (ies) separately.
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else.
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when)
- Report any concerns to the Club Child Protection officer or the school (wherever the bullying is occurring).

Action towards the bully (ies):

- Talk with the bully (ies) explain the situation and try to get them to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim.
- Inform the bully's parents.
- Insist on the return of borrowed items and that the bully (ies) compensate the victim.
- Provide support for the victim's coach/instructor.
- Impose sanctions if necessary.
- Encourage and support the bully (ies) to change behaviour.
- Hold meetings with the families to report progress.
- Inform all organisation members of action taken.
- Keep a written record of action taken.

3. Concerns outside the immediate sporting environment (e.g. a parent or carer):

- Report your concerns to the Club Child protection officer, who should contact social services or the police as soon as possible.
- See 4. below for the information social services or police will need.
- If the Club Child Protection Officer is not available, the person being told of or discovering the abuse should contact social services or police immediately.
- Social Services and the Club Child Protection Officer will decide how to involve the parents/carers.
- The Club Child Protection Officer should also report the incident to the WTA Governing Body. The Governing Body should ascertain whether or not the person/s involved in the incident play a role in the WTA and act accordingly.
- Maintain confidentiality on a NEED TO KNOW basis only.
- See 4. below regarding information needed for Social Services.

4. Information for Social Services or police about suspected abuse.

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth
- The child's home address and phone number
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Have the parents been contacted.
- If so what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.
- If the child was not the person to report the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? If so record the details.
- Where possible referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.