



Good Practice Guide
for Instructors, Members & Volunteers

This guide only covers the essential points of good practice when working with children and young people. You should also read the organisation's Child Protection Policy and Procedures which are always available for reference and be familiar with the guidance on recognising abuse.

- Avoid spending any significant time working with children in isolation.
- Do not take children alone in a car, however short the journey.
- Do not take children to your home as part of your organisation's activity.
- Where any of these are unavoidable, ensure that they only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the organisation or the child's parents.
- Design training programmes that are within the ability of the individual child.
- If a child is having difficulty with a wetsuit or buoyancy aid, ask them to ask a friend to help if possible.
- If you do have to help a child, make sure you are in full view of others, preferably another adult.
- Restrict communications with young people via mobile phone, e-mail, or social media to group communications about organisational matters. If it is essential to send an individual message, contact the child's parent or carer in the first instance and copy any individual messages to the child's parent or carer.

You should never:

- engage in rough, physical, or sexually provocative games.
- allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged or use such language yourself when with children.
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- fail to respond to an allegation made by a child; always act.
- do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves.

It may sometimes be necessary to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are very young or disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full



understanding and consent of the child (where possible) and their parents/carers. In an emergency which requires this type of help, parents should be fully informed. In such situations it is important to ensure that any adult present is sensitive to the child and undertakes personal care tasks with the utmost discretion.

Additional vulnerability

Some children may be more vulnerable to abuse or find it more difficult to express their concerns. For example:

- a disabled child who relies on a carer to help them get changed may worry that they won't be able to sail any more if they report the carer.
- a deaf child may not be able to express themselves or speak confidentially if they need an interpreter.
- a child who has experienced racism may find it difficult to trust an adult from a different ethnic background.
- children with low self-esteem or mental health problems can be more vulnerable to bullying or abuse, as can gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender young people, or any child who has a characteristic that marks them out in others' eyes as 'different.'

Grooming

Grooming is when someone develops a relationship with a child over a period of time to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation. Children and young people can be groomed online or face-to-face, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional. For more information on possible signs of grooming, see <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/grooming/> Sometimes the perpetrator grooms the entire family, building a relationship with the child's parents/carers so that they are allowed more access to the child than would normally be the case.

Similar behavior could be used to radicalise young people and recruit them to a religious or political cause. This is unlikely to happen in a sailing club setting, but under the government's 'Prevent' strategy teachers and others working with young people receive training on recognising the warning signs.

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