

Managing Challenging Behaviour Guidance

Overview

When coaching or volunteering within a weightlifting or para-powerlifting club you may, on occasions meet challenging behaviour. This guidance aims to equip you with the information to deal with difficult behaviour. Children's safety is paramount to Weightlifting Wales (WW) and British Weight Lifting (BWL) so we have created this document to help promote good practice, this guidance has been created from the following principles:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All those involved with young athletes (including other children and parents) should be provided with clear guidelines about expected standards of conduct and the process for responding to unacceptable behaviour.
- Children must never be subjected to any treatment that could be considered to be harmful, abusive, humiliating or degrading.
- Some young people will exhibit challenging behaviour as a result of medical conditions and may require specific or additional guidance. These, along with any other unique needs, should be discussed with parents/carers and the child when planning an activity. Extra support should be provided if needed.

Planning

When planning events or sessions, you should include consideration of whether any child involved may need additional support or supervision to participate safely. Things to consider addressing:

- Assessment of additional risk associated with the child's behaviour.
- Appropriate supervision ratios of coaches/volunteers to participants of a session.
- Information sharing for coaches/volunteers on managing any challenging behaviour to ensure a consistent approach.
- Specialist expertise or support that may be needed from carers or outside agencies. This is particularly relevant where it is identified that a child may need a level of physical intervention to participate safely.

Agreeing Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviours

Staff, volunteers, children, young people, and parents/legal guardians should be involved in developing an agreement about:

- What constitutes acceptable
- What constitutes unacceptable behaviour
- Appropriate disciplinary actions for unacceptable behaviour

This can be done at the club AGM or before each competition. We encourage that children should be involved in this process, as they should have a voice on the matter. Also ensure that parents/legal guardians understand the expectations on their children and ask them to reinforce this ahead of any sessions or competitions.

Managing Challenging Behaviour

Responses should always be proportionate to the actions imposed as soon as is practicable and fully explained to the child and their parents/guardian. In dealing with children who display disruptive or challenging behaviour, coaches might consider the following options:

Time out	From the training session
Reparation	The act or process of making amends
Restitution	The act of giving something back
Behavioural reinforcement	Rewards for good behaviour and consequences for negative behaviour
De-escalation of the situation	Talking with the child and distracting them from challenging behaviour
Increased supervision	By coaches/volunteers
Use of individual 'contracts' or agreements	For future or continued participation
Sanctions or consequences	Missing a training session
Seeking additional/specialist support	By working with WW/BWL and other external agencies
Exclusion	Temporary or permanent

The following should never be permitted as a means of managing a child's behaviour:

- Physical punishment or the threat of it
- Refusal to speak to or interact with the child.
- Being deprived of food, water, access to changing facilities or toilets or other essential facilities with the club
- Verbal intimidation, ridicule, or humiliation.

Physical Intervention

Coaches/members should consider the risks associated with employing physical intervention compared with the risks of not employing physical intervention. The use of physical intervention should always:



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- Be avoided unless it is necessary to prevent a child injuring themselves or others or causing serious damage to property.
- Aim to achieve an outcome that is in the best interests of the child whose behaviour is of immediate concern.
- Form part of a broader approach to the management of challenging behaviour
- Be the result of conscious decision making and not a reaction to an adult's frustration.
- Employ the minimum force necessary to avoid injury to a person or serious damage to property.
- Used only after all other strategies have been exhausted.
- Be recorded as soon as possible using the appropriate organisational reporting form and procedure.

Parents should always be informed following an incident where a coach/volunteer has had to physically intervene with their child.

Physical intervention must not:

- Involve contact with buttocks, genitals or breasts.
- Be used as a form of punishment.
- Involve inflicting pain.

Views of the Child

A timely de-brief for coaches/membes, the child and parents should always take place in a calm environment following an incident where physical intervention has been used. Even children who have not directly been involved in the situation may need to talk about what they have witnessed.

There should also be a discussion with the child and parents about the child's needs and continued safe participation in the group or activity.

A Policy for Managing Challenging Behaviour

All clubs have a duty of care to children and young people, therefore should develop and implement policy and procedures on managing challenging behaviour.

It should include:

- The standard of conduct expected from coaches/volunteers and athletes
- How the organisation will respond to unacceptable behaviours
- How your organisation will respond to 'high risk' behaviours
- The circumstances in which physical interventions will be used
- Guidance, support and/or training available to coaches/volunteers
- The circumstances where external agencies will be contacted for support or in response to concerns, eg – WW/BWL, Children's Social Care Services, the Police
- What will happen after an incident with regards to debrief.



All WW/BWL clubs must have arrangements in place to ensure the wellbeing of athletes, including guidance on recording information, who should be informed, and a system for recording and monitoring incidents.

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