

BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

Statement from Child Welfare Working Group (CWWG)

Skiing plays a positive role in the development of children whether they are looking to become a top athlete or just enjoying the sport recreationally. As well as the obvious health benefits, they also gain important social and life skills. That is why it is important that everyone who provides training does as much as possible to create and maintain an enjoyable and safe environment.

The Child Welfare Group is concerned that individuals and organisations should always follow “Best Practice” when offering training opportunities to children. While it always remains the parents’ responsibility for deciding what events and activities children and young people participate in we believe Snowsport has a responsibility for promoting awareness of current guidelines for good practice. This guidance is based on advice from the Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) and they have advised us on this statement as they also have concerns about certain practices that are happening within Snowsports.

While we want there to be as many training opportunities as possible this needs to be done in the correct way to ensure the safety of all individuals and organisations involved. We would encourage all organisations and parents to read the following Good Practice guidelines.

Guidelines for Good Practice

The following may alert you to any inappropriate situations that may be affecting your child

- Activities where limited information is made available
- Activities where parents are discouraged from staying to watch or from becoming involved
- Individuals who take charge and operate independently of organisational guidelines
- Individuals who show favouritism or personally reward specific children
- Encouragement of inappropriate physical contact
- Poor communication and negative responses to questions about safeguards for your child
- A “win at all costs” attitude towards the sport or activity
- Children who drop out or stop going for no apparent reason
- Invitations for children to spend time alone with staff or volunteers (or even to visit their home)

When choosing which organisation or club to send your child with you should ask the following questions

- **Child Protection Policy**

A good club will promote and welcome questions about its activities and the safety of its environment, its staff and the qualifications and cover they and the club have. It will have a child protection policy and you should be told what to do if your child has any concerns. There should be a club welfare officer who will answer any questions you might have.

- **Criminal Records Bureau Check**

You need to be sure that the staff and volunteers who will be working with your child are suitable. Ask if the club undertakes enhanced level CRB checks on coaches and helpers.

- **Training and education**

Appropriate training and education ensures that everyone working with children in sport is aware of how to make the activities enjoyable for them. Ask if coaches and volunteers have undertaken training through a recognised Sport National Governing Body, or achieved a formal qualification in the sport.

- **Events away from home**

Ask about what arrangements the club makes to ensure children are kept safe when they take part in competitions or events away from home. Homestay situations are a particular cause for concern as standards of care, transport and sleeping arrangements may be difficult to clarify and the home situation may bring the child into unforeseen contact with other unvetted adults. When staying overseas appropriate medical and personal insurance should always be available. Ask what will happen in the event of an emergency and what medical provision is available.

- **Communication**

Whilst we recognise we live in a free society, and that communication between individuals regardless of age is part of daily life, we do not consider it good practice for coaches to text or email individual children or young people. In regards to websites and chat rooms it is important that children do not give out any personal information about themselves and their families, in particular their address or phone number or the schools or clubs they go to. If anyone requests this information, whoever they might be, the child must not divulge this information, but should say they will pass the request on to their parents or guardians.

There is further guidance available on the following websites

http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/Sport/child_protection_in_sport.htm

<http://www.thecpsu.org.uk>

If you do have any concerns then please use the following contact details

childprotection@snowsportengland.org.uk or phone 0121 585 6448

Alternatively you can use the NSPCC Child Protection helpline on 0808 800 5000

Child Welfare Working Group
Snowsport GB
Snowsport England
Snowsport Wales
Snowsport Scotland