

5. Recognising Poor Practice, Abuse and Bullying

Introduction

All adults working in badminton have a duty of care and responsibility to act if they have any concerns about the behaviour of someone (an adult or another child) towards a young person and to follow the procedures in this document. Badminton organisations should therefore encourage and expect staff to discuss any concern they may have about the welfare of a person immediately with the designated person - this might be the Welfare Officer, chairperson, president, team manager, official or coach.

Designated Persons have been recruited within the counties and clubs and are known as Welfare Officers. They are there to support you and will enable concerns to be expressed and acted upon in confidence.

It is NOT your responsibility to decide if a situation is poor practice, abuse or bullying BUT IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO REPORT YOUR CONCERNS TO THE WELFARE OFFICER

Poor Practice

Poor practice may be defined as any action or behaviour that contravenes the following:

- Badminton England Safeguarding and Protecting Young People Policy and Procedures
- Badminton England Anti Bullying Policy
- Badminton England Codes of Conduct
- the Badminton England Equality and Diversity Policy
- the accepted roles and responsibilities of a coach
- the Badminton England Health and Safety Policy
- best coaching practice as advocated through the Badminton England coach education programme or resource materials

Abuse and Bullying

Abuse can and does occur in a wide range of settings, including sport and can happen wherever there are young people. The effects of abuse can be damaging and if untreated, they may impact upon a person into adulthood. Abuse is a description of ways in which individuals harm children and young people, often by those who they know and trust.

It is generally acknowledged that there are five types of abuse as defined on the following pages. Bullying is defined in more detail within the Badminton England Anti Bullying Policy

Abuse can occur outside of the badminton setting or within the badminton setting. It is important that any feelings about abuse are recognised but that we all take responsibility to act if we have a concern about a child or young person.

It is therefore crucial that all allegations and suspicions are treated seriously and appropriate actions taken. An environment that explicitly attempts to identify and report possible abuse or poor practice helps create a safer culture for children and young people.

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The Five Main Types of Abuse and Bullying

Neglect

Neglect occurs where adults fail to meet a young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs likely to result in the serious impairment of the young person's health or development. (E.g. failure to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a young person from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.) It may also include refusal to give young people love, affection and attention.

Neglect in Badminton could include a teacher or coach not ensuring young people were safe, exposing them to undue cold or to unnecessary risk of injury.

Physical abuse

This occurs when individuals including other young people, deliberately inflict injuries on a child or young person, or knowingly do not prevent such injuries. It includes injuries caused by hitting, shaking, squeezing, biting or using excessive force. It also occurs when young people are given alcohol, or inappropriate drugs, or there is a failure to supervise their access to these substances.

Physical abuse in Badminton may be when the nature and intensity of training and competition exceeds the capacity of the young person's immature and growing body, where drugs are used to enhance performance

Sexual abuse

Girls or boys can be abused by adults, (both male and female), or other young people. This may include encouraging or forcing a child or young person to take part in sexual activity, inappropriate touching of a young person or the taking of inappropriate photographs.

In Badminton, coaching techniques that involve physical contact with young people could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. The power of the coach over young performers, if misused, may also lead to abusive situations developing.

Emotional abuse

This occurs when individuals persistently fail to show young people due care with regard to their emotional welfare, when a young person may be constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted, or be subjected to sarcasm and unrealistic pressures. There may also be over protection, preventing young people from socialising, or bullying to perform to high expectations. The young person may lose self-confidence and may become withdrawn and nervous.

Emotional abuse in Badminton may occur if children are subjected to constant criticism, name calling, and sarcasm, bullying or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations consistently.

Bullying

Bullying may be deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding kit, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Cyber email and internet misuse, threats made via text messages and phone calls, hurtful social networking messages, spread rumours and forwarding inappropriate or embarrassing photographs
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

*For further information on Bullying and how to deal with it in your club/association please refer to the Badminton England Anti-Bullying Policy