Club Guide to Social Media Use With Children and Young People

The world of social media is ever changing and has become firmly embedded in most of our day to day lives. There are many benefits to using social media but we must consider the downsides as well as the upsides to make sure that everyone is kept safe while using social media, and where possible equip people with the knowledge, skills and confidence to stay safe online.

While social media provides an ideal platform for your club to engage with its members and the wider community by sharing news and updates, it can also present some risks.
Here are some things that we should consider when using social media.

If you're a club or organisation

Do

- Make sure that someone at the club is responsible for your club's social media use and is able to access it, monitor it and approve and reject posts as necessary.
- Have an online safety and social media policy that your club members and users are aware of and can access for advice and guidance. The Child Protection in Sport Unit have a sample policy that can be used for guidance: CPSU sample online safety and social media policy
- Make your members and users aware that their behaviour online can reflect on the club's reputation and that it is everyone's responsibility to uphold it.
- Ensure that the content is appropriate for all who may read or access it and no-one will find it upsetting or offensive.
- Always seek permission from parents/carers for their child to use social media platforms such as What's App groups, Instagram etc. Make sure the children are of the right age to use these platforms.
- Engage with younger members of your club who are likely to be social media savvy. Make them aware of what is or is not acceptable behaviour online. Reinforce the importance of being kind to others and being respectful when posting online and using social media platforms. Make them aware that bullying online will not be tolerated and offensive or inappropriate remarks or posts will be removed and challenged.
- Encourage parents to like your page so they can keep informed and engaged and see what is being posted.
- If you are using What's App groups with young people at your club while away from their parents or during training, invite their parents to be in the group so they can participate in the conversations and see the fun and growth their children are having. Do show all the great things your club is doing and achieving.

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Don't

- Be the only adult in a social media group. Always have other members of the club and the children's parents involved so that they can monitor their child's usage and be engaged with their activities.
- Assume that social media will look after itself. The club will need to take responsibility and ownership for all its social media platforms.
- Allow any kind of cyber bullying to take place on your club's social media. Incidents of this kind will need to be tackled by the club with the help of the parents and resolved as quickly as possible.
- Allow posts or comments that could be deemed offensive, violent or threatening to be posted to your social media platforms. It is a good idea for a person/s at the club to approve posts before they are posted to your pages.
- Post or use photos of children on social media without their and their parent's written permission to do so. Do not use their full names or personal information that will make them easily identifiable and open to potential online grooming or bullying.
- Allow links from your social media that could expose children to inappropriate content or nasty comments or pictures.
- Be afraid to use social media platforms, it's a great way to engage with people and your community and to share all the wonderful things you are doing and planning to do. With the right safeguards in place social media can be a great asset to your club and its members and users.

If you're a club, parent or indeed a child you can find useful information, guidance and tips on using social media and how to stay safe online by following the links below.

Webinars for clubs on using social media and guidance on producing your policy can be found in the **Club Zone** of the RYA website under Club Marketing: https://www.rya.org.uk/the-club-zone/Pages/social-media.aspx

Think You Know offer advice and guidance to people who work or volunteer with children.

https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/

UK Safer Internet Centre provide online safety tips, advice and resources to help children and young people stay safe online.

https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/

You may also wish to refer to your local authority's website for regional advice and guidance.

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Photography, images and video

Publishing articles, photos and videos in club newsletters, on websites, in local newspapers etc. is an excellent way of recognising young people's achievements and of promoting your organisation and the sport as a whole. However it is important to minimise the risk of anyone using images of children in an inappropriate way. Digital technology makes it easy to take, store, send, manipulate and publish images.

There are two key principles to bear in mind:

Before taking photos or video, obtain written consent from the child's parents/carers for their images to be taken and used

- A consent form could be included with the event entry form
- Any photographer or member of the press or media attending an event should wear identification at all times and should be fully briefed in advance on your expectations regarding his/her behaviour and the issues covered by these guidelines.
- Do not allow a photographer to have unsupervised access to young people at the event or to arrange photo sessions outside the event.
- Consent should also be obtained for the use of video as a coaching aid. Any other use by a coach will be regarded as a breach of the RYA's Code of Conduct.
- Care must be taken in the storage of and access to images. An image is personal data and should be treated in accordance with your organisation's data privacy policy.

When publishing images, make sure they are appropriate and that you do not include any information that might enable someone to contact the child

- It is preferable to use a general shot showing participants on the water, or a group shot of the prizewinners, without identifying them by name.
- If you are recognising the achievement of an individual sailor and wish to publish their name with their photo, DO NOT publish any other information (e.g. where they live, name of school, other hobbies and interests) that could enable someone to contact, befriend or start to 'groom' the child.
- Ensure that the young people pictured are suitably dressed, to reduce the risk of inappropriate use.

Most sailing activity takes place in areas that are open to the public and it is therefore not possible to control all photography, but any concerns about inappropriate or intrusive photography, or about the inappropriate use of images, should be reported to the organisation's child protection/welfare officer and treated in the same way as any other child protection concern. Parents and spectators should be prepared to identify themselves if requested and state their purpose for photography/filming. The recording of images or video using any type of camera or photographic equipment, including cameras on smartphones and tablets and action cameras used on the water, should not be permitted in showers or changing areas in any circumstances.

Please see full RYA Safeguarding Child Protection Guidelines for further information.

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If you're a parent / carer

As parents and carers you play a key role in how your child accesses the internet and helping them to stay safe online. The internet has its downsides but it also has lots of positives to help your child grow and learn. You don't need to be an expert on the internet or social media platforms to teach your child to stay safe and be aware, there is guidance and information available to help you.

The NSPCC offer some great guidance for parents and have teamed up with 02 to offer expert advice on using social networks, setting up parental controls and adjusting privacy settings.

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/advice-and-info/share-aware.pdf

UK Safer Internet Centre- offer advice and resources to help you as you support your child in using the internet safely, responsible and positively.

https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/

If you're a child

If you are a child it is very possible that you know more than most adults about the internet and how to use it. You probably use it for studying, browsing, social media, socializing and playing games. It is very important that you keep yourself safe when you are online.

- Never give out personal information or passwords when posting or chatting online
- If you wouldn't say it in person, don't say it online
- Treat others how you would wish to be treated
- If something or someone is making you feel worried, upset or uncomfortable tell a trusted adult.

ChildLine have lots of information on keeping yourself safe and protected online and highlighting some of the dangers you could encounter.

https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/