

**ULSTER BRANCH (IHA)
CHILD PROTECTION
& WELFARE POLICY**

AUGUST 2006

UBIHA - POLICY STATEMENT

We at the UBIHA aim to promote the participation of children in our club by creating a culture of safety and fun.

"Children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence; they must be kept safe from harm, and they must be given proper care by those looking after them"

(Article 19 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)

All children's sport should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play. Ireland and the UK have adopted and are committed to the European Code of Sports Ethics, which defines fair play as:

"Much more than playing within the rules. It incorporates the concepts of friendship, respect for others and always playing within the right spirit. Fair play is defined as a way of thinking, not just a way of behaving. It incorporates issues concerned with the elimination of cheating, gamesmanship, doping, violence (both physical and verbal), exploitation, unequal opportunities, excessive commercialism and corruption."

**(European Sports Charter and
Code of Ethics, Council of Europe, 1993)**

The **Children (Northern Ireland) Order (1995)** is based on a clear and consistent set of principles designed with the common aim of promoting the welfare of children.

Children have the right to be safe. All coaches should ensure that this fundamental principle takes precedent over all other considerations.

STANDARDS SET BY UBIHA WILL BE ACHIEVED THROUGH ENSURING: -

- Awareness of the issues which lead to children being harmed.
- Safe recruiting procedures for volunteers/coaches
- Provision of training for volunteers/coaches
- Codes of behaviour for volunteers/coaches
- Codes of behaviour for children/ young people
- Codes of behaviour for parents
- Good and safe working/playing practices
- Establishment of procedures for dealing with/recording of complaints/accidents.
- The club have procedures relating specifically to bullying, away trips and use of photography
- Identification and maintenance of parental responsibility
- Availability of information
- Regular review and monitoring of Child Protection procedures
- That all children are treated equally

The policy applies to all those involved in UBIHA, coaches, administrators, officials, volunteer drivers, parents and young people.

CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER

The Child Protection Officer for UBIHA is: -

Name & Address	Telephone
Peter Jackson 'Culdaff Cottage' 19, Ballysculty Road Muckamore Antrim BT41 4QU	02894 432735 (H) 07764 638418 (B) 02894 481667 (B)

Name of the Child Protection Officer shall be made known to clubs schools, coaches and young players as the designated person to whom concerns will be addressed.

The UBIHA has procedures in place for dealing with any concern or allegation of abuse either within the club or externally, but the first point of contact for a child; parent/guardian or coach should be through Club Youth/ School Liaison Officer, though any individual has the right to contact Social Services or the PSNI directly if they have a concern about a child's safety.

GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING ALLEGATIONS/ INCIDENTS

- Record all incidents reported or observed and forward details to Youth/Schools Liaison Officer
- Concerns can also be reported direct to UBIHA Child Protection Officer
- Ensure confidentiality - only "need to know basis" The Youth/School Liaison Officer will be responsible for storing any report in a safe and secure environment

GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING ACCIDENTS

In the event of an accident, the following procedure will be carried out: -

- Fill in 2 copies of an Accident Form for **ALL** accidents.
- One copy of form to incident book/folder.
- Make contact with parents
- Forward 1 copy to School / Club Liaison Officer for record keeping/ action required.
- In the event of a more serious accident:
 - Contact emergency services/ GP if required

- Record in detail all facts surrounding the accident, witness's etc and forward to UBIHA Child Protection Officer

GOOD AND SAFE WORKING / PLAYING PRACTICES

UBIHA will ensure for their organised events: -

- Proper supervision of children within the club and with a satisfactory ratio of coaches to children. A ratio of 1 coach to 12 children will be adhered to.
- Use of proper, recommended equipment. Worn hockey sticks or sticks with sharp edges should not be used Mouth, finger and shin guards must be worn. Goalkeepers must wear full protective equipment including groin protectors.
- Play must be supervised by a coach
- A clearly defined area of play/ in boundaries, fenced and safe from vehicular traffic.
- Public Liability Insurance in place, covering all members of the club.
- Only children within same/similar age bands will be selected for team playing/ coaching.
- A first aider and first aid kit is on hand in event of an accident, with accident incident book to be marked up at every relatively serious accident.

NB All accidents will be reported to parents

- In the event of transport being required this will be provided and supervised by coaching/ volunteers in possession of driving licence and roadworthy vehicles only. Permission must be sought from parents prior to any transport being facilitated.
- A safe environment for members
- Ongoing training and information for Leaders
- Implementation of policy and procedures in line with guidance from *Our Duty to Care* and the *Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport*
- Facilitation of open discussion on members protection issues
- Support to members who report accusations of abuse
- Suspected abuse information is treated confidentially
- Appropriate action is taken if members breach standards of reasonable behaviour
- The setting of standards of good practice
- The Youth Liaison has knowledge of statutory child protection procedures and their responsibility in reporting concerns.

- That parents are kept informed, therefore parents should have access to the club's guidelines for away trips / overnights and the use of photography and video equipment.
- The implementation of good and safe working practice is developed in the short, medium and long term to the mutual benefit of the member, the local area and community as a whole.

UBIHA has the right to: -

- Expect all leaders to comply with its Code of Conduct
- Expect all youth members to maintain standards of reasonable behaviour
- Take appropriate action if members breach the Code of Conduct or Child Protection Policy
- Expect all members to undertake appropriate training when advised to
- Expect leaders will not abuse members physically, emotionally or sexually
- Take appropriate action in the event of accusations
- Acquire pre-employment checks on all coaches
- Maintain records on individuals in line with advice from the data protection agency i.e. only hold records on individuals that they have a justifiable reason for holding.

CODES OF BEHAVIOUR FOR COACHES /VOLUNTEERS

Coaches/volunteers are expected to:

- Ensure the safety of all children by careful supervision, proper pre-planning of coaching sessions, using safe methods at all times.
- Actively encourage all children and not to discriminate on the grounds of disability, religious beliefs, race, gender, social classes or lack of ability.
- Not allow any rough or dangerous play, bullying, the use of bad language or inappropriate behaviour.
- Always be positive and to promote the objectives of the club at all times.
- Not let any allegations of abuse of any kind to go unchallenged or unrecorded if appropriate. Incidents and accidents to be recorded in the club incident/accident book. Parents will be informed.
- Report accidents or incidents of alleged abuse to the designated person.
- Administer minor first aid in the presence of others and where required refer more serious incidents to the club "first aider"

- Have access to telephone for immediate contact to emergency services if required.
- Foster team work to ensure the safety of youth members in their care
- Ensure the rights and responsibilities of youth members are enforced
- Report suspected abuse to the Ulster Branch (Irish Hockey Association)
- Not abuse members physically, emotionally or sexually
- Maintain confidentiality about sensitive information
- Be a role model (disciplined / committed / time keeping), remember children learn by example
- Refrain from smoking and consumption of alcohol during club activities or coaching sessions
- Protect themselves from false accusation by: -
 - Not spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
 - Not taking children alone in a car on journeys, however short
 - Never taking children to their home.
 Not administering First Aid involving the removing of children's clothing unless in the presence of another and with the child's permission.

Coaches/Volunteers have a right to:

- Access ongoing training and information on all aspects of leading / managing activities for youths, particularly on child protection
- Support in the reporting of suspected abuse
- Access to professional support services
- Fair and equitable treatment by UBIHA. Be protected from abuse by children / youths, other adult members and parents
- Not to be left vulnerable when working with children

Any misdemeanours and general misbehaviour will be dealt with immediately and reported verbally to the designated person. Persistent breach of the code will result in dismissal from the club.

Dismissals can be appealed by the coach / volunteer with final decisions taken by the club committee.

CODES OF BEHAVIOR FOR CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE

Children are expected to:

- Keep within the defined boundary of the playing/coaching area.
- Behave and listen to all instructions from the coach.
- Take care of equipment owned by the club.

- Refrain from the use of bad language or racial/sectarian references.
- Refrain from bullying or persistent use of rough and dangerous play.
- Show respect to other youth members and leaders
- Keep themselves safe
- Report inappropriate behaviour or risky situations for youth members
- Play fairly
- Respect officials and accept decisions
- Show appropriate loyalty and be gracious in defeat
- Respect opponents
- Not cheat
- Not use violence

Children/Young people have the right to:

- Be safe
- Be listened to
- Be respected
- Privacy
- Enjoy hockey in a protective environment
- Be referred to professional help if needed
- Be protected from abuse by other member or outside sources.
- Participate on an equal basis, appropriate to their ability
- Experience competition and the desire to win
- Be believed
- Ask for help

Any misdemeanours and general misbehaviour will be dealt with by the immediate coach and reported verbally to the Youth Liaison Officer. Persistent misbehaviour will result in dismissal from the club. Parents will be informed.

Dismissals can be appealed by the child/parent with final decisions taken by the club committee.

CODES OF BEHAVIOUR FOR PARENTS

Parents are expected to:

- Complete and return the Health and Consent Form pertaining to their child's participation with UBIHA. There is a **legal requirement** for parental consent.
- Deliver and collect the child punctually to and from coaching sessions/matches.
- Ensure their child is properly and adequately attired for the weather conditions of the time, including shorts, shirt, socks, tracksuit, sweat-tops, hat, gloves etc...

- Ensure that proper mouth, finger and shin-guards are worn at **ALL** times in accordance with Health and Safety Regulations. Any child not in possession of these 2 fundamental requirements will not be permitted to participate.
- Detail any health concerns pertaining to the child on the consent form, in particular breathing or chest conditions. Any changes in the state of the child's health should be reported to the coach prior to coaching sessions.
- Inform the coach prior to departure from the field of play if child is to be collected early from a coaching session
- Encourage their child to play by the rules and teach them that they can only do their best
- Behave responsibly on the sidelines
- Show appreciation and support the coach
- Be realistic
- Provide their child with proper clothing and equipment
- Ensure their child's hygiene and nutritional needs are met
- Accept the official's judgement
- Acknowledge the importance and role of the club coaches who provide their time free to ensure children's participation in the club
- Promote their child's participation for fun

Parents/Guardians have the right to:

- Know their child is safe
- Be informed of problems or concerns relating to their children
- Be informed if their child is injured
- Have their consent sought for issues such as trips
- Contribute to decisions within the club
- Complain if they have concerns about the standard of coaching

Any misdemeanours and breach of this code of conduct will be dealt with UBIHA Representative. Persistent concerns or breaches will result in the parent/guardian being asked not to attend training if their attendance is detrimental to the child's welfare.

The ultimate action should a parent/guardian continue to breach the code of behaviour may mean UBIHA officials regrettably asking the child to leave.

GUIDELINES ON TRANSPORTING YOUNG PERSONS IN YOUR CAR

The issue of transporting children has become very sensitive for sports leaders and parents. Many coaches argue that their organisation / club could not operate without the goodwill of volunteers and parents ensuring that children are returned home or transported to events in a private car.

Guidance from the Sports Council for Northern Ireland encourages coaches not to take children on journeys alone in their car.

The vast majority of coaches and volunteers will help out through their genuine desire to see children and their organisation / club develop. Unfortunately we must face the reality that a minority of others will join a sports organisations and clubs to gain access to children and create an air of acceptability about their role, justifying their close contact with children.

Best practice is clearly to avoid transporting a child alone, but we recognise that in some circumstances it is an essential part of a child's participation in training and competition.

If all alternatives have been exhausted and an adult has to transport a child there are a number of safety measures that should be put in place to minimise the risk:

- Parents should be informed of the person who will be transporting their child, the reasons why and how long the journey will take.
- A person other than the planned driver should talk to the child about transport arrangements to check they are comfortable about the plans
- The driver must ensure that they have insurance to carry others, particularly if they are in a paid position or claiming expenses.
- The driver should attempt to have more than one child in the car.
- When leaving children off after a match or training session coaches / volunteers should alternate which child is dropped off last. Ideally two child would be left off at an agreed point i.e. one of their family homes.
- The person who leaves children home should be alternated; this would reduce the risk of any one individual from always being alone with the child.
- The driver should have a point of contact and mobile phone should they break down.
- Ensure that children are aware of their rights and they have someone to turn to or report any concerns they may have. If a

culture of safety is created within your club then the child is more likely to talk to another person if they are feeling uncomfortable about a situation.

- Children should wear seatbelts at all times. The driver is legally responsible to ensure that a child under 14 wears a seatbelt (i.e. the adult would have to pay any fine) but morally responsible to ensure all passengers wear seatbelts.
- Late collections. These can present clubs and coaches with particular difficulties. Parents/guardians should be provided with guidelines addressing the issue and outlining their responsibility and the consequences of late collections. There should be contact numbers for parents/guardians and if possible an alternative contact number should be available. Parents/guardians should have a contact number for the club/coach to inform them of emergencies and possible late collections.

Like all advice these procedures will only reduce the risk and still the best advice is to avoid transporting children alone in a car.

USEFUL NUMBERS

■ Social Services	Local Number
■ NSPCC Helpline	0808 8005000
■ PSNI CARE Unit	Local Number
■ Childline (Freephone)	0800 1111
■ Coaching NI	028 90686940
■ Sports Council NI	028 90381222
Volunteer Development Agency	028 90236100