

Endurance Ireland Child Protection Policy



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1.0 Policy

Endurance Ireland is fully committed to safeguarding the wellbeing of its members. Every individual in the organisation should at all times, show respect and understanding for the members rights, safety and welfare and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the organisation and the guidelines contained in the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland. Endurance Ireland is committed to ensuring the following:

1. The welfare of the child is paramount.
2. All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to be involved in sport.

2.0 Basis of Policy

The aim of this code is to promote good practice by everyone involved in Endurance Ireland to provide a safe, health and enjoyable environment for young members. We firmly believe that the focus of our sport should be on the needs of the child rather than on competition or success. All children have the right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. A child is defined as under 18.

The guidance provided in this code of conduct is based on the principles set out in the following publications:

"Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport" Irish Sports Council

"Children First" National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children

Endurance Ireland in order to comply with the Code of Ethics have undertaken to implement the following:

- Adoption of the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport by the Club
- Hold Annual Elections for all Committee Members
- Clearly defined the roles of all Committee Members
- Appointment at least one Child Protection Officer who will also be the designate person to act as liaison with the Statutory Authorities in relation to reporting of allegations or suspicions of child abuse.
- Ensure best practice throughout the club by publishing all rules, codes etc to all members
- Implementation of procedures to report suspected abuse or complaints made.
- Ensure all minutes of all meetings are recorded and appropriately filed.

3.0 Good Practice

By adhering to this Code of Good Practice within the Club, Endurance Ireland can help ensure that our sport will be safe and fun for young participants, while also ensuring that those undertaking roles within our sport are protected.

3.1 Good Practice Guidelines

- Putting the child's welfare, safety and enjoyment first, before winning or achieving goals
- Treating all young people/disabled adults equally, with respect and dignity
- Making sport and activities fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play
- Being an excellent role model
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- Ensuring consent forms are obtained and signed prior to participation in events
- Ensuring that all children helping out at events are under the supervision of their parent or guardian
- Keeping up to date with insurance for sport
- Keep a written record of any injury/incidents that occur, including details of treatment if any given
- Ensure that mixed groups if brought away, are always accompanied by an adult male and adult female
- Ensure that all children are aware of the code of conduct within the club
- Challenge sensitively any inappropriate behaviour from a child and immediately inform the Club's Child Protection Officer
- Following any incident that you feel your actions could be misinterpreted, immediately write up a report and submit it to the Child Protection Officer

DO NOT ENGAGE IN THE FOLLOWING:

- Exert undue influence over a young participant in order to gain personal benefit or reward
- Share a tent/room alone with a young person
- Engage in rough contact, sexually provocative games, inappropriate touching of any kind, and/or make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child
- Engage in a sexual relationship with a young person. This is considered a breach of trust. If the young person is below the age of consent it may be illegal and is a criminal matter
- Use any form of corporal punishment or physical force on a young person
- Undertake any form of therapy (hypnosis, physical etc.) in the training of young people

4.0 Dealing with Bullying

Endurance Ireland operates a no tolerance policy in regards to bullying within the Sport. It is important that action is taken within the club to prevent bullying in sport and to aid any victims of bullying. The following guidelines have been adopted by the club and its members:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns. Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority
- Create an open environment
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully separately
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to keep it a secret

- Keep records of what was said (detailing who, when, what was said/happened)
- Report any concerns to the Club's Child Protection Officer or the school/location of the bullying

4.1 Club Actions against Bully(ies)

The following measures can be implemented against bully(ies) by the Child Protection Officer(s):

1. Talk with them and explain the situation and try and get the bully to understand the consequence of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim
2. Inform the bully(ies) parents in the event it is another junior
3. Instigate Disciplinary committee in the event it is not a junior
4. Insist on the return of any items which have been removed from the victim and compensation where appropriate to the victim
5. Impose sanctions on the bully as per the disciplinary committee
6. Encourage and support the bully to change behaviour
7. Hold meetings with the families of those involved to review progress
8. Keep the Committee informed of all actions
9. Keep a written record of all action taken

5.0 Control Measures to ensure the Protection of Children at Endurance Ireland Events

5.1 Responding to Disclosures, Suspensions & Allegations

Endurance Ireland acknowledges that the safety of young people is everyone's responsibility, however false allegation can occur. In the event that a young person says or indicates that they are being abused, or information is obtained which gives concern that a young person is being abused, you should react accordingly. The Protection for Person's Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998, provides immunity from civil liability to persons who report child abuse "reasonably and in good faith" to the HSE or the Gardai. This act also covers the offence of "false reporting".

All those working with children even if in a voluntary capacity, have a responsibility to ensure that children are protected from harm, but do not hold responsibility for deciding whether or not abuse has taken place. This is the role of the statutory agencies.

5.2 Reporting of Suspected or Actual Child Abuse

If you are uneasy or suspicious about a child's safety or welfare the following response guidelines should be followed:

- 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 Child Protection Officer (CPO)
- If the CPO judges there to be reasonable grounds for believing that the child has been abused or is at risk of abuse they will make a report to the HSE who have a statutory responsibility to investigate and assess suspected or actual abuse.
- In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate/serious risk and the CPO is unable to contact a Social Worker, the Gardai will be called. **At no time is a child to be left in a potentially dangerous situation.**

- In the case where the CPO is unsure if reasonable grounds existing they can informally consult with the Statutory authorities. The CPO should inform the family prior to making such a report unless they feel that this would endanger the child.

5.3 Reacting to a Report

If a child reports any form of abuse to you the following actions should be taken:

- React calmly
- Listen compassionately and carefully, try to keep questions to a minimum
- Facilitate the child to explain the problem and take them seriously
- Remember the child has decided to tell about something very important and has taken a risk doing so. The child may be frightened or anxious.
- Reassure the child
- If the nature of what the child is saying is unclear, use open, non-specific questions such as “Can you explain to me what you mean by that”
- The child should be given some indication of what happens next
- Carefully record all details and report immediately to the CPO.

Do not panic, allow any shock or distaste to show, ask direct questions, speculate or make assumptions, make negative comments about the alleged abuser, approach the alleged abuser, make promises to keep it a secret.

5.4 If an Endurance Ireland volunteer is the subject of a disclosure or referral

If an allegation is made, two procedures must be followed: first the procedure outlined in 5.2 and secondly below:

The safety of the child making the allegation and any others who may be at risk should be ensured and this should take precedence over any other consideration. In this regard Endurance Ireland will take any steps it deems necessary to protect children. In a volunteer is the subject of concern they should be treated with respect and fairness.

Where reasonable grounds for concern exist the following steps should be taken: Advice should be sought from the HSE with regard to any action taken by Endurance Ireland deemed necessary to protect the child who may be at risk. The matter should be reported to the local HSE services, the Volunteer involved in the concern should be asked to stand aside pending the outcome of any investigation by the Statutory Authorities. The Volunteer should be informed in private that there has been an allegation and the nature of that allegation. They should be afforded an opportunity to response and their response should be passed on to the HSE.

5.5 Confidentiality

The requirements of the Data Protection laws should be adhered to. A breach of confidentiality is a serious matter. Every effort must be made by all involved to ensure that full confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled on a need to know basis only. The

information shall be stored with the Child Protection Officer in a safe place with access to the Chairperson only.

5.6 Anonymous Complaints

While more difficult to investigate anonymous complaints alleging child abuse cannot be ignored. In all cases, we believe that the safety and welfare of the child is paramount. Any such complaints relating to inappropriate behaviour should be brought to the attention of the Child Protection Officer. The information shall be checked out and handled in a confidential manner. The Committee shall also be informed.

5.7 Rumours

Rumours should not be allowed to flourish. Any rumours shall immediately be brought to attention of the Child Protection Officer and investigated/referred without delay. The Committee must also be informed.

Appendix 1 Sample Referral Form

Your Name: _____

Your Position: _____

Child's Name: _____

Child's DOB: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Child's Contact Details: _____

What prompted your concerns (include date and time of incidents if any, also any physical and behavioural signs observed):

Have you spoken to the child about this? As best you can record exactly what the child said and what you said:

Action taken so far:

Have parents been contacted? _____

What has been said: _____

If external agencies contacted give dates and times:

Appendix 2 Consent forms for Juniors

ENDURANCE IRELAND JUNIOR RIDER CONSENT FORM

I _____ (Adult's name) consent to the child(ren) in my care named below to ride at the following ride: -

Venue : _____

Class entered: _____

Date: _____

I understand the rules of Endurance Ireland and agree to endeavour that the child in my care will follow these rules.

I understand that Endurance Ireland have certain criteria under which a child must be accompanied by an adult and I give my consent for the children under my care to be accompanied by _____. They will remain with the child(ren) throughout the ride and understand that this responsibility is not transferable.

In the event of either Adult or Child(ren) for some reason being unable to complete the ride the other rider(s) must also retire.

1. _____ child's name.

2. _____ child's name.

For all rides please complete and return this form to the organiser with your entry. (Junior Members consent forms can be signed at time of membership for full year)

Signed: _____ (Guardian)

_____ (Accompanying rider if different from above)

Appendix 3 List of Health and Safety Rules

This is an event organised by Endurance Ireland. The following is our list of Health and Safety Rules that we would ask you to follow at all times during the ride. This is to ensure that we all enjoy the day without causing inconvenience and danger to other riders and members of the public.

A few Dos and Don'ts while taking part!

1 Riders must

- 1.1 Be polite at all times
- 1.2 All Children under 14 must be accompanied and their guardian must have signed the Junior Consent form.
- 1.3 All trail riders stay below the maximum speed of 14kph.
- 1.3 Give consideration to other riders, landowners and the general public, particularly when riding through private and state lands and when overtaking or passing .
- 1.4 All horses will pass on the right when overtaking and right shoulder to right shoulder when passing in opposite direction
- 1.5 Pay attention to any special instructions given by the organiser
- 1.6 Be in control of their horse
- 1.8 Dogs must be kept on a leash and not go near the vetting area
- 1.9 Not leave any litter (including equine litter from the trailer / lorry)
- 1.10 Riders must use footwear with at least half an inch heel unless a stirrup cage is used, to prevent the foot slipping through the stirrup.
- 1.11 Riders must wear properly secured hats / crash helmets at all times when mounted. The head gear must comply with the safety as are approved from time to time by the Committee.
- 1.12 No smoking in the forests under any circumstances and no riding outside the tidal areas on the beach

2 Horses

- 2.1 Should be prepared and educated to ensure a reasonable standard of behaviour
- 2.2 Riders should take particular care in vetting area, especially when crowded. Stallions do compete and mares do kick.
- 2.3 Stallions must be bridled at all times and must carry blue ribbons on tail and bridle(both sides)
- 2.4 Tail ribbons are recommended for novice horses (Green) and horses with a propensity to kick (Red)
- 2.5 Save when safely enclosed in a stable, coral, lorry or trailer, a horse must not be left unattended at a ride.
- 2.6 **Junior riders are not permitted to ride or be in control of a stallion at an Endurance Ireland ride.**

3 Tack

- 3.1 Prohibited items include blinkers, hoods, bearing, running, side or check reins, spurs, electronic or mechanical equipment excluding pulse and temperature monitors. Whips in excess of 30 inches and any other items judged by the ride organiser/ veterinary surgeon to be potentially harmful to the welfare of the horse.

It is very important that all adults sign a consent form for children under 14 and that all riders stay on the marked course.

Have fun and if you have any problems please contact the Organiser details below:

Organiser: _____

Phone Number: _____