

KINDS AND INDICATIONS OF ABUSE

Main Forms of Abuse

It is generally acknowledged that there are four main forms of abuse:

Neglect

Neglect occurs where adults fail to meet a child's basic needs like the need for food or warm clothing, or where adults fail or refuse to give children love, affection and attention. Children might also be constantly left alone or unsupervised.

Neglect in volleyball could include a teacher or coaches not ensuring children are safe, exposing them to extremes of temperature or to unnecessary risk of injury.

Physical Abuse

Where adults physically hurt or injure children by hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning or biting or by giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison. Attempted suffocation or drowning also comes within this category.

In a volleyball situation, physical abuse might occur when the nature and intensity of training exceeds the capacity of the child's immature and growing body.

Sexual Abuse

Adults - both male and female - who use children to meet their own sexual needs, abuse girls and boys. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and fondling. Showing children pornographic material (books, videos, pictures) is also a form of sexual abuse.

In volleyball the power of the coach, team manager or official over young performers could, if misused, also lead to abusive situations developing.

Emotional Abuse

Persistent lack of love and affection, where a child may be constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted may make the child nervous and withdrawn. Emotional abuse may also occur when there is constant overprotection (which prevents children from socialising), or there is neglect, physical or sexual abuse.

In volleyball emotional abuse might occur if children are subjected to constant criticism or unrealistic pressure to perform consistently to high or unrealistic standards.

Any kind of abuse, harassment or criticism based on racial or ethnic origins which amounts to racial discrimination can also amount to emotional abuse. Bullying of a child, perpetrated either by other children or by an adult with the care or supervision of the child, can also amount to emotional abuse.

Abuses of any sort can be perpetrated not only by adults, but may also be caused by other children.



Section Four *(continued)*

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Indications of Abuse

Abuse in all its forms can affect a child at any age. The effects can be so damaging that if untreated, may follow an individual into adulthood.

Recognising child abuse is not always easy - even for experts. The examples listed below are not a complete list and they are only intended to indicate behavioural signs in children which may have been caused by factors possibly including child abuse. They do not in any way confirm that child abuse has occurred.

- The child says that she or he is being abused, or another person says they believe (or actually know) that abuse is occurring
- The child has an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to injury
- The child's behaviour changes, either over time or quite suddenly, and he or she becomes quiet and withdrawn, or alternatively becomes aggressive
- The child appears not to trust adults, e.g. a parent or coach with whom she or he would be expected to have, or once had a close relationship, and does not seem to be able to make friends
- He or she becomes increasingly neglected-looking in appearance, or loses or puts on weight for no apparent reason
- The child shows inappropriate sexual awareness for his/her age and sometimes behaves in a sexually explicit way



Bullying

Another type of abuse is bullying, here the abuser may well be another young person. Both girls and boys can be bullies and they can do both physical and emotional bullying. Bullying usually occurs when there is inadequate supervision, in volleyball this could happen in the changing rooms.

In volleyball the bully could be the parent/carer who pushes too hard or the coach or teammates who adopts a win-at-all costs philosophy.

Harassment

The main characteristic of harassment is that it is unwanted by the recipient. Each individual must determine what is and is not acceptable to them. It is the unwanted nature of the conduct that distinguishes harassment from acceptable behaviour.

NSPCC
Cruelty to children must stop. FULL STOP.
HELPLINE 0808 800 5000