



Safeguarding

Recognising, Responding and Reporting

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1. Responding to Child Abuse:

Regardless of how a concern comes to a coach/volunteer's attention, it must be reported to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP). The Designated Liaison Person (DLP), in consultation with the person who raised the concern, will decide if reasonable grounds for concern exist. If reasonable grounds for concern exist, the Designated Liaison Person will report to a Tusla/Health and Social Care Trust (HSCT) duty social worker.

If as the DLP you decide not to report a concern to Tusla/HSCT, the following steps should be taken:

- The reasons for not reporting should be recorded.
- Any actions taken as a result of the concern should be recorded.
- The employee or coach/volunteer who raised the concern should be given a clear written explanation of the reasons why the concern is not being reported to Tusla/HSCT.
- The employee or coach/volunteer should be advised that if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free to make a report to Tusla/HSCT or An Garda Síochána/PSNI.

The individual employee or coach/volunteer has protections under the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998, should they report independently.

Squash Ireland has a procedure for recording certain concerns which, following consideration, do not initially meet reasonable grounds for concern: This procedure identifies where such concerns are recorded, who has access to these records and who is responsible for reviewing these records in line with GDPR. Concerns which do not initially meet reasonable grounds for concern may, upon review, show patterns or clusters which may heighten the level of concern.

2. Responding to Non recent child abuse

It is possible that non-recent allegations of abuse can be made a number of years after the actual incident. This may be because of a change in circumstances for either the survivor or the alleged perpetrator. Any non-recent allegations must follow the current Squash Ireland safeguarding procedures.

If there are grounds for concern, then statutory authorities must be informed (TUSLA/Gateway Teams or Police).

The following points should also be considered;

- Clearly establish with the adult complainant if there may be any children currently at risk of harm from the person they are saying abused them as a child.
- Advise the person making the complaint that they should inform the An Garda Síochána/Police. Encourage them to do so while acknowledging the brave steps they have already taken in beginning to talk about their experience as a child. It is important that the person knows that there is a likelihood that an abuser will not have stopped

abusing after their individual abuse ended and if the person harmed them, they could be continuing to cause harm to others. This needs to be done without reinforcing the inappropriate guilt the survivor may already have for not coming forward earlier.

- If the complainant refuses to talk to the statutory authorities but has provided you with enough identifying factors then this information **MUST** be shared with An Garda Síochána/Police.

This breach of the complainants' confidence is only appropriate if there is any potential that the alleged perpetrator is still a risk to children or could face prosecution (i.e. they are alive).

Remember, the welfare of any children currently at risk is paramount. This must take priority over any request of confidentiality from the person providing you with the information/complaint. This should be explained to them at the earliest possible stage

- Offer support to the complainant when they are making a formal complaint to An Garda Síochána/Police
- Signpost the complainant to support agencies that can provide counselling.

When an adult making a complaint chooses not to report the matter to An Garda Síochána/Police and you have already discussed the possibility of any child still being at risk you must follow Squash Ireland's reporting procedures and inform An Garda Síochána/Police or TUSLA/Gateway Team immediately of any identifying features of the allegation including the name of the alleged abuser. The person making the complaint should be informed that this is the organisation's moral and legal responsibility. If the individual wishes to remain anonymous this should be respected but again explaining that without any further cooperation, there may be little action An Garda Síochána/Police can take to protect others. Encourage them to talk directly to the TUSLA/Gateway Teams, if not An Garda Síochána/Police, in order to enable social services to consider if there is any action they can take to protect children at risk, as their threshold for intervention is lower than the evidence required for any criminal justice prosecution.

3. Recording

Squash Ireland child safeguarding procedures' guidance on record-keeping:

- Records should be factual and include details of contacts, consultations and any actions taken.
- All agencies dealing with children must cooperate in the sharing of records with the statutory authorities where a child protection or welfare issue arises.
- Ensure that records on child protection concerns, allegations and disclosures are kept securely and safely within the organisation/club.
- Records should only be used for the purpose for which they are intended.
- Records should only be shared on a need to know basis in the best interests of the child/young person.
- Only the DLP has access to records on allegations, concerns and disclosures.
- The DLP keeps these records locked in a safe place.

- Indicate how long the organisation will retain these types of records.
- Child protection records should be updated as required and reviewed regularly by the Designated Liaison Person (DLP).

4. Reasonable Grounds for concern

There are many reasons a coach/volunteer may be concerned about the welfare or protection of a child or young person. Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (ROI) states that *“Tusla should always be informed when a person has reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected”*.

It is important to remember that children/young people are sometimes abused by members of their own family, by peers or by others outside the family environment such as strangers, workers or trusted adults. Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (ROI) lists the following as reasonable grounds for concern:

- Evidence, for example an injury or behaviour, that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way.
- Any concern about possible sexual abuse.
- Consistent signs that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.
- A child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused.
- Admission or indication by an adult or a child of an alleged abuse they committed.
- An account from a person who saw a child being abused.

Wherever appropriate, any issues should be checked with the parents/carers when considering whether a concern exists, unless doing so may further endanger the child or the person considering making the report. The DLP should be able to support this process. It is important to remember that abuse is not always committed through personal contact with a child or young person, sometimes it is perpetrated through social media or the use of information and communication technology

5. Responding to a child/young person who discloses abuse

A child or young person may disclose to a coach/volunteer that they have been or are being harmed or abused. Children/ young people will often have different ways of communicating that they are being abused. If a child or young person hints at or tells a coach/volunteer that he or she is being harmed by someone, be it a parent/carer, another adult or by another child/young person (peer abuse), it should be treated in a sensitive way.

Remember, a child/young person may disclose abuse to you as a trusted adult at any time during your work with them. It is important that you are aware and prepared for this.

- Be as calm and natural as possible.
- Remember that you have been approached because you are trusted and possibly liked.
- Do not panic.

- Be aware that disclosures can be very difficult for the child/young person.
- Remember, the child or young person may initially be testing your reactions and may only fully open up over a period of time.
- Listen to what the child/young person has to say. Give them the time and opportunity to tell as much as they are able and wish to.
- Do not pressurise the child/young person. Allow him or her to disclose at their own pace and in their own language.
- Conceal any signs of disgust, anger or disbelief.
- Accept what the child or young person has to say – false disclosures are very rare.
- It is important to differentiate between the person who carried out the abuse and the act of abuse itself.
- It may be necessary to reassure the child/young person that your feelings towards him or her have not been affected in a negative way as a result of what they have disclosed.
- Reassure the child/young person that they have taken the right action in talking to you.

When asking questions:

- Questions should be supportive and for the purpose of clarification only.
- Avoid leading questions, such as asking whether a specific person carried out the abuse.
- You should also avoid asking about intimate details or suggesting that something else may have happened other than what you have been told.

5. Confidentiality

It is essential that there is a clear understanding of professional and legal responsibilities with regard to confidentiality and the exchange of information.

Squash Ireland uses the following guidelines in terms of confidentiality:

- Where child protection and welfare concerns arise, information must be shared on a 'need to know' basis in the best interest of the child/young person with the relevant statutory authorities and with parents/guardians.
- No undertakings regarding secrecy can be given. Those working with children/young people and families and in adult services should make this clear to parents/guardians and to the child/young person.
- The proportionate provision of information to the statutory agencies necessary for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality or data protection.

- Parents/guardians and children/young people have a right to know if personal information is being shared, unless doing so could put the child/young person at further risk or may put the reporter at risk.

6. Responding to Domestic Abuse Guidance

What is Domestic Abuse?

Domestic abuse is a pattern of behaviour which is characterised by the exercise of control and the misuse of power by one person over another by using threatening behaviour, physical violence or other controlling behaviours including psychological, sexual, financial, or emotional abuse – known as coercive control. Domestic abuse can take many forms and isn't limited to one form of abuse like physical violence.

Abusive relationships can be between intimate partners or family members, irrespective of age, gender, or sexual orientation. It affects all socioeconomic, racial, faith and cultural backgrounds. Domestic abuse is a crime in Ireland and Northern Ireland and the behaviour is never acceptable.

Types of Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is not limited to one type of behaviour, as perpetrators will often use multiple control tactics against their victims. Listed below are some of the more common types of domestic abuse experienced by victims and survivors.

Physical: Physically hurts the individual in any way or throws items in their direction to scare or threaten them which can include:

- Damaging items physically in the direction of the victim like a wall or a door.
- Physically assaulting the victim claiming that 'they made them do it';
- Raising their voice to scare and intimidate the victim.

Emotional: A form of manipulation that can harm a person's mental health and wellbeing designed to control aspects of the victim's life by cutting off their support networks. Examples include:

- Makes the victim feel guilty when they spend time with others -If you love me you won't go out
- Love bombs them with gifts and attention, so they feel indebted to them.

Psychological: Coercive Control is an ongoing pattern of behaviour in which the perpetrator insults, humiliates, and instils fear in an individual in order to control them.

- Isolating the victim from their family and friends -they don't really care about you.
- Demands they dress a certain way or deems them when they wear something the perpetrator does like 'you look ugly in that dress' 'I like it better when you don't wear

makeup, you should stop wearing it.'

- Gaslights their victim- 'I never said/did that, you are crazy.'

Financial: Constantly wants the individual to justify what they spend money on; tries to take control of all finances.

- Tells the victim they aren't good with money, and they can help them manage it.
- Takes out loans and credit in their name and doesn't make the payments.
- Prevents the victim from working and having financial Independence

Sexual: Is a form of abuse which includes jealousy, possessiveness and continually accuses the individual of being unfaithful. Demands sex, or pressures victims into unwanted sexual activities. Can also include:

- Threatening to publish intimate images as a method of control
- Sexually humiliating the victim by publishing intimate images
- Forcing the victims into sexual situations they don't feel comfortable

Stalking: Demands to know where the individual is at all times including constantly messaging, calling & tracking of their movements.

- Demands they share their location with the perpetrator.
- Show up to places they know the victim will be like their workplace or a child's school during pickup time.
- Places hidden spying equipment on the victim like trackers or spyware on their devices.
- Telephones the victim's workplace asking to speak to them or if they are there.

Cyber Harassment: When a perpetrator uses technology to extend their control over the victim. Like coercive control, it can feel more Insidious to the victim as it is still terrifying without the perpetrator being physically there.

- Demands access to their social media and email accounts.
- Tells the victim they aren't allowed social media accounts- usually following accusations of cheating.

The Impact of Domestic Abuse

Victims and survivors of domestic abuse can experience varying degrees of trauma because of what perpetrated on them. It is important how we understand how this trauma can manifest and be respectful and understanding to victims and survivors when seeing these behaviours. Common impacts Include:

- Post traumatic stress disorder
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Lifelong Injuries from the physical or sexual violence experienced

Responding to Domestic Abuse

If concerned that an adult colleague (coach/volunteer) or club parent is living with domestic abuse, then the first thing you should do is seek advice for yourself either through your club safeguarding /welfare officer or the Women's Aid Federation NI/ Women's Aid RoI . The control within domestic violence situations is often about shame and creating guilt so terms like "our secret our story" and "I don't want everyone knowing my business", are common. It is important you seek the advice of Women's Aid staff to ensure any communication with the adult does not push the person and whole family away and it may not be suitable for a club representative at initial stage, to raise this concern with the adult. You do not know the risk level in house; therefore, you should seek immediate advice from Women's Aid or report to: the Domestic and Sexual Violence Helpline (NI) or Domestic Violence Helpline for Republic of Ireland (contact details under useful contacts).

DA is such a complex issue and so many things heighten danger. If it can be done safely talk to the adult and check how things are. Contact the Domestic and Sexual Violence (DandSV)/ DV Helplines, Women's Aid contact details along with Childline for anyone who may need help and to know they are not alone.

Following discussion with Women's Aid or DandSV/DV Helpline the club welfare/ safeguarding officer can decide to refer the information to Garda/PSNI specialist Domestic Violence team or Social Services/TUSLA if there is a child in the house. The police could arrange for a welfare check to be undertaken and social services/TUSLA will check if the family are known to them or there are concerns at the child's school/nursery before deciding what action to take.

Children do not just witness domestic abuse they experience it as they live in an environment of fear and threat of violence. The emphasis of control by the person perpetrating the violence and the lack of voice for the child can make home a very frightening place to live and impact on the child's emotional development and view on the world. Domestic Abuse has an impact on their family relationships and can also affect future relationships. The club should promote Childline to encourage any young person effected to have someone to talk to about their situation or they can also be directed to Hide Out website for specific support around Domestic Abuse <http://thehideout.org.uk/> .

Key summing up

- Identify risk and how situation can escalate quickly
- Don't want to push family away
- Don't try to sort it out yourself – always talk to some e.g. welfare officer/safeguarding officer
- Any sign of harm/stress to child call Social Services, inform parent if possible but only if it does place the child at further risk

Knowing signposting options available in resource book e.g.

- Women's Aid
- NSPCC Helpline
- Childline

- 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Abuse Helpline

You may feel you are not able to make a referral to social services with the concern/evidence you have, but it is about support for the family currently which can be challenging to be able to deliver. DA is such a complex issue and so many things heighten danger. If it can be done safely talk to the adult you are worried is being harmed and check how things are. Just because it is not happening within the club does not mean that domestic abuse can be ignored you. Everyone at a sports club have a moral duty to protect an adult or child impact by abuse.

Seeking support

Domestic abuse is a crime in Ireland and Northern Ireland. It is never acceptable, and any relationship you've had with the person doesn't excuse their behaviour. If you are in danger, call the Police by dialling '999'. If it's not safe for you to speak, you can hit '55' on your keypad to let the operator know. You can also report what is happening on the PSNI's Non-Emergency number by dialling '101' on your phone.

PSNI useful information on DA <https://www.psni.police.uk/safety-and-support/keeping-safe/domesticabuse>

-Child and Family Agency

If in the Republic of Ireland and you have any concerns about a child you should report it to the Child and Family Agency please see website for contact details [Tusla - Child and Family Agency](#)

Any query or concern in relation to children out of hours should be reported immediately to An Garda Siochana/PSNI.

Services throughout Northern Ireland offer specialist support for women, children and young people affected by domestic abuse. You can find your local Women's Aid group by visiting: www.womensaidni.org

Women's Aid 24-Hr Domestic Violence

Helpline for Republic of Ireland Tel: 1800 341900

Visit: <https://www.womensaid.ie/>

24-Hour Sexual Violence Helpline

Tel: 1800 778888

Visit: <https://www.drcc.ie/>

The Men's Advisory Project (MAP) exists to provide counselling services for men experiencing domestic abuse.

Support and counselling services are also available to men who have previously left a violent or abusive relationship and who are still experiencing the effects. www.mapni.co.uk
info@mapni.co.uk

Belfast: (028) 9024 1929

Foyle: (028) 7116 0001

The Rainbow Project provides Northern Ireland's only co-cultural gay affirmative counselling service.

info@rainbow-project.org

www.rainbow-project.org

Belfast: (028) 9031 9030

Foyle: (028) 7128 3030

HERe NI is a community organisation and registered charity supporting lesbian and bisexual women and their families to improve the lives across Northern Ireland.

www.hereni.org Tel: 028 9024 9452

Childline UK

Tel: 0808 11 11

Visit: <https://www.childline.org.uk/>

Childline Republic of Ireland

Tel: 1800 66 66 66

Visit: <https://www.childline.ie/>

Health and Social Care Trusts in NI

Each trust will have a Gateway team to deal with reports of child abuse and more local contacts for ongoing professional liaison for advice on concerns.

Northern HSC Trust Tel: 03001234333

South Eastern HSC Trust Tel: 03001000300

Southern HSC Trust Tel: 08007837745

Belfast HSC Trust Tel: 028 90 507000

Western HSC Trust Tel: 028 71314090

Regional Emergency Social Work service. Available 5.00 PM – 9.00 AM Monday to Thursday and 5.00 PM on Friday to 9.00 AM on Monday. There is a 24-hour cover over public holidays. 028 9504 9999

The Adult Safeguarding Gateway teams in NI can be contacted at the following numbers:

Northern Trust 028 256 35512

Western Trust 028 716 11366

South Eastern Trust 028 925 01227

Belfast Trust 028 950 41744

Southern Trust 028 374 12015 or 028 374 12354

Emergency (Out of Hours) Social Work

028 9504 9999

7. Reporting concerns about a Child

Squash Ireland has the following procedures in place for reporting any concerns about the welfare or protection of a child that arise.

Seeking advice and guidance: all concerns should be reported to the National Children's officer, and/or the Designated Liaison person.

[Safeguarding - Squash Ireland](#)

Reasonable grounds for concern: The responsibility of staff and volunteers to report to Tusla/HSCT using the Report Process available on the website, where reasonable grounds for concern exist.

Informal consultation: The process for seeking advice and guidance from the Tusla/HSCT social work office in the child/young person's area when the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) or coach/volunteer is unsure whether a report should be made.

How to report a concern: It is the DLP's responsibility to complete the Child Protection and Welfare Report Form and to forward it without delay to the Tusla/HSCT Duty Social Worker by registered post under confidential cover. Reports can also be made on Tusla/HSCT secure web portal.

Allegations of abuse by a child: where the person allegedly causing harm to a child is another child (peer abuse), reports should be made to Tusla/HSCT for both children.

Guidance on dealing with adult disclosures of child abuse: Retrospective Abuse Report form is required when reporting any concerns about retrospective abuse.

Immediate risk to a child: The steps to be taken where an immediate risk to a child is believed to exist.

Recording: Guidance on how the details of the concern and the actions taken are to be recorded. See above

Talking to parents/carers: The process for discussing a concern with parents/carers before reporting and the circumstances in which this is not advised, as it may further endanger the child or the person making the report. You do not need to inform the family that a report is being made, if by doing so the child will be placed at further risk or in cases where the family's knowledge of the report could impair Tusla/HSCT ability to carry out an assessment. Also, it is not necessary to inform the family if the person making the report reasonably believes it may place them at risk of harm from the family.

Cases not reported to Tusla/HSCT: The process for recording both the reasons for the decision and any actions taken.

Information for mandated persons: Mandated persons must report concerns of harm above a particular threshold under the Children First Act 2015. Refer them to chapter 3 of Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (ROI). Mandated persons should provide a copy of their report to the DLP.

Responsibilities of a Mandated Person – Mandated persons should be made aware of their responsibilities to report child protection and welfare concerns that reach or exceed the threshold for 'harm' as defined in the Act.

A Mandated Person has a statutory obligation to report mandated concerns to Tusla, they cannot discharge this duty to the DLP. However they may make a report jointly with another person, whether the other person is a mandated person or not. In effect, this means that a mandated person can make a joint report with a designated liaison person.

All records and copies of child protection and welfare concerns should be held securely by the DLP.

7. Reporting to Statutory Authorities:

You should always inform Tusla/HSCT if you have reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected. You can find details of who to contact to discuss your concern on the Tusla/HSCT website.

If your concern does not reach the threshold for mandated reporting, but you feel it is a reasonable concern about the welfare or protection of a child, you should report it to Tusla/HSCT under Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (ROI).

8. Duty to refer to Disclosure and Barring Services (NI only)

Duty to refer to Disclosure and Barring Service (NI only)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-referrals-form-and-guidance>

Under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order, all organisations have a legal duty to refer information to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in certain circumstances. In all cases there are two conditions, both of which must be met, to trigger a referral to the DBS by a regulated activity provider.

A referral MUST be made to the DBS if Squash Ireland/Ulster Squash or a club in Northern Ireland:

- a. withdraws permission for an individual to engage in regulated activity, or would have done so had that individual not resigned, retired, been made redundant or been transferred to a position which is not regulated activity; because
- b. they think that the individual has:
 - engaged in relevant conduct;
 - satisfied the criteria set out in the Harm Test; or
 - received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence.

If both conditions have been met, Squash Ireland/Ulster Squash or the club will refer the information on to the DBS.

The referral must be made to the DBS when Squash Ireland/Ulster Squash or the club has (in following with good practice) gathered sufficient evidence as part of its investigations to support its reasons for withdrawing permission for the person in question to engage in regulated activity, consulted with the relevant social services or police if appropriate.

9. Procedure for the Management of Allegations of Abuse against a Coach or Volunteer.

Squash Ireland has agreed the following procedures to be followed in cases of alleged child abuse against a coach/ volunteer. If such an allegation is made, three steps should be taken:

- Responding to allegations of abuse made against a coaches/volunteers.
- Reporting allegations of abuse made against coaches/ volunteers to Tusla/HSCT.
- Internal procedures for dealing with the coach/volunteer should to be clearly outlined.

Responding to allegations of abuse made against coaches/volunteer.

An allegation of abuse may relate to a person who works with children who has:

- Behaved in a way that has or may have harmed a child/ young person;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence in relation to a child/young person;
- Behaved towards a child/young person or children/young people in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to a child/young person;
- Behaved in a way that is contrary to the club/sports organisation code of behaviour for coaches & volunteers;

- Behaved in a way that is contrary to professional practice guidelines.

If an allegation is made against a coach/volunteer working for Squash Ireland will ensure that everyone involved is dealt with appropriately and in accordance with Squash Ireland guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures, the rules of natural justice and any relevant employment law. Squash Ireland has a dual responsibility in respect of both the child/young person and the coach/volunteer.

There are two separate procedures to be followed:

- The reporting procedure to Tusla/HSCT in respect of the child/ young person and the alleged abuser
- The internal personnel procedure for dealing with a coach/ volunteer.

If an allegation of child abuse is made against a Sports' leader, two steps should be taken:

- The reporting procedure.
- The procedure for dealing with the Sports Leader.

Special Considerations

The following points should be considered:

- The safety of the child making the allegation and any others who are/may be at risk should be ensured and this should take precedence over any other consideration. In this regard, the Squash Ireland will take any necessary steps which may be immediately necessary to protect children
- If a Sports Leader is the subject of the concern s/he should be treated with respect and fairness.

Steps to be taken within the Sports Organisation

Where reasonable grounds for concern exist the following steps should be taken:

- advice should be sought from the local duty social worker with regard to any action deemed necessary to protect the child/children who may be at risk.
- The matter should be reported to the local statutory authorities following the standard reporting procedure outlined above
- In the event that the concern is connected to the actions of a Sports Leader in the club, the Sports Leader involved in the concern should be asked to stand aside pending the outcome of any investigation by the Statutory Authorities.
- It is advisable that this task be undertaken by a senior office holder other than the designated liaison person/national children's officer who takes the responsibility for reporting.

When the Sports Leader is being privately informed by the senior officer of a) the fact that an allegation has been made against him/her and b) the nature of the allegation, s/he should be

afforded an opportunity to respond. His/her response should be noted and passed on to the statutory authorities.

All persons involved in a child protection process (the child, his/her parents/carers, the alleged offender, his/her family, Sports Leaders) should be afforded appropriate respect, fairness, support and confidentiality at all stages of the procedure.

Once the criminal process is completed, employers should consider the need to examine whether there are grounds for disciplinary proceedings for misconduct. The fact that the alleged abuser has not been prosecuted or has been found not guilty does not mean that such proceedings are not necessary or feasible.

Internal procedures for dealing with a coach/volunteer should be clearly outlined

In the context of an allegation of abuse against a coach/ volunteer, Squash Ireland's disciplinary procedures should ensure that fair procedure is followed and take account of the employment contract/membership guidelines as well as the rules of natural justice. The following points should be incorporated into the procedure:

- In making an immediate decision about the coach/ volunteer's continued work with Squash Ireland, the President should as a matter of urgency take any measures necessary to protect the child/young person. These should be proportionate to the level of risk to the child/young person; 'protective measures' do not presume guilt.
- The President should privately inform the coach/ volunteer that an allegation has been made against him or her and the nature of the allegation.
- The coach/volunteer should be afforded an opportunity to respond.
- The President should note the response from the coach/ volunteer and pass on this information if making a formal report to Tusla/HSCT.
- The coach/volunteer should be offered the option to have representation at this stage and should be informed that any response may be shared with Tusla/HSCT.
- While Tusla/HSCT will not provide advice on employment matters, advice and consultation with regard to risk to children/ young people can be sought from the local Tusla/HSCT social work office. The President should ensure that actions taken by Squash Ireland do not undermine any investigations or assessments undertaken by Tusla/HSCT or An Garda Síochána/PSNI. Squash Ireland should liaise closely with the investigating bodies to ensure this.

Once the statutory process is completed, Squash Ireland will consider the need to examine whether there are grounds for disciplinary proceedings for misconduct. The fact that the alleged abuser has not been prosecuted or has been found not guilty does not mean that such proceedings are not necessary or feasible.

9. Categories of Abuse:

Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (ROI) defines four categories of abuse: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. A child/young person may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time.

When working with children/young people it is important to be aware of the four categories of abuse these are as follows:

Neglect:

Child neglect is the most frequently reported category of abuse, both in Ireland and internationally. Ongoing chronic neglect is recognised as being extremely harmful to the development and well-being of the child and may have serious long-term negative consequences.

Neglect occurs when a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that the child is harmed physically or developmentally. It is generally defined in terms of an omission of care, where a child's health, development or welfare is impaired by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care, intellectual stimulation or supervision and safety.

Emotional Abuse:

Emotional abuse is the systematic emotional or psychological ill-treatment of a child as part of the overall relationship between a caregiver and a child. Once-off and occasional difficulties between a parent/carer and child are not considered emotional abuse. Abuse occurs when a child's basic need for attention, affection, approval, consistency and security are not met, due to incapacity or indifference from their parent or caregiver.

Physical Abuse:

Physical abuse is when someone deliberately hurts a child physically or puts them at risk of being physically hurt. It may occur as a single incident or as a pattern of incidents. A reasonable concern exists where the child's health and/ or development is, may be, or has been damaged as a result of suspected physical abuse.

Physical abuse can include the following:

- Physical punishment.
- Beating Slapping, hitting or kicking.
- Pushing Shaking or throwing.
- Pinching Biting, choking or hair-pulling.
- Use of excessive force in handling.
- Deliberate poisoning.
- Suffocation.
- Fabricated/induced illness.

- Female genital mutilation.

Sexual Abuse:

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or arousal, or for that of others. It includes the child being involved in sexual acts (masturbation, fondling, oral or penetrative sex) or exposing the child to sexual activity directly or through pornography.

Exploitation: (an NI only category of abuse)

Exploitation is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature.

NB: If you require further information on any of the categories of abuse listed above please consult Children First Guidance directly via the following link:

[Children First Guidance and LegislationTusla - Child and Family Agency](#)

10. Signs of Abuse:

If you are dealing with children, you need to be alert to the possibility that a welfare or protection concern may arise in relation to children you come in contact with. A child needs to have someone they can trust in order to feel able to disclose abuse they may be experiencing. They need to know that they will be believed and will get the help they need. Without these things, they may be vulnerable to continuing abuse.

Some children may be more vulnerable to abuse than others. Also, there may be particular times or circumstances when a child may be more vulnerable to abuse in their lives. In particular, children with disabilities, children with communication difficulties, children in care or living away from home, or children with a parent or parents with problems in their own lives may be more susceptible to harm.

The following list is intended to help identify the range of issues in a child's life that may place them at greater risk of abuse or neglect. It is important for you to remember that the presence of any of these factors does not necessarily mean that a child in those circumstances or settings is being abused.

Parent/Carer Factors:

- Drug and alcohol misuse.
- Addiction, including gambling.

- Mental health issues.
- Parental disability issues, including learning or intellectual disability.
- Conflictual relationships.
- Domestic violence.
- Adolescent parents.

Child Factors:

- Age.
- Gender.
- Sexuality.
- Disability.
- Mental health issues, including self-harm and suicide.
- Communication difficulties.
- Trafficked/Exploited.
- Previous abuse.
- Young carer.

Community Factors:

Cultural, ethnic, religious or faith-based norms in the family or community which may not meet the standards of child welfare or protection required in this jurisdiction.

Culture-specific practices, including:

- Female genital mutilation.
- Forced marriage.
- Honour-based violence.
- Radicalisation.

Environmental factors:

- Housing issues.
- Children who are out of home and not living with their parents, whether temporarily or permanently.
- Poverty/Begging.

- Bullying.
- Internet and social media-related concerns

Poor motivation or willingness of parents/guardians to engage:

- Non-attendance at appointments.
- Lack of insight or understanding of how the child is being affected.
- Lack of understanding about what needs to happen to bring about change.
- Avoidance of contact and reluctance to work with services.
- Inability or unwillingness to comply with agreed plans.

You should consider these factors as part of being alert to the possibility that a child may be at risk of suffering abuse and in bringing reasonable concerns to the attention of Tusla/HSCT

11. Statutory Contacts Republic of Ireland & Northern Ireland TUSLA-Child & Family Agency

If in the Republic of Ireland and you have any concerns about a child you should report it to the Child & Family Agency please see website for contact details

Click here - [Contact a Social WorkerTusla - Child and Family Agency](#)

Any query or concern in relation to children out of hours should be reported immediately to An Garda Siochana/PSNI.

12. Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Trusts

Each trust will have a Gateway team to deal with reports of abuse and also more local contacts for ongoing professional liaison for advice on concerns.

Regional Emergency Social Work service. Available 5.00 PM – 9.00 AM Monday to Thursday and 5.00 PM on Friday to 9.00 AM on Monday. There is a 24 hour cover over public holidays.
Tel: 028 9504 9999

9.00 - 5.00 Gateway Numbers

Northern HSC Trust Tel: 03001234333

South Eastern HSC Trust Tel: 03001000300

Southern HSC Trust Tel: 08007837745

Belfast HSC Trust Tel: 028 90 507000

Western HSC Trust Tel: 028 71314090