

## Child Protection and Safeguarding Announcement

In light of recent events surrounding the global cheerleading community, SportCheer Wales would like to remind Welsh clubs of the importance of robust and stringent child protection and safeguarding policies.

The welfare and safety of athletes and junior coaches is of utmost importance in the sport of cheerleading, and as a working national body, we have a responsibility to support member clubs in ensuring policies and procedures followed by the club support this duty of care when dealing with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

SCW would like to remind you of your legal duty of care to;

- Ensure all staff are recruited in line with the SCW criminal records check policy
- Ensure your programme has an up to date child protection policy
- Ensure your programme has a designated welfare / safeguarding officer who is familiar with the All Wales Safeguarding procedures.
- Ensure all coaching staff and welfare / Safeguarding officers are fully trained in Child protection.

You may want to take the opportunity to talk with your athletes about abuse; offering the young people in your care a safe space to ask any questions they may have, providing you with an opportunity to remind them of your safeguarding procedure, what they should do if something happens to them and also the expectations they should have of your staff in terms of communication and physical contact.

Before doing so we strongly advise you speak to parents first and let them know your intention to discuss the topic of abuse, offering them the option to opt out (in line with the Children and Social Work Act 2017 regarding non compulsory sex education in schools).

This topic may be triggering for some athletes and coaches, and disclosures of abuse may follow as a result. Please be prepared to handle these appropriately in line with your child protection policy. Any disclosure of abuse must be reported to the police and appropriate local authorities.

The resources included in this article may help you in talking about the subject with your young people. <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection-schools/promoting-healthy-relationships#article-top>

Complimentary refresher Child protection training will be provided by SCW for all Welsh programmes within the next month.

The following policies and procedures can help to support your programme in navigating this important area.

- SCW criminal records check policy
- SCW safe recruitment policy
- SCW guide to recruiting a welfare officer
- SCW Child protection policy
- SCW Child protection guidelines

SCW also provides the following templates for programmes to adapt and use for their own use.

- Club child protection policy
- Club Criminal records check policy
- Club safe recruitment policy
- Child protection reporting form
- Welfare officer job role description
- Social media policy
- Social media policy
- A guide to working with and safeguarding young people
- The SCW coaching safety code.

Welfare officers are encouraged to download and become familiar with the Wales safeguarding procedures mobile app