



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Issue 2

86% of cheerleaders in Britain are under 18.

All cheerleading coaches staff and helpers have a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in cheerleading from harm



“Sport is an everyday activity for many children and young people and makes a significant contribution to their well being and development.

Whether involved in sport at a local level or competing in a national championship all children and young people have a right to have fun, be safe and be protected from harm.”

NSPCC

Child Protection in British Cheerleading

Many children and young people are involved in Cheerleading and other sports every day. Some are able to gain sporting skills or knowledge; some gain social confidence or learn a leisure pursuit and others are provided with competitive opportunities. It is to be hoped that all the children and young people who come into contact with sports organisations also receive care and attention, and that the organisations protect them from coming to any harm whilst they are working with them.

Although for the overwhelming majority of children this is the case, unfortunately it is not so for all. Very occasionally a young person is hurt through an accident which might have been prevented through vigilance by the sports organisation in whose temporary care they were. Good sports organisations spend much time and effort in regularly updating their practice guidelines in order to prevent accidents such as these.

Even more rarely a child is abused by a paid member of staff or volunteer whilst in the charge of a sports organisation or by another child. Abuse is always traumatic for the child and, although most abuse happens in the home, sports organisations must accept that prevention of abuse is part of their duty to care for the children with whom they work, and amend their practice accordingly.

Sport offers young people a healthy lifestyle and opportunities for personal development, fun and friendship. It is important that we give all young people the experience of enjoying the benefits of sport. As we develop sporting activities, it is vital that we develop safety mechanisms to ensure young people enjoy their sport without being exposed to abuse from others involved in it.

The NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit is committed to making sport a safer environment for children and young people. We do this by promoting the need for child protection policies and procedures to all involved in sport, by working with sport and other organisations to establish high standards of practice.

The NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit is pleased to endorse the work that British Cheerleading have undertaken in relation to the safety and welfare of children involved in its activities. The child protection policy and procedures adopted by the British Cheerleading will make a significant contribution to safeguarding the children and young people participating in its sports activities.

Steve Boocock
Child Protection in Sport Unit Director
June 2003



BCA Child Protection Policy

Introduction

All sporting organisations which make provision for children and young people must ensure that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount;
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse;
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
- All coaches/staff (paid/unpaid) working in cheerleading have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer.

Cheerleading staff/volunteers are generally not trained to deal with situations of abuse nor decide if abuse has occurred.

Policy statement

The British Cheerleading Association has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in cheerleading from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account.

BCA will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in Cheerleading through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines adopted by the BCA.

A child is defined as under 18
The Children Act 1989.

Policy aims

The aim of the BCA Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice:

- Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst involved in cheerleading activities;
- Allow all coaches/staff /volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

WHAT DOES THIS DOCUMENT DO?

This document has been designed to help you understand and implement the Child Protection Policy. It contains the following help and guidance.

- ◆ What is child protection?
- ◆ A safe environment
- ◆ What is child abuse?
- ◆ How does this affect us?
- ◆ Promoting good practices
- ◆ Good practice guidelines
- ◆ Practices to be avoided
- ◆ Photographic and video guidelines
- ◆ Web Site guidelines
- ◆ How to listen and react
- ◆ What to do
- ◆ Discipline
- ◆ Physical Contact
- ◆ Bullying
- ◆ Positive Vetting
- ◆ Recruitment of staff and volunteers
- ◆ BCA implementation plan
- ◆ References and contacts
- ◆ Concerns Flowchart and Reporting
- ◆ Appendices

WHAT IS CHILD PROTECTION?

Every child, regardless of age, has at all times and in all situations, the right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice that results in a child being physically or psychologically harmed

A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Cheerleading offers a valuable contribution to the development of athletic skills and the promotion of worthwhile values through positive leadership, teamwork and community involvement. In your squad cheerleaders learn to trust and respect the adults of the club. This places your staff and volunteers in a unique position of trust and confidence.

This position of trust is one in which a child may feel the need to confide in you, or where you may feel that all is not well in the child's life. Your squad has a duty to ensure that your staff and volunteers are equipped with the necessary information and knowledge to provide the support and guidance they need.

A safe environment is thus not just working to cheerleading safety guidelines, ensuring safety mats are provided for stunting, and that safety spotting techniques are taught thoroughly. It is a duty of care to ensure that all aspects of the child's safety and well-being are paramount, and cared for.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

There are four commonly recognised categories of child abuse. These are:

Physical Abuse - hurting or injuring a child, for example, by hitting or shaking them. This category is also likely to include bullying.

Sexual Abuse - when an adult exploits their power, authority or position and uses a child sexually to gratify their own needs - it could range from sexually suggestive comments to full intercourse.

Emotional Abuse - when a child is not given love, help and encouragement and is constantly derided, ridiculed or ignored. This also includes racially and sexually abusive remarks.

Neglect - this usually means failing to meet children's basic needs such as food, warmth, adequate clothing, medical attention etc It could also mean failing to ensure they are safe or exposing them to harm.

Cheerleading has been fortunate in the caring nature of those involved working with children.

We should however all be especially aware that cheerleading is potentially vulnerable to the ill intentioned, which this policy addresses.

HOW DOES THIS AFFECT US?

There may be a time when a child approaches a trusted adult in your squad to discuss a problem in their life. It is vital that you know how to react to this in a sensitive and appropriate manner. It may be something outside cheerleading, it may however be something relating to relationships and behaviours that you had not been aware of.

PROMOTING GOOD PRACTICES WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about any action to take. Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them.

A coach, instructor, teacher, club official or volunteer may have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where a young person needs protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document. When a child enters the club having been subjected to child abuse outside the sporting environment, sport can play a crucial role in improving the child's self esteem. In such instances the club must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the child receives the required support.

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to safeguard children and ensure their welfare, and also to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate within cheerleading:

Good practice means:

- always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment i.e. no secrets).
- treating all young people/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
- always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals.
- maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with cheerleaders (e.g. it is not appropriate to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them).
- building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process;
- making sport fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.
- ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and according to guidelines enclosed. Care is needed, as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when the child is constantly moving. Young people should always be consulted and their agreement gained. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about manual support and their views should always be carefully considered.
- keeping up to date with the technical skills, qualifications and insurance in sport.
- involving parents/carers wherever possible (e.g. for the responsibility of their children in the changing rooms). If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure parents/teachers/coaches/officials work in pairs.
- ensuring that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff. (NB however, same

gender abuse can also occur)

- ensuring that at competitions or residential events, adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms.
- being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- securing parental consent in writing to *act in loco parentis*, if the need arises to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- requesting written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars.

PRACTICES TO BE AVOIDED

The following should be **avoided** except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the club or the child's parents. For example, a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session:

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others;
- Avoid taking children to your home where they will be alone with you.

Practice never to be sanctioned

The following should **never** be sanctioned.

You should never:

- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay;
- share a room with a child;
- allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching;

- 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*;
- allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon;
- do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults, that they can do for themselves;
- invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

NB. It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the cheerleaders involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a child to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to another colleague and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed.

- if you accidentally hurt a cheerleader.
- if he/she seems distressed in any manner.
- if a cheerleader appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.
- if a cheerleader misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done

PHOTOGRAPHIC AND VIDEO GUIDELINES

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled sportspeople in vulnerable positions. It is advisable that all clubs be vigilant with any concerns to be reported to the Club Child Welfare Officer.

Photography is monitored at BCA events. Official photography is by approved persons of professional standard, familiar with BCA

standards. For safety reasons flash photography is not allowed at BCA events. Parents will be given the option of not allowing official BCA photographs of their child/team. Private individuals wishing to take photographs must first seek permission from the BCA. (See appendix 1)

Videoining at BCA events is only allowed by approved and authorised persons.

Videoining as a coaching aid: there is no intention to prevent club coaches and teachers using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, performers and their parents/carers should be aware that this is part of the coaching programme and care should be taken in the storing of such films. All video and/or photographs must be of a wholesome and positive nature, avoiding emphasising inappropriate body areas, postures, underwear, or from under stunts or pyramids.

MEDIA STANDARDS

Representatives of the Media must first seek permission from the BCA before coming to events, where they will be monitored by BCA event staff.

WEB SITES GUIDELINES

The internet is a means of accessing information, the content of some external material available can be highly unsavoury. The following guidelines are used by BCA in making our web resource informative whilst being wholesome safe and secure. Any squads producing their own web sites should follow the same principles.

- No personal information about a child, or contact details should be contained on a web site.
- All BCA web site content is produced directly by BCA, is fully checked, wholesome, and suitable for the youngest of on-line visitors
- All photographs are reproduced with permission, selected to show cheerleading in the best image and integrity, and are of a positive and wholesome nature (see above). Wherever possible professional photographers familiar with BCA standards are used.

- Links to external sites are always fully vetted for content and suitability, with these links being re-checked on a regular basis.

Coaches parents and cheerleaders alike can visit the wealth of BCA web site information with confidence that children will not be exposed to unsavoury content, nor be redirected to such content via any of our web pages.

HOW TO LISTEN AND REACT

Coaches staff and volunteers must acknowledge the age group they are working with, and never trivialise or exaggerate child abuse issues. If a child confides in you about a sensitive issue of concern you should;

- Allow the child time to speak without interruption or in leading them by making suggestions.
- Do not try to interrogate other than to clarify your understanding.
- Reassure the child that you are glad that they have told you and that they were right to do so.
- Be honest in telling the child that you cannot keep it a secret, and that you will have to tell someone who can help.
- Remain calm, no matter how difficult it may be to listen. You have been chosen because the child feels they can talk to you. Do not show anger disgust disbelief or negative feelings.
- Really listen. Take in what they say seriously.
- As soon as practical afterwards write down everything the child has told you but remember that it is highly confidential.

WHAT TO DO

Problems outside the Sport

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused should be reported to the Club Child Welfare Officer, (see 'Concerns Procedure'), who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
- The Club Child Welfare Officer will refer the allegation to the social services department, who in turn may involve the police.

- The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.
- The Club Child Welfare Officer should also notify the BCA Child Welfare Officer. (see 'Concerns Procedure')

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a strictly *need to know basis* only.

Problems within the Sport

The same principles will apply, but in addition the BCA Child Welfare Officer will be notified as soon as practical to ensure any appropriate steps to safeguard children involved can be effected with advice from social services.

If the Club Child Welfare Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the appropriate club manager or in his/her absence or the BCA Child Welfare Officer who will refer the allegation to Social Services.

- The BCA Child Welfare Officer will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries.
- Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries the BCA will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the BCA will reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true.

The welfare of children should always remain paramount.

It is not the responsibility of those working in cheerleading to decide that child abuse is occurring, however, it is their responsibility to refer any concerns on.

DISCIPLINE

Cheerleading involves athletic techniques where for safety reasons control and attention has to be maintained. Non physical discipline may be required on occasions due to inappropriate or unsafe behaviour of children/young people. When discipline is used it should be done so appropriately and with the clear intention of teaching or reinforcing appropriate behaviour. It must not be used impulsively, to gain power, or to embarrass or humiliate a child/young person. Discipline should be used only to:

- Develop a sense of responsibility for behaviour;
- Develop respect for others and their property;
- Reinforce the rules or values of the sport;
- Reinforce positive behaviour or attitudes;
- Reinforce awareness of health and safety aspects of the activity.

Clubs should detail disciplinary sanction procedures in their constitution. A sample club constitution is available on the BCA web site.

PHYSICAL CONTACT

Many sports, by their nature, require a degree of physical contact between adults and children/young people. Physical contact can be used appropriately to instruct, encourage, protect or comfort. The aims of guidelines relating to physical contact are to provide adults and children/young people with appropriate types and contexts for touching.

Physical contact between adults and children/young people should only be used when the aim is to:

- Develop sports skills or techniques;
- To treat an injury;
- To prevent an injury;
- To meet the requirements of the particular sport.

Physical contact should not involve touching genital areas, buttocks or breasts.

Physical contact should always meet the need of the child/young person and not the need of the adult.

Physical contact should be fully explained to the child/young person and prior consent be sought from parents, except in the case of an emergency. Physical contact should not take place in secret or out of sight of others.

Records of injuries should be fully recorded

BULLYING

Bullying is often defined in terms of three components.

- It must occur over time, rather than being a single aggressive act.
- It involves an imbalance of power, the powerful attack the powerless.
- It can be psychological, verbal, or physical in nature.

Action if Bullying is Suspected

The same procedure should be followed if bullying is suspected. All settings in which children are provided with services or are living away from home should have rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies in place.

Action to Help the Victim and Prevent Bullying in Sport:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns (It is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide as a result of bullying, so if anyone talks about or threatens suicide, seek professional help immediately). Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority. Create an open environment.
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully(ies) separately.
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else.
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).
- Report any concerns to the Club Child Welfare Officer or the school (wherever the bullying is occurring).

Action Towards the Bully(ies):

- Talk with the bully(ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully (ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s).
- Inform the bully's parents.
- Insist on the return of *borrowed* items and that the bully(ies) compensate the victim.
- Provide support for the coach of the victim.
- Impose sanctions as necessary. Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour.
- Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.

- Inform all organisation members of action taken.
- Keep a written record of action taken. Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.
- Inform all organisation members of action taken. Keep a written record of action taken.

POSITIVE VETTING

What is Positive Vetting?

Positive vetting is a process in which coaches staff and voluntary helpers with substantial access to children and young people are cleared by the appropriate authorities, in this case the Criminal Records Bureau. Clearance is effected by establishing identity and checked by the CRB against Police, Department of Health, and Department of Education records.

Who will be checked?

Adult cheerleading staff with substantial access to children or young people.

This would usually mean head coaches, plus any adult assistant coaches and helpers who may be in unsupervised control and responsible for cheerleaders. Where an assistant coach or helper is only ever conducting their duties under the direct supervision of cleared staff then clearance is not required. However, un-cleared staff must never be left in sole responsible charge of cheerleaders who are not their own children.

Position	Level of disclosure
Club welfare officer	Enhanced
Head Coach / Coach	Enhanced
Asst Coach (over 18)	Standard
BCA welfare officer	Enhanced

See appendix 2 for position descriptions

Existing clearance

Many will already have been cleared by the CRB. eg: Teachers, social workers, and those cleared through other sports or dance association CRB registered bodies. A copy of your existing disclosure certificate will be accepted by the BCA in place of separate BCA clearance. Privately arranged 'Police Checks' cannot be accepted as this system is being phased out.

What happens with my form?

Details on your form will be verified by CRB registered BCA Counter Signatories, ie: BCA

Welfare Officers or BCA Regional Welfare Officers. The BCA Welfare Officer will sign and send your form to the CRB. Copies of the Disclosure Certificate will be sent to the applicant and the BCA. The BCA decides on acceptance, based on information received from the CRB.

If you have concerns regarding previous criminal convictions contact BCA who can seek guidance from the NSPCC.

Copies of the forms will not be retained by BCA beyond a four week query period after clearance, only the reference of your clearance and date will be recorded in the BCA National Coaches Register.

RECRUITMENT OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Cheerleading recognises some individuals may pose a risk to children and young people and that all reasonable steps are to be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children.

The Criminal Records Bureau has been established to provide organisations with relevant information to assist in the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers working with children and young people. The BCA will require all those holding recognised positions to undertake a CRB disclosure. The BCA is registered with the CRB to undertake these checks.

When undertaking pre-selection checks the following should be included:

- All applicable volunteers/staff should complete a CRB application form. The application form will elect information about the applicants identity and a self disclosure about any criminal record.
- Consent should be obtained from an applicant to seek information from the Criminal Records Bureau.
- Confidential references, preferably including previous work with children. These references will be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact.
- Evidence of identity (passport, birth certificate, or driving licence with Photo).
- The form is to be sent to the BCA Child Welfare Officer, who will process the application through the relevant authorities. (See above)

- ◆ BCA committee staff designated by the committee to process such applications are themselves vetted, and will receive specific training for their duties. (See training and Education)

All applications will be treated in confidence by the BCA. Details of successful information will be recorded only in the BCA National Coaches Register. Forms will not be retained on completion of acceptance / query checking.

- ◆ Each BCA registered club is to appoint a club child welfare officer, to whom club matters may be referred, and to liaise with the BCA child welfare officer. The designated person at club level should be a responsible person, other than the head coach, and must first be cleared themselves.
- ◆ Club Child Welfare Officers should be selected and appointed by clubs with due care for the responsibilities involved.
- ◆ The BCA will undertake to give all BCA Child Welfare Officers guidance and support, provide information and access to external training, and provide training seminars at BCA events.

BCA IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The implementation of the BCA Child Protection Policy consists of five planned phases.

Preliminary work consists of the formulation and official approval of this policy, formal acceptance at the 2002 BCA AGM to introduce and implement, plus BCA magazine articles and other information to clubs on the requirements for adopting this policy.

1. BCA registers with the Criminal Records Bureau as a Registered Body for processing Disclosure Applications.
2. Relevant BCA Committee staff appointed and trained as Child Welfare Officers.
3. Child Protection Policy information and education for coaches and club staff instigated. Relevant training and courses will be offered via the BCA, and seminars be included in the annual BCA Coaches Conference.
4. All applicable new coaches and club officials will be required to register with the

BCA under the National Coaches Register and to submit Disclosure Applications via the BCA..

5. Positive vetting will be extended to existing coaches and club officials to ensure protection is maximised across the sport. This will commence with any coaches and staff not yet on the National Coaches Register, then to those on the Register as their Coaches Registration renewals become due.

- This Policy has been agreed for implementation by the BCA committee, and is distributed to all member clubs.
- This Policy is to be reviewed every 3 years or whenever there is a major change in the organisation or in relevant legislation

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

All staff and volunteers who work with children should receive training in recognising and understanding possible signs of child abuse and know what steps need to be taken to provide child protection. BCA expects staff to have undertaken the following recognised training programmes.

Examples

Position	Training
Head Coach / Coach	Sportscoach UK
Asst Coach (over 18)	NSPCC Educare

See appendix 3

IMPLEMENTATION BY CLUBS

Cheerleading Clubs should make all staff volunteers and parents aware of the BCA Child Protection Policy, and its purpose in protecting children from harm. Each club will have a copy, and further copies are available from the BCA on request.

Awareness and guidance on child protection issues helps safeguard young cheerleaders, which is the collective responsibility of everyone involved with cheerleading.

REFERENCES & CONTACTS

NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit

www.sportprotects.org.uk

CCPR - Child protection in Sport

<http://www.ccpr.org.uk/campaigns/content/child.html>

Sport England - Child Protection

www.sportengland.org/whatwedo/running_sport/child_protection.htm

Criminal Records Bureau

www.crb.gov.uk

SportsCoack UK (Courses)

www.sportscoachuk.org

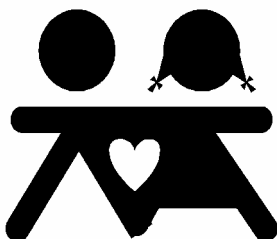
NSPCC Educare (Courses)

www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/EduCare/EduCare.asp

If you do not know who to turn for advice or are worried about sharing your concerns with a senior colleague, you should contact the social services direct (or the NSPCC on 0800 800 500, or Childline on 0800 1111)

BCA Child Welfare Officer

Ivan Millard 07831 471 163
130 Tenniswood Road
Enfield
Middx
EN1 3HE



WHAT TO DO IF THERE ARE CONCERNS

Are you concerned about the behaviour of a parent or carer?

YES

Report your concerns to the Club Protection Officer. If the Club Child Protection Officer is not available, the person being told or discovering the abuse should contact Social Services or the Police immediately. Social Services and the person reporting concerns decide how to involve parents/carers

Record what the child has said, or what has been seen. Include dates and times and, if possible, send a copy to Social Services.

Remember:

- Maintain confidentiality on a *need to know* basis only
- Ensure Club Child Welfare Officer follows up with Social Services
- The Club Child Welfare Officer should also report the incident to the BCA Child Welfare Officer who should ascertain whether or not the person/s involved in the incident play a role in Cheerleading and act accordingly

Are you concerned about the behaviour of a member of staff or volunteer?

YES

Is it serious poor practice / an alleged breach of the code of ethics and conduct?

Could it be child abuse?

YES

YES

The Club Child Welfare Officer will deal with it as a misconduct issue

Report concerns to the Club Child Welfare Officer (UNLESS - see below) who must then ensure the safety of the child (and other children). This person will then refer concerns to the Social Services (who may involve the Police). The Club Child Welfare Officer should also inform the BCA Child Welfare Officer.

If concerns remain, refer to the BCA Child Welfare Officer who will decide how to handle the case in conjunction with the Club Protection Officer.

If the allegation/concern relates to the Club Child Welfare Officer, refer directly to the BCA Child Welfare Officer who will facilitate referral of the concerns to Social Services who may involve the Police.

BCA disciplinary committee investigation

In all cases ensure the appropriate Child Welfare Officer is contacted

Possible outcomes of Hearing:

- No case to answer
- Warrants advice/warning as to future conduct/sanctions
- Further training and support needed

Possible outcomes:

- Police inquiry
- Criminal proceedings
- Referral back to BCA Disciplinary Committee
- Possible civil proceedings

BCA national committee appeal

Information passed to the Social Services or the Police must be as helpful as possible, hence the necessity for making a detailed record at the time of the disclosure/concern. Information should contain the following:

- Name of child
- Age of child and date of birth
- Home address and telephone number
- Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- What is the nature of the allegation? Include dates, times, and special factors and other relevant information

APPENDIX 1

GUIDELINES ON USE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC AND FILMING EQUIPMENT *

The protocol set out below is accepted best practice in sport governing bodies. However, BCA recognise the challenges that it presents in open areas where there is unrestricted access by the public.

...at Competitions

Professional photographers/filming/video operators wishing to record the event should seek accreditation with the event organiser by producing their professional identification for the details to be recorded. Ideally, they should request this at least 5 working days before the event. Press / Video ID Cards will be issued and worn as usual.

Students or amateur photographers/film/video operators wishing to record the event should seek accreditation with the event organiser by producing their student or club registration card and a letter from the club/ educational establishment outlining their motive for attending the event. Accreditation ID Cards will be issued and worn as usual.

All other spectators wishing to use photographers/film/video **equipment with a telescopic or zoom lens should register their intent with the promoter of the event.** BCA reserves the right to issue coloured identification labels on the day to registered spectators which can serve to highlight those who have permission for photography. The colour and type of such identifying labels will be changed to prevent unofficial replication.

Accreditation procedure: For each event a register is maintained recording the individual's name and address and club. Professionals should register prior to the event and their identification details be recorded. Ideally, identification details should be checked with the issuing authority prior to the event. Press / Video Passes will be worn at all times during the event.

Public information: the specific details concerning photographic/video and filming equipment registration should, wherever possible, be published prominently in event programmes and must be announced over the public address system, prior to the start of the event.

The recommended wording is:

For safety reasons flash photography is not allowed.

In line with the recommendation in the BCA Welfare Policy, 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 staff at the BCA information desk before carrying out any such photography.

The BCA reserves the right to decline entry to any person unable to meet or abide by the promoter's conditions.

If you are concerned about any photography taking place at this event, please contact the promoter or event organiser who will be pleased to discuss this matter with you.

... at club sessions

There is no intention to prevent club coaches and teachers using videoing as a legitimate coaching aid. However, athletes and their parents should be aware that this is part of the coaching programme and care should be taken in the storing of such films. If clubs are concerned that someone they do not know is using their sessions for photography or filming purposes, they should ask them to leave and contact the BCA

* Adapted with permission [pending] from the Amateur Swimming Association (1999) *Child Protection in Swimming Procedures and Guidelines* pp.14-15.

APPENDIX 2

POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

CRB disclosure processes refer to adult cheerleading staff with substantial access to children or young people.

This would usually mean head coaches, plus any coaches, adult assistant coaches and helpers who may be in unsupervised control and responsible for cheerleaders. Where an assistant coach or helper is only ever conducting their duties under the direct supervision of cleared staff then clearance is not required. However, un-cleared staff must never be left in sole responsible charge of cheerleaders who are not their own children.

Some of the positions described below may be combined in many clubs. ie: Head Coach / Coach

HEAD COACH

Responsible for the direct coaching of the club's squads and individual cheerleaders, teaching techniques and routines, and setting the overall coaching programme and teaching implementation for the club. The Head Coach may be assisted by one or more Coaches or Assistant Coaches, especially where there are several squads run by the club.

COACH

Responsible for coaching club squads and individual cheerleaders, techniques and routines, under the direction or supervision of the club Head Coach. Such Coaches would normally coach secondary or junior squads within the club organisation, or coach beginners or development squads.

ASSISTANT COACH

Coaching squads and individuals under the direction of either the Head Coach or Coaches, usually at the same training sessions, to support and assist the coach in teaching techniques and routines. Assistant Coaches would be over 18 years and not take sole supervision of a class.

CLUB WELFARE OFFICER

Person responsible for the welfare and wellbeing of young people in the club, normally other than the Head Coach, who is designated by the club to undertake child protection duties and responsibilities. Club welfare officers may often be non-coaching club management staff, assisting with registration, finances or club administration duties.

BCA WELFARE OFFICER

Staff designated by the BCA, separately CRB cleared as CRB Counter Signatories, and trained in child protection duties. BCA Welfare Officers are responsible for the administration of the BCA Child Protection Policy and its implementation, and are the primary BCA contacts in matters relating to child protection concerns.

APPENDIX 3

RECOMMENDED COURSES

"Good Practice and Child Protection"

Normally a 3 hour evening course run through many County Councils, costing around £22. For further details ...

Sports Coach UK
114 Cardigan Road
Headingley
Leeds
LS6 3BJ

Tel: 0113 2744802

"Keeping Children Safe in Sport"

Correspondence course, return exam paper for marking. Approx £25.26. . For further details ...

NSPCC EduCare Child Protection Awareness Programmes, PO BOX 62, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV32 5GE.

Tel: 01926 436219 to register

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