



# Tennis Northern Child Protection Protocol (CPP)



## **Introduction**

Tennis Northern works closely with and has responsibility for all participants, many of whom are children (defined as under 18 years of age by Children's Act 1989). Tennis Northern detests the abuse of all people, but especially of its members in general and children in particular. This abuse can be expressed as neglect, bullying by peers or adults, verbal, emotional, physical or sexual abuse. Tennis Northern and its affiliated clubs have a responsibility to ensure that appropriate policies and procedures are established to safeguard all children and its members from any threat of or form of abuse while participating in any aspect of our sport. All children, able bodied or disabled have the right to protection.

Tennis Northern views the role of sport as being an important aspect in the development of physical skills, self-esteem and the ability to be a team player, as well as offering the opportunity to achieve individual success through sport.

Tennis Northern has adopted within its programme a policy intended to safeguard its athletes from all forms of abuse. This protocol stems from Tennis Northern's objectives of "Encourage and Promote tennis as an activity in the region that promotes health and safety of all participants" and is binding on all of Tennis Northern's affiliated clubs and their members and is intended to reinforce a policy of zero tolerance of any form or threat of abuse towards children or members.

Tennis Northern's Child Protection Advocate is the Regional Development Manager and any questions or queries relating to this document should be addressed to them.

## **Purpose of a Child Protection Protocol (CPP)**

The purpose of this protocol is to provide clubs, coaches, administrators, officials, volunteers and parents with good practice information about child protection in tennis programmes.

The responsibility for safeguarding athletes, children and young people is with all adults who play a role in their lives. This refers to all who work, directly and indirectly, with children including those responsible for the administration and co-ordinating of the tennis organisation, affiliated clubs and its activities.

Athletes, children and young people have a fundamental right to participate in sport that is safe and protects them from potential or actual injury, abuse and other harm. Ensuring a child's safety involves minimising or eliminating activities and actions that are more likely to cause harm. This includes protecting them from: injury; bullying; all forms of abuse, age-inappropriate training regimes and unsafe equipment/and or facilities.

Tennis Northern aims to foster an environment within the sport that ensures the safety and wellbeing of all members. An awareness of the CPP guidelines amongst all involved with children and young people in tennis, also assists in reducing risk to tennis clubs/organisations, schools, coaches, volunteers and parents. Knowledge of this protocol amongst the wider tennis community may also safeguard adults involved with children and young people in tennis by preventing the possibility of false accusations.

The welfare of all children, our athletes and members is and always must be, paramount.

## **Defining Abuse**

Child abuse means the harming (whether physically, emotionally or sexually), ill-treatment, abuse, neglect or deprivation of any child or young person (Section 2, Children and Young Persons Amendment Act, 1994). Tennis Northern considers this definition and examples below applicable to all its members.

There are four main types of abuse that can affect a young person at any age. These include physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect. The effects can be so damaging that if not treated may follow the individual into adulthood

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse is any act that results in inflicted injury to a child or young person. Injuries caused through abuse/neglect are known as non-accidental injury (NAI). It may include, but is not restricted to:

- Shaking
- Hitting, kicking
- Throwing
- Burning
- Training methods which are inappropriate for the age and physiological development of the child/athlete. For example, intense fitness warm ups such as running around the courts could be harmful for very young children if not adjusted to their age and skill level.
- Giving young people alcohol or inappropriate drugs would also constitute as child abuse

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse is any act or acts that result in the sexual exploitation of a child or young person, whether consensual or not. It may be perpetrated by an adult, older child or similar aged child. It may include. But is not restricted to:

- Non-contact abuse
  - Exhibitionism
  - Suggestive behaviours or comments
- Contact abuse
  - Touching breasts, genital areas or any inappropriate physical contact
  - Exposing children to any obscene or inappropriate material or images

Adults have a responsibility at all times to establish and maintain appropriate professional boundaries in their relationships with athletes. Activities that may involve physical contact with young people could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. The power of a coach over young athletes, if misused, may lead to abusive situations developing. The relationship that a coach has should be similar to that of a teacher/student relationship within an educational environment.

### **Emotional/Psychological Abuse**

Emotional abuse is any act or omission that results in impaired psychological, social, intellectual and/or emotional functioning and development of a child or young person. It may include, but is not restricted to:

- Rejection or isolation
- Inappropriate or continued criticism, threats, humiliation or accusations of the child or young person
- Exposing children to, or involvement in anti-social or illegal activities
- Bullying actions such as sarcasm, persistent teasing, tormenting

### **Neglect**

Neglect is any act or omission that results in impaired psychological functioning, injury and/or development of a child or young person. It may include, but is not restricted to:

- Failing to provide medical care when necessary
- Neglectful supervision – failure to provide developmentally appropriate supervision of the child or young person, leading to increased risk or harm
- Abandonment – leaving a child or young person in a situation without arranging necessary care for them and with no intention of returning

The above definitions of physical, sexual, emotional/psychological abuse and neglect are from the Children's commissioner, 2004

### **Principles**

- Sport NZ require organisations that run programmes for children/young people to have a child protection policy and/or an appropriate code of conduct that outlines requirements, practices and procedures for ensuring the safety of children and young people in their care.
- The protection and nurturing of children is the responsibility of adults. Children are never responsible for abuse/neglect inflicted on them by others, either from adults or other children.

## Practice Guidelines

### **Maintaining good practices amongst coaches, officials and volunteers means:**

- The safety and wellbeing of children/young people must be paramount at all times
- Athletes are treated with dignity and respect
- Good practice is promoted to reduce the possibility of abusive situations
- Always working in an open environment avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication
- Ensuring that at camps, holiday programmes or trips away, adults (other than the child's parents/care givers) should never enter children's rooms or invite children/young people into their room.
- They refer and deal with concerns regarding safeguarding children/young people according to the steps within this protocol.
- Securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- Ensuring any form of abuse directed at a child from others, whether this is from another child or adult, is challenged. Definitions of abuse are outlined within this protocol.
- Following the reporting process of abuse as outlined in this protocol
- *Where a coach believes it is necessary to touch an athlete in order to correct their technique, it is important that they:*
  - *Consult with the parent/caregiver if present; and/or*
  - *Ensure the child is made aware of the purpose of the contact and gives consent.*
  - *Consider the appropriateness of the ways in which technique is corrected involving touch*
- Knowing and understanding the Tennis Northern Child Protection Protocol

**All coaches, officials and volunteers must ensure they never:**

- Take, *or be in the presence of* children/young people in secluded places where they will be alone.
- Share a room with a child other than their own
- Reduce a child/young person to tears as a form of control
- *Deliberately do something to make someone feel diminished or embarrassed.*
- Use *inappropriate language*, or allow other children to use inappropriate language unchallenged (*e.g. swearing, name calling/put downs, sarcasm, innuendo, sexualised connotations, culturally or racially offensive comments*)
- Leave the club, school or organisations venue before all players have been collected or are continuing to be supervised by appropriate adults.
- Cause a player to lose self esteem by embarrassing, humiliating or undermining the individual.
- Yell or shout at players as a reprimand or in response to anger
- Abuse your position of power or trust with children or adults
- Engage in, or allow unchallenged any form of abuse as described in this protocol.
- Make sexually suggestive comments or actions to, or in the vicinity of a child/young person, even in fun.
- Engage in rough, physically or sexually provocative games.

The relationship between coaches and club officials who hold a position of trust and responsibility with athletes, in particularly, but not limited to those under the age of 18, must be professional and appropriate at all times. This relationship is also an important one. Not only does it develop a child or young person's tennis potential and self esteem but also allows them to develop an appropriate and trusting relationship with a responsible adult.

The power and influence a coach has in a professional relationship with a child/young person cannot be underestimated. Coaches have power beyond the court. While coaching athletes you can teach respect, teamwork, tolerance, and integrity. What coaches do and say can change the attitudes and damaging behaviours that contribute to any form of abuse. It is vital for all coaches as well as other volunteers, to recognise the responsibility that have and ensure they do not misuse their position of power and trust.

## **Privacy/Confidentiality**

When disclosures of child abuse are made that fall in the remit of this Child Protection Protocol, those to whom disclosure is made are required in all circumstances to follow the procedures outlined. All those involved in dealing with issues of Child Protection are required to respect the provisions of confidentiality which relate to their responsibility. The Privacy Act 1993 and the Health Information Privacy Code (1994), authorises disclosure of information necessary to prevent or lessen serious and imminent harm to any individual (to the extent necessary) to statutory social workers or the police.

The Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1989 also gives way to privacy under certain circumstances. These deal with the reporting of child abuse (s15) and protection of an individual from proceedings (disciplinary, civil and criminal) when disclosing child abuse to either a Child, Youth and Family (CYF) social worker or the Police (s16).

Tennis Northern encourages good communication with the Tennis Northern Child Protection Advocate, CYF and Police to keep children safe. Requests for information from agencies such as CYF or the Police should be referred directly to the Tennis Northern Child Protection Advocate, who is responsible for ensuring such requests are dealt with promptly and appropriately. Upon their request, information can or must be released to a CYF social worker, police officer or care and protection coordinator (s66 CYF Act).

Release of information to others, outside of these categories, does not attract the same protection. Therefore great care is needed when dealing with requests for information from third parties and any such request should always be discussed with the Tennis Northern Child Protection Advocate.



## Handling disclosures of Abuse

As a trusting adult, disclosures of abuse may be made to you by the victim or another person, such as a sibling or parent/caregiver. The following is a guide to handling disclosures:

- If a child/young person discloses abuse, listen. Tell them that no one deserves to be hurt and that it was not their fault.
- Do not over-react. Let them know you're glad they told you.
- **Ensure the child/young person's immediate safety.** Try not to alert the alleged abuser. Seek advice and support from the Tennis Northern Child Protection Advocate.
- **Do not** ask investigative or leading questions (as this can contaminate evidence), but **assess safety** by asking open-ended questions, such as "Who did this?", "When did this happen?", "Where did this happen?"
- Discuss confidentiality and its exclusions and that you will need to tell someone else.
- Notify the Tennis Northern Child Protection Advocate immediately regarding all concerns.

## Assessing Risk with Suspected/Actual Abuse or Disclosure of Abuse

Assessing risk falls into two main categories: non-urgent concern or child needing immediate safety. The following guides you as to what is non-urgent and urgent.

### **Non-urgent Child Protection Concerns exists**

- Injuries seem suspicious or are clearly the result of abuse
- Interaction between child and parent/caregiver seems angry/threatening/aggressive
- Disclosure of abuse
- Suspicion of abuse towards a child by any other person (i.e. a coach, parent, older child etc.)

### **The Child is in need of Immediate Safety**

- Child has been severely or sexually abused, or injured as a result of abuse (known, suspected or a disclosure of)
- There is immediate danger for the child or for other children, in or out of the home environment
- Your safety is compromised
- Child is home alone and there are safety concern

## Legal and Privacy Issues

### **Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act**

#### **S15 Reporting of ill treatment or neglect of child or young person**

Any person who believes that any child or young person has been, or is likely to be, harmed (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually), ill-treated, abused, neglected, or deprived may report the matter to a social worker or a member of the police.

#### **S16 Protection of person reporting ill treatment or neglect of child or young person**

No civil, Criminal, or disciplinary proceedings shall lie against any person in respect of the disclosure or supply, or the matter of the disclosure or supply, by that person pursuant to section 15 if this Act of information concerning a child or young person (whether or not that information also concerns any other person), unless the information was disclosed or supplied in bad faith.

#### **S66 Government Departments may be required to supply information**

- (1) Every Government Department, agent, or instrument of the crown and every statutory body shall, when required, supply to every Care and Protection Co-ordinator, CYF social worker or member of the police such information as it has in its possession relating to any child or young person where that information is required –
  - a. For the purposes of determining whether that child or young person is in need of care or protection (other than on the ground specified in section 14 (1)(e) of this Act): or
  - b. For the purposes of proceedings under this part of this Act.

## How to respond to Child Protection concerns

- If you have concerns about the behaviour of an adult or child to another child or concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child, you must
  - Believe the child
  - Ensure the child's immediate safety
  - DO NOT make any decisions alone
  - DO NOT investigate the child yourself, and
  - DO NOT question the alleged offender.
  
- If **the child is in need of medical attention** you must adhere to the following:
  - Seek medical assistance without delay
  - State the concern is child protection – if necessary the medical agency will refer the matter to the appropriate authorities
  - Take advice from the appropriate authorities regarding notifying the parents/carers. (You will need to pass on parental contact details)
  - Contact the Child Protection Advocate immediately to inform of events/outcomes
  - Document everything you have observed
  - Record a factual statement of events using the Tennis Northern referral form and forward to the Child Protection Advocate without delay
  - Discuss the support needed for yourself or other tennis club members with the Child Protection Advocate if you feel necessary.

- If the **child is NOT in need of medical attention** you must to the following:
  - Assess the risk: What is happening to the child?  
What is happening around the child?  
What has been disclosed?
  - If a **non-urgent** concern for the child exists:
    - Contact the Child Protection Advocate for immediate advice/action
    - Contact Child, Youth and Family (CYF) if the Child Protection Advocate is not available OR You need to go directly to CYF (0508 326 459)
    - Contact the parents/carers **only if safe to do so** (this may be left to police, CYF or the Child Protection Advocate)
    - Ensure the Child Protection Advocate is informed immediately of events/outcomes
    - Document everything you observed and record a factual statement of events using the Tennis Northern referral form and forward it to the Child Protection Advocate without delay.
    - Discuss the support needed for yourself or other tennis club members with the Child Protection Advocate if necessary.
  - If an **urgent** concern for child exists:
    - Contact Police immediately – State of concern relates to child protection (Dial 111)
    - Contact CYF – (0508 326 459)
    - Contact the parents/carers **only if safe to do so** (this may be left to Police, CYF or the Child Protection Advocate)
    - Ensure the Child Protection Advocate is informed immediately of events/outcomes
    - Document everything you observed, record a factual statement of events using the Tennis Northern referral form and forward to the Child Protection Advocate without delay.

## **Photography and Video**

All those involved with athletes in tennis must follow these guidelines on photography/video and the use of photography/video material. Any device that has the ability to take photographs or video are included in these guidelines.

As it is currently possible for photographs or video to be taken with a mobile phone unknown to the subject, Tennis Northern requires all clubs to advise its members to be vigilant in changing rooms and other areas of tennis clubs and to report immediately to the Child Protection Advocate any concern arising from the photographic/video use of mobile phones.

It has also been identified that some clubs are using 'websites' as a means of making their clubs known. It is necessary that prior authorisation from parents, or caregivers has been approved before photographing, filming or posting photographs and videos online. During competitions and tournaments, look out for people who don't appear to be relatives or friends of children who are participating but, nevertheless, seem to spend a lot of time videoing or photographing them. Report these incidents to the organisers or the organisations management immediately.

Tennis Northern feels that Professional photographers 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 5 working days before the event.

Students or amateur photographers wishing to record the event should seek accreditation with the event organiser by producing their student or club registration card and a letter from their club/educational establishment outlining their motive for attending the event.

A system should be established whereby a record is made of the individuals name, address and club. Professionals are required to register prior to the event and their identification details also recorded. Ideally identification details should be checked with the issuing authority prior to the event. On registering, promoters of events should consider issuing an identification label on the day, which can serve to highlight those who have accreditation. Where regular events occur, the identifying label should be changed to prevent unofficial replication.

## **Child Protection Advocate**

The Child Protection Advocate will be someone who:

- Has suitable experience working with children
- Demonstrate a proven history of considerate and robust decision making regarding highly sensitive and challenging scenarios
- Can provide two confidential references. These references must be confirmed through telephone contact
- Provide consent to undergo a police check
- Agree to undergo training for the role.
- Is able to put processes in place whereby education of child protection within the tennis community is ongoing.
- Is able to maintain current knowledge with local and central government policy regarding Child Protection. This knowledge needs to continually inform the Tennis Northern Child Protection Protocol.

## **Recommendations**

- All coaches and team managers (paid or unpaid) are vetted from their suitability to work with children/young people and must agree to a police check as part of the recruitment process
- This check should be carried out by each club employing the services of a coach
- Suitable training needs to occur for the Tennis Northern Child Protection Advocate to ensure they are equipped with the necessary skills for this role.

## Tennis Northern Referral Form to Child Protection Advocate

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Club: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Section 1: Details of the child concerned**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_  
Disability/Special Needs: Yes/No  
If yes, give detail: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents/Carers:

Address:

Phone Numbers: Home:

Mob:

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### **Section 2: Details of Referrer**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Club: \_\_\_\_\_ Position in the club: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Numbers: Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Mob: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Section 3: Details of adult/child against whom the allegation is made (if applicable)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position in the club: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Numbers (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Section 4: The concern or incident**

Date of incident: \_\_\_\_\_  
Place of incident: \_\_\_\_\_  
Did you observe the incident/concern: Yes/No

If no, give details of the person who did:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position in the club: \_\_\_\_\_



Contact details:

Details of concern (record accurately, including as many details such as time and place, if any injuries sustained).

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Child's account of what happened (please state what the child actually said 'word for word' or indicate if not their words).

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