



# athlete welfare toolkit

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# know the signs

## how do we spot signs of harrassment, abuse or assault?

**A coach or sports staff member might display some of the following behaviours if there is abuse occurring:**

Signs of abuse are not always obvious, and one of these behaviours on its own does not necessarily mean that abuse is happening, but you should be aware of that these behaviours can also be abusive and manipulative.

Every warning sign and every concern should be taken seriously and can be reported to the nearest welfare officer.

- 1 Refusing to allow an athlete privacy or to make their own decisions about personal matters
- 2 Insisting on physical affection such as hugging, tickling etc even if the athlete does not want it
- 3 Being overly interested in the sexual development of a child or teenage athlete
- 4 Insisting on time alone with an athlete with no interruptions
- 5 Favouritism, making a particular athlete feel 'special' compared with others
- 6 Picking on a particular athlete, talking about them negatively with the rest of the training group
- 7 Discussing or sharing sexual jokes or materials with an athlete online or offline
- 8 Paying for things like physio or massage for athletes, buying expensive gifts or giving athletes money for no apparent reason

### Signs in the athlete that could indicate abuse is taking place:

There are many reasons why an athlete's behaviour may change, but it is best practice to check for these signs. If you notice a combination of these warning signs, it is time to seek help and advice.

You do not need to wait for 'proof' to report a concern - you should talk to a designated welfare officer as soon as possible.

- 1 Suddenly having nightmares or other sleeping problems
- 2 Becoming withdrawn or very clingy
- 3 Personality changes or suddenly seeming insecure. Outbursts of anger, being very defensive
- 4 Regressing to younger behaviours
- 5 Unaccountable fear of particular places or people
- 6 Changes in eating habits
- 7 Becoming secretive
- 8 Having unexplained gifts such as toys, money, mobile phones, expensive clothes
- 9 The child athlete acting in a sexual way with toys or objects



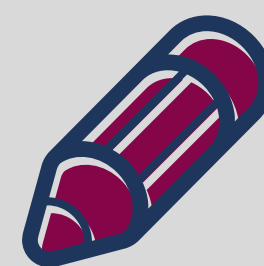
# what happens if I decide to report?

helping you to know what to expect in athletics

## First Contact

Once you have alerted your sport's welfare officer or a member of staff, you can expect a safeguarding, welfare, or case management officer to get in touch with you. This individual will be trained in the safeguarding procedures and is there to support you throughout the reporting process.

STEP  
01



## Gathering information

Although you may have briefly explained why you are reporting an individual in your initial reporting, you should not be asked to complete a written statement at any time, especially unsupported. If you are asked to write a statement, you should question whether this is appropriate, and if there is another way you could communicate your experience.

STEP  
02

## An Interview

If the officer needs more information from you, you will likely be invited to an interview where you will be asked some questions about your experience. This should not be an interrogation, and you should be supported at all times.

STEP  
03



## Investigation

At this point, the officer will decide whether or not to conduct a full investigation which will mean the accused is temporarily suspended while the investigation is underway

STEP  
04

At the end of the investigation period, the case management officer will collate the information and present the findings to an independent case management committee.

## Timeline

During the investigation you will have the opportunity to reach out for help from professionals to support you during this time. The process may take up to 6 months, or longer, while the investigator conducts interviews.

STEP  
05



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# who can I talk to?

your  
first  
point  
of  
call

Talking can really help you process your own experience and help you understand what has happened. Consider reaching out to professionals as well as family and loved ones

Each National Governing Body has a welfare and safeguarding team. You can reach out to them without forming an official report.

If you are an athlete from Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland or England, you may consider reaching out to the welfare officers for your country. British Athletics also have a dedicated welfare team to support any British Athletics Athletes.

## my concern - online reporting form

MyConcern has been created by child protection and safeguarding professionals, relentless in their efforts to keep children, young people and adults at risk safe from harm.

MyConcern is a simple to use, safe and secure software for recording and managing all safeguarding concerns in athletics in any setting.

No matter how small a concern, you are able to log it here.

This system can be used to submit a safeguarding concern by clubs, athletes, coaches, parents or any other individual.

[Click here for MyConcern Website](#)



### Welsh Athletics

Lead Safeguarding Officer: Carl Williams  
safeguardingandwelfare@welshathletics.org  
07792 242153

### Scottish Athletics

Welfare Officer: Morva Mackenzie  
morva.mckenzie@scottishathletics.org.uk  
07983081122



### England Athletics

EA Safeguarding Lead: Emma Davenport  
welfare@englandathletics.org



### Athletics Northern Ireland

Welfare Officer: Allister Woods  
welfare@athleticsni.org,  
028 9060 2707



### British Athletics

UKA Safeguarding Lead: Angus Macdonald  
safeguarding@uka.org.uk



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# where to get help

## Useful resources & helplines



### THINK U KNOW

UK organisation which protects children online & offline



### ANN CRAFT TRUST

Safeguarding Adults & Young People at Risk



### GOV.UK

Domestic Abuse - How to Get Help



### NHS

Help after rape and sexual assault



### SPORT IN MIND

UK Based Mental Health in Sport Organisation



### SPORTING WELLNESS

Mental Health Support for Athletes



### MIND

Mental Health Charity



### NSPCC

UK Organisation for Child Abuse Prevention



### VICTIM SUPPORT

Support and advice for abuse cases in England & Wales



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