

Webinar	Child Safeguarding in International Sports	
Date	Thursday, April 7, 2016	
Time	9:30am – 11am	
Location	Brunel University London Uxbridge, United Kingdom	
Facilitators	Daniel Rhind, Senior Lecturer Social Psychology Lead International Safeguards for Children in Sport Research Project Frank Owusu-Sekyere, PhD Researcher Research Assistant, International Safeguards for Children in Sport Project	
Attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olivia Lecoufle, Save the Children • Laura Wright, Right To Play • Carol Tisshaw, Save the Children • Chris Keller, Right To Play • Belinda Maswikwa, ICPNC • Emma Colucci, Right To Play • Sally Proudlove, NSPCC • Michael Montgomery, IICRD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeff Niehaus, Save the Children • Heather DeLagran, Equitas • Jamie Gregory, Plan Canada • Mona Abu Shaban, Right To Play • Paul Hunt, SAD • K. Patel, Plan Canada • Latha Caleb, Save the Children • Olivia Fernandos, Save the Children

Webinar Outline

1. **Key messages from CSWG Webinar Series: Session One**
2. **Overview of International Safeguards**
 - How they were developed
 - How they came about
 - What they are,
 - What currently working on to finish off project
3. **Research and Project Findings**
 - What works and what doesn't work
 - Experience with practical implementation of safeguards
4. **Presenting the Children Pillars Model**
 - Outlines a series of factors that underpin what works well when trying to implement safeguards across different countries, contexts and large and small organisations.

1. Key messages from Corrine Davey's webinar (session one) that link well to this webinar

- Differences and similarities between different child safeguarding standards and sports
- International safeguards – sports safeguards are aligned but a different culture and environment, specific in its own safeguards
- Involving children in developing and informing sports safeguarding policy

1.1. Reflection point: How does sport differ and relate to general safeguards and existing International Standards on Child Safeguarding? Key challenges and considerations include:

- Working in a context where there are no existing reporting procedures in place is difficult because:
 - Creating awareness, educating and implementing policies encourages people to report and disclose.
 - Disclosure and reporting may happen more quickly than the implementation of needed supports or policies
 - Perception that policies created the problem, rather than making the problem visible
- Creating awareness of what is acceptable or isn't acceptable, empowering children to speak and making their voices heard is challenging because:
 - Sports have particular norms so children and adults alike may have difficulty differentiating between appropriate/inappropriate behaviour and 'sporting culture'
- Assumption that child protection and safeguarding is someone else's job – not sport problem
 - People involved in sports have a responsibility in this area alongside other people, agencies and services.

1.2. Reflection point: Why are sports different? Why not copy paste from existing International Standards for Child Safeguards or child protection.

Audience comments:

- There is a power dynamic, a coach has a lot of power and authority that can be exploited - used for positive or negative reasons
- There is a lot of physical contact in sports
- Potential for gender bias inherently built into different sports
 - Institutional gender stereotypes in certain sports for certain children
 - Perception that boys are less vulnerable than girls is not true or justified
 - Any patterns between abusers and gender?
- There are many groups and interrelations between groups with coaches, volunteers, team members and parents
 - Lead to different dynamics and can causes problems

Discussion: Other sports specific challenges and considerations include:

- Sport is unique in that it is inherently seen as good, positive and has an aura of being safe
 - Parents trust their children with strangers who are coaches for two hours but may think twice in other (non sports) settings.

- People generally don't associate or engage with negative underbelly that can exist because it is unpleasant and may not be their personal experience of sport.
- Blurred lines between what is appropriate and inappropriate touching or aggression, due to the inherent physicality in sport.
- Can legitimately touch and be aggressive with athletes and that can be seen as positive or desirable
- Challenging to get support for or reach consensus about intentional touch that is appropriate and consensual.
- Competition and continuous pushing of athletes can be deemed as acceptable rather than a form of (emotional) abuse that would not be acceptable in a different setting,

2. Overview of International Safeguarding in Sport

How they were developed, how they came about, what they are and work in implementation

- There are broad ranges of issues that are salient within safeguarding in sport, conceptualised as 'in around and through sport including:
 - Sexual emotional and physical abuse that can happen within sport
 - The broad range of safeguarding issues around sport such as: during major events, child trafficking, children being displaced, sexual exploitation during major events and travelling to and from events can put children at risk, locally, in the community and internationally.
- Key question is what can be done to make children safer in sporting environments?

Findings from a UK study on the experience of 6000 people age 18-24 helps set the context

- 75% had experienced emotional abuse in a youth sports setting before the age of 18
 - Abuse appears to be pervasive and normalised
 - Runs counter to the perception that abuse is abnormal or rare
 - Challenging to tell coaches to change their methods or teach children that is not appropriate and they shouldn't put up with it as an athlete
- Approximately 25% had experienced various forms of abuse including
 - Being hit or forced to train when injured
 - Sexual abuse with boys more likely to experience sexual harm than girls
- Adopt a systems approach model that has been used in high risk industries
 - Helps creates awareness that it may be a bad barrel rather than a bad apple i.e. the environment and context may facilitate abuse.
 - No quick fix, lots of areas to work on from training to policies and procedures
 - Address gaps and target different layers or levels of organisations

Background: 2012 Olympics in London meeting due to increasing anecdotal evidence about sports being the context for abuse around the world. Research project funded by Oak Foundation to work with organisations to help them determine what should be in place to help minimize abuse to children.

- Policy should be in place to outline principles, definitions, values
 - This policy must be meaningful for the organisation
 - The development process is important so each organisation must reflect on their context and write their own policies
- Procedures for reporting and responding, outlining responsibilities and key contact people

- Advice and support for those who are involved in safeguarding
 - Some people in safeguarding roles may not have experience so important to know where they can turn to or access additional resources
 - Take a proactive approach by thinking of areas where additional risks or challenges lie and thinking of ways to minimize those risks e.g. while travelling from home travel
 - Develop guidelines that clarify grey areas such as what is acceptable and appropriate from verbal encouragement, touching, on social media etc.
 - Determine recruitment, background check and induction procedures
 - Ongoing communications with stakeholders to make sure safeguarding is embedded rather than just ticking a box
 - Work with partners and community to create a network
- Monitoring and Evaluation
 - How to measure how safe a child is in an organisation
 - How to measure whether safeguards are effective
 - Challenging to determine baseline and indicators of success

Self-audit tool developed alongside safeguards to:

- Assist with monitoring and evaluation
- Help organisations track their own progress against international safeguards
 - Where is my organisation today i.e. tool serves as a check point that can be used today and in the future
 - Assess each criteria according to whether a) in place b) partially in place c) not in place
 - Helps organisations determine where their priorities should lie
- There are advantages and disadvantages to conducting self-audits

2.1. Reflection point: Safeguarding for minimizing risk to children. Reflect on where your organisation stands and how the self-audit tool may work for you.

Discussion:

- The idea of risk is subjective, challenging and differs across cultures and contexts
 - Most interviewees identify physical injuries or objects rather than psychological, emotional or sexual harm
 - If they don't see risk as an issue then less likely to perceive need for policies

3. Research and Project Findings

What works and what doesn't work and experience with practical implementation of safeguards

- **Project aims to:**
 - Understand organisation progress with respect to safeguarding using audit tool
 - Understand how do people feel, think, behave and talk about safeguarding
 - Measure changing attitudes and progress made in the last three years
- **Project outputs**
 - Published safeguards
 - When project ends in June, will also develop an evidence-based implementation guide that will help people work towards the safeguards
- **Research methods**

- **Sample of fifty diverse organisations working towards the safeguards for the last two years.** Recruited thirty-two of these organisations.
 - Half are deliverers i.e. working directly with children.
 - Other half are governors i.e. fund or oversee organisations that work with children.
- Representative sample ranging from large international organisations in terms of sport for development or sport for performance. Sizes differ from local clubs to international. Different geographical regions – America, Europe, Africa, Asia.
 - Goal is challenging: the safeguards are applicable to various youth-centred sports organisation in the world
- Several in-depth case studies, including for Frank's PhD
- Included the voices of children in focus groups and interviews
- Organisations grouped based on size or geography with experts who lead learning sets and regular meetings to share experience and good practices.
- **Safeguarding is never achieved but is a journey companies are walking towards**
- Based on interviews and data analysis:
 - Organisations were described as being generally opposed but individual voices were more proactive in words and language
 - Five categories:
 - Opposed – it's a waste of time
 - Inactive – I don't care or it's not my job
 - Reactive - may do it if prompted or reminded
 - Active – will do it as a part of their job
 - Proactive – go beyond what's needed and really care.
 - Aim for move people towards proactive behaviours, attitudes, hearts and minds.
 - Second round of interviews hope to see progress and identify where gaps lie e.g. behaviour, knowledge or feelings.

3.1. Reflection point: What actually works and underpins success? What are successful organisations doing differently?

Audience comments and discussion:

- Open discussions to outline boundaries and differentiate between abuse that is meant to be abusive and harm that can happen because of sport.
 - Providing tools for healthy discussions and open dialogue about the difficult questions to help with ownership
 - Confront perceptions and engage with ideas that abuse is meant to be intentional
- Use and explore different ways of communication
- Continuous discussion and orientation beyond on boarding:
 - Having safeguarding explicitly embedded in all JD's, ToR's, codes of conduct.
 - Ongoing discussions with communities and children to inform what standards they can expect from behaviour.
 - Example of safe sports app has been effective as people constantly receiving communications.
- Outline what to do if there is a problem/incident
- Grey area between abuse and legal age of sexual consent and the difficulty moving from reporting to prosecutions.

- Age of consent differs from 13 to 21 with great discrepancy across countries and organisations
- Age of consent in the UK is 16 but it is 18 for people in positions of trust such as doctors or teachers but this does not include coaches or sport managers.
- **Ensuring leadership and getting clear multi-directional buy-in is crucial**, including media reporting of high profile cases can act as a catalyst for real change.
- What does safeguarding look like for communities who are already systemically oppressed groups?
 - Difficult to encourage reporting when communities don't necessarily trust police
 - Challenging to safeguard children in unsafe communities e.g. due to conflict. Creating safe spaces is crucial for protecting and safeguarding children.
 - Important to recognise it's a journey so important to move in the right direction.
 - Mapping out the formal and informal child protection service providers and identifying best ways to do no harm for children in existing contexts and local organisations.
- Competitive sports mentality can itself be reflective of the bigger conflicts existing in children's lives
 - Definition of childhood differs
 - Interesting questions for future research.

4. Presenting the Children Pillars Model: Support to Implement Safeguards

Outlines a series of factors that work well when trying to implement safeguards across different contexts.

- The importance of perception
 - People primed to be looking at sports through positive lens
 - Complex issue because what is and isn't acceptable is not universal
 - There are many grey areas such as age of sexual consent, corporal punishment etc. even within countries.
- Aim was to have eight global safeguards that can be put in the place anywhere in the world but in practice must be tailored to local context to be effective.
 - Must be culturally sensitive, understand what is acceptable in that culture and be flexible and adaptable to norms.
 - Developing safeguards must be process of facilitation and ownership where stakeholders define what is normal and develop a policy that everyone in that context agrees with, but with reference to international standards.
 - Example of children playing without shoes in the Caribbean to highlight how forcing one policy (children must wear shoes in sport) may expose children to harm (physical abuse from parents when children scuff expensive shoes)
- Policies must be integrated in a holistic way throughout the organisation for real change to occur - it is not just an add-on, one person's job or an annual workshop.
- Need clear incentives to motivate organisations and individuals to act - carrots and sticks
- While people generally agree with moral argument for protecting children – this wasn't strong enough to lead to action
 - Important to tie moral argument to core organisation goals and concerns such as:
 - If they want medals - safeguarding would help achieve that goal
 - Will reduce likelihood of not being sued powerful

- Will be perceived as committed to human rights
 - Will improve ability to access donor or government funding
- **Reinforce importance of leadership as committed leaders can:**
 - Ensure appropriate support resources and personnel are place
 - Prevent safeguarding falling down list of organisation priorities
- **Having safeguarding champions in every department, level and country is important** so everyone could see local role model to reinforce key messages and serve as point of contact.
- **Guiding and mentoring each other is not tied necessarily to hierarchical power**
- Important to reconsider and reflect continuously as there are new challenges and issues such as concussions, online grooming etc.
- **Resources are important in certain areas but are not always tied to finances.**
 - Can achieve a lot by prioritising, being supported in role by leaders and investing in time.
 - Emphasis on cultural change and recognising what resources are in place
- **Engaging with stakeholders to define and design policies will facilitate ownership**
- **Creating networks to prevent feelings of isolation**
 - Having a system was powerful and gave sense that goal were achievable
 - People met periodically to share experiences and challenges - reassurance and sense they are taking part in a collective journey.
- **Overarching message is emphasising that these are children first.**
 - Labels can subconsciously make people more vulnerable such elite athletes, disabled children, refugees etc.

In depth case study from Caribbean

- General feeling was that it had reached crisis level and people felt they needed to do more
- 3 main factors:
 - Denial led to lack of awareness, lack of training on abuse and lack of policies
 - In absence of safeguarding policy, arbitration occurs with great difficulty - no one being convicted, so wasn't being talked about or seen as a significant issue.
 - Criminals could island hop so recognised importance of developed Safe Stamp - an inventory of people who are safe to hire. This needed to be used and maintained
 - Workshops to help people understand what is going on in friendly and culturally sensitive way.

Final audience comments and discussion:

- Safe spaces as a critical environment for demonstrating safeguarding
- Safeguarding is a great way to move the singular focus on bullying to look at teasing, meanness, conflict and bullying - which children get
 - Stereotype is abuse is from coach to athlete but evidence suggests peer perpetrators may be more prevalent
- Overcoming sectoral language barriers is a reality - education and child rights and protection use similar language but conceptually they are far apart
- Question about including support with effects of child abuse e.g. depression etc.
- Will include links to appropriate resources in the guide because encouraging children to disclose without placing supports may potentially cause more harm than good