Promoting Good Practice

Although policies and procedures for the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults are extremely necessary, it is important to put them into perspective and not be intimidated by the overload of information. The best way to comply with new legislation and procedures is to use common sense. SDS supports and requires the following good practice by members when in contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults. By demonstrating exemplary behaviour all paid and voluntary personnel can protect themselves from false allegations whilst securing a safe and enjoyable environment for all those involved.

When working with children, young people and vulnerable adults these good practice guidelines are recommended to minimise the risk of abuse:

- Sport should be fun, enjoyable and promote fair play
- Always work in an open environment, e.g. avoid private, unobserved situations and secrets
- Treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults equally, with respect and dignity
- Put the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults first before winning or achieving performance goals
- Be an excellent role model including no smoking and drinking alcohol in the company of children, young people and vulnerable adults
- Offer enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- Ensure if any form of manual or physical support is required for a child, young person or vulnerable adult, it is provided openly, the athlete is informed of what is being done and their consent is obtained
- Deliver educational instruction first verbally; secondly by demonstration; and thirdly, only if necessary, with hands-on – which must be accompanied by telling the child, young person or vulnerable adult where you are putting your hands and why this is necessary and obtaining their consent
- Involve parents, guardians and carers wherever possible
- Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust that empower athletes to share in the decision-making process
• Maintain a professional relationship with athletes, e.g. it is not appropriate to have an intimate relationship with a child, young person or vulnerable adult, or to share a room with them unless the specific care needs of the individual athlete dictates otherwise

• Recognise the developmental needs and capacity of children, young people or vulnerable adults and avoid excessive training or competition and either pushing them against their will or putting undue pressure on them

• Be aware of any pre-existing medical conditions, medicines being taken by participants or existing injuries and treatment required

• Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given

• Where possible, ensure access to medical advice and/or assistance is available