

HOW TO KEEP COACHING AND TEACHING VIRTUALLY SAFE

It is a really challenging time at the moment, due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. As a result sports, clubs and activities have had to be cancelled. However, we understand that sports organisations are looking at how they can stay interactive with their teams and club members during this period of time. Below is some specific guidance from the Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) that may be relevant to sports clubs and organisations.

Safeguarding Procedures

During this time, it is important to consider what your organisations safeguarding procedures say about online use. The CPSU [online safety topic page](#) has information and advice on this topic. You may need to apply some of your existing guidance and procedures to the new environments/settings that have arisen.

However, the principles of online safeguarding still apply.

Therefore, for all online teaching and coaching the following fundamental questions should be considered:

- Do you have an [online safety policy](#) and an [acceptable use statement](#)? These should include the use of social media for staff and young people. It would be useful to revisit this and reissue it to coaches, clubs and members.
- Are there specific procedures to follow in the event of concerns arising during online interaction, for example between the coach (deliverer) and a young person? These can be linked directly to your safeguarding procedures but need to be clear and accessible.
- Do all those using, or likely to use, online coaching know and understand what the [codes of conduct](#) are for these environments? Do you have a process for signing up to these online? This is a great opportunity to promote codes of conduct to all members and remind them of the consequences of not following these codes.
- What processes are in place to ensure that coaches selling or offering their coaching services online are registered with you (where appropriate), have

been **recruited appropriately** and have the correct qualifications and insurance to offer online coaching?

- Parental involvement is critical to ensure you have parental consent for involvement in the activity. How is this managed by the coach?
- What is the process for addressing concerns raised, such as instances of misconduct online and how do these work during the current pandemic?
- Consider the platform that is being used. Are privacy and confidentiality settings appropriate? For more information on different websites and platforms see **NetAware**.

Online Group Coaching Sessions

- Ensure that all members have access to the sessions to avoid anyone feeling excluded from the group. Consider how communication between the coach and the children and their parents is managed. Is this in line with your procedures?
- Be clear on what the sessions will be used for. This will ensure that participants are clear on what to expect and will help to reduce any anxieties on this new way of training.
- Have sessions been risk assessed in light of the specific needs of the audience? How will risk be managed? For example, if there is an injury as a result of activity during the session.
- Is there an opportunity for the group to interact directly, or is this only via the coach? If the former, how will this be monitored and moderated? How will cyber bullying be addressed?
- Are **codes of conduct** clear for coach and participants?

One on One Online Coaching Sessions

These sessions should take place in an open environment, for example the living room and should be organised with parent's consent and supervision. Consider how communication is managed between the coach and the child and their parents. This should be in line with your procedures.

- 1) Have sessions been risk assessed and how will risk be managed?
- 2) Are **codes of conduct** clear for coach and participants?

Treat coaching a group online as you would a physical group. Set up a closed group for you and your young athletes which includes their parents, and communicate with them all through this rather than one to one contact with athletes. Consider asking a parent to set the group up or at least be an admin so that everything is kept transparent. Facebook or WhatsApp* both work well for this and allow the sharing of links, photo's or video clips, chat, and keep a record of the communication. Provide your club welfare officer with an update on your communication method and a list of athletes that you will be engaging with so that they may keep a log of club activities. Be sensible and follow the usual thought processes in terms of protecting both you and your athletes.

Training Programmes and Schedules

Many clubs are posting training schedules online that can be completed at home. These should be carefully managed with regular discussions to ensure skills and techniques are being performed correctly to avoid risk of injury.

Further guidance

- [Online safety topic page](#) - CPSU
- [Undertaking remote teaching safely](#) - NSPCC Learning

Related information

- [Coronavirus advice and support for parents and carers](#) - NSPCC