

**CODE OF ETHICS AND GOOD
PRACTICE FOR CHILDREN
IN CAVING**



Speleological Union of Ireland

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SUI CODE OF ETHICS AND GOOD PRACTICE

The Speleological Union of Ireland is dedicated to ensuring that children are protected and kept safe from harm while they participate in caving with certified leaders and members of this organization.

This is achieved through the following:

- Promoting best practice in caving for children
- Ensuring that SUI members are aware of the organisation's Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children in Caving
- Training our Leaders through the SUI Cave Leadership Scheme in the essential Principles, Practices, Policies and Procedures of Caving with Children
- Having a Designated National Children's Officer on the SUI Committee
- Clear procedures for reporting concerns from children, parents, SUI members and Certified leaders
- Providing Clubs, Schools, Outdoor Education Centres and Youth Groups information about our Code of Ethics and Good Practice

SUI GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR CHILDREN IN CAVING

Children have a lot to gain from caving. Their natural sense of fun and spontaneity can blossom from a positive Caving experience. Caving provides an excellent opportunity for children to learn new skills, become more confident and maximise their own unique potential. These benefits will increase through a positive and progressive approach to the involvement of children in caving that places the needs of the child first. A child centred approach to children's caving will return many benefits in terms of the health and well-being. The participation of children in caving is guided by the following set of core values that provide the foundation for all practice.

IMPORTANCE OF CHILDHOOD

The importance of childhood should be understood and valued by everyone involved in SUI. The right to happiness within childhood should be recognised and enhanced at all levels of caving.

NEEDS OF THE CHILD

All children's caving experiences should be guided by what is best for children. This means that adults leading caving trips with children should have a basic understanding of the emotional, physical and personal needs of young people. The stages of development and ability of children should guide the types of activity provided within caving.

INTEGRITY IN RELATIONSHIPS

Adults interacting with children in caving are in a position of trust and influence. They should always ensure that they treat children with integrity and respect and that the self-esteem of children is enhanced. All adult actions in caving should be guided by what is best for the child and carried out in the context of respectful and open relationships. Verbal, physical, emotional or sexual abuse of any kind or threat of such abuse is totally unacceptable within caving, as in society in general.

QUALITY ATMOSPHERE AND ETHOS

Caving with children should be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere. Standards of behaviour for leaders and children in Caving trips should be as important as the standards we set for safety, conservation and equipment. Standards of excellence should extend to personal conduct.

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EQUALITY

All children should be valued and treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of ability, age, sex, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion. Children, irrespective of ability or disability should be involved in caving activities in an integrated and inclusive way, whenever possible, thus allowing them to participate to their potential alongside other children.

PEOPLE

Everyone involved in caving i.e. children, parents/guardians and Cave Leaders must accept the role and responsibilities that they undertake in their commitment to maintaining an enjoyable and safe environment.

ADULTS INVOLVED IN CAVING

The roles of every adult involved in children's caving should be clearly defined. Many leadership roles contribute to the successful development and organisation of children's caving. These may overlap on occasions, but it is very important that each Cave Leader has a clear idea of his/her role and responsibilities. Each person involved in children's caving should ensure that the *Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Caving in Ireland* is agreed, adopted and implemented in the organisation to which they are affiliated.

ADULT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS IN CAVING

The trust implicit in adult-child relationships in caving places a duty of care on all adults, voluntary or professional, to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the child while engaged in their caving activity. Adults have a crucial leadership role to play in caving. Whether they are parents/guardians or Cave Leaders or teachers, they can contribute to the creation of a positive caving experience for young people. The unique nature of caving allows Leaders to develop positive and special relationships with children. Such relationships have tremendous potential to help children to develop and express themselves in an open and secure way. Positive adult-child relationships will result in growth, development and fulfilment for all those involved in children's Caving.

Most adults who become involved in caving with children do so in their own free time. There may, therefore, be a reluctance to make impositions upon them with regard to either conditions of training, or reproaches for any misdemeanours. However, given the important and responsible roles which adults play at many different levels in caving, SUI sees it as essential that their competence and ability to deal with children in a fair, empathic and ethical way is supported, guided and maintained.

Adult-child relationships in caving should be:

- open, positive and encouraging
- entered into by choice
- defined by a mutually agreed set of goals and commitments respectful of the creativity and autonomy of children
- carried out in a context where children are protected and where their rights are promoted
- free from verbal, physical, emotional or sexual abuse or any threat of such harm
- respectful of the needs and developmental stage of the child
- aimed at the promotion of enjoyment and individual progress
- governed by a code of ethics and good practice in caving that is agreed and adhered to by all members of the Caving clubs and SUI
- respectful, but not unquestioning of authority
- mindful of the fact that children with disabilities may be more vulnerable

CHILD TO CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

Interaction between children should be conducted in a spirit of mutual respect and fair play. Cave Leaders as well as teachers, parents/guardians, who create an environment in which quality, open relationships are valued and where the integrity of each individual is respected, can promote such interaction.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS /GUARDIANS

SUI recognizes that parents/guardians play a key role in the promotion of an ethical approach to caving and their children's enjoyment in caving. Parents/guardians therefore need to be aware, informed and involved in promoting the safest possible environment for children to enjoy their participation in caving. SUI's Code of Ethics and Good Practice should be communicated to parents by leaders bringing children on a caving trip.

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THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF CAVE LEADERS

Cave Leaders (including those not holding BCL or CL Certification) play a vital role in children's Caving. Caving clubs/schools/Outdoor Centres should ensure that the work of Cave Leaders which occurs mainly on a voluntary basis, is guided by SUI's Code of Ethics and Good Practice whilst also recognising that they are entitled to obtain a healthy sense of achievement and satisfaction through their involvement in children's Caving.

CHILDREN'S OFFICERS

SUI considers the appointment of a Children's Officer in Caving Clubs where children are regularly introduced to caving, should be seen as an essential element in the creation of a quality atmosphere in that caving club. They act as a resource for all members of the club with regard to children's issues. They ensure that the children have a voice in the running of their club and can talk freely about their experiences in their caving activities.

CLUB CHILDREN'S OFFICER

The Club Children's Officer should be child centred in focus and should have as his/her primary aim the establishment of a child centred ethos within the club. S/he is the link between the children and the adults in the club. S/he also takes responsibility for monitoring and reporting to the Club Management Committee on how club policy etc. impacts on children. Given the need to ensure that children are valued within all caving contexts a Children's Officer should be appointed by all clubs. Appointment of this person should be done in consultation with the juvenile members of the club and their parents/guardians. The Children's Officer should be an ex-officio member of, or have access to, the Club Management Committee. S/he should have as his/her primary aim the establishment of a child centred ethos within the club. S/he should be introduced to the children in an appropriate forum. The Children's Officer should have the following functions:

- to promote awareness of the *Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Caving in Ireland* within the club and particularly among the children and their parents/guardians. This could be achieved by the production of information leaflets, the establishment of children's/age-group specific notice boards and by regular information meetings for the children and their parents/guardians
- to influence policy and practice within the club in order to prioritise children's needs
- to provide an accessible resource to children through the creation of forums
- to see that children know how to make concerns known to appropriate adults or agencies. Information disclosed by a child to the Children's Officer or any other adult within the club should be dealt with in accordance with the Department of Health and Children's Guidelines *Children First* and the Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety's *Our Duty to Care* as outlined at 5.13 in this Code
- to encourage the involvement of parents/guardians in the club activities and co-operate with parents/guardians in ensuring that each child enjoys his/her involvement in caving
- to act as an advisory resource to Cave Leaders on best practice in children's caving
- 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 Cave Leaders

Children's Officers do not have the responsibility of investigating or validating child protection concerns within the club and have no counseling or therapeutic role. These roles are filled by the Statutory Authorities as outlined in *Children First* and *Our Duty to Care*. It is, however, possible that child protection concerns will be brought to the attention of the Children's Officer. In this event, it is essential that the child protection officer has the responsibility within the club for reporting to the Statutory Authorities.

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S OFFICER

SUI appoints a National Children's Officer as a member of the Committee to ensure that children's interests are kept on the agenda. The role of the National Children's Officer involves:

- the promotion of the values, attitudes and structures which make caving enjoyable for children
- circulation of all relevant information and resource materials on children's caving to clubs and affiliates of the SUI
- communication with Club Children's Officers to ensure the widespread dissemination of the *Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Caving in Ireland* and the publicising of related education programmes, materials and events

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- liaison with clubs, to ensure drop-out rates and transfers are monitored so that unusual developments or trends can be addressed
- familiarisation with *Children First* and *Our Duty to Care* to ensure they can act as an information source to other members of the organisation
- commitment to attendance at training as required in order to act as a resource to members in relation to children's needs
- co-ordination of training for others, as appropriate

CAVING CLUBS

To ensure that best practice is being followed, all Caving clubs need to work closely with the SUI Committee. In promoting best practice in children's Caving and in implementing this Code at club level each club should:

- adopt and implement the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Caving in Ireland as an integral part of its policy on children in the club
- have its constitution approved and adopted by club's members at an AGM or EGM
- permit all members over 16 years of age to vote, where possible. One parent/guardian should have one vote for all their children under 16 years of age, where relevant
- ensure that the Club Management Committee is elected or endorsed by registered club members at each AGM
- adopt and consistently apply a safe and clearly defined method of selecting Cave Leaders
- clearly define the role of committee members, all Cave Leaders and parents/guardians
- appoint at least one Children's Officer. In the event that a club caters for both boys and girls, one Children's Officer of each gender would ideally be appointed
- designate the Club Chairperson to act as liaison with the Statutory Authorities in relation to the reporting of allegations or suspicions of child abuse. Any such reports should be made according to the procedures outlined in this Code/*Children First* /*Our Duty to Care*
- ensure best practice throughout the club by disseminating its code of conduct, including the disciplinary, complaints and appeals procedures in operation within the club to all its members. The club's code of conduct should also be posted in all facilities used by the club
- have in place procedures for dealing with a concern or complaint made to the Statutory Authorities against a committee member or Cave Leader or other members of the club. Regulations should stipulate that a Cave Leader who is the subject of an allegation, which has been reported to the Statutory Authorities, should stand aside, while the matter is being examined. S/he should be invited to resume full duties immediately if s/he is vindicated
- ensure that relevant Cave Leaders report to the Club Management Committee on a regular basis
- encourage regular turnover of committee membership while ensuring continuity and experience
- develop effective procedures for responding to and recording accidents
- ensure that any unusual activity (high rate of drop-out, transfers, etc.) is checked out and reported by the Club Chairperson to the Governing Body of Caving
- ensure that all club members are given adequate notice of AGMs and other meetings
- ensure that all minutes of all meetings (AGMs/EGMs/, Committee) are recorded and safely filed

SUI

SUI is responsible for overseeing the adoption and implementation of this Code by all its affiliated members.

To maximise compliance with the Code, SUI will:

- ensure that the *Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Caving in Ireland* is adopted, agreed to, implemented and signed up to by all members
- appoint a National Children's Officer S/he will be a member of the SUI Committee
- ensure that effective disciplinary, complaints and appeals procedures are in place
- have in place procedures for dealing with a concern or complaint made to the Statutory Authorities against a committee member or a Cave Leader. Regulations will stipulate that a Cave Leader who is the subject of an allegation, which has been reported to the Statutory Authorities, should stand aside while the matter is being examined. S/he should be invited to resume full duties immediately if s/he is vindicated
- ensure that all Caving clubs with child members are fully affiliated and signed up to the SUI's Code of Practice
- be represented by appropriate personnel at all education/training workshops dealing with the Code

- where children are involved in representative teams, designate an appropriate senior officer from the committee as the person with responsibility for following the guidelines of the Code
- review its child protection procedures regularly through open discussion with its members, Caving Clubs and Statutory Authorities
- establish contact with representatives of the Statutory Authorities in their areas. The building of these relationships will contribute to the creation of an environment in which education and knowledge of child protection issues and procedures are widely known
- examine and take appropriate action in response to any reports of unusual incidents (high rate of transfers, dropouts) received from clubs

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Everyone taking part in caving, irrespective of his or her role, should be able to do so in a safe environment. The purpose of creating and adhering to policies and procedures is to facilitate and encourage best practice.

CLUB STRUCTURES

- SUI recommends that membership of the Management Committee of Caving Clubs should be for a fixed period to encourage regular turnover of committee membership. Each club should work out its own system of rotation to ensure that continuity and a level of experience are maintained. Effective methods of communication within the club are vital to the successful implementation of the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Caving in Ireland. Within each Caving club a system of record keeping should be established and adhered to in the interests of confidentiality and good practice. A current mailing list and a schedule of meetings, including the AGM, are the two most basic requirements. Any organisation unable to reach its membership will struggle to implement good practice.
- SUI recommends that all Caving clubs with child members should be fully affiliated to the SUI and therefore bound by the guidelines enshrined in the constitution. Each member of a club should sign up to the Club's Constitution. S/he should also sign an agreement to adhere to the rules and regulations of the club which includes a commitment to upholding the Code and all of the agreed complaints, disciplinary and appeals procedures within the club. This commitment should form part of the annual membership/affiliation process to avoid adding to the administrative burden of officials in the clubs.

REGULATIONS

- SUI recommends that the regulations adopted by a Caving club should clearly define the tasks to be undertaken by Cave Leaders and parents/guardians. The regulations should define the roles and responsibilities of elected officials. This information should be widely disseminated within the club. Regulations, based on the constitution, should legislate for effective disciplinary, complaints and appeals procedures. Guidance on the use of sanctions could also be outlined in the regulations.

DISCIPLINARY, COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCEDURES

- Each club should ensure that it has adequate disciplinary, complaints and appeals procedures in place. **It is important to note that the investigation of suspected child abuse is the responsibility of the Statutory Authorities and should not be undertaken by Children's Officers or other club members/Cave Leaders.** The standard reporting procedure outlined in the Statutory Authorities guidelines should be followed by each Caving club and adhered to by its members.

RECOMMENDED PROCEDURES

- A quality Caving club will operate on the basis of good practice to include a complaints/appeals procedures similar to the following:
 - a code of conduct reflecting a child centred ethos should be drawn-up, widely disseminated and applied to all Cave Leaders and members
 - each club should appoint a disciplinary committee with clearly defined procedures to resolve problems relating to the conduct of its members. This should include bullying. The committee should consist of a representative from the Management Committee and ordinary registered members of the club. Regular turnover of this committee should be encouraged

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- the disciplinary committee should initiate an investigation following a complaint into any incident of suspected misconduct that does not relate to child abuse. It should, as soon as possible, inform the Management Committee of the progress of the disciplinary process
- written confidential records of all complaints should be safely and confidentially kept and club procedures should be defined for the possession of such records in the event of election of new officers
- the disciplinary committee should furnish the individual with details of the complaint being made against him/her and afford him/her the opportunity of providing a response either verbally or in writing
- where it is established that an incident of misconduct has taken place, the disciplinary committee should notify the member of any sanction being imposed. The notification should be made in writing, setting out the reasons for the sanction. If the member is under 18 years of age, correspondence should be addressed to the parents/guardians
- if the member against whom the complaint was made is unhappy with the decision of the disciplinary committee s/he should have the right to appeal the decision to an appeals committee (independent of a disciplinary committee). Any appeal should be made in writing within an agreed period after issue of the decision of the disciplinary committee. The chairperson of the appeals committee should be a member of the Management Committee or elected by the members at AGM
- the appeals committee should have the power to confirm, set aside or change any sanction imposed by the disciplinary committee
- if any party is not satisfied with the outcome the matter can be referred to the Governing Body. However efforts to resolve the issue at local level should be exhausted before the Governing Body is engaged in attempts to resolve the matter

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- Caving exposes children to new challenges, most of which occur in environments with certain risks. Cave Leaders should have the appropriate training and experience for undertaking the activity. Caving clubs that take responsibility for children in Caving must ensure that Cave Leaders are competent to provide safe and rewarding experiences for those in their care and that appropriate training and educational opportunities are developed. Training for the following should be made available and updated on a regular basis:
 - National Children's Officer
 - Club Children's Officer
 - Cave Leaders

SUI will ensure that all Children's Officers and all other relevant Cave Leaders have access to training in the following areas:

- The Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Caving in Ireland
- Communication skills
- Basic understanding of child development as it relates to Caving
- Education or Information Dissemination
- Awareness of the appropriate club response to suspicions or reports of child abuse

PRACTICE

SUI expects that leaders in children's caving should always strive to interact positively with children, enhancing the child's involvement and enjoyment of the Caving activity and promoting the welfare of the participant. The Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Caving in Ireland assists in the achievement of these aims and can also help to protect Cave Leaders in their various roles by providing a framework for the promotion of good practice.

CONTEXT FOR THE CONDUCTING OF A CAVING ACTIVITY

- the activity undertaken should be suitable for the ability, age and experience of the participants
- children with disabilities should be involved in Caving activities in an inclusive way, whenever possible. Cave Leaders should be aware of and seek to gain competence in addressing the special needs of children with disabilities
- adult/child ratios should reflect the duration, nature and location of the cave, the ages and characteristics of the young people and any other safety issues related to safe caving. It is recommended that more than one adult at a time should be present at Caving activities. This will help to ensure the safety of the children and protect adults against false allegations
- quality leadership in caving trips is necessary to enable young people to accept responsibilities, accept others and accept themselves. The environment should help participants to feel and believe that they all have an equally important contribution to make to the activity. These principles form part and parcel of the SUI's Leadership Scheme Basic Cave Leader (BCL) and Cave Leader (CL) training programmes.
- standards of behaviour of both children and Cave Leaders must be considered as important as Caving adventure
- parents/guardians have a duty to ensure that the context in which their child is participating is appropriate, as indicated by the five points above

GUIDELINES FOR CAVE LEADERS

Cave Leaders have an important role to play in promoting good practice in children's caving. They should have as their first priority the children's safety and enjoyment of the cave. Cave Leaders should enjoy a sense of achievement and pleasure through their work with young people. After undertaking appropriate education and training within the club or SUI's Leadership Scheme Cave Leaders will be well prepared to operate in a safe caving environment with a knowledge and understanding of their role and responsibilities. They should be supported in their work by the Caving club, School, Youth Group, Outdoor Education Centre and parents/guardians.

Cave Leaders are responsible for setting and monitoring the boundaries between a instructional relationship and friendship with young participants. Cave Leaders should operate to the club's and SUI's agreed code of conduct, which emphasises enjoyment, equality and the general well being of young people. The SUI model of good practice should help children to demonstrate an awareness of equality and respect for Cave Leaders, other members of their group and the practices of the safe caving. The club and parents/guardians should afford Cave Leaders the respect they deserve and make them aware of any special needs of the child. Club/organisational procedures should support the Cave Leaders' / SUI's model of good practice, thus ensuring protection for both the Leader and participant. In so doing, Cave Leaders should feel able to make a complaint in an appropriate manner and have it dealt with through an effective complaints procedure. They should be able to appeal any decision through an effective appeals procedure.

In a Caving context, certain types of coaching require a "hands on approach" i.e. it may be necessary to support a child in order to physically demonstrate a particular technique or overcome a specific obstacle. This should only occur when necessary and in an open and appropriate way with the knowledge, permission and full understanding of the child concerned and his/her parents/guardians.

SUI recommends where possible, Cave Leaders should avoid:

- spending excessive amounts of time with children away from others
- being alone with a child in a cave for a excessive amount of time
- taking children to the Cave Leader's home
- taking children on journey's alone in their car

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SUI expects that Cave Leaders should not:

- use any form of corporal punishment or physical force on a child
- exert undue influence over a participant in order to obtain personal benefit or reward
- engage in rough physical games, sexually provocative games or allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind, and/or make sexually suggestive comments about, or to, a child
- take measurements or engage in certain types of fitness testing without the presence of another adult
- undertake any form of therapy (hypnosis etc.) in the training of children

GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

SUI believes that parents/guardians have the primary responsibility for the care and welfare of their children. Parents/guardians should encourage their children to participate in caving for fun and enjoyment and should ensure that their child's experience of caving is a positive one. Lessons learned in children's caving will shape values and attitudes in adult life. They should always remember that children participate in caving for their own enjoyment not that of the parents/guardians.

SUI believes that parents/guardians and Cave Leaders will ideally work in partnership to promote good practice in children's caving and to support all efforts to protect against verbal, physical or sexual abuse in caving activities. To do so, parents/guardians should ensure that caving clubs treat their children with fairness, respect and understanding, and that the club is fulfilling its responsibility to safeguard children. They should encourage their children to tell them about anyone causing them harm. They should become aware of club procedures and policies, in particular where changes are made that effect them or their children, and be informed of all matters relating to ethics and good practice. They should check that the *Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Caving in Ireland* has been adopted in the club/organisation.

Parents/guardians should remember that children learn best by example. To assist in the promotion of good practice with the club they should:

- be aware of the Cave Leaders and their role within the club
- show appreciation of and respect for Cave Leaders and their decisions
- encourage their child to abide by the rules
- focus on the fun and participation of the child in the activity
- liaise with the Cave Leaders in relation to medical conditions of their children and any requirement for their child's safety

To promote the procedures of good practice in caving parents/guardians should be:

- encouraged to become members of the club, where feasible, and take an active interest in the running of the club or any Caving activities in which their children take part
- willing to become the Club Children's Officer
- informed of the training programmes and be satisfied with the general environment that is created for their children
- informed if their child sustained an injury during caving activities
- informed of problems or concerns relating to their children.
- informed in advance and have their consent sought in relation to matters regarding away trips, camps or specially organised activities

Comments and suggestions by parents/guardians should always be considered and their complaints acknowledged and dealt with as they arise through an effective and confidential complaints procedure.

Parents/guardians should not:

- ignore or dismiss complaints or concerns expressed by a child which relate to his/her involvement in caving
- put undue pressure on their child to participate
- take safety for granted
- treat the club as a child-minding service

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GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN

Children have a great deal to gain from Caving in terms of their personal development and enjoyment. The promotion of good practice in Caving will depend on the co-operation of all involved, including child members of Caving clubs. Children must be encouraged to realise that they also have responsibilities to treat other children and Cave Leaders with fairness and respect.

Children in Caving are entitled to:

- be safe
- participate in Caving activities on an equal basis, appropriate to their ability and stage of development
- be treated with dignity, sensitivity and respect
- be happy, have fun and enjoy Caving
- comment and make suggestions in a constructive manner
- make a complaint in an appropriate way and have it dealt with through an effective complaints procedure
- be afforded appropriate confidentiality
- be represented at decision making bodies/meetings within their Caving club/organisation
- have a voice in the running of their club
- be listened to
- be believed

Children should undertake to:

- Be safe and have fun
- respect the caves and fellow cavers
- approach the Children's Officer with any questions or concerns they may have

Children should not:

- use violence, use unnecessary, inappropriate physical contact
- bully
- tell lies about adults or other children
- spread rumours
- keep secrets about any person who may have caused them harm

SUPERVISION OF AWAY TRIPS

Attention to the following factors will help to promote safety:

- written permission of parents/guardians should be obtained for all overnight away trips. Parents/guardians should inform the club/Cave Leader at the outset of any medical condition or special needs of their child
- all adults who travel on away trips with children should be carefully chosen
- adults/Cave Leaders accompanying or participating in an away trip should make known any medical condition/special needs to the Caving Club in advance
- the roles and responsibilities of adults participating in away trips should be clearly defined
- The Cave Leader should have overall responsibility for the children's well being, behaviour and sleeping arrangements.
- where there are mixed groups there should be at least one female in the leadership structure
- the leader should submit a report to the Caving Club as soon as possible after the end of the trip
- as a norm, adults should not share a room with a child. Where the presence of an adult is needed there should be more than one child in the room with the adult. If children are sharing a room, it should be with those of the same age and sex
- adequate adult:child ratios should be observed
- Cave Leaders are discouraged from travelling alone in their cars with children
- if a child suffers a significant injury or an accident the parents/guardians should be informed as soon as possible

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SAFETY

SUI recommends that all Caving clubs should ensure that a clear statement of specific and potential risks attached to Caving is widely publicised to all members. They should also have specific procedures in place for safeguarding against such risks. The following practices should apply in order to promote safety:

- activities being undertaken should be suitable for the ability, age, and experience of the participants
- equipment should meet the highest possible standards and be appropriate to the maturity of the participants
- where protective equipment is deemed necessary it should be used
- First Aid should be available for all training sessions and caving trips. There should be a proper First Aid Kit in a Comfort Sac. First Aid should be a basic element of a Cave leader's training – SUI's BCL and CL Assessment requires a valid First Aid Certificate before validation
- injuries should be recorded, with a note of the action taken in relation to each one. It is recommended that each club maintain an accident/incident book with a specific incident form for completion by Cave Leaders
- parents/guardians should be notified, by the Cave Leader, of injuries/illness which their children incur while participating in a caving activity
- all clubs should have a simple and widely known emergency plan to ensure safety procedures
- children should be taught the principles of safe caving and be encouraged to abide by them, keeping in mind that many rules are there for their safety
- it is important that before children participate in a caving activity, they have learned and agreed personal safety rules. If Cave Leaders take children into potentially dangerous situations they should hold the appropriate qualification required by the SUI – such as deep water or vertical sections

INSURANCE COVER

All clubs should ensure that appropriate insurance cover is in place to cover the activities of the club, Cave Leaders and participants. For away trips parents/guardians should be made aware of the need for comprehensive insurance to cover their child, e.g. health/medical insurance etc. Adults transporting children in their cars should be aware of the extent and limits of their motor insurance cover, particularly in relation to acceptable numbers and liability.

REGISTRATION, DROPOUT AND CLUB TRANSFERS

Loss of club members, including adult transfers, should be monitored. Any unusual or unexpected dropout or club transfer of children or Cave Leaders should be checked out by the Club Children's Officer. If any concerns regarding a child or children's welfare are raised the matter should be handled in accordance with procedures outlined in this Code.

DISCIPLINE IN CHILDREN'S CAVING

Discipline in Caving should always be positive in focus, providing the structure and rules that allow participants to learn to set their own goals and strive for them. It should encourage young people to become more responsible for themselves and therefore more independent.

- the main form of discipline should be positive reinforcement for effort. It should encourage the development of emotional and social skills as well as skills in caving
- children should be helped to become responsible about the decisions and choices they make within caving, particularly when they are likely to make a difference between safety and danger
- there should be no place for fighting, over-aggressive or dangerous behaviour in caving
- participants should treat others in a respectful manner. They should not interfere with, bully or take unfair advantage of others

THE USE OF SANCTIONS

The use of sanctions is an important element in the maintenance of discipline. However, Cave Leaders should have a clear understanding of where and when particular sanctions are appropriate. It should be remembered that effectively controlled organisations and successful Cave Leaders are characterised by the sparing use of sanctions. The age and developmental stage of the child should be taken into consideration when using sanctions.

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Recommended use of Sanctions:

Sanctions should be fair and consistent and in the case of persistent offence, should be progressively applied.

The following steps are suggested:

- rules should be stated clearly and agreed
- a warning should be given if a rule is broken
- a sanction (for example, use of time out) should be applied if a rule is broken for a second time
- if a rule is broken three or more times, the child should be spoken to, and if necessary, the parents/guardians may be involved
- sanctions should be used in a corrective way that is intended to help children improve now and in the future. They should never be used to retaliate or to make a Cave Leader feel better
- when violations of group rules or other misbehaviours occur, sanctions should be applied in an impartial way
- sanctions should not be used as threats. If rules are broken sanctions should be implemented consistently, fairly and firmly
- sanctions should not be applied if a Cave Leader is not comfortable with them. If an appropriate action cannot be devised right away, the child should be told that the matter will be dealt with later, at a specified time and as soon as possible
- once sanctions have been imposed, it is important to make the child feel s/he is a valued member of the group again
- a child should be helped, if necessary, to understand why sanctions are imposed
- a child should not be sanctioned for making errors in a caving trip
- sanctions should be used sparingly. Constant sanctioning and criticism can cause a child to turn away from caving

PROTECTION

SUI firmly support the principle that a central goal for all involved in children's caving is to provide a safe, positive and nurturing environment where children can develop and enhance their physical and social skills. Promoting a child centred ethos should go hand in hand with identifying and eliminating practices that impact negatively on safe and enjoyable participation in children's caving.

AREAS OF RISK FOR CHILDREN IN CAVING

Awareness of risk to children's happiness and welfare in caving should be seen as central to protection against harm. Such risk could include the following:

- children suffering significant harm by being deprived of proper supervision and safety
- Cave Leaders, parents/guardians subjecting children to constant criticism, sarcasm, rejection, threatening behaviour or pressure to perform at unrealistic levels
- the infliction of any form of non-accidental injury or other forms of child abuse

SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN CAVING

- the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco should be actively discouraged as being incompatible with a healthy approach to caving activity
- a cave Leader should not smoke when underground with children or drink alcohol before taking a group into a cave
- Cave Leaders in children's Caving should refrain from seeking sponsorship from the alcohol and tobacco industries

BULLYING

The risk of bullying and harassment by adults and by children should be anticipated by taking active steps to prevent it occurring. A prompt and decisive response should be made to any indications that it is taking place.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is repeated aggression be it verbal, psychological or physical, which is conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behaviour, which is intentionally aggravating and intimidating and occurs mainly among children in social environments such as schools, sports clubs and other organisations working with children. It includes behaviours such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting or extortion by one or more children against a victim. It is the responsibility of Cave Leaders to deal with bullying that may take place in the group/club. Each club should have a clear policy on bullying which is known to members and implemented by Cave Leaders. Incidents of bullying should be dealt with immediately and not tolerated under any circumstances.

Many children are reluctant to tell adults that they are being bullied. Older children are even more reluctant. This underlines the need for constant vigilance and encouragement to report bullying.

Types of Bullying

Bullying can occur:

- child to child - includes physical aggression, verbal bullying, intimidation, damage to property and isolation
- adult to child - includes the use of repeated gestures or expressions of a threatening or intimidatory nature, or any comment intended to degrade the child
- child to adult - includes the use of repeated gestures or expressions of a threatening or intimidatory nature by an individual child or a group of children

Combating Bullying

All clubs/organisations should have an anti-bullying policy, which includes the following measures:

- raising awareness of bullying as an unacceptable form of behaviour
- creating a club ethos which encourages children, Cave Leaders and parents/guardians to report bullying and to use the procedures of the complaints mechanism of the organisation to address this problem

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- providing comprehensive supervision of children during caving trips
- providing a supportive environment for victims of bullying
- obtaining the co-operation of parents/guardians to counter bullying

CHILD ABUSE

A Caving club, like any other organisation that includes children among its members, is vulnerable to the occurrence of child abuse. This possibility should be openly acknowledged and addressed in its formal policies and procedures. An environment in which awareness of what constitutes abusive behaviour and a willingness to tackle the issue head on is the most likely to achieve effective implementation of child protection measures. It is only by discussing and agreeing procedures and best practice that all Cave Leaders can be assured that they are providing the safest and most enjoyable experiences in caving for the children and for themselves.

CHILD PROTECTION IN CAVING

SUI believes that the prevention and detection of child abuse depends on the collaborative effort of everyone concerned. The following factors are central to effective child protection in caving:

- acceptance by all involved with children that abuse, whether physical, psychological or sexual is wrong, severely damages children and must be confronted
- awareness of the behavioural and physical indicators of various forms of abuse
- knowledge of the appropriate response and action to be taken where abuse is revealed or suspected
- vigilance, and avoidance of all situations conducive to risk
- open, trusting and co-operative relationships within the club and with parents/guardians and others concerned with children's progress or welfare
- willingness to co-operate with the Statutory Authorities (police authorities, health boards or social services), in relation to sharing information about child protection concerns at any time
-

PROTECTIONS FOR PERSONS REPORTING CHILD ABUSE ACT, 1998 (IRL)

The Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to persons who report child abuse reasonably and in good faith to the Health Board or the Gardai. This means that, even if a reported suspicion of child abuse proves unfounded, a plaintiff who took an action would have to prove that the reporter had not acted reasonably and in good faith in making the report. This Act came into operation on 23rd January, 1999. The main provisions of the Act are:

- the provision of immunity from civil liability to any person who reports child abuse reasonably and in good faith to designated officers of Health Boards or any member of *An Garda Síochána*;
- the provision of significant protections for employees who report child abuse. These protections cover all employees and all forms of discrimination up to and including, dismissal;
- the creation of a new offence of false reporting of child abuse where a person makes a report of child abuse to the appropriate authorities knowing that statement to be false. This is a new criminal offence designed to protect innocent persons from malicious reports.

SUI draws attention to the fact that this Law does not exist in Northern Ireland where any person wrongly accused can seek recourse under the laws of slander, libel or malicious prosecution.

SOURCES OF CHILD ABUSE

It is important to realise that children may be subjected to abuse by parents/guardians or other family members, persons outside their family, other children, or those who have responsibility for their care for one reason or another for short or long periods of time.

CATEGORIES OF ABUSE

All Cave Leaders should be familiar with signs and behaviours that may be indicative of child abuse. Though a child may be subjected to more than one type of harm, abuse is normally categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. For detailed definitions of abuse, refer to *Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (Department of Health & Children) and *Co-operating to Protect Children* (Volume 6 of the Children (NI) Order regulations). The categories of abuse may be briefly summarised as follows:

Child Neglect

Neglect is normally defined in terms of an omission, where a child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and

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safety, attachment to and affection from adults, or medical care. It may also include neglect of a child's basic emotional needs.

Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific point. For instance, a child who suffers a series of minor injuries is not having his or her needs for supervision and safety met. The threshold of significant harm is reached when the child's needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well being and/or development is severely affected.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the relationship between an adult and a child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child's need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. It is rarely manifested in terms of physical symptoms. For children with disabilities it may include over-protection or conversely failure to acknowledge or understand a child's disability.

Examples of emotional abuse include:

- Persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming;
- Where the level of care is conditional on his or her behaviour;
- Unresponsiveness, inconsistent or unrealistic expectations of a child;
- Premature imposition of responsibility on the child;
- Over or under protection of the child;
- Failure to provide opportunities for the child's education and development;
- Use of unrealistic or over-harsh disciplinary measures;
- Exposure to domestic violence.

Children show signs of emotional abuse by their behaviour for example, excessive clinginess to or avoidance of the parent/guardian, their emotional state (low self-esteem, unhappiness), or their development (non-organic failure to thrive). The threshold of significant harm is reached when abusive interactions dominate and become typical of the relationship between the child and the parent/guardian.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury that causes significant harm to a child, including:

- Shaking;
- Use of excessive force in handling;
- Deliberate poisoning;
- Suffocation;
- Munchausen's syndrome by proxy (where parents/guardians fabricate stories of illness about their child or cause physical signs of illness);
- Allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a child;
- For children with disabilities it may include confinement to a room or cot, or incorrectly given drugs to control behaviour.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others, For example:

- Exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child;
- Intentional touching or molesting of the body of a child whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification;
- Masturbation in the presence of a child or involvement of the child in the act of masturbation;
- Sexual intercourse with the child, whether oral, vaginal or anal;
- Sexual exploitation of a child;
- It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

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SIGNS OF CHILD ABUSE

Signs of abuse can be physical, behavioural or developmental. A cluster or pattern of signs is the most reliable indicator of abuse. The following indicators should be noted. It is important, however, to realise that all of these indicators can occur in other situations where abuse has not been a factor and that the list is not exhaustive.

Physical Indicators

Unexplained bruising in soft tissue areas
Repeated injury
Black eye(s)
Injuries to mouth
Torn or bloodstained clothing
Burns and scalds
Bites
Fractures
Marks from implements
Inconsistent stories, excuses relating to injuries

Behavioural Indicators

Unexplained changes in behaviour - becoming withdrawn or aggressive
Regressive behaviour
Difficulty in making friends
Distrustful of adults or excessive attachment to adults
Sudden drop in performance
Change in attendance pattern
Inappropriate sexual awareness, behaviour or language
Unusual reluctance to remove clothing
Reluctance to go home

CHILDREN WHO MAY BE ESPECIALLY VULNERABLE TO ABUSE

Children in certain situations may be especially vulnerable to abuse. These include children who, for short or long periods, are separated from parents or other family members and depend on other adults for their care and protection. Children with disabilities may also be more at risk as the nature of their disability sometimes limits communication between themselves and others and they may depend more than most children on a variety of adults to meet their needs, for example, for care and transporting.

NEED FOR INTERNAL PROCEDURES IN CAVING CLUBS

Each club should have clear procedures for responding to reports or concerns relating to the welfare and safety of children. All Cave Leaders, children and parents/guardians should be aware of how to report and to whom concerns should be reported within the club. These procedures should be consistent with Statutory Authority guidelines, i.e. *Children First* and *Our Duty to Care* and with the procedures outlined in this Code. Copies of the Statutory Authority guidelines should be available in all Caving clubs. Everyone involved in child protection matters should be aware of their responsibility to work in co-operation with the statutory child protection authorities.

RECOGNISING AND REPORTING OF SUSPECTED OR ACTUAL CHILD ABUSE

The ability to recognise child abuse depends as much on a person's willingness to accept the possibility of its existence as it does on knowledge and information. It is important to note that child abuse is not always readily visible, and may not be as clearly observable as the text book scenarios might suggest. If a Caving Leader or a parent/guardian is uneasy or suspicious about a child's safety or welfare the following response should be made:

Grounds for Concern

Consider the possibility of child abuse if there are reasonable grounds for concern. Examples of reasonable grounds are:

- a specific indication from a child that s/he has been abused
- a statement from a person who witnessed abuse
- an illness, injury or behaviour consistent with abuse
- a symptom which may not itself be totally consistent with abuse, but which is supported by corroborative evidence of deliberate harm or negligence
- consistent signs of neglect over a period of time

In some cases of child abuse the alleged perpetrator will also be a child and it is important that behaviour of this nature is not ignored. Grounds for concern will exist in cases where there is an age difference and/or

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difference in power, status or intellect between the children involved. However, it is also important to distinguish between normal sexual behaviour and abusive behaviour. Persons unsure about whether or not certain behaviours are abusive and therefore reportable, should contact the duty social worker in the local health board or social services department where they will receive advice.

Reporting Child Abuse

The following items should be followed in reporting child abuse to the Statutory Authorities:

- Observe and note dates, times, locations and contexts in which the incident occurred or suspicion was aroused, together with any other relevant information;
- Report the matter as soon as possible to the person designated for reporting abuse (the senior office holder, normally the Chairperson). If the Chairperson has reasonable grounds for believing that the child has been abused or is at risk of abuse, s/he will make a report to the health board/social services who have statutory responsibility to investigate and assess suspected or actual child abuse;
- In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk and the Chairperson is unable to contact a duty social worker, the police authorities should be contacted. **Under no circumstances should a child be left in a dangerous situation pending intervention by the Statutory Authorities;**
- If the Chairperson is unsure whether reasonable grounds for concern exist or not, s/he should informally consult with the local health board/social services. S/he will be advised whether or not the matter requires a formal report;
- A Chairperson reporting suspected or actual child abuse to the Statutory Authorities should first inform the family of their intention to make such a report, **unless doing so would endanger the child or undermine an investigation;**
- A report should be given by the Chairperson to the Statutory Authorities in person or by phone, and in writing;
- It is best to report child abuse concerns by making personal contact with the relevant personnel in the Statutory Authorities.

RESPONSE TO A CHILD REPORTING ANY FORM OF ABUSE

The following points should be taken into consideration:

- It is important to deal with any allegation of abuse in a sensitive and competent way through listening to and facilitating the child to tell about the problem, rather than interviewing the child about details of what happened;
- It is important to stay calm and not to show any extreme reaction to what the child is saying. Listen compassionately, and take what the child is saying seriously;
- It should be understood that the child has decided to tell about something very important and has taken a risk to do so. The experience of telling should be a positive one so that the child will not mind talking to those involved in the investigation;
- The child should understand that it is not possible that any information will be kept a secret;
- No judgmental statement should be made against the person against whom the allegation is made;
- The child should not be questioned unless the nature of what s/he is saying is unclear. Leading questions should be avoided. Open, non-specific questions should be used such as Can you explain to me what you mean by that;
- The child should be given some indication of what would happen next, such as informing parents/guardians, health board or social services. It should be kept in mind that the child may have been threatened and may feel vulnerable at this stage.

ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST CAVE LEADERS

Each caving club should have agreed procedures to be followed in cases of alleged child abuse against Cave Leaders. If such an allegation is made, two procedures should be followed:

- The reporting procedure in respect of the child
- The procedure for dealing with the Cave Leader

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Special Considerations

The following points should be considered

- the safety of the child making the allegation and any others who are/may be at risk should be ensured and this should take precedence over any other consideration. In this regard, the Caving club/organisation should take any necessary steps which may be immediately necessary to protect children
- if a Cave Leader is the subject of the concern s/he should be treated with respect and fairness

Steps to be taken within the Caving Organisation

Where reasonable grounds for concern exist the following steps should be taken by the club/organisation:

- advice should be sought from the local health board/social services with regard to any action by the club deemed necessary to protect the child/children who may be at risk
- the matter should be reported to the local health board/social services following the standard reporting procedure outlined above
- in the event that the concern is connected to the actions of a Cave Leader in the club, the Cave Leader involved in the concern should be asked to stand aside pending the outcome of any investigation by the Statutory Authorities. It is advisable that this task be undertaken by an appointed committee member other than the Chairperson who takes the responsibility for reporting. When the Cave Leader is being privately informed by the Chairperson of a) the fact that an allegation has been made against him/her and b) the nature of the allegation, s/he should be afforded an opportunity to respond. His/her response should be noted and passed on to the health board/social services personnel.

All persons involved in a child protection process (the child, his/her parents/guardians, the alleged offender, his/her family, Cave Leaders) should be afforded appropriate respect, fairness, support and confidentiality at all stages of the procedure.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is about managing information in a respectful, professional and purposeful manner.

Confidentiality should be maintained in respect of all issues and people involved in concerns about the welfare of a child or bad practice within a club. It is important that the rights of both the child and the person about whom the complaint has been made are protected.

The following points should be borne in mind:

- a guarantee of confidentiality or undertakings regarding secrecy cannot be given, as the welfare of the child will supersede all other considerations
- all information should be treated in a careful and sensitive manner and should be discussed only with those who need to know
- information should be conveyed to the parents/guardians of the child about whom there are concerns in a sensitive way
- giving information to others on a need to know basis for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality

DEALING WITH ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS

Anonymous complaints can be difficult to deal with but should not be ignored. In all cases the safety and welfare of the child/children is paramount. Any such complaints relating to inappropriate behaviour should be brought to the attention of the Chairperson. This information should be checked out and handled in a confidential manner. Any such complaints relating to child protection concerns should be handled in accordance with procedures outlined in this Code.

RUMOURS

Rumours should not be allowed to hang in the air. Any rumours relating to inappropriate behaviour circulating in Caving organisations should be brought to the attention of the Chairperson and checked out without delay. Any ensuing information should be handled confidentially and with sensitivity. If the Chairperson has reasonable grounds for concern that a child has been abused s/he should refer the matter to the Statutory Authorities, using the standard reporting procedure. (See 5.13) If there is any doubt about the requirement to report the substance of a rumour, advice should be sought from the duty social worker in the local health board or social services department.

Children should be encouraged to report problems or concerns directly to their Children's Officer and/or to their parents/guardians, or any trusted adult, regardless of how minor or serious the problem might be. Parents/guardians should also encourage children to inform them of any such problems or concerns. Open trusting relationships between adults and children will help to ensure that all-important issues are dealt with in a constructive manner.

RECORDING ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE CHECKLIST

Name of Child

Age

Any special factors

Parent's/Guardian's names

Home address and (phone number, if available)

Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns, or passing those of somebody else? If so, record details

What has prompted these concerns? Include dates and times of any specific incidents

Any physical signs? Behavioural signs? Indirect signs?

Has the child been spoken to? If so, what was said?

Have the parents/guardians been contacted? If so, what has been said?

Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? If so, record details

Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details

References and Source Material

- *The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995*, HMSO
- *Our Duty to Care (DHSS) 2000*, Child Care NI
- *Pastoral Care in Schools - Child Protection*, Department of Education, Northern Ireland 1999
- *Child Protection in Sports Fact Sheet*, Sports Council for Northern Ireland
- *Protecting Children from Abuse*, the National Coaching Foundation, England
- *Code of Ethics and Conduct for Sports Coaches*, National Coaching Foundation, England
- *Getting it Right, Developing your Child Protection policies procedures*, Northern Ireland Volunteer Development Agency 1999
- *Co-Operating to Protect Children, Vol.6 Guidelines & Regulations Children (NI) Order 1995*, HMSO
- *Children First - National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children*, Stationery Office Dublin 1999
- *Report of the Independent Inquiry into Matters Relating to Child Sexual Abuse in Swimming*, Stationery Office, Dublin 1998
- *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1992*
- *Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998*, Stationery Office, Dublin 1999

Useful Contacts

Eastern Health Board

Regional Directors
Child Care and Family Support Services
Dr Steeven's Hospital
Dublin 8.
Tel No. 01-6790700, Fax No. 01-6771523

Midland Health Board

Regional Director
Child Care and Family Support Services
Primary Care Unit, General Hospital
Tullamore, Co Offaly
Tel No. 0506-46283, Fax No. 0506-46266

Mid-Western Health Board

Regional Director
Child Care and Family Support Services
87 O'Connell Street
Limerick
Tel No. 061-483592, Fax No. 061-317407

North-Eastern Health Board

Regional Director
Child Care and Family Support Services
1st Floor. Foley's Forge
Dunshaughlin, Co Meath
Tel No. 01-8250907, Fax No. 01-8250695

South-Eastern Health Board

Regional Director
Child Care and Family Support Services
Dublin Road
Lacken
Kilkenny
Tel No. 056-20400, Fax No. 056-52813

Western Health Board

Regional Co-Ordinator
Child Care and Family Support Services
Child Care Unit
Merlin Park Hospital
Galway
Tel No. 091-757631, Fax No. 091-755632

North-Western Health Board

Manorhamilton
Co Leitrim
Tel No. 072-20400, Fax No. 072-20431

Southern Health Board

Wilton Road
Cork
Tel No. 021-545011, Fax No. 021-545748

The Commissioner

An Garda Síochána
Garda Headquarters
Phoenix Park
Dublin 8
Tel No. 01-6660000

National Coaching and Training Centre

University of Limerick
Plassey
Limerick
Tel No. 061-202895, Fax No. 061-338374

Irish Sports Council

21 Fitzwilliam Square
Dublin 2
Tel No. 01-2407700, Fax No. 01-2407777

Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation

Kildare Street
Dublin 2
Tel No. 01-6313800, Fax No. 01-6611201

The Sports Council for Northern Ireland

House of Sport
Upper Malone Road
Belfast BT9 5LA
Tel No. 02890-381222

NI Volunteer Development Agency

Annsagate House
70/74 Ann Street
Belfast BT1 4EH
Tel No. 02890-236100

Child Care NI - Children (NI) Order

11 University Street
Belfast BT7 1FY
Tel No. 0 2890-234499

NIPPA-Pre-School Playgroup

Enterprise House
Boucher Crescent
Belfast BT 12 6H2
Tel No. 02890-66825

Northern Ireland Institute of Coaching

House of Sport
Upper Malone Road
Belfast B79 5LA
Tel No. 02890-381222

Programme Manager Family & Child Care

Down Lisburn HSS Trust
Health Centre, Linenhall Street
Lisburn
Tel No. 02892-665181

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Pre-Employment Consultancy Service

Child Care Unit
Department of Health and Social Services & PS
Room 508a, Dundonald House
Upper Newtownards Road
Belfast BT4
Tel No. 02890-524290

Programme Manager Family & Child Care

Foyle HSS Trust
Riverview Social Services
Abercorn Road
Derry BT48 6SA
Tel No. 02871-266111

Programme Manager Family & Child Care

North Down & Ards HSS Trust
23-25 Regent Street
Newtownards
Tel No. 02891-816666

Programme Manager Family & Child Care

Lakeland Sperrin HSS Trust
2 Coleshill Road
Enniskillen BT74 7HG
Tel No. 02866-344000

Programme Manager Family & Child Care

Aldergrove House
6 Ashgrove Road
Newry BT34 1QN
Tel No. 028302-60505

Programme Manager Family & Child Care

Lakeland Sperrin HSS Trust
Tyrone & Fermanagh Hospital
Hospital Road
Omagh Tel No. 02882-245211

Programme Manager

Craigavon & Banbridge Trust
Bannvale Road
Moyallen Road
Gilford BT63 5JZ
Tel No. 02838-831983

Programme Manager Family & Child Care

Newry & Mourne HSS Trust
5 Downshire Place
Newry BT34 1DZ
Tel No. 028302-64324

Programme Manager Family & Child Care

Armagh & Dungannon HSS Trust
Gosford Place
The Mall
Armagh BT61 9AR
Tel No. 02837-522262

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Director of Children's Services

Homefirst HSS Trust
The Cottage
Greenmount Avenue
Ballymena BT43 6DA
Tel No. 02825-633700

Assistant Director of Children's Services

Headquarters, Causeway HSS Trust
8E Coleraine Road
Ballymoney BT53 6BP
Tel No. 028276-61337

NSPCC Helpline

Jennymount Court
North Derby Street
Belfast BT 15 3HN
Freephone 0800-800500 (24 hours)

Programme Manager

Homefirst HSS Trust
Pinewood Offices
101 Fry's Road
Ballymena
Tel No. 02825-658531

Designated Officer – Contacts

Below are the contacts for Advice and Information Officers attached to the countries 10 Health Boards in the Republic of Ireland. The table shows the contact name, address and phone number and also the areas that they serve. The advice and information officer can offer you advice or assist you in the implementation of policies and procedures related to the Code and Children First. Each of these areas will also have a duty social work service who can assist you with a child protection concern.

Advice and Information Officers

Northern Area Health Board
<u>Jan Davis</u> 01 8908703
<i>Child Care Strategy Unit, Northern Area Health Board</i>
<i>Swords Business Campus, Balheary Road, Swords, Co. Dublin</i>
East Coast Area
Lorraine Egan 01 2014273
East Coast Area HB, Southern Cross Business Park, Boghall Rd, Bray, Co. Wicklow
Counties: South Coastal Area of Dublin, Wicklow to West Wicklow, Carlow
South Western Area
<u>Mary Tallon</u> 01 4100450
Unit 9 The Maltings Business Park, Marrowbone Lane, Dublin 8
Counties: South Inner City, South Co. Dublin, West Wicklow and Co. Kildare
Midland Health Board
<u>Charney Weitzman</u> 0506 27735
Child Care Unit, Tullamore Hospital, Co. Offaly
Counties: Longford / Westmeath and Laois / Offaly
Mid-Western Health Board
<u>Anne Murray</u> 061 483520 / 086 8508353 / amurray@mwhb.ie
87 O'Connell Street, Limerick
Area: Limerick
<u>Jan Godfrey</u> 065 6823921
Community Care Dept., Tobartaoscain, Ennis, Co. Clare
Area: Clare
<u>Laura Nee</u> , 067 38314
Annbrook House, Limerick Rd., Nenagh, Co. Tipp
Area:North Tipp

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Western Health Board
<u>Brid Burke</u> 091 548440
Community Care Services
EHB Newcastle Road, Galway
Area: Galway
<u>Sandra Claxton</u> , 094 42579
St. Mary's Hospital, Castlebar, Co. Mayo
South Eastern Health Board
<u>Ann Purcell</u> , 0503 33797
Children First, Community Care, SEHB, Castlehill, Carlow
Carlow / Kilkenny
Waterford
Wexford
South Tipperary
Southern Health Board
<u>Fiona Mullins</u> , 021 4529010
Ellis House, Ballyvolane Commerical Park, Ballyvolane, Cork
<u>Maurine Crowley</u> , 021 4550040 / 087 9192665
Ellis House, Ballyvolane Commerical Park, Ballyvolane, Cork
South Lee
North Lee
North Cork
West Cork
Kerry
North-Eastern Health Board
<u>Trish Callan</u> , 042 9385457
Child Care Managers Officer, NEHB, Dublin Road, Dundalk
Area: Cavan / Monaghan
Louth – not yet in place
Meath – not yet in place
North-Western Health Board
<u>Noreen Heron</u> 071 55133
Markievicz House, Barack Street, Sligo
Donegal
Sligo / Leitrim



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