

Photographs and Images of Children

There have been concerns about the risks posed directly and indirectly to children and young people through the use of photographs on sports websites and other publications. Photographs can be used as a means of identifying children when they are accompanied with personal information – this is X who lives at y, is a member of the z gymnastics club and who likes a certain music group. This information can make a child vulnerable to an individual who may wish to start to “groom” that child for abuse. Secondly the content of the photo can be used or adapted for inappropriate use. There is evidence of this adapted material finding its way onto child pornography sites.

Sporting organisations and clubs need to develop a policy in relation to the use of images of athletes on their websites and in other publications. The sport will need to make decisions about the type of images they consider suitable and that appropriately represent the sport, without putting children at increased risk. They will want to ensure that parents support their policy. When assessing the potential risks in the use of images of athletes, the most important factor is the potential of inappropriate use of images of children.

If sporting organisations are aware of the potential risks and take appropriate steps the potential for misuse of images can be reduced.

The CPSU would advise sporting bodies to:

- Consider using models or illustrations if you are promoting an activity.
- Avoid the use of the first name and surname of individuals in a photograph. This reduces the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people within and outside the sport.

Easy rules to remember are:

- If the child is named, avoid using their photograph.
- If a photograph is used, avoid naming the child.
- Ask for the child’s permission to use their image. This ensures that they are aware of the way the image is to be used to represent the sport. A Child’s Permission Form is one way of achieving this.
- Ask for parental permission to use an image of a young person. This ensures that parents are aware of the way the image of their child is representing the sport. A Parental Permission Form is one way of achieving this.
- Only use images of children in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use. With regard to the actual content it is difficult to specify exactly what is appropriate given the wide diversity of sports. However there are clearly some sports activities - swimming, gymnastics and athletics for example when the risk of potential misuse is much greater than for other sports. With these sports the content of the photograph should focus on the activity not on a particular child and should avoid full face and body shots. So for example shots of children in a pool would be appropriate or if poolside, waist or shoulder up.
- Create a recognised procedure for reporting the use of inappropriate images to reduce the risks to children. Follow your child protection procedures, ensuring both your sports child protection officer and the Social Services and/or Police are informed.

First steps and things to think about:

- Establish the type of images that appropriately represent the sport for the Web and other media.
- Think about the level of consideration you give to the use of images of children in other publications, for example, the processes involved in choosing appropriate images for the newsletter or magazine. Apply an increased level of consideration to the images of children and young people used in the web site.



Guidelines for Use of Photographic Filming Equipment at Sporting Events

- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour.
- Issue the photographer with identification which must be worn at all times.
- Inform children and parents that a photographer will be in attendance at an event and ensure they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs.
- Do not allow unsupervised access to children or one to one photo sessions at events.
- Do not approve/allow photo sessions outside the events or at an child's home.
- If parents or other spectators are intending to photograph or video at an event they should also be made aware of your expectations.
- Spectators should be asked to register at an event if they wish to use photographic equipment.
- Children and parents should be informed that if they have concerns they can report these to the organiser.
- Concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography should be reported to the event organiser or official and recorded in the same manner as any other child protection concern.

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 (*set number of days*) working days before the event.

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 procedure: a system should be established. Professionals should register prior to the event and their identification details be recorded. Ideally they should be:

- name and address of the person using the camera
- names of subjects (if specific)
- the reason or use the images are being or intended to be put to
- signed declaration that the information provided is valid and that the images will only be used for the reasons given.

Ideally, identification details should be checked with the issuing authority prior to the event. On registering, promoters of events could consider issuing a coloured identification label on the day which can serve to highlight those who have accreditation but they must ensure that where events occur regularly, the colour and or type of identifying label is changed to prevent unofficial replication.

A clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour should be issued. It may include a list of any areas where photographic and recording equipment including mobile phones is forbidden under all circumstances (e.g. changing rooms, toilet areas). Unsupervised access to athletes or one to one photo sessions at event or photo sessions outside the events or at an athlete's home should not be approved/allowed.

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:

In line with the recommendation in the *Name of Governing Body* 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 spectator desk before carrying out any such photography.

The promoter 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, children/young people 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 their Governing Body for further advice.

* Adapted with permission from the Amateur Swimming Association (1999) Child Protection in Swimming

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(Jan 2009)

