

**Basketball**  
Ireland



**CODE OF CONDUCT**

**FOR**

**CHILDREN'S SPORT**

**Basketball Ireland's  
Code of Conduct for Children's  
Sport in Ireland**

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## **Basketball Ireland Policy Statement**

**Basketball Ireland is fully committed to safeguarding the well being of its members. Every individual in the organisation should at all times, show respect and understanding for members rights, safety and welfare and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the organisation and the guidelines contained in the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland.**

# **Basketball Ireland CODE OF CONDUCT Guiding Principles**



**The guidance given in this code of ethics is based on the principles set out in the following publications:**

- **“Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children’s Sport”, Irish Sports Council and Sports Council Northern Ireland 2000 (reviewed 2006)**
- **“Children First” National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, Dept of Health Children 1999.**
- **“Our Duty to Care” Dept of Health Children 2002 .**

**The aim of this code is to promote best practice by everyone involved in the sport of Basketball and to provide a safe, healthy, enjoyable environment for young members.**

# **Basketball Ireland's Core Values In Young People's Sport**

## **Integrity in relationships:**

Adults interacting with children in sport should do so with integrity and respect for the child. There is a danger that sporting contexts can be used to exploit or undermine children. All adult actions in sport should be guided by what is best for the child and in the context of quality, open working relationships. Verbal, physical, emotional or sexual abuse of any kind is unacceptable within sport of Basketball.

## **Fair Play:**

All children's sport should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play. Ireland has contributed and is committed to the European Code of Sports Ethics, which defines fair play as: "much more than playing within the rules". It incorporates the concepts of friendship, respect for others and always playing with the right spirit. Fair play is defined as a way of thinking, not just behaving. It incorporates issues concerned with the elimination of opportunities, excessive commercialisation and corruption. (European Sports Charter and Code of Ethics, Council of Europe, 1993).

## **Quality atmosphere and ethos:**

Children's sport should be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere. A Child centred ethos will help to ensure that competition and specialisation are kept in their appropriate place.

## **Competition**

Too often competitive demands are placed on children too early and may result in excessive levels of pressure on them.

## **Equality:**

All children should be treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of age, ability, sex, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion. Children with disability should be involved in sports activities in an integrated way, thus allowing them to participate to their potential alongside other children.

**Leaders in children's sport should strive to create a positive environment for the children in their care. They have an overall responsibility to take the steps necessary to ensure that positive and healthy experiences are provided.**

**BI Guidelines for Young Players:**

Basketball Ireland wishes to provide the best possible environment for all young people involved in the sport. Young players deserve to be given enjoyable, safe sporting opportunities, free of abuse of any kind. These players have rights, which must be respected, and responsibilities which that they must accept, including the responsibility of treating sports leaders and other participants with fairness and respect.

**Young players are entitled to:**

- Be treated with dignity and respect
- Be safe and to feel safe
- To get help against bullies
- To say No
- To be listened to
- To be believed.
- To protect their own bodies
- To refuse inappropriate touches
- Be happy, have fun and enjoy sport
- Experience competition at a level at which they feel comfortable
- Make complaints and have them dealt with
- Confidentiality

**Young players should always:**

- Treat all coaches, managers, selectors, club and tournament organisers and officials with respect.
- Abide by the rules set down by team managers when travelling to away events.
- Behave in a manner that avoids bringing the game of Basketball into disrepute
- Play fairly at all times, do their best
- Respect team members, even when things go wrong
- Respect opponents, be gracious in defeat
- Talk to the club children's officer or other designated person if they have any problems.

**Young players should never:**

- Use unfair or bullying tactics to gain advantage on or off the court.
- Use bullying tactics to isolate another player.
- Pass on gossip about another player or adult.
- Make false allegations against other players or adults.
- Cheat
- Use violence or physical contact that is not allowed within the rules
- Shout or argue with officials, coaches, selectors, team mates or opponents
- Harm team members, opponents, or their property
- Bully or use bullying tactics to isolate another player
- Use unfair or bullying tactics to gain advantage
- Take banned substances
- Keep information secret, especially if they or others have been caused harm.
- Tell lies about other adults / young people
- Spread rumours

**BI Policy Guidelines for Parents** (*Code of Ethics & Good Practice p30 -31*):

*Basketball Ireland is committed to providing a safe and fair environment for all juvenile young players. Our first priority is the welfare of young players and we are committed to providing an environment, which will allow participants to perform to their best ability, free from bullying and intimidation. Basketball Ireland also has a duty of care for volunteers working with juveniles Young players on behalf of the organisation. Basketball Ireland believes that parents should....*

- Be a role model for your child and maintain the highest standards of conduct when interacting with children, other parents, with officials and organisers.
- Encourage your child to play by the rules.
- Always behave responsibly on the sidelines and do not seek to unfairly affect the game on court or the player on court.
- Take care not to expose any junior young player, intentionally or unintentionally, to embarrassment or disparagement by the use of flippant or sarcastic remarks.
- Always recognise the value and importance of the volunteers who provide sporting/recreational opportunities for your child.
- Respect referees, coaches, organisers and other players.
- Do not publicly question the judgement or honesty of referees, coaches or organisers.
- Teach your child that honest endeavour is as important as winning and do all you can to encourage good sportsmanship.
- Set a good example by applauding good play on both sides
- Encourage mutual respect for teammates and opponents
- Ensure that their children are collected at the appointed times
- Check transport plans and be happy with the arrangements
- Parents should support all efforts to remove abusive and bullying behaviour in all its forms:

**Child to Child** – includes physical aggression, verbal bullying, intimidation, or isolation.

**Adult to Child** – includes the use of repeated gestures or expressions of a threatening or intimidating nature, or any comment intended to degrade the child.

**Adult to Adult** – includes verbal aggression towards other adults in order to achieve a beneficial outcome for own self or own child.

**Child to Adult** - includes repeated gestures or expressions of a threatening or intimidating nature by an individual child or a group of children.

**Basketball Ireland Policy: Coaches/Selectors/Team Managers:**

Basketball Ireland recognises the key role coaches, selectors and team managers play in the lives of children in sport. Basketball Ireland has adopted the principles Irish Sports Council's "Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport."

All Coaches/Selectors/Team Managers should have as their first priority the children's safety and enjoyment of the sport and should adhere to the guidelines and regulations set out in the Basketball Ireland's Code of Practice.

Coaches must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every child and must treat everyone equally, regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or ability.

Basketball Ireland will take all reasonable steps to ensure that people working with young people in basketball are suitable and appropriately qualified. Assessment procedures are therefore necessary and these procedures apply to all persons, paid or unpaid, with substantial access to young people.

There must be a "sign-up" procedure, whereby the appointed/reappointed coach/selector/team manager, agrees to abide by the "Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children in Sport" and to the policies and code of Basketball Ireland.

Leaders should familiarise themselves with the *Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport* and with *Basketball Ireland's Code of Conduct* and follow the procedures if they suspect or receive complaints of abuse of any sort.

Upon qualification all Coaches should be required to sign a Coaches Charter prior to receipt of their Certificate

When travel/overnight travel is involved, the Coach/Selector/Manager/Volunteer travelling with children must sign a separate agreement. Parents will also be asked to sign permission forms in these instances.

All adults taking responsibility for children in sport should undergo a recruitment process. Before recruitment, terms of reference should be drawn up and these should clearly state:

- a. The responsibilities of the role,
- b. The level of experience/qualifications required.
- c. Basketball Ireland's commitment to the ISC Code.

Potential coaches/selectors/team managers must complete an Application/Assessment form. – See appendix 2.

References will be needed and will be followed up.

**Potential appointees should be made aware of the following publications**

- Basketball Ireland's Code of Practice which can be downloaded at the following link:  
<http://www.basketballireland.ie/basketballireland/downloadresource.jsp?docID=64>
- Code of Ethics & Good Practice in Children's Sport from the Irish Sports Council which can be downloaded using the following link:  
[http://www.irishsportsCouncil.ie/code/home\\_page.asp?PageName=00\\_00axxx\\_Home](http://www.irishsportsCouncil.ie/code/home_page.asp?PageName=00_00axxx_Home)

- Children First – Department of Health and Children which can be downloaded using the following link:  
[http://www.dohc.ie/publications/pdf/children\\_first.pdf](http://www.dohc.ie/publications/pdf/children_first.pdf)
- Our Duty to Care from the Department of Health & Children which can be downloaded using the following link:  
[http://www.dohc.ie/publications/our\\_duty\\_to\\_care.html](http://www.dohc.ie/publications/our_duty_to_care.html)

### **Guidelines for Coaches:**

A coach of juvenile children's team(s) has a duty of care, which is more onerous than that of a coach to an adult team.

A coach must act as a role model and promote the positive aspects of sport and of basketball and maintain the highest standards of personal conduct.

The use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco must be actively discouraged as being incompatible with a healthy approach to sporting activity.

Remember your behaviour to players, other officials, and opponents will have an effect on the players in your care.

Be generous with praise and never ridicule or shout at players for making mistakes or for losing a game. All young players are entitled to respect.

Be careful to avoid the "star system". Each child deserves equal time and attention.

Care must be taken not to expose a child intentionally or unintentionally to embarrassment or disparagement by use of sarcastic or flippant remarks about the child or his/her family.

Physical punishment or physical force must never be used. Never punish a mistake - by verbal means, physical means, or exclusion.

Insist that players in your care respect the rules of the game. Insist on fair play and ensure that your players know that you will not tolerate cheating or bullying behaviour.

Remember that young players play for fun and enjoyment and that skill and playing for fun have priority over highly structured competition.

Never make winning the only objective.

Encourage the development of respect for opponents, officials, selectors and other coaches and avoid criticism of fellow coaches.

It is important to realise that certain situations or friendly actions could be misinterpreted by the participant or by outsiders.

Basketball coaches are responsible for setting and monitoring the boundaries between a **working** relationship and **friendship** with players. It is unadvisable for coaches to involve young players in their personal life i.e. visits to coaches home or overnight

stays.

When approached to take on a new player, ensure that any previous coach-student relationship has been ended by the student/others in a professional manner.

When young players are invited into adult groups/squads, it is advisable to get agreement from a parent/carer. Boundaries of behaviour in adult groups are normally different from the boundaries that apply to junior Children's groups/squads. The group leader or senior coach should nominate one adult member of the group to take particular responsibility for the underage player. Where necessary, two adult members, one of each gender, can be appointed.

Basketball coaches who become aware of a conflict between their obligation to their players and their obligation to their governing body must make explicit the nature of the conflict and the loyalties and responsibilities involved, to all parties concerned.

Basketball coaches should communicate and co-operate with medical and ancillary practitioners in the diagnosis, treatment and management of their players' medical and psychological problems.

Set realistic goals for the team and for the individual players and do not push young players. Create a safe and enjoyable environment.

Do not criticise other officials, coaches, and selectors. You are the role model for the children in your care.

Avoid working alone and ensure there is adequate supervision for all activities.

Avoid giving advice of a personal or medical nature – if you are not qualified to do so. Any information of a personal or medical nature must be kept strictly confidential unless the welfare of the child requires the passing on of this information.

Leaders/coaches should communicate and co-operate with medical and ancillary practitioners in the diagnosis, treatment and management of their players' medical or related problems.

**It is advisable to:**

Record attendance at training.

Keep a brief record of injury(s) and action taken.

If behavioural problems arise and a young player has to be disciplined, keep a brief record of problem/action/outcomes.

The nature of the relationship between coach and player can often mean that a coach will learn confidential information about a player or player's family. This information must be regarded as confidential and except where abuse is suspected, must not be divulged to a third party without the express permission of the player/family.

Coaches must be particularly careful about their use of alcohol, before coaching, during events, on trips with young players.

Coaches should familiarise themselves with the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for

Children's Sport and with the Basketball Ireland Code of Conduct and follow the procedures if they suspect or receive complaints of abuse of any sort.

**Do:**

- **Be Positive** during a session, praise and **encourage effort** as well as results
- Plan and prepare appropriately
- Put welfare of young person first, strike a balance between this and winning / results
- Encourage fair play, treat participants equally
- Recognise developmental needs
- Be Qualified and up-to-date with knowledge and skill of sport for young people
- Involve parents where possible and Inform parents when problems arise
- Keep record of attendance at training
- Keep a brief record of injury(s) and action taken
- If behavioural problems arise and a young player has to be disciplined, keep a brief record of problem/action/outcomes

**Avoid:**

- Spending excessive amounts of time with children away from others
- Taking sessions alone
- Taking children to their (leader's/Coach's) home
- Taking children on journeys alone in their (leader's/Coach's) car

**Do Not:**

- Use any form of punishment or physical force on a child
- Exert undue influence over a participant in order to obtain personal benefit or reward
- Engage in rough physical games, sexually provocative games or allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind, and /or make sexually suggestive comments about, or to a child
- Take measurements or engage in certain types of fitness testing without the presence of another adults
- Undertake any form of therapy (hypnosis etc.) in the training of children

**Safety**

- Leaders and should be aware of potential risks to safety and take steps to safeguard against these risks.
- Ensure activities are suitable for age and stage of development of participants
- Keep a record of any specific medical conditions of the participants
- Keep a record of emergency contact numbers for parents / guardians
- Ensure appropriate kit is used
- Know the contact numbers of emergency services
- If an incident occurs, make a brief record of injury and action taken. Make a brief record of the problem/action/outcome. Contact the participants parents and keep them informed of all details
- Officials (umpires, referees, etc.) should ensure the conduct of the game
- Participants should know and keep the rules of their sport.
- Coaches should hold appropriate qualifications required by the governing body
- Have adequate insurance cover for all activities
- Make parents/guardians aware of their duty to be present at finishing time of sessions or events.

### **Physical Contact.**

Physical contact during sport should always be intended to meet the child's needs – NOT the adult's.

Adults should use appropriate contact which is aimed at assisting the development of the skill or activity or for safety reasons e.g. to prevent or treat an injury. This should be done in an open environment with the permission and understanding of the participant.

In general

- Contact should be determined by the age and development stage of the participant – Don't do something that a child can do for itself.
- Never engage in inappropriate touching such as touching of groin, genital areas, buttocks, breasts or any other part of the body that might cause a child distress or embarrassment.

**Basketball Ireland Policy: Recruitment/Appointment: Volunteers/Sports Leaders.**  
(Sports Leaders : all adults involved in children's sport)

Basketball Ireland will take reasonable steps to ensure that suitable people work with young players. Procedures will be adopted for all persons with substantial access to young people.

There will be a "sign-up" procedure, whereby the newly recruited volunteer, agrees to abide by the "Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children in Sport" and to the Basketball Ireland's Policies and Code of Conduct.

All adults taking responsibility for children in sport should undergo a recruitment process and adults taking on a temporary coaching role should be aware of Basketball Ireland's guidelines for coaches.

- Potential sports leaders must complete an Application/Assessment form – See Appendix 2
- Formal vetting procedures should be availed of when and if available
- Checks with referees will be followed up.
- It is recommended that terms of reference, clearly outlining the tasks to be performed and the skills required, be drawn up before recruiting and appointing a sports leader.
- A decision to appoint a Sports Leader is the responsibility of the Club or Organisation and not of any one individual within it.
- The club management/organisations executive should ratify all recommendations for appointment.
- Every effort will be made to manage and support appointed Sport Leaders.

## **Basketball Ireland Policy – Travelling with children**

### **Guidelines/regulations for Coaches/selectors/managers/authorised volunteers.**

Basketball Ireland recognises the extra responsibilities taken on by coaches/selectors/managers and authorised volunteers when they travel with children to events. This responsibility is even more onerous when overnight stays are involved.

- **Cars used to transport players/teams:** Those who use their own vehicles to transport players must ensure that they have adequate insurance cover and be careful not to carry more than the permitted number of passengers.
- Avoid being alone with one player (e.g. travelling to a venue or consulting/ advising in closed off room – If necessary leave the door open and be in earshot of others.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact outside the normal coaching, technical area.
- Remember casual comment can be open to misconstruction.

### **At residential events the following rules should apply:**

- Adults should not enter a player's room without first knocking
- All group socialisation should take place in communal areas (i.e. no boys in girls' rooms and vice versa).
- Alcoholic drink, smoking or other illegal substances are forbidden to players.
- The behaviour of the group should at all times be such that the good name of the Basketball Ireland is upheld
- There must be at least one authorised adult of each gender with a mixed party.
- Lights out times should be enforced.
- Young players should be under reasonable supervision at all times and should never be allowed to leave the accommodation or sports hall without prior permission.
  - **Injury(s):** Make a brief record of injury and action taken.
  - **Behavioural Problems:** Make a brief record of the problem/action/outcome. Submit report on return home.

**Coaches/Selectors/Managers/ Authorised Volunteer** asked to travel with the group in a supervisory capacity must sign up for each trip – parents of children on the team should not be asked to accept group responsibilities.

**Parents:** Must sign an agreement that their children will abide by the rules laid down.

**Young Players:** Must sign a behaviour agreement.

*Basketball Ireland*

*Guidelines on use of Photographic and Filming Equipment at  
Competitions & Practice Sessions*

Amateur photographers/film/video operators wishing to record an event or practice session should seek accreditation with the event organiser or leader of practice session.

During competitions or practice sessions, children must not be photographed or filmed without their permission and the express permission of one of their parents or person acting for the parent. A record of the permission should be kept.

Professional photographers/film/video operators wishing to record an event or practice session should seek accreditation with the event organiser by producing their professional identification for the details to be recorded.

A record should be kept of accreditations.

This information should be published prominently in event programmes and should be announced over the public address system prior to the start of an event.

Recommended wording:

*"In line with the recommendation in the Basketball Ireland's Code of Conduct, the promoters of this event request that any person wishing to engage in any video, zoom or close range photography should register their details with the organisers. On no account should children be photographed or filmed without their permission and the permission of their parents".*

Videoring as a coaching aid: Video equipment can be used as a legitimate coaching aid. However, permission should first be obtained from the player and the player's parent/carer.

Anyone concerned about any photography taking place at events or training sessions can contact the organisers and ask them to deal with the matter.

Mobile phones with camera facilities should be strictly monitored in dressing rooms and a policy for their use within clubs/teams should be made known to all concerned.

## **Responding to Disclosure, Suspicions & Allegations**

Basketball Ireland accepts that organisations, which include children as members, are vulnerable to the occurrence of child abuse and therefore there is a need for policies and procedures to deal with this issue. The safety of young people is everyone's responsibility.

False allegations of abuse can occur. However, if a young person says or indicates that he/she is being abused, or information is obtained which gives cause for concern that a young person is being abused, you should react immediately.

The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to persons who report child abuse "**reasonably and in good faith**" to the Health Board or the Gardai (See 5.13.1 – ISC. Code). The act also covers the offence of "**false reporting**". This Act came into operation on 23rd January 1999. The main provisions of the Act are:

1. The provision of immunity from civil liability to any person who reports child abuse "reasonably and in good faith" to designated officers of Health Boards or any member of An Garda Síochána
2. The provision of significant protections for employees who report child abuse. These protections cover all employees and all forms of discrimination up to and including, dismissal
3. The creation of a new offence of false reporting of child abuse where a person makes a report of child abuse to the appropriate authorities "knowing that statement to be false". This is a new criminal offence designed to protect innocent persons from malicious reports.

*This Law does not exist in Northern Ireland where any person wrongly accused can seek recourse under the laws of slander, libel or malicious prosecution*

Each Junior Basketball Club affiliated to the Basketball Ireland should have clear procedures for responding to reports or concerns relating to the welfare and safety of children. All involved adults, children and parents/guardians should be aware of how to report, and to whom concerns should be reported, within the club/organisation. Copies of the Statutory Authority guidelines should be available in each club and copies are held at Basketball Ireland Office. Everyone involved in child protection matters should be aware of his/her responsibility to work in co-operation with the statutory child protection authorities.

The term "**Sports Leader**" means all adults, in a paid or voluntary capacity e.g. club helpers, tournament officials, coaches, team managers, camp managers.

## **REPORTING OF SUSPECTED OR ACTUAL CHILD ABUSE**

If a Sports Leader or a parent/guardian is uneasy or suspicious about a child's safety or welfare the following response should be made:

### **RESPONSE TO A CHILD REPORTING ANY FORM OF ABUSE**

#### **The following Actions should be taken:**

- React calmly.
- Listen compassionately and carefully –keep the questions to an absolute minimum, facilitating the child to tell about the problem.
- Take what the child is saying seriously.
- Remember the child has decided to tell about something very important and has taken a risk to do so.
- Reassure the child.
- If the nature of what the child is saying is unclear, use open, non-specific questions such as "Can you explain to me what you mean by that";
- The child should be given some indication of what happens next - informing parents/guardians, health board or social services. It should be kept in mind that the child may have been threatened and may feel vulnerable at this stage.
- Carefully record the details.

#### **The following actions should be avoided:**

- Do not make promises of confidentiality – it may not be possible to keep that promise.
- Do not make a judgement or make negative comments about the alleged abuser
- Do not speculate or make assumptions
- Do not interview the child – do not probe for more information than is offered
- Do not approach the alleged abuser
- Do not allow your shock or distaste to show.

## Reporting Child Abuse

It is not the responsibility of anyone working under the auspices of the Basketball Ireland, in a paid or voluntary capacity, or those working in affiliated organisations, to take responsibility or decide whether or not child abuse is taking place.

However, there is a responsibility to protect children in order that appropriate agencies can then make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the young person.

### Actions to Take:

- Observe and note dates, times, locations and contexts in which the incident occurred or suspicion was aroused, together with any other relevant information
- Report the matter as soon as possible to the person designated for reporting abuse (*the senior office holder, normally the Chairperson*). If the Chairperson has reasonable grounds (See 5.13.1 of ISC code) for believing that the child has been abused or is at risk of abuse, s/he will make a report to the health board/social services that have statutory responsibility to investigate and assess suspected or actual child abuse.
- In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk and the designated person is unable to contact a duty social worker, the police authorities should be contacted. **Under no circumstances should a child be left in a dangerous situation pending intervention by the Statutory Authorities.** Make a record of the report.
- If the designated person is unsure whether reasonable grounds for concern exist or not, s/he should informally consult with the local HSE services. S/he will be advised whether or not the matter requires a formal report;
- A designated person reporting suspected or actual child abuse to the Statutory Authorities should first inform the family of their intention to make such a report, **unless doing so would endanger the child or undermine an investigation**
- A report should be given by the designated person to the Statutory Authorities in person or by phone, and in writing;
- It is best to report child abuse concerns by making personal contact with the relevant personnel in the Statutory Authorities.

## **Allegations Of Abuse Against Sports Leaders**

Each club/group affiliated to the BI should have agreed procedures to be followed in cases of alleged child abuse against Sports Leaders. If such an allegation is made, two procedures should be followed:

- The reporting procedure as outlined in “Reporting Child Abuse”.
- The procedure for dealing with the Sports Leader (below)

The following points should be considered:

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

### **Steps to be taken within the Sports Organisation**

Where reasonable grounds for concern exist the following steps should be taken by the club/organisation:

- Advice should be sought from the local HSE with regard to any action by the club deemed necessary to protect the child/children who may be at risk
- The matter should be reported to the local HSE following the standard reporting procedure outlined above
- In the event that the concern is connected to the actions of a Sports Leader in the club, the Sports Leader involved in the concern should be asked to stand aside pending the outcome of any investigation by the Statutory Authorities. *It is advisable that this task be undertaken by an appointed committee member other than the Designated person who takes the responsibility for reporting.*

### **The Sports Leader should be informed, in private**

- That an allegation has been made against him/her,
- The nature of the allegation,

S/he should be afforded an opportunity to respond. His/her response should be noted and passed on to the Health Service Executive personnel.

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

### **Confidentiality.**

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned.

Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only.

Information should be stored in a secure place, with limited access to designated people.

The requirements of the Data Protection laws should be adhered to.

Breach of confidentiality is a serious matter.

### **Anonymous Complaints**

Anonymous complaints can be difficult to deal with but should not be ignored. In all cases the safety and welfare of the child/children is paramount. Any such complaints relating to inappropriate behaviour should be brought to the attention of the Designated Person. The information should be checked out and handled in a confidential manner.

### **Rumours**

Rumours should not be allowed to hang in the air. Any rumours relating to inappropriate behaviour should be brought to the attention of the Designated Person and checked out without delay.

## **Disciplinary, Complaints and Appeals Procedure**

All members who are dissatisfied are required to register their complaint in writing and an open process of investigation will be conducted and responded to in writing.

- Complaints may be lodged by all members of the organisation
- They should be received in writing by the Administrator of the organisation
- The complaint should outline all relevant details about other parties involved
- The complaint should be brought to the attention of the C.E.O who will convene the disciplinary committee
- If the complaint involves a criminal offence the designated person should disband the disciplinary committee. The statutory authorities should then be informed
- The disciplinary committee should hear the case of all parties involved and decide if a rule or regulation has been infringed
- They should, in writing, inform those involved of the sanctions to be imposed. Written notification should be given to parents if the complaint is against a junior member
- Keep all records on file
- If any party does not agree with the disciplinary committee they can appeal the decision in writing within 10-day period
- The appeals committee is convened, whose chairperson should be taken from the executive committee and those who have not been on the original disciplinary committee
- The appeals committee should confirm or set aside or change any sanction imposed by the disciplinary committee.

For more information on Disciplinary, Complaints and Appeals Procedures see Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport, page 22 section 3.4

## ***Basketball Ireland's Anti Bullying Guidelines***

### ***What is Bullying?***

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression, be it verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating and occurs mainly in social environments such as schools, clubs and other organisations working with children and young people. It includes behaviours such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting and extortion behaviour by one or more children against a victim.

### ***How would you know if a child is being bullied?***

All bullies operate using furtiveness, threats and fear. Bullying can therefore only survive in an environment where the victim does not feel empowered to tell someone who can help or in which it is not safe to do so. The following indicators are warning signs that a young person might be getting bullied: -

- Reluctance to come to a venue or take part in activities
- Physical signs – unexplained bruises, scratches, or damage to belongings
- Stress-caused illness – headaches, and stomach aches which seem unexplained
- Fearful behaviour – fear of walking to a meeting, going different routes, asking to be driven
- Frequent loss of, or shortage of, money with vague explanations
- Having few friends
- Changes in behaviour –withdrawn, stammering, moody, irritable, upset, distressed
- Not eating
- Attempting suicide or hinting at suicide
- Anxiety – shown by nail-biting, fearfulness, tics

There are other possible reasons for many of the above

### ***Who should deal with bullying?***

While the more extreme forms of bullying would be regarded as physical or emotional abuse and are reported to the health board or An Garda Síochana, dealing with bullying behaviour is normally the responsibility of all Leaders within this club/organisation.

### ***How can it be prevented?***

- Ensure that all members follow the code of conduct, which promotes the rights and dignity of each member.
- Deal with any incidents as they arise.
- Use a whole group policy or 'no-blame approach', i.e., not 'bullying the bully' but working with bullies and the group of young people, helping them to understand the hurt they are causing, and so make the problem a 'shared concern' of the group, (see below)
- Reinforce that there is 'a permission to tell' culture rather than a 'might is right'
- Encourage young people to negotiate, co-operate and help others, particularly new or different children

- Offer the victim immediate support and put the 'no blame approach' into operation
- Never tell a young person to ignore bullying, they can't ignore it, it hurts too much
- Never encourage a young person to take the law into their own hands and beat the bully at their own game
- Tell the victim there is nothing wrong with them and it is not their fault

### **What is the 'No Blame' Approach?**

#### ***Step 1 – Interview with the victim***

If you find that there has been an incident of bullying, first talk to the victim. At this stage find out who was involved and what the victim is now feeling. Try asking the following questions:

- Was it verbal or physical intimidation?
- How hurt is the victim
- Was it within his/her peer group?
- Ensure the victim that his/her name will not come out in the investigation
- Actively listen

#### ***Step 2 – Meet with all involved***

Arrange to meet with all those involved; this should include some bystanders, those who may have colluded, those who joined in and those who initiated the bullying.

- Have a maximum of six to eight in the group – keep the number controllable
- Make a point of calling a 'special' meeting
- Ensure the severity of the topic is understood by all
- Speak only of the hurt caused in general terms with no reference to the victim
- Play on the conscience of all – ask questions like: How would you feel? Would you like it done to you?

#### ***Step 3 – Explain the problem***

The distress being suffered as a result of the bullying incident is explained. At this stage the details of the incident or the allocation of the blame is not discussed. Explain the feelings of loneliness, feeling left out, rejected, laughed at. Try asking questions:

- ❖ Would they like it if it happened to them
- ❖ "Someone here in this group was bullied by someone within the group, what could we do to see it does not happen again?"
- ❖ Listen, watch out for reactions, and pick up on any without isolating anyone

#### ***Step 4 – Share the responsibility***

Explain what steps / controls may have to be introduced to prevent further incidents and how everyone will loose out as a result

***Step 5 – Ask the group for their ideas***

At this stage the group is encouraged to suggest ways that would make the victim feel happier. All positive responses are noted. Use phrases “if it were you” to encourage a response. Listen to all suggestions and note them

***Step 6 – Leave it to them***

Now the problem has been identified, solutions suggested, the problem is now handed over to the group to solve. Arrange to meet again in a week’s time. Pass responsibility over to the group and give a time frame within which something must be done

***Step 7 – Meet them again***

Each member of the group, including the bully, discuss how things are going, who is doing what and have there been other incidents. This allows for continual monitoring and also keeps all involved in the process.

Again enforce the idea of the ‘team’ looking after each other at regular intervals to ensure it is know that bullying or intimidating behaviour will not be tolerated.

For more information on Bullying see Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport, page 37 section 5.4

Appendix 1



**Application Form for New Junior Members**

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Male / Female

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone – Home \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone - Mobile (in case of emergency) \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

MEDICAL HISTORY INFORMATION (details of any know allergies, conditions, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

In the event of illness, having parental responsibility, I give permission for medical treatment to be administered where considered necessary by a nominated first aider, or by suitably qualified medical practitioners. If I cannot be contacted and my child needs emergency hospital treatment, I authorize a qualified medical practitioner to provide emergency treatment or medication.

Other information

Any other special needs, requirements or directions that would be helpful for leaders to know about

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PARENTAL/GUARDIAN CONSENT

I am the Parent/Guardian of \_\_\_\_\_

Photographs

I understand that photographs will be taken during or at sport related events and may be used in the promotion of sport

Drug Testing (for elite players only)

I give permission for my child(ren) to be tested for prohibited substances in accordance with the Irish Sports Council Anti Doping Rules (where applicable)

I hereby consent to the above child(ren) participating in activities of the organisation in line with the Code of Ethics for Young People. I will inform the leaders of my children's activities of any changes to the information above.

I confirm that all details are correct and I am able to give parental consent for my child(ren) to participate in and travel to all activities.

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**Basketball Ireland Assessment/Application Form:  
Coaches/Selectors/Team Managers:**

**Confidential:**

Position applied for: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Any surname previously known by:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Present address: \_\_\_\_\_

Current occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous experience of working with young children in a voluntary or  
Professional capacity.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Sporting/Basketball Qualifications: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Applying: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Self-Declaration

Do you agree to abide by the guidelines contained in the Code of Conduct for Basketball  
Ireland for Young People?                      Yes      No

Have you ever been asked to leave a sporting organisation?                      Yes      No

*(If you have answered yes, we will contact you in confidence)*

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a caution; a Bound  
Over Order; or are you at present the subject of criminal investigations?

Yes      No

*(If you have answered yes, we will contact you in confidence)*

Basketball Ireland 2008

Name and address of two people who know you (but who are not related to you) and who would have experience of you working with children, whom we could contact and who would provide you with a reference.

Name and Address of Referee 1: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name and Address of Referee 2: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I agree to abide by the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport and the Basketball Ireland's Code of Conduct.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Appendix 3



#### Existing Leaders Information Form

Leaders should familiarise themselves with the Code, in particular the code of conduct, page 9. Leaders should read below and agree to abide by these terms. Leaders should update the self-declaration questions annually.

#### **As a leader in Basketball Ireland I agree that I should**

- Be positive during sessions and competitions, praise and encourage effort as well as results
- Put welfare of young person first, strike a balance between this and winning / results
- Encourage fair play and treat participants equally
- Recognise developmental needs, ensuring activities are appropriate for the individual
- Plan and prepare appropriately
- Have experience relevant to working with young people or hold up-to-date qualifications and be committed to the guidelines in this Code
- Involve parents where possible and inform parents when problems arise
- Keep a record of attendance at training and competitions
- Keep a brief record of injury(s) and action taken
- Keep a brief record of problem/action/outcomes, if behavioural problems arise
- Report any concerns in accordance with this Code's reporting procedures

*Where possible I will avoid:*

- Spending excessive amounts of time with children away from others
- Taking sessions alone
- Taking children on journeys alone in my car

*Sports Leaders should not:*

- Use any form of physical punishment or physical force on a child
- Exert undue influence over a participant in order to obtain personal benefit or reward



**Appendix 4**

**Basketball Ireland Assessment/Application form for volunteers, newly recruited to work with Children:**

|                   |
|-------------------|
| Role:<br><br><br> |
|-------------------|

|   |
|---|
| Club:<br>School:<br><b>OR</b><br>NGB Group: |
|---|

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Previous experience/or involvement in Sport: give details:

Reasons for applying: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been asked to leave a sporting organisation in the past?

Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have answered yes to the above, we will contact you in confidence

Do you agree to abide by the guidelines contained in the Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children's' Sport in Ireland and by the Basketball Ireland's Code of Conduct. Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_

Please give names and address of two responsible people whom we can contact and who from personal knowledge are willing to endorse your application: If you have had previous involvement in sport, one of these names should be that of an administrator/leader of your last club/place of involvement.

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

2. Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

# Basketball Ireland

## Sample Letter to person giving reference:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear

The above has expressed an interest in becoming a coach/volunteer and has given your name as a referee. This post involves substantial access to children. As an organisation committed to the welfare and happiness of children, we are anxious to know if you are satisfied that this person is suitable to work with children in a sporting capacity.

How long have you known this person?

In what capacity?

Are you satisfied that: (name of applicant) \_\_\_\_\_ is  
suitable to work with children in a sporting capacity?    Yes                      No

Contact Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 6**

**Basketball Ireland  
Travelling with Underage Players:**

**EVENT:** \_\_\_\_\_

**VENUE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATES:** \_\_\_\_\_

**COACHES/SELECTORS/ MANAGERS**

I hereby agree to abide by the guidelines and regulations contained in the Basketball Ireland's Code of Conduct.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**AUTHORISED VOLUNTEER**

I hereby agree to abide by the guidelines and regulations contained in the Basketball Ireland's Code of Conduct.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENT/GUARDIAN OF TRAVELLING CHILD**

I have read and accept the conditions and rules set down by the Basketball Ireland for children travelling to matches and events.

Parents/Carers Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**YOUNG PLAYER TRAVELLING**

I have read and accept the conditions and rules set down by the Basketball Ireland for children travelling to matches and events and I agree to abide by those rules.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_