



code of ethics &  
**Good Practice**  
for Children's Sport

**THE  
IRISH SPORTS  
COUNCIL**



AN CHOMHAIRLE SPÓIRT



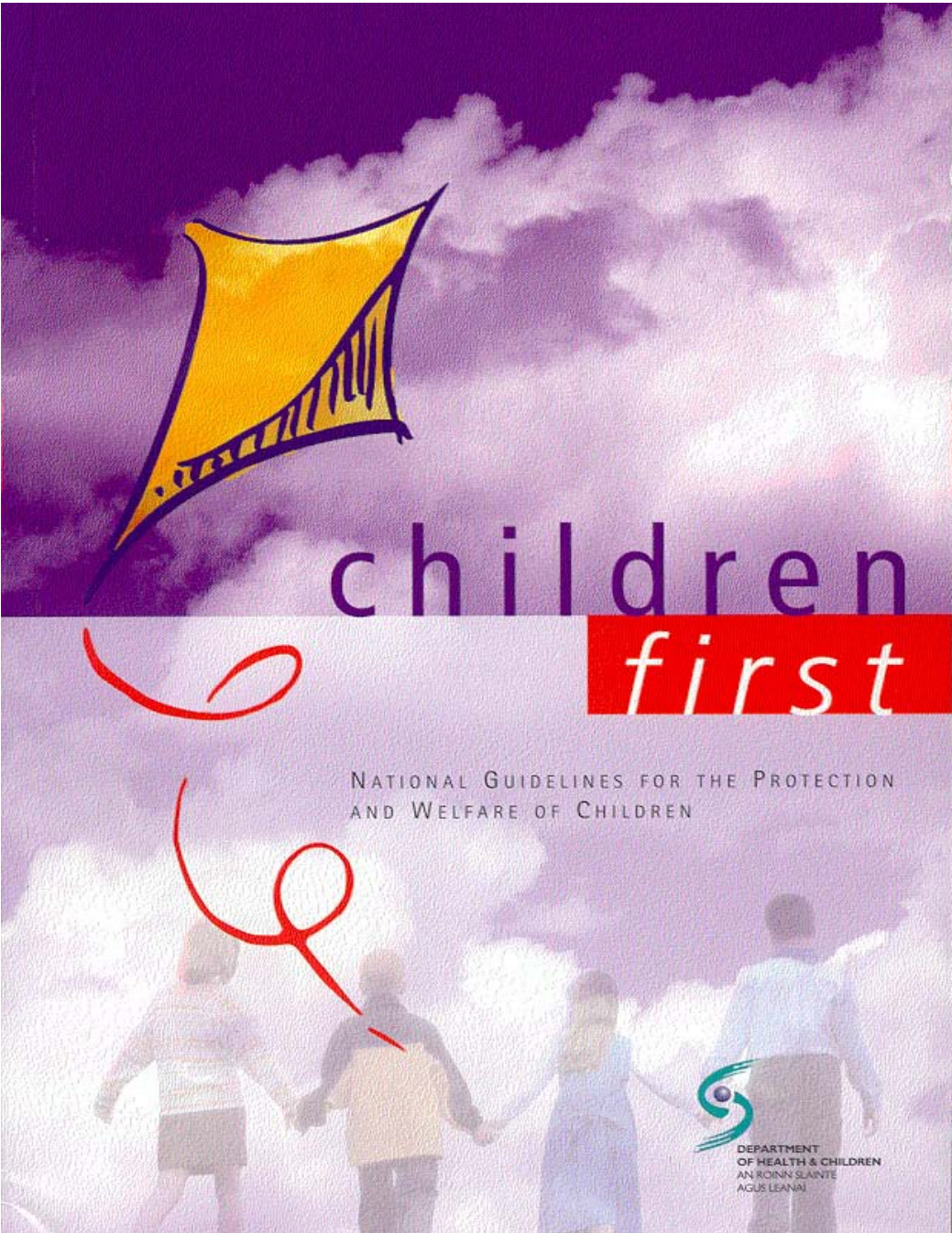
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COUNCIL NORTHERN IRELAND

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# children *first*

NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR THE PROTECTION  
AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN

  
DEPARTMENT  
OF HEALTH & CHILDREN  
AN RÓINN SLAINTE  
AGUS LEANAÍ



# UN Convention

- 54 Articles
- Ratified in 92 by Ireland

Underlying principles.....

- Non-discrimination (article 2)
- Best interests of the child (art 3)
- Survival & Development (art 6)
- The child's opinion (art 12)



# UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

- Article 31

“right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child”

- National Children's Strategy

“parties shall respect and promote the rights of the child to participate fully..... And shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for recreational and leisure activity”



# Consultation with Y/People

NCO - NCAC - Dail na nOg / bPaisti  
Play Policy and Recreation Policy

"more leisure centres and youth clubs  
wider more practical curriculum  
more choice  
more education through sport  
more money on sports and recreational facilities in the  
community"

**Recreation (not sport) Study by Cork IT ([www.nco.ie](http://www.nco.ie))**  
9/10 play at least one sport, competitively or recreationally  
Team sports (young people) individual sports (adults)



# Drop Out & Barriers

75% aspire to join a new activity,

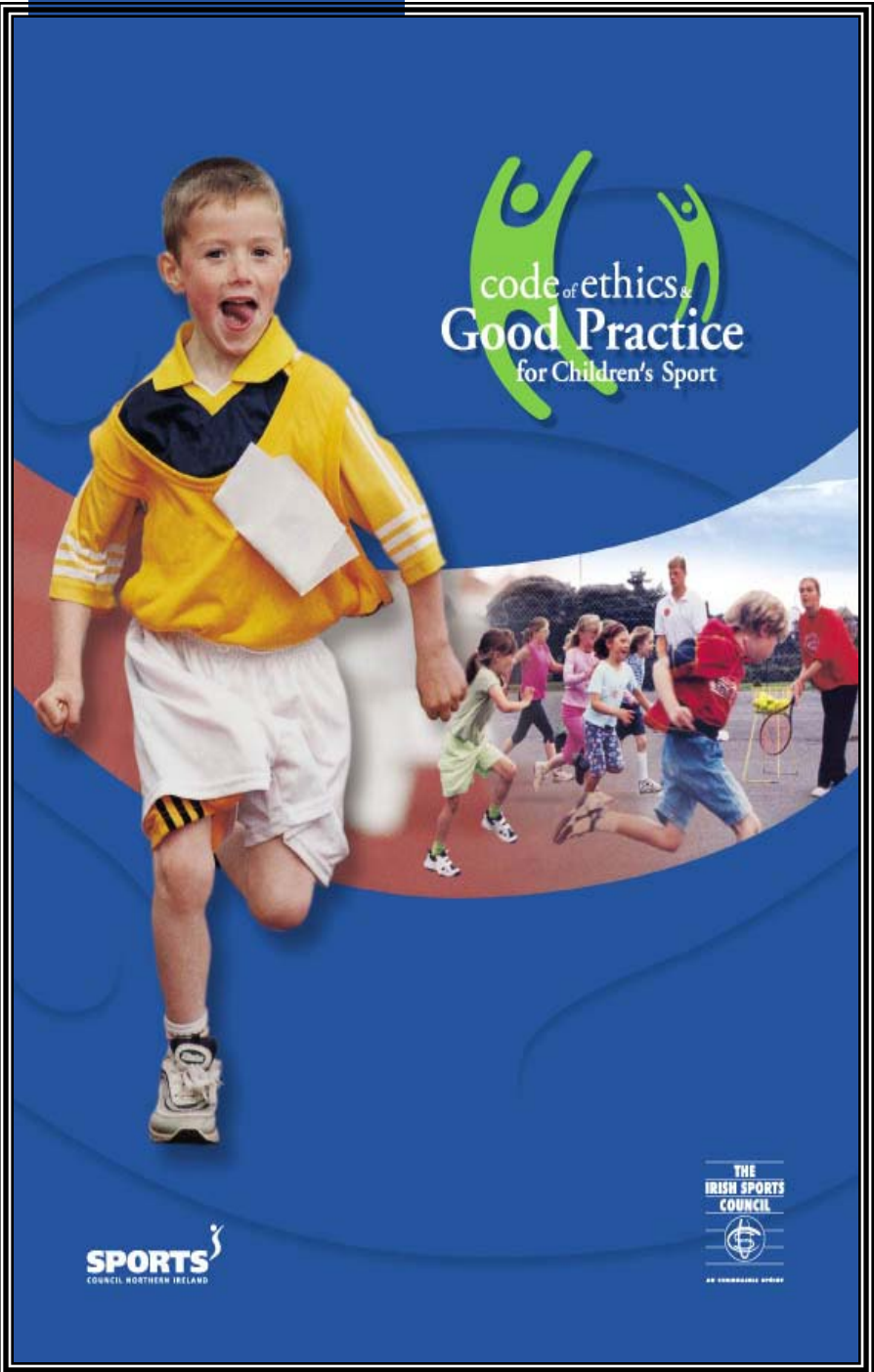
49 of 75 of listed activities were sports, 14 of the top 18

## Drop Out

- Lost interest 55%
- Times didn't suit 34%
- Didn't like the leader 27%
- Skill level not good enough 21% **ERSI Primary <10%**
- Friends dropped out 16%
- Didn't like the rules 13%
- Felt I was too old 10%
- Cost too much 7%

- Not nearby 41%
- Didn't know anyone 30%
- No transport 29%
- Didn't know how to 26%
- Times didn't suit 26%
- Too busy 19%
- Skill level not good enough 16%
- Cost 15%
- Parents didn't approve 9%
- Wasn't old enough 6%

*Less likely to lose interest in sports than other activities*



Principles - core values & guiding principles

People - roles and responsibilities

Policy & Procedures - clubs & organisations

Practice - making it happen

Protection - statutory guidelines & advice



# Our Objective

*We want sport to be*

**Safe,**

**Fun**

*and conducted in spirit of*

**Fair Play**





# Checklist

- Policy Statement - Pg 53 Appendix 1
- Code(s) of Conduct - Pg 29 - 32
- Disciplinary Procedures - Pg 24 & 35
- Reporting Procedures - Chapter 5
- Recruitment & Selection - Pg 25
- Bullying Policy - Pg 41
- Safety Statement - Pg 34
- General Guidelines - Pg 33 – 36



## 1.8 Legislative Basis

- Code is not legal document
- Based on Child Care Act (IRL) 1999 and
- Children (NI) Order 1993
- Additional Legislation

e.g. Children's Act 2001

Protection of Children & Vulnerable Adults Act (NI) 2003

Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998

- National Children's Strategy

Ombudsman for Children Emily Logan (ROI)

Commissioner for Children & Young People (NI)

*Not definite legal interpretation but failure to comply may have legal implications or consequences*



# Role of NCO

## Section 2.8.1 Page 16

- Familiarisation with Children First and Our Duty to Care – to act as a source of information to other members
- Attendance at appropriate training
- Co-ordination of training for others
- Promotion of values, attitudes and structures which make sport enjoyable for young people (2.8.3 – pg18)
- Circulation of all relevant information and resource materials to clubs and affiliates



# Role of NCO

- Communicate with club children's officers
- Liaison with all clubs to examine rules & structures
- Liaison with clubs to monitor drop-outs and transfers
- Assist in the development of a system of record keeping which maintains confidentiality while allowing for appropriate disclosure
- Ensure that the executive develops sport specific code (checklist) – should be reviewed



# Role of Club CO

*(Page 17)*

- To ensure that children know how to make concerns known to appropriate adults or agencies. Further information is outlined in Section 5.13 in this Code
- To encourage the appropriate involvement of parents/guardians in the club activities To act as an advisory resource to Sports Leaders on best practice in children's sport
- To report regularly to the Club Management Committee
- To monitor changes in membership and follow up any unusual dropout, absenteeism or club transfers by children or Sports Leaders
- To ensure that the children have a voice in the running of their club and ensure that there are steps young people can take to express concerns about their sports activities / experiences.
- Establish communication with other branches of the club, e.g. facilitate parent's information sessions at the start of the season



# Section 2.9 Page 18

## Designated Person

- Have knowledge of the Code of Ethics and Statutory guidelines
- Have a knowledge of categories and indicators of abuse
- Undertake training in relation to child protection
- Assist with the ongoing development and implementation of the organisation's child protection training needs
- Provide information and advice on child protection
- With NCO advise on training needs
- Be familiar with and able to carry out reporting procedures as outlined in Section 5.13 – 5.17 of Code
- Communicate with parents and/or agencies as appropriate



# Designated Person

- Be aware of contacts and services in relation to child protection, i.e. principal and duty social workers and their contacts
- To inform local Health Services Executive Area Board / local Social Services and/or An Garda Síochána/PSNI of relevant concerns about individual children, using the Standard Reporting Form, (see Appendix 6). *Keep a copy of this form and ensure acknowledgement of receipt of this form*
- Ensure appropriate information is available at the time of referral and it is confirmed in writing, kept under confidential cover
- Liaise with Statutory Authorities and agencies as appropriate



# Designated Person

- Procedures for dealing with concerns regarding poor practice within the sport
- Ensure leaders are aware of allegations against them
- Ensure case record is maintained of actions taken by organisation
- Ensure records are kept in confidence in a secure location and access is on a 'need to know'
- Assist clubs who report persistent poor practice
- Assist administrators on issues of confidentiality, record keeping and data protection



# *PROTECTIONS FOR PERSONS REPORTING CHILD ABUSE ACT, 1998*

## Protection from civil liability when.....

- Report in 'good faith and without malice'
- to a 'designated officer' of HB or the Gardai
- Protection from penalisation by an employer

False reporting is an actual offence and carries a fine or 12 months imprisonment



# Disciplinary (Page 24)

- Code of conduct
- Complaints in writing to the CO/Secretary
- Appoint disciplinary committee (CO)
- Is it a welfare issue - go to SA
- Committee of 3 hears all sides
- If rule broken, decide the sanction
- Inform all in writing
- Keep records
- Appeals procedure (within 10 days)
- Appeals committee consult with CO
- Local - National



# Recruitment - Page 25

- Reviewed
- Take account of POC(NI)S
- Take account of progress with vetting
- Appendices changed to reflect above
  
- Recruitment (vetting) to be used in conjunction with supervision and codes of conduct



# Chapter 4 (Pg 29-36)

- Codes - broken into sections (*e.g. should avoid*)
- 4.2 - Physical Contact (page 30)
- 4.5 - Supervision & General Guidelines
- Page 32 - Transport
- Page 32 - General Supervision (4.5.2)
- Page 33 - Overnight & Away Trips
- Page 34 - Hosting 4.5.4
- Page 35 - Use of photographic & mobile equipment



## *Chapter 5*

**Bullying – shortened, website reference**

**Page 42 – Re-ordering of sections**

**Page 42 – Harm, ‘significant harm’**

**Categories (physical, emotional, sexual, neglect)**

**Indicators – list not exhaustive – examples given**

**Page 44 – Grounds for Concern (5.10)**

**Page 47 – Informal consultation (5.13)**

**Page 47 – Allegations against SL – Flowchart 12 (Pg.67)**

**Page 50 – Disclosing information to others (5.21)**



# Significant Harm

"Harm can be defined as the ill treatment or the impairment of the health or development of a child, whether it is significant is determined by his/her development as compared to that which could be reasonably expected of a child of a similar age"

*Children First (paragraph 3.32)*



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## 5.10 Grounds for Concern

- Specific indication from a child
- An account by a person who saw the child being abused
- Evidence, such as an injury or behaviour which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused another way
- An injury or behaviour consistent both with abuse and an innocent explanation but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern
- Consistent indication over time that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect



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# Appendices

- 2 - 5 Recruitment

Application & reference (page 54 & 55)

POC(NI)S & Disclosure (page 56 & 57)

- 6 - Standard Reporting Form (ROI) (58 - 60)

Longer, not answer all questions

Guidance re confidentiality

Sample for NI

9 - Application Form new juniors (64)

10 - Recruitment - existing leaders (65)

11 - Flowchart - abuse external (66)

12 - Flowchart - concern involves member (67)

## Leaders & Parents

- child-centred
- role model

## Irish Sports Council Governing Bodies

- Policy & Procedures

Young people  
Safe and FUN  
in sport

## Designated Officers

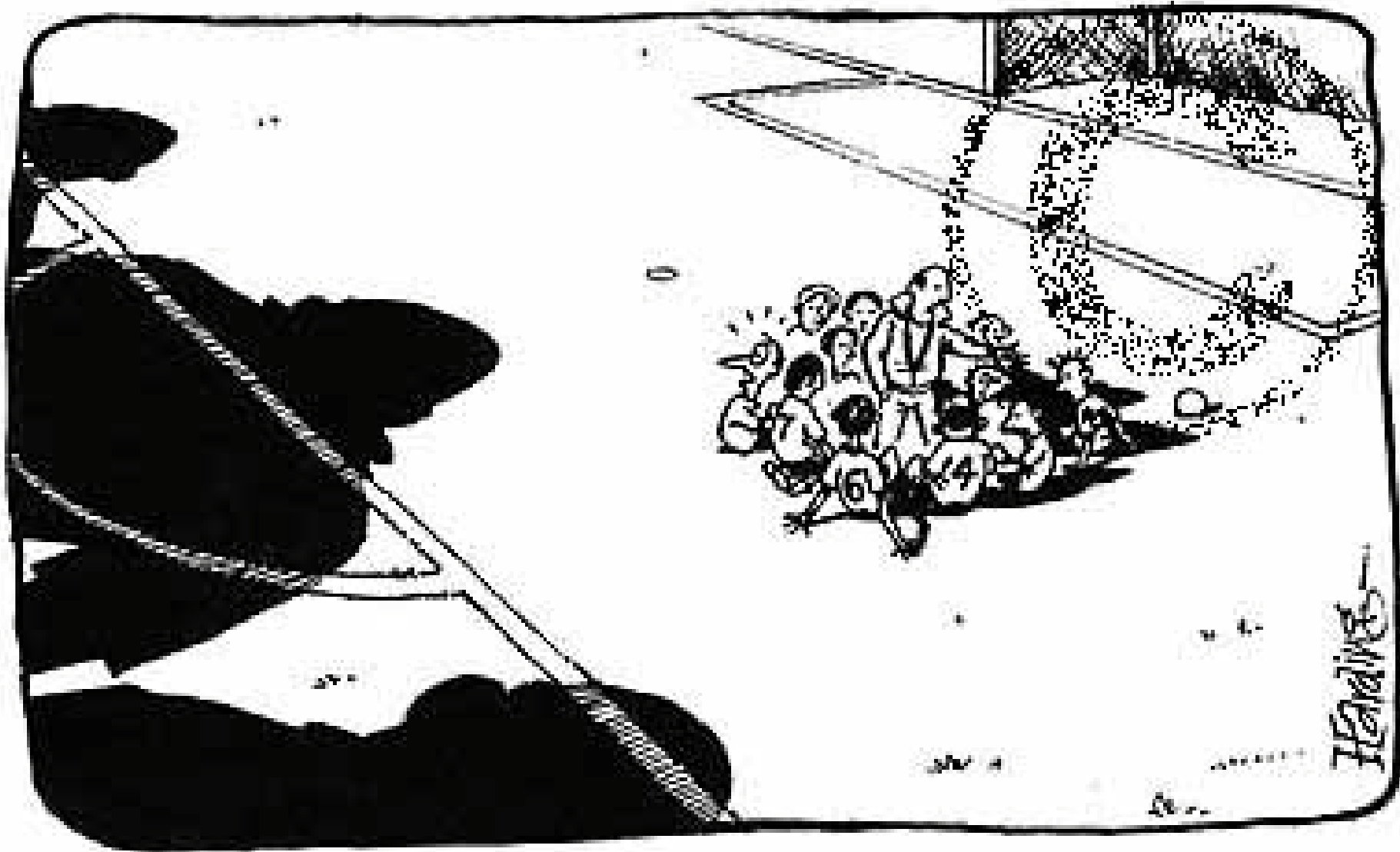
## Children's Officers

## Clubs

- policy
- child-friendly



"This is the little league. You can't negotiate a signing bonus."



... So it is very important that you remember NOT to allow yourselves to be intimidated by the OPPOSITION, whoever they are...



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