



GBS SnowSafe **Safeguarding Children Policy**

April 2025

6th Edition

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(Registered Charity 216401)

The guidance is correct at the time of publication (April 2025) and will be reviewed every 3 years or
when there is a significant change in legislation.

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If you need this Policy in a different format, please ask and we will endeavor to assist

SECTION 1

Safeguarding Children Policy

1.1 Introduction

Everyone who participates in the activities of GB Snowsport (GBS) is entitled to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment. GBS has a moral and legal obligation to ensure that, when given responsibility for children (anyone under the age of 18), all those working or volunteering on behalf of the organisation provide children with the highest possible standard of care.

GBS is committed to ensuring the safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice.

The aim of the policy is to promote good practice, provide children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst involved in the activities of GBS, and to allow staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific safeguarding and child protection issues. The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background.

Our GBS policy is based on the English guidance and legislation but, in the light of the common principles and similar approaches taken by all home nations, the procedures in this document are fully applicable to everyone working, competing or volunteering for GBS.

This policy should be read in conjunction with GBS Safeguarding Adults Policy and GBS Safeguarding Adults Procedures [December 2022] which can be found on our website.

[Safeguarding-Adults-in-Sport-Policy-December-22-FINAL.pdf](#)

[Safeguarding Adults Procedures December 2022](#)

1.2 Who the Policy Applies To

Everyone working, competing or volunteering for GBS is required to adopt our policy. Everyone who encounters U18s has a role to play in safeguarding our athletes. Children are best protected when all staff are clear about what is required of them individually, and how they need to work together to safeguard athletes.

This policy is specifically for our staff and volunteers, working on GBS programmes and athletes competing for GBS. If you are a member of an affiliated club or academy, the Safeguarding Children Policies of the Home Nations NGBs will be more appropriate for your organisation to adapt and implement.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (Children Act 1989). We have a moral and legal duty to safeguard all children in our care.

We use the words “children” and “athletes” within our policy. This is deliberate and to ensure all concerned realise all our athletes are children until they reach the age of 18.

This policy is written in the context of the following relevant legislation and guidance:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR Regulation 2018
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Protection of Children Act 1999
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 – Part 5 Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Sexual Offenders Act 1997
- UN Convention for the Rights of a Child (1989)

1.3 Safeguarding and the Duty of Care

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. It means:

- protecting children from abuse and maltreatment
- preventing harm to children's health or development
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

GB Snowsport will:

- Appoint a GBS Safeguarding and Welfare Officer and a lead Board member for safeguarding
- Provide advice support and guidance for all staff, disciplines, athletes and their families and carers
- Recognise the role and responsibilities of the statutory agencies in safeguarding children and young people and work in partnership with parents and children.
- Develop a culture of listening to and consulting with athletes in individual decisions and GBS development
- Ensure all cases of poor practice that may be abuse and any allegations of abuse are dealt with confidentially and properly and where appropriate, referred to other agencies
- Convene a Case Management Panel and/or Disciplinary Panel when necessary
- Deal with all allegations and make decisions within agreed timescales according to our Disciplinary Policy
- Adhere to Recruitment and Selection policy and DBS policy.
- Keep a list of all suspended, disciplined and disqualified persons and refer people disqualified to the Disclosure and Barring Service (where appropriate) and other relevant government agencies.

1.4 The Role of the GBS Safeguarding and Welfare Officer

The GBS Safeguarding and Welfare Officer will:

- Take the lead role in the development and establishment of GBS approach to safeguarding children and young people
- Take the lead role in the production and updating the GBS Safeguarding Children Policy
- Take the lead role in maintaining and reviewing GBS Safeguarding Children Standards Implementation Plan
- Co-ordinate the dissemination of the Safeguarding Children Policy, procedures and resources throughout the organisation

- Offer advice, support, and guidance on safeguarding matters to all GBS staff and volunteers, disciplines and athletes and their families and carers.
- Arrange safeguarding inductions for staff working as part of GBS programmes
- Support the management of cases of poor practice
- Manage the referrals to Children's Social Care Services, the Police and in England, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Manage the referrals to the DBS, where applicable
- Be the central point of contact for internal and external individuals/agencies
- Represent GBS at external meetings related to child protection or safeguarding
- Advise on GBS safeguarding children training needs and development of its safeguarding training strategy
- Keep records of concerns, investigations and referrals
- Maintain confidentiality regarding cases

The CEO is responsible for ensuring that the Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport are maintained and embedded.

SECTION 2

Promoting Best Practice – Everyone's Responsibility

Working Together to Safeguard Children: a guide to statutory guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, produced by the Department for Education (DfE), outlines what organisations in England must do to safeguard children and young people under the age of 18. (Updated 2023)

2.1 Guidance for coaches and others working with children

Coaches have a vital role to play in safeguarding children in snowsport. Good coaching is about providing an enjoyable and safe environment in which children can enjoy the sport and achieve their potential.

It is not always easy to distinguish poor practice from abuse. It is therefore NOT the responsibility of employees or participants in snowsport to make judgements about whether or not abuse is taking place. It is however their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse, and to act if they have concerns about the welfare of the child. This relates to concerns within snowsport, and outside snowsport. See Section 4.2 for details on responding to concerns.

This section will help identify what is meant by good practice and poor practice.

2.2 Promoting Good Practice

Child abuse and harassment can take place in many situations, from the home and school to a snowsport environment. Snowsport coaches have regular contact with children and should adopt the highest standards of practice and be responsible for identifying those in need of protection.

Anyone working or volunteering for GBS with children is likely to be in a position of trust. If a child decides to talk to you about abuse, or you have concerns about them you need to know what to do. You also need to understand your duty of care towards children in snowsport, the current guidance on good practice and the need to act responsibly when you are around children. This will not only protect the children you are responsible for but reduce the potential for misunderstandings and inappropriate allegations being made.

- Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encourage open communication with no secrets)
- Make the experience of snowsport fun and enjoyable: promote fairness, confront and deal with bullying
- Treat all children equally and with respect and dignity
- Do not swear in front of children and do not allow swearing to go unchallenged
- Be an excellent role model; this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol whilst in the company of children under your care
- Always put the welfare of the child first, before winning, the child's welfare being paramount
- Be acutely aware of the power that a coach, volunteer or official develops with participants in snowsport and avoid any inappropriate or intimate interaction (sexual or otherwise)
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with children. Where any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and with the consent of the child. Physical contact can be appropriate so long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the child's consent has been given. The Child Protection Sport Unit [CPSU] provides guidance on the appropriate use of physical contact between adults and young people in sports activities. <https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/best-practice/physical-contact-and-young-people-in-sport/>
- Written parental consent must always be provided for any travel arrangements made by GBS e.g. overnight stays, training and race camps abroad
- If boys are taken away, they should be accompanied by a male member of staff
- If girls are taken away, they should be accompanied by a female member of staff
- Ensure that at when away at events an unaccompanied adult does not enter a child's room except in an emergency, (e.g. the child is very unwell) and never invites a child to their room
- Do not engage in a sexual relationship with anyone under the age of 18 in your care or anyone over that age whom you are in a position of trust over
- Always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- Keep up to date with technical skills relative to your coaching, qualifications and insurance
- Recognise the developmental needs and capacity of the athlete and do not risk impacting on athlete welfare in a desire for personal achievements. This means avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing athletes against their will
- Secure written parental consent for the organisation to act in *loco parentis*, and for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises
- Promote good sportsmanship, encouraging athletes to be considerate of other athletes, officials and volunteers and by being modest in victory and gracious in defeat
- Help GBS work towards eradicating harassment and abuse of children in snowsport

- Abide by the GBS [Officials-Code-of-Conduct-20241419 \(1\).pdf](#)

2.3 Examples of Poor Practice – you must never:

- Unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with children or a child away from others
- Go alone into a child's room without another adult in a position of responsibility
- Share a room with a child
- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- Take part in, or tolerate, behaviour that frightens, embarrasses or demoralises a child or affects their self-esteem
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Shower with a child
- Do things of the personal nature that the child can do for themselves
- Take a child alone in a vehicle with you (unless it is an emergency).

Any of these situations can leave you open to allegations and many of these actions would be difficult to defend and could result in disciplinary action and in some situations, be reported to the police

It is recognised that due to the nature of GBS camps occasionally it is impractical or impossible to avoid certain situations. The task should only be carried out with full understanding and consent of the parents and child following consultation with the head coach, or Chair of your Discipline and a risk assessment should be carried out. Advice should be sought from GBS Safeguarding and Welfare Officer. .

If during your care you accidentally hurt a child, a child seems distressed in any manner, acts in a sexually inappropriate manner, misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, you should immediately report any such incidents as soon as possible to another colleague and make a written record of it on a Safeguarding Incident Report Form [Safeguarding Incident Report Form](#) . The GBS Safeguarding and Welfare Officer must be informed as soon as possible. Parents should also be informed where appropriate.

SECTION 3

Child Abuse

3.1 Defining Child Abuse

What Is Child Abuse? Recognising Child Abuse.

All those involved in snowsport have a responsibility to be able to recognise and respond to signs of child abuse.

Remember, it is not your responsibility to determine if abuse has occurred, but it is your responsibility to report and act on any concerns you have.

Any person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in the family, at school, in institutions, or in a community setting, e.g. snowsport. Abusers are usually known to children and can be adults or other children. The effects of abuse can be extremely damaging and have a lifelong impact on the child.

Children with disabilities, elite athletes, children in Care, children from black and mixed ethnic backgrounds and children who have previously suffered abuse are all at increased risk of harm. Children whose parents are suffering from mental health problems, pressure, drug or alcohol abuse or domestic violence within the family is at increased risk of harm. However – just because a child is living in these circumstances does not mean they are suffering harm.

3.2 Types of Child Abuse

There are four main types of child abuse: physical, emotional, neglect and sexual abuse. Children and young people can also be harmed through poor practice and bullying within a snowsport setting.

Physical Child Abuse

This may involve:

- Hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, biting, or other physical harm of a child.

In snowsport physical abuse may occur where the level and intensity of training or competition exceeds the capacity of the child's immature and growing body, or where drugs are used to enhance a child's performance, or athletes are being told to participate when injured. ▸

Emotional child abuse

This is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may include:

- Constant belittling, shaming or humiliation of a child
- Telling a child he is worthless, no good, bad or useless
- Constantly ignoring a child
- Not giving the child any signs of affection or physical contact (in the home setting)
- Exposing the child to violence or abuse by others
- Not allowing a child to express their views, or making fun of them when they do, or letting others make fun of them
- Imposing unrealistic expectations on them relative to their age or ability or preventing them from participating in normal social or age appropriate activities
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another and doing nothing about it
- Serious bullying or cyber bullying

There is a degree of emotional abuse involved in all types of child abuse, though it can occur alone.

In snowsport, emotional abuse may occur if children are subjected to constant criticism or name calling, sarcasm, bullying, sexism, homophobia or racism. Coaches or other team members may be putting unrealistic pressure on them to consistently perform to high expectations.

Neglect

This is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve:

- Failure to provide adequate food, clothing or shelter
- Failure to protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger
- Failure to adequately supervise children
- Failure to provide the child with adequate medical care or treatment

Within snowsport neglect could occur if children are subjected to undue cold, or not recognising the need for a child to have a rest. It could include subjecting them to unnecessary risk of injury either through pushing the athlete too hard or beyond their capability.

Sexual abuse

This involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. It may involve:

- Rape or oral sex
- Masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of the clothing
- Enticing a child to watch sexual activities, look at sexual material or participate in sexual discussions
- Involving the child in the production of sexual images including photos, online or videos
- Encouraging the child to behave in a sexually inappropriate way
- Grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)

It should be noted that some individuals deliberately target sports activities in order to gain access to, and abuse children. Grooming may occur over several years before an individual makes his or her move. Contacts made within sport and pursued through texts, WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter etc. have

been used to groom children for abuse. There is evidence within sport that some individuals have deliberately ignored governing body codes of practice and used physical contact within a coaching role to mask their inappropriate touching of children.

Within snowsport coaching techniques which involve physical contact with children can create situations where sexual abuse can be disguised and may therefore go unnoticed. Power and authority of, or dependence on the coach if misused, may also lead to abusive situations developing. It is inappropriate for coaches and others to ask young people about their boyfriends and girlfriends and in some cases, this could be part of a grooming process.

Men, women, boys and girls can be sexually abused. Men, women and children can be the abusers. The shame of sexual abuse often prevents children from coming forward. Unfounded accusations of sexual abuse are not common; if a child confides in you, take him or her seriously.

Remember, it is not your responsibility to determine if abuse has occurred, but it is your responsibility to report and act on any concerns you have.

Bullying

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time and occurs whenever children and young people come together, including within sport situations. It can take many forms and is harmful to the victim.

The competitive nature of snowsport, particularly at the elite level, makes it an ideal environment for bullies to operate in. If a child does well, other children are sometimes jealous and may bully the child. If a child does not do well, other children may humiliate them or tell them they have let the team down.

GBS will not tolerate bullies at any level.

Any incidents involving coaches and our athletes and/or concerns should be reported in line with GB Snowsport reporting procedures.

Please refer to

- GBS Officials Code of Conduct - [Officials-Code-of-Conduct-20241419.pdf](#)
- GBS Athletes Code of Conduct - [Athletes-Code-of-Conduct-20240419.pdf](#)
- Unacceptable Behaviour / Dignity and Respect Policy and Procedure – Athletes [Unacceptable Behaviour / Dignity and Respect Policy and Procedure July 2023](#)

Increasingly there is a range of specific areas of concern where children may be at risk of experiencing abuse.

Cyber bullying

Cyber bullying involves a person or group of people using the internet, mobile phone, online games, or other kinds of digital technology to threaten, tease, upset or humiliate someone else. It is a form of bullying, but because it happens online or on mobile phones it can happen 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A child cannot get away from the bully by going home, or going out, and it can feel as though there is no

escape. It can be done anonymously by blocking the sender's details or setting up a fake account. Cyber bullying can also involve a lot of people, and the child may feel as though everyone is ganging up on them. There is however always a trail, and children should be asked to keep copies of the e mails, abusive texts and messages and seek help.

Hazing

Hazing refers to any activity expected of someone on joining a group, or maintaining status in a group, that humiliates, degrades or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate. This also can be known as **initiations**. We know that hazing exists in schools, universities and in sports environments and need to be aware it could exist within snowsport. Typical hazing activities include sleep deprivation, personal servitude, binge drinking and drinking games, being forced to wear embarrassing attire, carry out dangerous stunts and sexual assault. Hazing will not be tolerated and should be dealt with and reported to the GBS Welfare Officer.

Child sexual exploitation

The request/demand/ performing any sexual act of an under 18-year-old, in exchange for any type of reward, monetary or otherwise, including a threat not to carry out an action (e.g. sending pictures of the child to others). Contacts made within sport and pursued through other routes, such as social media, have been used to manipulate and groom children for abuse. Those who want to sexually abuse children can also groom protective adults and organisations to create opportunities for abuse to take place.

3.3 Abuse of Elite Athletes

Elite athletes are particularly vulnerable to abuse. Research has highlighted the vulnerability of those young people participating at an elite level in sport, and the justifications behind the strenuous training environment these young people may have to experience, without any consideration to the negative impact it may be having on the child's development.

Potentially abusive situations can arise when a coach develops training programs and schedules for attending competitions that are focused on the goals of the sport to achieve success rather than the needs of the child. There have been great strides made in challenging the "no pain no gain" culture within sport, but we must ensure we challenge this where it is detrimental to the welfare of our young athletes.

Many elite athletes in sport are afraid of their coach or feel intimidated by them. Due to the culture of sport sometimes an ethos exists which facilitates power, obedience and potentially the rationalisation of abuse which can be more prevalent at the elite level. Reports in other sports of coaches "crossing the line" include social outings, time in hot tubs, hugs, kisses, texts/phone calls and highly personal conversations irrelevant to the athlete's participation in sport.

Studies indicates significantly higher levels of interpersonal violence (psychological, physical and sexual) experiences by disabled, LGBT, ethnic minority and international level young athletes. Vertommen et al (2015¹).

¹ <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283354947> Interpersonal violence against children in sport in the Netherlands and Belgium

At the elite level, a young person's commitment is expected and assumed, but in situations where this operates within an established culture of risk, such commitment can be abused physically, sexually or emotionally. We must ensure suitable boundaries are maintained and poor or dangerous practice removed from snowsport.

Most child abuse is by family members or people they know, away from a snowsport environment. However research by Professor Brackenridge on the sexual harassment and abuse of women in sport suggests it is the close personal relationship of trust that develops between athletes and coaches, and the highly competitive nature of relationships between athletes that can leave some athletes vulnerable to abuse. In children where there is an inevitable imbalance of power between coaches and athletes, these effects could be exacerbated. The literature also contains insights into the range of sexually abusive practices that might happen to children in sport, including sexual bullying between athlete and coach and athlete and athlete, sexist jokes and language and the use of sex to control athletes.

It is therefore very important that coaches and all staff are aware of our requirements and adhere to the GBS Child Safeguarding Policy to safeguard all children, and themselves.

More Information:

- CPSU briefing paper [Safeguarding the Elite Young Athlete](#)
- CPSU briefing paper [Preventing Abuse of Positions of Trust in Sport](#)

3.4 Abuse of Disabled Children

All staff need to be aware of the increased vulnerability of disabled children. Whether or not your role involves contact with children with multiple disabilities, GBS thinks it important to raise awareness for the work you do for GBS and other organisations. Disabled children may be more likely to be abused due to the increased likelihood of isolation, speech and language communication needs, and being viewed as a "safe target" for abusers. Deaf and disabled children are subject, like all children, to all types of abuse.

However, there are additional risks they may face as a result of their impairment and NSPCC research found they are significantly more likely to experience on line harm, than non-disabled children. Sullivan and Knutson 2000 found that 31% of disabled children had been abused compared to a prevalence of 9% in the non-disabled population.

- (1) Sullivan PM and Knutson JF (2000) Maltreatment and Disabilities: a population based epidemiological study. Child Abuse and Neglect 24 10 1257–1273.

For more information see the CPSU guidance <https://thecpsu.org.uk/help-advice/topics/deaf-and-disabled/>

3.5 Recognising Signs of Abuse

Recognising child abuse is not easy. Below are some guidelines and common indicators of abuse.

Most children will collect cuts and bruises as part of the rough and tumble of everyday life. Injuries should be interpreted considering the child's medical and social history, developmental stage and the explanation given. Most accidental injuries occur over bony parts of the body, e.g. elbows, knees, and shins, and are usually on the front of the body. In addition to the physical signs (bruising, bites, scalds etc.) you should primarily be concerned with changes in a child's behaviour. Some children may always

have difficulty in interacting with other children. Indicators that a child may be being abused include the following:

- Unexplained bruises, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- Multiple bruises, in clusters, often on the upper arm or outside of the thigh
- Cigarette burns
- Human bite marks
- Broken bones
- Scalds with upward splash marks
- Multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- Flinching when approached or touched
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- Reluctance to get changed
- Depression or withdrawn behaviour
- Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone
- Sexual knowledge beyond their age or developmental level
- Dirty, smelly or inappropriate clothing for the conditions, or getting clothes torn
- Pain or itching in the genital area or discomfort when walking or sitting down
- Sulking, hair twisting, rocking, fear of making mistakes, sudden speech disorders
- Fears of parents being approached for an explanation
- Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress
- Complaining of being tired all the time.

If a child is being bullied or abused within snowsport, in addition to the above, the following may be observed:

- Reluctance to go to training or competitions
- An unexplained 'drop off' in performance
- Behavioural changes.

This is not a definitive list but should serve as a guide to assist you. Remember too that many children will exhibit some of these indicators at some time, and the presence of one or two indicators should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring. There may well be other reasons for changes in behaviour.

Talk to the child, and if in any doubt, pass your concerns on to the Camp Welfare Officer or GBS Safe-guarding and Welfare Officer.

SECTION 4

Responding to an allegation, disclosure or concern

Follow our clear Flowcharts so you know what to do if you have a concern. ***Remember, it is not your responsibility to determine if abuse has occurred, but it is your responsibility to report and act on any concerns you have.*** This applies to both allegations or suspicions of abuse occurring within snowsport, and to allegations or suspicions that abuse is taking place elsewhere, such as in a child's family or the community.

Information should be shared on a strictly need to know basis and other than protecting a child, should remain confidential. However, the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information for safeguarding purposes. If in doubt, contact the GBS Safeguarding and Welfare Officer.

Further information can be found in the CPSU briefing document about [CPSU Information Sharing Safe-guarding Concerns](#)

If you receive any media enquiries about an alleged incident, refer these straight on to the CEO or the GBS Media Officer.

We all have a duty to pass on concerns appropriately. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility – these procedures apply to all those who work, volunteer or represent GBS in any capacity.

4.1 How the Concern is Raised

There are several reasons why you may become aware of a possible case of abuse and these include:

- Something a child has said
- You may see it happening
- Signs or suspicions of abuse
- An allegation made against a colleague
- An allegation made about a parent/carer or someone not working within the sport
- Response to bullying
- Response to a breach of a code of conduct, or poor practice
- Observation of inappropriate behaviour

You may witness something yourself, or someone might come to you with their concerns. Even where no allegation is made, if you have concerns, they should be passed on.

There are three important steps in taking appropriate action and they are essential.

- **Step 1 - Responding to the disclosure, concern or allegation.**

- **Step 2** - Recording the relevant information
- **Step 3** - Reporting the relevant information

Throughout, confidentiality must be maintained. Never approach or contact the alleged perpetrator if a child may be subject to further risk and/or abuse.

4.2 Responding to the disclosure, suspicion or allegation.

Anyone responding to a disclosure, suspicion or allegation must:

- Stay calm – so as not to frighten the child. Do not show disgust or disbelief
- Ensure the child is safe and feels safe
- Reassure the child that they are not to blame, and that it is right to tell
- Be honest, do not say you can keep a secret, but say you may need to tell someone else in order for them to be helped.
- Listen carefully, showing they are being taken seriously
- Keep questions to a minimum, only if necessary, to clarify what is being said. Avoid asking leading questions. The law is very strict and child abuse cases have been dismissed where it is felt the child has been led or words and ideas have been suggested during questioning
- Keep an open mind, do not make assumptions or judgments
- If the child needs urgent medical help – call an ambulance. Inform doctors of the concern and ensure they are aware it is a Child Welfare issue.
- If you are concerned for the **immediate safety** of the child, call the Police, 999 or 112 from most places within Europe (check for other countries).

AVOID LEADING QUESTIONS

A question that is a “leading question” is one which may prompt the respondent to answer in a particular way and often result in false, biased or distorted information. Children are particularly susceptible to leading questions:

Examples of leading questions:

- “Who else is involved?”
- “Did this take place at home?”
- “This has happened before, hasn’t it?”

Instead, ask questions in an objective way to encourage an accurate response:

- “Is anyone else involved?”
- “Where did this take place?”
- “Has this happened before?”

NEVER:

- Approach any alleged abuser to discuss the concern
- Make promises to the child you cannot keep
- Rush into actions that may be inappropriate

Remember to maintain confidentiality; only tell others if it will help protect the child.

4.3 Recording the relevant information

Any information shared with GBS, Children's Social Care, the Police, the Local Authority Designated Officer [LADO] (if it relates to a person in England employed to work with children) must be as helpful and accurate as possible. It is important to write down as much information at the time, or as soon as possible afterwards. The Safeguarding Incident Report Form [Safeguarding Incident Report Form](#) should be used if possible. Information recorded must include:

- Details of the child (name, address, gender, date of birth, home telephone number)
- Details of the parent/carer or guardian (name, address, telephone number)
- Whether or not the parents/guardian have been informed
- Details of the person expressing their concern
- Details of the nature of the allegation – what you are told, use the exact words if you can, or observations
- Description of any visible bruising or other injuries
- Details of the person alleged to have caused the incident, injury (name, address, date of birth/approximate age, telephone number – if you are able to get this information without arousing suspicion)
- Witnesses to the incident (but don't ask them for their account)
- Times, dates and other relevant information
- It must be clearly documented what is fact, or what you have been told, and what is opinion or hearsay
- A signature, date and time on the report

4.4 Reporting relevant information

It is recognised that strong emotions can be aroused, particularly in cases where sexual abuse is suspected or where there is misplaced loyalty to a colleague. It is important to understand these feelings, but not allow them to interfere with your judgement about any action to take.

- If you are concerned for the immediate welfare of a child contact the police say it is a child protection concern. Keep a note of the name and job title of the person you spoke to, and the crime reference number.
 - If in UK dial 999
 - If outside UK the emergency services for the specific country where the concern has occurred [Emergency Numbers Worldwide | Adducation](#)
- Information should be shared on a strictly need to know basis and other than to protect a child, should remain confidential.
- If the parents are not implicated, let them know your concerns, unless it would put the child at further risk to do so
- All incidents should be reported to the GBS Safeguarding and Welfare Officer who will manage reporting to statutory services where appropriate. If the GBS Safeguarding and Welfare Officer is not contactable, the CEO of GBS should be informed without delay

- If you become aware that someone may not be suitable to work or be around children e.g. you read something in the press, or hear something about someone, and this person is involved within snowsport in any capacity including parent, coach, participant, volunteer, committee member, official etc.

ALWAYS report it to the GBS Safeguarding and Welfare Officer – don't assume someone else has.

GBS Safeguarding and Welfare Officer contact details can be found at [GBS Safeguarding](#)

You should complete the Incident Form [Safeguarding Incident Report Form](#) and email to the GBS Safeguarding and Welfare Officer who will

- Record the concern
- See if any other incidents have been reported
- Advise you if there is any further action they should take
- Where appropriate, deal with the matter themselves, informing you where possible
- Where appropriate, refer the matter to the Police, Children's Social Care or the LADO
- Where appropriate, start Disciplinary Proceedings.

If you are concerned a child may be being abused outside snowsport, follow the same procedures for reporting.

Consideration should be given to the support required for everyone affected by the disclosure. This includes the young person, the person reporting, other GBS Staff, athletes and volunteers and potentially the alleged perpetrator of the abuse.

Contact GBS Safeguarding and Welfare Officer for further information.

The NSPCC Helpline can be contacted for advice or guidance by calling 0808 800 5000 or emailing help@NSPCC.org.uk.

4.5 Allegations of previous abuse

Allegations of abuse can be made some time after the event. For example, by an adult who was abused as a child by a member of staff who is still currently working with children.

Where such an allegation is made, the same procedure should be followed.

This is because other children, either within or outside of snowsport, may be at risk from this person. This may be done in consultation with other snowsport National Governing Bodies, if appropriate.

4.6 REPORTING OF CONCERNS WITHIN SNOWSPORT

Are you concerned about the behaviour towards a young person of another adult in snowsport?

- Stay calm
- If the child/young person is present reassure him/her they are not to blame
- Keep questions to a minimum
- Record information accurately – as spoken by the child/young person

If the child requires immediate medical attention
Dial 999/112 (or appropriate number if abroad) for an ambulance and inform the doctor there is a child protection concern.

- Complete a Safeguarding Incident Report form [Safeguarding Incident Report Form](#)
- Report to the GBS Safeguarding and Welfare Officer - **ALWAYS**
- Where you have urgent concerns and the GBS Safeguarding and Welfare Officer is unavailable – refer immediately to Children’s Social Care, LADO (where the person concerned is in a position of trust) or Police and forward them and the GBS Welfare Officer a copy of the incident form within 24 hours. If abroad report to Police and ask for local Children Services details.

GBS SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE OFFICER

Alleged Minor Poor Practice

- Complaints Procedure
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Possible resolution at local level
- No further action

Possible Outcomes

- No case to answer
- Complaint resolved with agreement between parties
- Training/mentoring agreed
- More significant concerns emerged – follow Serious Poor Practice guidelines

Serious Poor Practice or Alleged Child Abuse

Possible processes:

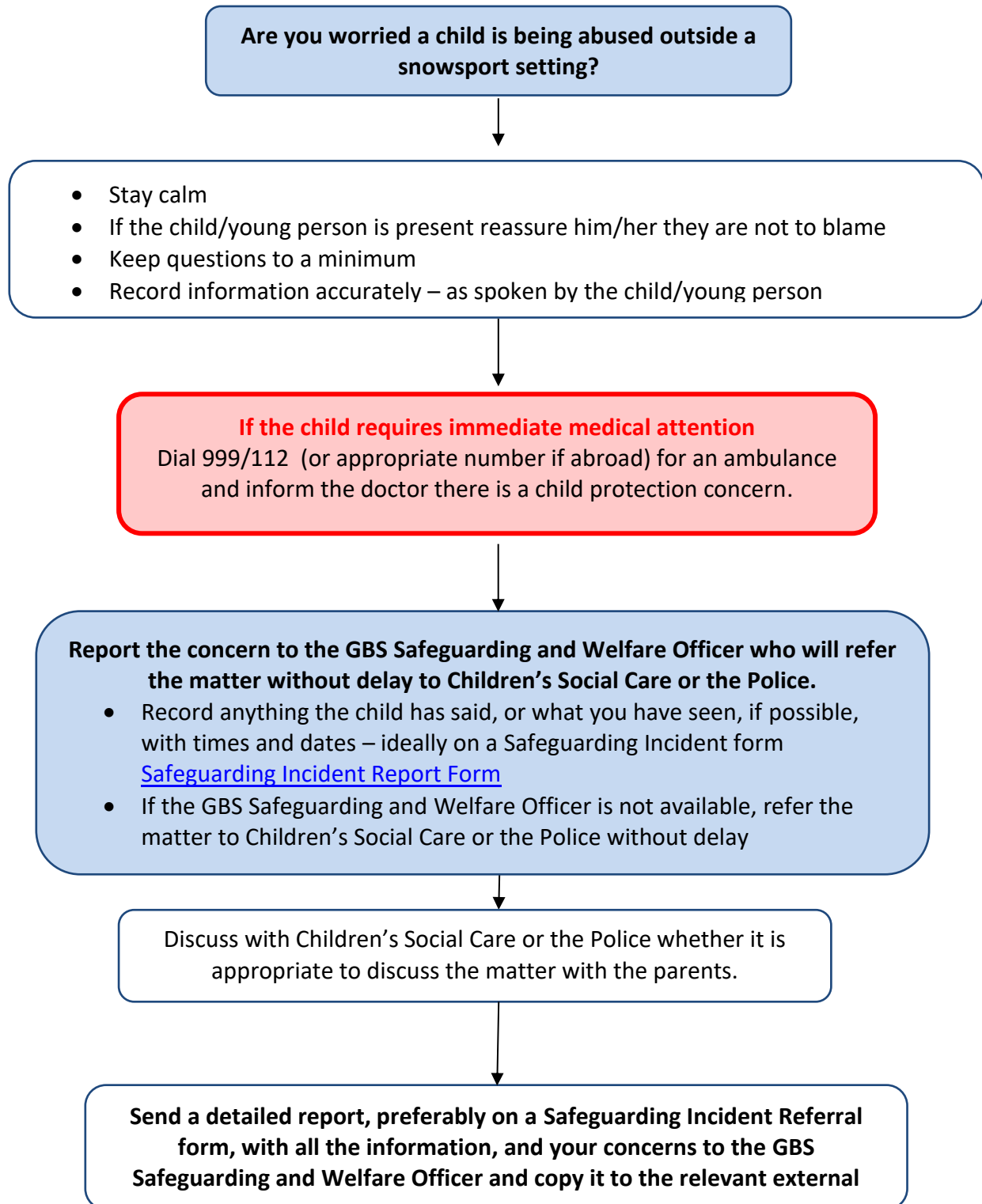
- Child Protection Investigation
- Criminal Investigation/proceedings
- Investigations under disciplinary proceedings
- Referral to Case Management or Disciplinary Panel for consideration of suspension/disciplinary

Possible Outcomes

- No case to answer
- Complaints, Disciplinary Procedure Invoked
- Sanctions/suspension
- Civil proceedings

Appeals

4.7 REPORTING OF CONCERNS OUTSIDE A SNOWSPORT SETTING



REMEMBER TO KEEP THIS CONFIDENTIAL – STRICTLY ON A NEED-TO-KNOW BASIS

SECTION 5 Training

5.1 Induction

All new staff and volunteers working with U18s will receive a safeguarding induction from the GBS Safeguarding and Welfare Officer, or where appropriate and trained, another member of GBS.

- This will include information about safeguarding elite athletes, good practice, recognising signs of abuse and the different types of abuse. It will cover the importance of listening to athletes, expectations of staff and athletes, confronting inappropriate behaviour and dealing with concerns. Information will be provided about recording and reporting procedures, our Whistle Blowing policy, confidentiality, information sharing and completing incident and accident forms.
- All new staff and volunteers will be asked to complete and return a Self-Declaration Form, with a website link to our Safeguarding Children Policy, Code of Conduct and Employee Handbook. If requested a hard copy of any of these documents will be sent to them.

5.2 Safeguarding Training

All coaches, team managers and others responsible for the welfare of children should complete a safeguarding course every 3 years. This will support them to:

- analyse their own practice against what is deemed good practice, to help ensure no concerns arise from misunderstandings or misinterpretation
- recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice and/or abuse
- respond to concerns expressed by a child
- work safely and effectively with children

GBS is continually reviewing our requirements for safeguarding training. With a host of new sports safeguarding courses being delivered online, GBS will now accept specific sports e-learning courses as refreshers for coaches and others working with children.

[Safeguarding & Protecting Children - UK Coaching](#)

[Child Protection in Sport and Active Leisure Online Training Course | EduCare](#)

SECTION 6

Trips Away with Children

6.1 Guidance for the Designated Lead Responsible Adult (e.g. Head Coach, Team Leader, Manager)

As the Lead Responsible Adult, you have a 'duty of care' as well as a legal responsibility under the Children Act for the safety and well-being of the athletes at all times. You are responsible for ensuring the safeguarding children policy and procedures are being followed and in the event of an incident you will be held to account. You are responsible for the welfare of the children and must ensure there are sufficient staff members on the trip.

The Lead Responsible Adult may be the Camp Welfare Officer, Team Manager, Coach or another person, but must be agreed for each camp.

All staff working with children will have up to date DBS disclosure in line with the GBS Disclosure Policy and should ensure they are fully aware of GBS Safeguarding Children Policy. Current advice regarding physical contact with children should be followed. Adults should be aware of, and abide by, the relevant Code of Conduct.

There should always be a minimum of two adult staff members (over 18) on the trip.

Be aware at all times of possible tensions within the group. Snowsport is an individual sport, and its competitive nature may lead to jealousies and to bullying.

Boys and girls
separate
quarters, and
not share rooms with adult staff members or adult athletes*.

***Do not take your responsibility lightly.
You are not on holiday, but on duty 24 hours a day.***

should be in
sleeping
children must

*Where there is only one U18 athlete it is accepted it may be preferable for them to share with an athlete over the age of 18 of the same gender rather than be in a room by themselves. However, it must be stressed to all concerned that members of the opposite gender must not enter their room. Where under 18s are sharing with over 18s, parents must be informed of the situation and their permission sought, as well as the permission of the athletes (under 18 and over 18).

Staff should not go into the bedrooms of children without another staff member present (unless it is an emergency).

At least one staff member should be with the children at all times of the day, or at least within very easy reach. The children must always know the whereabouts of at least one of the staff members in case of emergency.

Where there are organised events for the adults (e.g. race/competition managers' meetings) one staff member should remain in the hotel/accommodation with the children and another staff member must be contactable and able to return within ten minutes.

GB Snowsport has a Dry Team Policy, which means from the day upon which a Team is assembled until it is disbanded, no Team Member is allowed to drink alcohol or to purchase or knowingly have alcohol in their possession without the consent of the Team Manager. Staff should be aware they are role models for the athletes. The laws of the country you are visiting must be adhered to. There must always be at least one responsible adult who has refrained from drinking alcohol in case of emergency.

Insurance documents and contact details should be always carried by a staff member in case of accident. In most Disciplines, for camps involving under 18s, a Camp Pack will be provided by GBS office containing all the necessary information.

The lead Responsible Adult must carry, or have access to, extra funds in case of any emergency (e.g. hospital treatment of a child).

Clear guidelines for behaviour, curfews, rendezvous times etc must be laid down clearly to the athletes during the induction, so they know what is always expected of them. Disciplinary measures may at times be necessary, and such procedures must be conducted with fairness. At least two staff members must be present and involved in any disciplinary matter, and the child should, where possible, be represented by an accompanying adult. All disciplinary measures must be proportionate and explained fully to the athlete. They must not involve humiliation of athletes, refusal to speak or interact with them or any threat of physical punishment or being told to go to their room and miss a meal. Participants and parents will have read and signed the relevant Code of Conduct and will be aware of possible procedures and sanctions. Examples of acceptable sanctions include time out; not being able to participate in a social activity or temporary exclusion from the camp. It is hoped that with positive reinforcement of good behaviour, our athletes will behave appropriately.

The CPSU has produced guidelines on [Managing Challenging Behaviour](#).

The Lead Responsible Adult or Camp Welfare Officer must:

- Have a copy of the consent forms, emergency contact details, passport details, flight details, travel insurance etc for each athlete

In addition in a mountain environment:

- If athletes have mobile phones, it is advisable for staff to have their number in case of emergency – but this should only be used where necessary and appropriate
- Copies of all emergency contact details and athletes telephone numbers should be given to any other coaches or staff with responsibilities for welfare when abroad, in case of emergency
- Athletes should be given mobile telephone numbers of all staff with responsibilities for welfare, to be used in an emergency only. This is particularly important if athletes are travelling independently from the group.
- Staff and athletes should delete the contact details after the camp.

6.2 Guidance for GBS Camp Welfare Officer

GBS Camp Welfare Officers are required for all trips abroad where children under the age of 18 are present. The role of the Camp Welfare Officer may sometimes be undertaken by the Team Manager or another member of GBS Staff. Their role is to ensure the athletes are welcomed, supported, and know who to turn to if they have any problems and ensure the athletes know the boundaries, rules and requirements when they are not training or competing

Many of our athletes will have attended training and race camps organised by other organisations and Academies, but it is imperative they know the standard of behaviour GBS requires of them, know their

boundaries and know there is always someone they can talk to if they have any concerns about their welfare or training/competition

For further information please refer to GB Snowsport Information for Camp Welfare Officers

6.3 Guidance on Supervision of Children

It is important to remember when planning any type of snowsport activity with children that sufficient adults must be present to adequately supervise all participants and manage any incident that may arise. Prevention is the most important aspect of supervision of children. From the moment the athlete is in your care, staff and volunteers are acting *in loco parentis* and have a duty of care for them.

Appropriate supervision ratios and systems for monitoring the whereabouts of children are essential. It must be clear at all times who in the team is responsible for supervision. This is particularly important in the mountain environment.

There must always be a minimum of two staff present.

This ensures at least basic cover in the event of something impacting on the availability of one of the adults during the activity (e.g. in the event of a participant requiring the attention of an adult during the activity following an accident). Ensuring there are always at least 2 adults present also helps safeguard the adults, in the event of an accusation.

For single gender groups, there must be at least one staff member of the same gender. *
For mixed gender groups, there must be at least one male & one female staff member*
Supervision ratios are NOT the same as coaching ratios

*It is recognised occasionally that it is not possible to have a member of staff of the same gender as an athlete, particularly where there are only 2 or 3 athletes on the camp. This must be an exception rather than the rule. A risk assessment should be carried out and the reason for the absence of a staff member of the appropriate gender documented. Parents and athletes should be informed prior to the camp and their permission sought. The GBS Safeguarding and Welfare Officer must also be advised prior to the camp.

A minimum supervision ratio of adults to participants of 1:10 is required for all our athletes (aged over 12), whilst observing the minimum of two rule. At least one of the responsible adults should be trained in First Aid. Depending on the nature of the camp, it may be necessary to have a higher supervision ratio.

Although it is accepted that occasionally parents or carers may accompany children, or be present at events, you should never count parents in the supervision ratio, unless they are formerly volunteering for the role. Any parent officially taking on the volunteering role of Responsible Adult should have had appropriate recruitment checks carried out prior to the trip including DBS where necessary, had their role explained to them, understand what acceptable practice is and know who has overall responsibility for the group.

All responsible adults must be a minimum of 18 years old. Whilst it is accepted that sixteen-year-olds may be assisting in a coaching support role, they are not “adults” in child safeguarding terms [Children Act 1989] and therefore must not count in supervision ratios.

A risk assessment should be carried out prior to the trip. Due to the diverse nature of snowsport, the information above can only be guidance and your risk assessment may demonstrate you require more adults present.

Supervision ratios are NOT the same as coaching ratios

Snowsport activities are diverse and vary greatly according to snow conditions, terrain, experience of athletes etc. Your expertise and risk assessment of the activity will determine your coaching ratios. Coaching Ratios should be agreed by your Discipline Committee.

6.4 Guidelines on Sexual Activities in Snowsport

Coaches should ensure they maintain healthy, positive and professional relationships with all athletes.

'Position of trust' is a legal term that refers to certain roles and settings where an adult has regular and direct contact with children. Examples of positions of trust include teachers, care workers and health care staff such as physiotherapists.

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland changes to the Sexual Offences Act (2003) made in 2022 extend the definition to include sports coaches. The law now states that those in a position of trust in sports organisations cannot legally have a sexual relationship with young people they work with under 18yrs old.

A “position of trust” within snowsport would include all staff members; coaches, camp welfare officers, team managers, physios, ski technicians – indeed anyone whom GBS is employing or deploying to help with an activity. These people are in a position of power and such a relationship could constitute an abuse of this position.

Sexual activity between children/young people involved in snowsport will be prohibited during team events or social activities organised by or on behalf of GBS. Inappropriate or criminal sexual behaviour committed by a young person will lead to disciplinary action in accordance with the GBS policy and reports being made to external agencies including the Police or Children’s Social Care Services if necessary.

Sexual activity between adults (aged 18 or over) in a position of trust, and young people (16+) involved in snowsport is prohibited. Inappropriate sexual behaviour committed by an adult in a position of trust will lead to suspension and disciplinary action in accordance with GBS governing body guidance. This will also be referred to the police as it is a criminal offence.

Sexual activity between children aged 16-17 in a position of trust and young people (16+) involved in snowsport is prohibited. Inappropriate sexual behaviour will lead to suspension and disciplinary action in accordance with GBS governing body guidance.

Sexual activity between an adult and a child under the age of 16 is a criminal act and immediate action will be taken to report it to the police.

Sexual interactions between athletes aged 16 – 18 who are legally married or have civil partners – GBS actively discourages athletes engaging in any sexual relationships for the duration of a camp, even if they are legally married or in a civil partnership. This recommendation is to help coaches and camp welfare officers with decision making and ensure all athletes are treated equitably, and work as part of a team, whilst on residential trips.

Please see CPSU briefing for further information [Preventing abuse in positions of trust in sport - NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit](#)

6.5 Child Welfare in the Mountain Environment

Much of the guidance about child welfare is common to all sports. There are, however, some situations that are either unique to, or are made more challenging by the mountain environment in which many of our activities take place. This note gives some examples and is intended to provoke thought and promote best practice. It is not intended to refer to evenings in resorts or behaviour in mountain restaurants, but to the open mountainside, in any part of the world.

Understanding the risks

Children who take part in snowsport, and their parents and guardians, must accept the mountains are a dangerous environment; accidents in the mountains can lead to injury and, in extreme cases, to death. Coaches can minimise these risks through their skills and experience, but risks cannot be eliminated completely. In more dangerous situations, greater care and greater ability are required from all participants.

Coaches shall be free to refuse to take on the mountain any person (of any age) who appears not to have an adequate understanding of the risks or who does not take precautions appropriate to the prevailing environment. They should satisfy themselves that any child is sufficiently mature to understand the risks and to cope, both physically and mentally, with the conditions that may be encountered.

A risk assessment should be carried out to ensure there are sufficient adults and coaches present.

Stress and tiredness

Coaches must be alert to signs of cold and tiredness, which may lead to errors of judgement. The same applies to stress caused by a child being stretched beyond his or her limits. Athletes will be competing, but coaches should always ensure this is never harmful and that it would not lead to over-exertion or excessive risk-taking.

With careful thought and planning, it should be possible to avoid any situation that could potentially put children at greater risk of abuse, or be deemed bad practice.

6.6 Children at High Altitude – Managing the Risks

Dr Jenny Shute – Youth and Children’s Consultant, GB Snowsport
Member of FIS Medical Committee

There are many opportunities for children to travel to areas of high altitude (>2500m) for tourism, for skiing, and for racing and training. This short summary focuses on some of the hazards that may affect

children at altitude and identifies ways in which the risks can be managed, notably by careful planning, awareness and rapid and effective treatment. It is intended primarily for those with no specialist medical knowledge; some references for further reading are listed.

Careful assessment and management of the risks will facilitate safe enjoyment of some of the most beautiful places in the world (Pollard, Murdoch, 1996).

Factors which affect the safety and physical well-being of children high in the mountains include:

- Mountain/environmental/climatic hazards, including terrain, snow conditions, crevasses, rock/ice falls, avalanches, changeable weather, wind, visibility (not covered in this short risk management summary)
- Cold exposure
- Sun exposure
- Dehydration
- Individual responses to altitude, and the various forms of altitude sickness

Cold exposure - Younger children are particularly vulnerable to the effects of cold because of their large surface area to volume ratio. Adequate clothing is essential to prevent misery, hypothermia, and frostbite. Physical exercise will allow the children to generate heat through muscle activity, and the risk of hypothermia will be lessened. Younger children may become susceptible to hypothermia on long slow chairlifts at any altitude; T-bar or Poma alternatives should be used in preference. Remember to make particular allowance for the added effects of wind-chill.

Sun exposure - Reflection from snow and a thinner atmospheric layer at high altitude make the risk of solar ultraviolet radiation burns more likely than at sea level. Children are more likely to burn than adults if exposed to excess sun. Snow blindness results from solar damage to the cornea and conjunctiva. Appropriate sun-block creams (protection from UVA and UVB, SPF at least 30, applied before sun exposure), hats, long sleeves and goggles are required to prevent sunburn or snow blindness.

Dehydration - Since minute ventilation is about 20% higher at an altitude of 2500m and each

breath must be humidified, relative dehydration is a frequent issue. Adequate fluid intake should be encouraged, and sports drinks should be available for 'resuscitation'.

Children with pre-existing illnesses - Children with certain underlying chronic medical conditions may be at increased risk of developing either an exacerbation of their chronic illness or an illness directly related to altitude. Risk factors include a history of high-altitude illness, residence at an altitude below 900m, exertion, and certain pre-existing cardiopulmonary conditions.

N.B. Don't travel on cable cars or any aircraft with sick children – the pressure changes are too rapid.

Individual responses to altitude, and the various forms of altitude sickness

The major categories of altitude illness are acute mountain sickness (AMS), high altitude pulmonary oedema (HAPE), and high altitude cerebral oedema (HACE). The two latter more serious conditions are usually preceded by AMS. The mainstay of treatment for each of these conditions is DESCENT. The incidence of acute mountain sickness (AMS), the most common form of altitude illness, is high – approximately 1 in 4 visitors to Colorado ski resorts develop AMS symptoms.

Acute mountain sickness (AMS)

- An acute illness characterised by headache, anorexia, nausea, vomiting, fatigue, weakness, dizziness, light-headedness, and sleep dis-order. The symptoms typically develop within 6 to 10 hours after ascent, but sometimes as early as 1 hour.
- Children are no more susceptible than adults; being fit doesn't help.

- Previous history may indicate susceptibility

High altitude pulmonary oedema (HAPE)

- Acute pulmonary oedema (swelling of or fluid on the lungs) caused by altitude hypoxia, presenting as dyspnoea (breathing difficulty), reduced exercise tolerance, cough, haemoptysis (coughing up blood), tachycardia (fast pulse), tachypnoea (fast breathing), cyanosis (blueness of fingers, lips etc), fever
- Conditions that predispose a child to HAPE include recent inflammatory processes, such as viral infection, and conditions linked with underlying pulmonary hypertension.

High altitude cerebral oedema (HACE)

- HACE is swelling of, or fluid on the brain and consists of headache, ataxia (disturbances of balance), behavioural changes, hallucinations, confusion, disorientation, decreased level of consciousness, focal neurological signs, and coma.
- There is no published information about the incidence of HACE in children.

Sleeping Altitude

- Most mountain tourist sites and ski resorts are located at or below about 3200m, and the majority of travelers to these sites will sleep at 2000m or below.
- Ascents with sleeping altitudes at or below 3000m carry a low risk of serious altitude illness. Sleeping altitude is more important than 'active altitude', perhaps because with wakefulness and activity the ventilation rate is higher and therefore oxygen saturations are higher.
- exacerbate the symptoms); the child should be carried where practical during descent.
- Oxygen when available
- If HAPE is suspected, the patient should remain sitting upright.
- Call for urgent medical assistance if HAPE or HACE are suspected

- Staying even one night at lower elevation significantly mitigates the incidence of AMS
- Remember, wherever possible 'climb high, sleep low'.

Risk Management re Altitude illnesses:

Planning

- Plan for slow graded ascent
- Plans should include sleeping at lower altitude wherever possible
- Drug prophylaxis (usually acetazolamide*) may be used in adults but is not indicated in children except under special circumstances
- Management of group size, provision for adequate supervision at all times on the hill
- Prepare an evacuation strategy in case urgent descent is necessary
- Be flexible – if one child becomes sick the group plan may need to be adjusted

Awareness

- Full awareness by all responsible adults re signs and symptoms
- Watch out for all in a big group
- Be aware that non-specific signs (e.g. fussiness) may present in younger children
- Care – upper respiratory infections are a predisposing factor for HAPE; URTI may also lead to
- problems of equalising pressure on rapid ascent in lifts, perforated eardrums

Treatment

- DESCENT (a descent of only 500 to 1000m usually leads to resolution of AMS)
- Further ascent is contraindicated
- Descent, when possible, should involve minimal exertion (exertion is likely to

***NB** acetazolamide (used in the prophylaxis and treatment of altitude illness) is on the WADA list of prohibited drugs.

In short, the keys to management of the risks of altitude illness are careful planning, full awareness of the risks and of the signs and symptoms, flexibility and rapid treatment – most notably descent.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Larry Gaul M. D. FACC /USSA, fellow member of the FIS Medical Committee, for his helpful and expert advice.

This short summary has been gleaned from the literature, in particular from the publications listed below.

References

For those who would like to read more, and for medical personnel requiring more detailed information regarding prophylaxis and treatment:

Children at High Altitude: An International Consensus Statement by an Ad Hoc Committee of the International Society for Mountain Medicine, March 12, 2001 – Pollard et al, published in HIGH ALTITUDE MEDICINE & BIOLOGY, Volume 2, Number 3, 2001; Mary Ann Liebert, Inc.

High Altitude Illness – Peter H Hackett, MD, & Robert C Roach, PhD; published New England Journal of Medicine, Vol. 345, No. 2, July 12, 2001

The High Altitude Medicine Handbook – Andrew Pollard & David Murdoch (Third Edition 2003); published by The Radcliffe Medical Press, Oxford

Travel to High Altitude with Young Children: An Approach for Clinicians - Michael Yaron and Susan Niermeyer; published in HIGH ALTITUDE MEDICINE & BIOLOGY, Volume 9, Number 4, 2008

Children at Altitude – 2008 Consensus Statement of the UIAA Medical Commission, Meijer, H.J. & Jean, D.

6.7 First Aid

On the mountain, the initial appraisal of an injured athlete will usually be by one of the coaches training the athletes. It is very important therefore that GBS coaches are up to date with their first aid training at the appropriate level. Where necessary, piste patrols should be contacted to arrange removal of the casualty from the mountain. The coach, or another member of the team, should arrange to meet the piste patrol and sled at the bottom of the mountain to accompany the casualty to first aid, or hospital. There should always be at least 2 coaches training athletes, and the other coach would be able to supervise the rest of the athletes on the mountain.

In a snowsport setting on the mountain it is recognised it is not always possible to follow the general guidance below on good practice – but where possible:

- Two first-aiders should treat casualties, or a first aider accompanied by another adult of the same gender as the casualty.
- Never take the casualty alone into a room or close the door behind you. Always leave the door open or attend to them in an open environment. Sometimes a little privacy for the casualty may be required, for example where they need to remove clothing, and unless it is an emergency, there should always be two adults present.

- If they need taking to hospital, a staff member should accompany the athlete to hospital, or follow in their vehicle to enable them to bring the athlete back after treatment. Ideally this would be 2 members of staff, to avoid the athlete travelling back with one staff member.
- It is important at the first opportunity to fill in an Accident Report Form no matter how trivial the accident may seem.
- Parents should always be informed of injuries as soon as is reasonably possible. They need to sign the Accident form, or where this is impractical, ask them to e mail you to say they have been informed.
- Ensure you keep a copy of the signed Accident Report form and forward this and the parent's e mail (where applicable), to GBS office. GBS office will keep the form in line with HSE requirements.

SECTION 7

General Guidance

7.1 Online Safety

GBS is keen to promote the safe and responsible use of online technology within snowsport. These guidelines are intended to support you to use these technologies safely and responsibly. To do this requires an awareness of the benefits and risks involved to both children and coaches and other staff members.

GBS recognises that social media provides everyone with the ability to participate in online discussions, keep in touch with supporters, and share a wide variety of information. The GBS Social Media Policy is not designed to stop GBS Staff, GBS Athletes, and GBS Volunteers from using social media it is a tool to bring attention to the dangers of reckless and careless use.

For further information please refer to [GBS Social-Media-Policy.pdf](#)

Keeping children safe in snowsport extends beyond the snowsport environment to include digital devices, online platforms and communication. Children and young people face several potential risks online, such as abuse or being exposed to harmful content. All of which can affect their wellbeing and mental health. Here are some of the key concerns:

Exposure to Inappropriate Content: This includes pornography, violent content, and material promoting the use of harmful substances like illegal drugs, alcohol, cigarettes or vapes, self-harm or eating disorders.

Online Predators: Children may be targeted by individuals seeking to exploit them. This could include being encouraged to create or share inappropriate or harmful material of themselves or others, including sexting (sexual messages, images or videos). It could also include inappropriate relationships between adults in positions of trust or influence.

Cyberbullying: The anonymity of the internet can lead to bullying, harassment, and intimidation, trolling or berating by peers and people they consider ‘friends’.

Privacy Risks: Sharing personal information online, such as on social media, can lead to identity theft or unwanted contact.

Radicalisation: Exposure to extremist content can influence young minds.

Financial Risks: Children might be enticed into gambling or making in-app purchases that can lead to significant expenses.

It’s crucial for coaches and other sport staff to understand online activities and the potential risks associated with them.

For adults the risks involved include:

- Misinterpretation of their communication with young people
- Potential investigation (internal or statutory agencies) and potential disciplinary action

Written Consent

Written consent should be obtained from parents/carers before any contact is made with children under the age of 18. This should be incorporated in the Consent form.

Sexting or Youth Produced Sexual Imagery

If you become aware that a child has sent or received a text with a sexual theme (naked or topless pictures, a picture displaying genitals or committing a sex act) you should:

- Reassure the child they have acted appropriately by telling you
- Never copy, forward or print the image
- Do not view the image yourself
- **ALWAYS contact the GBS Safeguarding and Welfare Officer for advice**
- If you are concerned for the immediate safety of a child, ring the Police without delay
- You cannot confiscate the phone/device (teachers and police have additional powers)
- Offer the child support to deal with the issue
- Depending on the circumstances it may or may not be appropriate to delete the image (depending on the content, whether Police are involved etc). The GBS Welfare Officer will advise.

More information can be found at [Online safety and social media in sport | CPSU](#)

7.2 Guidance on the Use of Photographic Equipment/Recording Images

It is important to acknowledge that parents/carers may wish to take photographs or videos of their own children participating in snowsport. Coaches may also wish to video athletes as this is a useful coaching aid and take photographs,

Key Concerns

The key concerns regarding the use of images of children/young people relate to:

- The possible identification of children when a photograph is accompanied by personal information
- The inappropriate use, adaptation or copying of images for use on child pornography or illegal websites
- The taking of inappropriate or unauthorised photographs or recorded images of children
- The identification and locating of children at risk; for example, because they have been removed from their family for their own safety, or there are restrictions on family contact following parental separation, or because they are a witness in criminal proceedings.

You need to be aware that there have been concerns about the risks posed directly and indirectly to children using photographs on sports websites and other publications. Photographs can be used as a means of identifying children when they are accompanied with personal information. E.g. “this is X who lives at y and goes to z school whose other hobbies include mountain biking and cello”. This sort of information can lead to the child being identified and vulnerable to an individual who may wish to start to “groom” that child for abuse. Photographs and information on the internet have also been used by estranged parents (e.g. in adoption or domestic violence circumstances) to identify, trace and cause significant difficulties for, or harm to children.

GBS recognises many of our athletes require wide media coverage to attract sponsors and followers. We also recognise that publicity and pictures/recordings of our athletes enjoying snowsport is essential to promote the sport and a healthy lifestyle. However, the following guidelines should be observed.

Guidelines for Photographic and Recorded Images

- There should be signed consent on athlete registration forms for parents/carers and the athletes to show their consent to opt-in to photographs and video recordings being made
- Parents and athletes should be able to ask to opt-out of photographs at the races we organise. However, due to the nature of the races in a mountain environment, it is not possible to guarantee photographs will not be taken
- All athletes featured in recordings must be appropriately dressed for the activity they are participating in
- Personal details which might make the young person vulnerable, such as their exact address or school should never be revealed
- Coaches should be allowed to use video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid and means of recording special occasions, however care should be taken in the dissemination and storage of the material which come within the Data Protection Act 2018
- You should not use any images of a child or young person known to be the subject of any court order or who has denied you their consent
- Parents and spectators taking photographs and videos should only take them of their own children
- Any instances of the use of inappropriate images should be reported to the GBS Welfare Officer and to Children’s Social Care or the Police where necessary.

Guidelines for Publishing Photographic and Recorded Images

- If a photograph is used, personal details of children such as an e mail address, home address and telephone numbers should never be revealed on a website or in print.

- It is usual practice to recommend if you name a child in an article, not to include their picture. However for elite athletes it is reasonable to expect athletes to be named alongside a picture (but no other personal information should be included). The exception to this is where consent has been denied.
- Think about the level of consideration that you give to the use of images in all publications, for example the process used in choosing photographs for a publicity brochure. Apply an increased level of consideration to the images of children used on websites.

Guidelines for the Official Photographer

- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour
- Issue the photographer with ID which must be worn at all times
- Inform the athletes and parents that a photographer will be in attendance and ensure they are aware photographs will be taken and have been given the opportunity to request to opt-out of any photographs or films that feature and clearly identify their child (e.g. close-ups, small group and team photos). It should be made clear for international events it may not be possible to prevent photographs being taken and posted on line, particularly by other parent or spectators.
- The photographer may wish to take a wide-angle general photographs. Parents/carers should be warned that this type of photograph may be taken
- Do not allow unsupervised access to children or one-to-one photo sessions at events
- Ensure if photographs can be viewed on the day, children do not give their e mail address to the photographer for photos to be e mailed to them, they should give the parents/carers e mail address
- Any other professional photographers attending the event (e.g. local press, TV etc.) should seek accreditation with the event organiser by producing their professional identification for the details to be recorded. This should ideally be done a week before the event. At races abroad on a public hill it is recognized it may not be possible to enforce this.
- Ideally accreditation should include name and address of person; names of subjects they are filming/photographing (if specific people); the reason the images are being taken, or where they will be used and a signed declaration that the information is valid and that the images will only be used for the reasons given.

Guidelines for National and International Events Organised by GBS

It is not possible to guarantee photographs will not be taken or published at events taking place which are often on mountains abroad. When GBS organises an event, for example the British races, it is suggested a statement is included in the race briefings such as:

The organisers may wish to publish photographs of some of the athletes taking part in this event to celebrate the sport and successes, and for promotional and publicity purposes. As athletes progress higher up the competitive ladder competing at international races, it is not possible to guarantee photographs will not be taken or published. Where general photographs are taken, we will not normally publish the name. However, we may wish to publish a photograph together with the name of podium placed athletes and others. All taking part in this event should be aware of this.

The organisers recognise there may be some athletes/parents who do not wish their photos to be published, and they should complete and return the opt out form. The organisers will endeavour to respect these wishes but cannot guarantee an athlete's photograph will not be published by us or others attending this event. The Event Organisers reserve the right to decline entry to any person unable to meet or abide by the promoter's conditions.

It is suggested if parents or athletes have any concerns in this regard, they contact the Event Welfare Officer who would advise. Their contact details are:

7.3 Guidelines for Transporting Children and Young People

It is important all steps are taken to ensure the safe transport of children and young people. You should be aware in other sports abusers have in the past abused children whilst transporting them, or groomed children whilst transporting them. The following guidance is issued as best practice. We know due to the nature of our camps this best practice cannot always be followed. Where this is the case you must be able to evidence why you did not follow our guidance.

Within GBS camps most athletes are transported by minibus. Please consider the following:

- If hiring transport, use a reputable company providing necessary insurance
- Where our staff are transporting athletes, GBS will ask for proof of driving convictions, penalty points, overseas insurance
- Ensure sufficient supervisors are on each minibus (male and female if mixed teams)
- Everyone travelling should have a seat and seat belt regulations must be adhered to for the country you are in. Seat belts must be always worn by everyone
- Parents/carers/other coaches should be issued with detailed information of drop-off and pick-up points and times
- All staff supervising children should be issued with relevant information of passengers e.g. name/contact number of parent/carer, name/contact number of person who is meeting them (if different), pick-up/drop-off point, medical information, emergency telephone number
- Children must not be dropped off if the person meeting them has not arrived
- An athlete under the age of 18 should not be alone in the vehicle with an adult
- If using mini buses then consideration must be given to the relevant legislation, both in the UK and abroad.

Every effort should be made not to take a child alone in a car or minibus by a staff member, except in an emergency where there is no other adult available to accompany them. If transporting just one child, the child should sit in the back seat of the car/minibus. When transporting athletes, if they have to use the front of the minibus ensure the same athlete does not sit beside you frequently. This is also to safeguard you in the event of an allegation.

For more information about transporting children see the CPSU [Guidelines on transporting a child in your car | CPSU](#)

7.4 Guidance on Missing Children

The Camp Welfare Officer must ensure there is clear guidance on reporting missing participants. As a rule, away from the mountain, where a child is reported missing there should be a maximum of 20 minutes before the police are called. Clearly in a mountain environment the alarm may need to be raised much sooner or even immediately.

For residential events, it is recommended the Team Manager/Camp Welfare Officer has access to photos of children/young people (attached to their consent form) in the event of them having to report a participant missing to the police. A photocopy of their passport could be used for this purpose.

What to do if a young person is suspected of being missing

If the child is missing on the hill

1. Report this to the piste patrol or lift operators straight away
2. Do not let other athletes search for the child. Ensure they stay together in a safe place
3. Follow the advice of the piste patrol or no piste patrol available, organise the remaining adults to conduct a search and report back to you within a short time
4. Proceed as 6 below.

If the child is missing off the hill

1. Ensure all other children continue to be supervised appropriately while a search for the child is carried out
2. If they have a mobile phone, try ringing them
3. Inform the head coach or designated Camp Welfare Officer
4. Make an immediate assessment of the situation. E.g. if the child was seen stepping into an unknown car, inform the Police immediately
5. Organise the remaining available adults to conduct a search of the surrounding area allocating each individual to a specific area. Ask them all to report back to you within a short time
6. Make a note of the circumstances in which the child has gone missing and where he/she was last seen. Prepare a detailed physical description of the child, to include their hair and eye colour, approximate height and build and clothing he/she was wearing, as this will be required by police
7. If the child is not found after a thorough search, call the Police – 999, 112, mountain rescue or appropriate number if abroad
8. Keep searching, if the child is subsequently found, call off the search and inform relevant parties including searchers, police and parents
9. If the child is not found, follow police guidance if further action is recommended and maintain close contact with the police
10. Report this to the CEO and complete an Incident Report Form and forward a copy to the GBS Welfare Officer and CEO (the Police will also require this). [Safeguarding Incident Report Form](#)

DO NOT SEND OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE TO SEARCH

7.5 Safe Events

When organising an event, GBS will appoint an Event Welfare Officer. This will be someone who has undergone snowsport child safeguarding training.

The Event Welfare Officer's core responsibilities are to:

- Be responsible for safeguarding children at the event. Be a central point of contact for anyone who has any concerns regarding welfare of children at the Event
- Ensure the [Event Photographic Policy](#) is publicised and on display

- Ensure Safeguarding Incident Forms are completed where necessary and a copy forwarded to the GBS Welfare Officer at GBS without delay [Safeguarding Incident Report Form](#)
- Ensure Accident Report Forms are completed where necessary and a copy forwarded to GBS who will ensure a copy is kept confidentially and in line with requirements
- Ensure that DBS checks have been completed in advance where necessary (see table below)
- Be vigilant and aware that race officials should not have unsupervised contact with children
- Be the central point of contact for a missing child and be responsible for organising the search and if necessary reporting to the Police. See [Guidelines for Missing Children](#)
- Ensure concerns are dealt with appropriately and where necessary make referrals to the GBS Welfare Officer, the Police or Children's Social Care.

The Chief of Championships is responsible for the general risk assessment and running of the race. The TD assesses the physical risks of the course.

Minimum Learning Requirements & Safeguarding Checks for staff involved in an event:

Staff	Roles & Responsibilities	DBS	Safeguarding training*
Event Welfare Officer	Responsibility for implementation of event welfare plan	Yes	Yes
Coaches who are involved in the running of the event	Course setting, organising of event etc. NB Use Licenced Coaches as they should be up to date (but check)	Yes	Yes
Other Staff recruited by GBS	Other aspects of the event	Yes**	No
Race Officials	Responsibility for race or event procedures and protocol	No	Encouraged to do training, but not obligatory
Other helpers– should not have direct unsupervised contact with children	Supporting race officials and servicing the event	No	No
Coaches, team managers, drivers – NOT employed or arranged by Event Organisers	Not the responsibility of the Event Organiser		

*UK Coaching Safeguarding & Protecting Children for up-to-date information of accepted safeguarding courses. [Safeguarding & Protecting Children - UK Coaching](#)

** If they are in an appropriate role and meet the frequency criteria

You should also refer to the Transport Guidelines and Supervision Guidelines

The Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) has guidance for organising different sized events. [Safe sport events, activities and competitions | CPSU](#)

SECTION 8

Useful Information

8.1 Relevant Legislation, Publications and Websites

Legislation

The NSPCC Child Protection in Sport {CPSU} has up to date information on Child Protection legislation in England.

[Legislation and statutory guidance | CPSU](#)

The practices and procedures within our Policy are based on principles contained within UK and International legislation and Government guidance.

Publications and Guidance

[Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance](#)

Safe Sport Events, Activities and Competitions A booklet to support organisers of sports events ensure the safety and welfare of children. Provides guidance on roles and responsibilities, recruitment and training, reporting procedures for concerns and health and safety. [Safe sport events, activities and competitions | CPSU](#)

Safeguarding deaf and disabled children in sport A training resource to help sports organisations include and safeguard deaf and disabled children more effectively. [Safeguarding d/Deaf and disabled children in sport | CPSU](#)

Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport A downloadable booklet from the CPSU that provides a benchmark for sports organisations make informed decisions, promote good practice and challenge practice that is harmful to children. [Standards for safeguarding children in sport | CPSU](#)

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015 This document is for anyone whose work brings them into contact with children and families and is relevant to those working in all sectors (including sports) [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#)

Information Sharing (Dept of Education 2024) - This document provides advice for anyone providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers. It aims to help people decide when and how to share personal information legally and professionally. [DfE non statutory information sharing advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers](#)

Websites

[Ann Craft Trust](#) – Supporting organisations to safeguard adults

Anti-bullying Alliance - Brings organisations together to influence policy, and develop a consensus around how to stop and prevent bullying. [Anti-Bullying Alliance](#)

ChildLine - Information and support for children [Childline | Childline](#)

Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) - An abundance of useful information with resources, news and events, guidance, training, research etc for sports organisations [NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit | CPSU](#)






Kidscape UK charity established specifically to prevent bullying and child sexual abuse [Help With Bullying | Bullying Advice | Kidscape](#)



MIND Charity providing advice and support to anyone experiencing a mental health problem. [Home - Mind](#)

Young Minds Charity providing advice and support for young people experience mental health problems, and their parents [YoungMinds | Mental Health Charity For Children And Young People | Young-Minds](#)






8.2 Useful Contact Details

GB Snowsport Contacts for Safeguarding (please complete local details)

GBS Welfare Officer	Name: Sarah Torkington-Halstead  +44 (0) 7980 675742  Sarah.Torkington-Halstead@gbsnewsport.com
CEO of GBS	Name: Vicky Gosling  +44 (0) 203 994 5300  Vicky.Gosling@gbsnewsport.com
GBS Media Enquiries	Name: Chris Scott (Head of External Relations)  chris.scott@gbsnewsport.com

Local Children's Social Care, including out of hours contact.	Find your local council - GOV.UK
Police – Emergency	 999 (or 112 - emergency EU no)
Police – Non emergency local office	 101

National Contacts for Safeguarding

ChildLine UK – 24 hour helpline for children	 0800 1111
Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre	 0870 000 3344
Kidscape – helpline for adults concerned about bullying	 08451 205 204
NSPCC Freephone – 24 hour helpline for adults concerned about a child	 0808 800 5000
The Samaritans	 08457 909090

8.3 Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

GBS	GB Snowsport
Child	A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18 th birthday
Child Protection	Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm as a result of maltreatment. In a proactive safeguarding environment, the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.
Children's Social Care	The services formerly known as Social Services (the name may vary around the country)
CPSU	Child Protection in Sport Unit
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service.
DBS check	Disclosure and Barring Service check (previously known as CRB disclosure)
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer (in England). The LADO should be involved if an allegation is made about someone (in England) who works or volunteers with children (e.g. a coach) – as opposed to a family member or friend. The role of the LADO is to support organisations where concerns have arisen in relation to the behaviour towards children of a member of staff or volunteer in a position of trust or responsibility.
GBS Safeguarding and Welfare Officer	The GBS Welfare Officer at GB Snowsport to whom all concerns should be reported and from whom advice can be sought
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children's Board
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
Regulated Activity (RA)	Regulated Activity (RA) is work that a barred person must not do and in this Policy will relate to Children. In snowsport it includes unsupervised teaching, training, instructing, caring for, advising, guidance on well-being, or supervising children or driving a vehicle only for children.
Regulated Work (RW)	In Scotland, RW is work that a barred person must not do and in this Policy will relate to children. For snowsport purposes it is very similar to RA (above).
Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children	Proactively promoting the welfare of children and working in a positive way to ensure everyone is following best practice regarding child welfare. If there is a good safeguarding culture, the need for "child protection" measures will be reduced.
Staff/Volunteer/ Consultant	The terms "Staff" and "Consultant" refer to paid employees, and the term "Volunteer" to someone giving their time for free, but who may be reimbursed out of pocket expenses. For the purposes of this Policy, these terms

	are all interchangeable and the Policy applies directly, or indirectly, equally to all. In safeguarding, anything that applies to paid employees also applies equally to volunteers.
Working/Volunteering	For the purpose of this Policy, these terms are interchangeable. In safeguarding, anything that applies to working, also applies to volunteering.
WADA	World Anti-Doping Agency - promotes, coordinates and monitors the fight against doping in sport in all its forms.