

# Duty to Report and Care for Coaches/Volunteers It's Everyone's Responsibility



# Your obligation

Members of the public have an obligation to report their concerns to a Children's Aid Society if they know or suspect that a child/youth may be OR is being harmed

The Child, Youth and Family Services Act (CYFSA) sets out an additional duty to report for professionals, and covered individuals recognizing that people working closely with children have a special awareness of signs of child abuse and neglect, and a particular responsibility to report their suspicions to CAS.

A covered individual is an adult who is authorized by an applicable amateur sports organization to interact with a minor or amateur athlete.

# What is Child Abuse?

“**Child abuse**” means the physical, emotional, or sexual abuse and/or neglect of a child under 18 years of age.

*In January of 2018, the CYFSA (Child, Youth and Family Services Act) made changes to include 16 and 17 year olds within the Age of Protection.*

# What is Physical Abuse?

**Physical abuse** is any deliberate physical force or action by a parent or caregiver that results, or could result, in injury to a child

*Examples:* Bruising, cuts, slapping, shaking, burning, biting, or throwing a child.

# Examples of Physical Abuse in Baseball

- \* A coach forcing an athlete with an injury to play before medical clearance.
- \* A coach or player purposely hitting another player with a bat.
- \* A coach or player purposely striking a ball against another player.
- \* A coach or player denying water breaks as punishment.

# What is Neglect?

**Neglect** occurs when a caregiver fails to provide for a child's basic needs

*Examples:* Inadequate food, sleep, safety, education, clothing, or medical treatment; leaving a child alone or failing to provide adequate supervision

# What is Emotional Abuse?

**Emotional abuse** is a pattern of behaviour that attacks a child's emotional development and sense of self-worth

*Examples:* Excessive, aggressive, or unreasonable demands; constant criticism, teasing, belittling, insulting, rejecting, ignoring, or isolating.  
Exposure to domestic violence

Mental Health and Covid

# Examples of Emotional Abuse in Baseball

- \* A player or players calling another player worthless, an embarrassment, or making fun of them.
- \* A coach refusing to allow a player to miss practice for a family matter.
- \* A coach throwing equipment, water bottles, bats, chairs etc. at or in the presence of players.
- \* A coach or parent ignoring a player for extended periods of time.

# BULLYING

- \* **Bullying** is intentionally aggressive physical and/or non-physical behaviour repeated over time that hurts, threatens or frightens another person. Bullying can take place on and off the field.
- \* Several people ganging up on individual team members. Ongoing teasing.
- \* A coach making an athlete feel like they are not a part of team.
- \* Fans verbally abusing players from the opposite team.

# CYBERBULLYING

- \* **Cyberbullying** is the use of the internet or cell phones to harass and bully another person. This can be in the form of mean text messages, posting unwanted pictures of someone else on social media, and creating a fake social media account and pretending to be someone else.
- \* **Research shows that cyberbullying is a far greater problem than bullying itself!!**

# HARASSMENT

- \* **Harassment** is unwanted behaviour that is repeated over time that annoys, put downs, threatens, or offends someone else.
- \* A player being called bad names by teammate or coach.
- \* Teammates or coach making bad comments about an athletes gender, disability, religion, race, or sexual orientation.

# HAZING

- \* **Hazing** is a physically harmful or offensive act that is forced onto someone or someone is forced to do. Hazing often occurs as a initiation for a new member of a team.
- \* A new player being taped or tied up and forced to stay in a closet.
- \* A player being forced to drink alcohol or do drugs.
- \* Forcing a player to dress or act in an inappropriate way.

# What is Sexual Abuse?

**Sexual abuse** occurs when a child is used for the sexual gratification of an adult or an older child

*Examples:* Sexual intercourse, exposing a child's private areas, indecent phone calls, fondling for sexual purposes, watching a child undress for sexual pleasure, and allowing/forcing a child to look at or perform in pornographic pictures or videos, or engage in prostitution.

# GROOMING

- \* Adults (sexual predators) who take advantage of children groom them by being a friend so the child will like them. They want the child to trust them. Sexual predators find ways to be alone with the child, and they begin non-sexual touching such as tickling or wrestling which gradually turns into touching private parts. Once the sexual touching starts, predators want to continue the sexual touching and prevent children from telling an adult by blaming the child or by threatening the child or the child's family member with violence.

# GROOMING CONTD

- \* Abusers tend to be responsible adults such as coaches and teachers who care about children and win the trust of their child victims and their parents.
- \* Abusers are typically white males age 35 to 50, married, professionals. Females also abuse but at a much less prevalent rate.
- \* It's a warning sign when abusers care too much about a player and want to hang out with children outside baseball. They often give children gifts, money, special trips, babysitting, help with homework etc.
- \* **Police Checks and Sexual Predators. Offenders on average offend 350 times before being caught.**

# Domestic Violence

In Ontario in 2013, nearly 50% of all substantiated investigations of child abuse involved exposure to domestic violence. That means children were

- Direct witnesses to physical violence
- Indirectly exposed to physical violence
- Exposed to emotional violence

One in four women and one in ten men experience domestic violence. This increased during Covid.

# Reporting concerns

The child/youth you are concerned about must be younger than 18 years of age. The person who is harming them must either be a caregiver or in a position of authority over them

Despite the provisions of any other act, if a professional/covered individual who works with children has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child may be in need of protection, they shall report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to a Children's Aid forthwith

The duty to report is ongoing – any additional information requires a further report even if you have previously reported

Your duty cannot be delegated to any other person – if you have the information you are the one that needs to report it

# Duty to Report for 16 and 17 year olds

- \* There is not a duty to report with regard to youth over the age of 16. The legislation states that you **may** report with regard to this age group.
- \* If the young person is making plans to manage their safety and/or if a support network is in place to support the young person's safety planning then professionals do not need to report. If the young person does not want the professional to report, more discretion needs to be exercised based on the professional's relationship with the youth, the youth's capacity and the level of risk to the youth if CAS intervention is not provided.
- \* There are other ways that a Society can work with youth of this age and/or their family and ensure their safety

# What if I am not certain?

It is NOT necessary for you to be certain a child is/may be in need of protection to make a report, it is the role of CAS to determine what the next steps are with supporting a family

“Reasonable grounds” refers to information an average person, exercising normal and honest judgment, would need in order to make a decision to report . **Consult with the Risk Management Officer.**



# What if I don't report?

Any professional or official who fails to report their suspicion that a child is, or may be, in need of protection, when the information on which it is based is obtained in the course of his or her official duties is liable on conviction to a fine of up to \$5000.00

The exception to this is for youth ages 16 and 17 who do not wish for a report to be made and are making other plans to manage their safety.



# Should I call?

Consultations are encouraged to provide clarity on whether a situation is reportable. In 2013, over 171,000 referrals were made by people concerned about the safety or well-being of a child. **Consult with the Risk Management officer,**

When making a decision to report, it is important to remember that CAS file history impacts a decision to investigate concerns

It is also important to remember that CAS may have extensive involvement with a family on other matters and your information could provide valuable information that could impact the current risk level



# What about confidentiality?

A professional/covered individual must report concerns for a child under the age of 16 years despite the provisions of any other act, even when the information is considered to be confidential or privileged. This duty overrides the provisions of any other provincial statute, with the exception of lawyer/client

The CYFSA provides that no action for making the report will be instituted against a person who makes a report unless the person acts maliciously or without reasonable grounds for the suspicion



# What happens when I call?

You will speak to a Child Protection Worker to discuss the details of your concerns and you may be contacted for further information

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# Then what?

If the information received requires CAS intervention a Child Protection worker will investigate within 12 hours or 7 days depending on the severity of the information.

The worker will assess whether the family requires ongoing support and intervention or whether the file will close. Did you know that in 2013, children remained in their home in 97% of all CAS investigations across Ontario?

What if a worker does not call you back? What should you do?



# Will I be identified?

There is always a chance that a family may figure out who reported the concerns, however your identity is not divulged by the Society during an investigation, unless requested through disclosure

The Society recognizes the important role that you play in your players lives. The worker does not intentionally impact the working relationship. if at all possible. Whistle blowers who report misconduct suspicions in good faith will be protected by NBA against any retaliation, punishment, and other harm regardless of the outcome of any investigation.



# How does CAS help?

The CAS assists in helping families resolve problems by teaching caregivers more positive parenting skills, helping to link families to community support services or assisting them with accessing the tools to meet the needs of their children/family.

They protect children/youth from abuse and maltreatment by ensuring they have a safe environment to live. CAS makes every attempt to maintain children in their family home, but there are times this is not possible

Risk Management officer can help support Families and find appropriate mental health supports if needed.

# How can NBA help?

- \* **System Navigator** advocates for families of children/youth (living in Northumberland county) whom have complex needs in order to support them as they are experiencing challenges with system gaps and barriers.
- \* **Guiding principles** are advocacy, family centred, neutral, solution focused, creative and flexible.
- \* **Roles and responsibilities of system navigator** helps link families to appropriate services.
- \* **Risk Management officer** will act as a, liaison for the coach, player and/or family.

# Duties Risk Management Officer

- \* Help develop policies and procedures to support risk management within the organization.
- \* Makes sure police checks and waivers are completed in a timely fashion.
- \* Provide training and education in all aspects of risk management.
- \* Makes sure medical information forms are completed.

# Duties of Risk Management officer contd

Ensures that associations code of conduct is signed by coaches, players and parents on a yearly basis.

Acts as a support to coaches, players, and families as issues may arise.

Act as a advocate/liaison for children/youth and families to get mental health supports as required.

Be the chairperson of the Fair play committee (with two designated members of executive) as needed.

# See it, Hear it, Report it!

## **DON'T STOP THERE!**

Research shows that it can take up to 7 times for a child to report the problem before someone steps up and does something about it. Don't be the one that waits until the next time. See it, Hear it, Report it!!



**Children's Aid Society 1-800-267-0570**

**1-613-962-9291**

**We are here to help!**



# Any questions?

Can you think of a situation when you struggled with whether or not you should report something?

# Child Abuse Prevention

We live in a great community. Together, we all have a part in making sure our kids and youth are healthy, happy and safe.

**What choice will you make?**

