



## SAFEGUARDING LGBTQ+ - YOUNG PEOPLE

**LGBTQ+ children and young people face the same risks as all children and young people, but they are at greater risk of some types of abuse.**

It's essential that sport or activity providers create a supportive and welcoming culture for all children, safe from harm and a place where they can thrive.

Being LGBTQ+ isn't a safeguarding risk, it's how others in our society may behave towards a young person who categorises themselves as LGBTQ+ that may cause risk. Many young people may just want to discuss with you how they feel, so it's important that if they trust you to talk to, you respond in a positive supportive manner.

### What does LGBTQ+ mean?

LGBTQ+ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning and more. This term covers a broad range of people who have different lived experiences and may be at different stages in exploring their gender and sexuality and includes people who are asexual or have differences in sex development (sometimes known as intersex).

### Awareness and understanding

Communication is key, you shouldn't assume any young person would want to be separated or excluded from activities, have a conversation with them regarding their needs and if any changes or amendments are required. This is good practice for all young people, to make them feel heard and valued within your club or activity.

Many children and young people may have known or questioned their sexuality or gender identity from a young age. A large number don't tell anyone until they are older. This may be because they are scared or worried about others' reactions to their identity or sexuality.

To help facilitate a young person's own understanding and confidence, your sport club or activity should promote the [Childline website](#) and contact details as they can support a young person with [advice about their feelings or sexual identity](#).

The window of time between first questioning their identity and starting to accept themselves (or coming-out) can lead to young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health being impacted. For example, they may experience:



- low self-esteem or possibly depression
- feeling a sense of isolation
- minority stress
- a need to prove themselves in other areas of their lives
- imposter syndrome
- fear of bullying

Your club or activity should strive to create a culture of acceptance, awareness and understanding of different types of sexuality and gender identities.

## Key things to remember

- treat everyone with respect and fully implement equal opportunities
- let young people know that they can talk to you and that their privacy will be respected - confidentiality practice should reflect that of your safeguarding procedure
- support young people to find the right information and specialist support services
- reinforce an ethos of acceptance and difference
- support all young people within your club or activity, so they feel valued, heard, able to express themselves and progress in their sport
- challenge abusive or harmful behaviours (homophobia, transphobia, racism, sexism, and any other form of discrimination)
- challenge gender stereotypes and celebrate difference
- promote LGBTQ+ related events and campaigns to demonstrate openly that your club or activity has inclusive values
- do not automatically assume a person's sexual orientation or gender
- promote LGBTQ+ specialist services to everyone in your sport or activity

**The first step to supporting LGBTQ+ young people in your club or activity, is to create and promote an inclusive environment and culture for all children, parents, carers, staff and volunteers, not just LGBTQ+ individuals.**

Everyone within your club, activity or organisations should be made aware of your sports culture of acceptance, where people's individuality is welcomed, valued, listened to, and celebrated.



## The benefits of inclusivity

Creating a safe and accepting space, allows children and young people to:

- express themselves free from prejudice or judgement, which builds confidence and self-esteem
- feel valued and reassured through positive re-enforcement
- seek support and guidance if they should need it - support could also be extended to parents and peers

## How to be inclusive for LGBTQ+ young people

### Have a conversation with the young person

This should be led by the young person with the welfare officer or coach, a parent may also be present. This conversation gives the young person the opportunity to discuss what would work for them regarding changing rooms facilities, training, and competition, and allows them to discuss any worries or other thoughts.

### Inclusion statement and equalities policy

It's important to have inclusivity written into your organisations safeguarding policies and procedures. But this needs to be backed up by real support for relevant LGBTQ+ campaigns or events. For further information, take a look at our [sample anti-bullying policy](#)

### Inclusive use of terminology, language and attitude

Your sport's paperwork should be inclusive and use terminology that is appropriate for everyone. Language used within the club or activity is inclusive as well as externally on social media, within newsletters and all communication with young people, parents and the public.

### Training needs



Training and development of staff and volunteers is an essential part to keeping your club up-to-date and engaged, ensure that inclusivity is included in any training.

## **Inclusive anti-bullying policy**

This should include all forms of discrimination to include the whole LGBTQ+ community and celebrate pride.

## **Challenge negative behaviour**

Ensure you respond to any negative behaviour towards anyone taking part in your sport or activity, reinforcing that your organisation is inclusive and celebrates difference. Any non-inclusive behaviour should be challenged and made clear that this behaviour isn't acceptable.

- Some National Governing Bodies (NGBs) have developed LGBTQ+ guidance. For further information [visit our LGBTQ+](#)
- Having an open discussion with the young people in your club or activity regarding their preferred name, pronouns, needs and concerns will help all members to feel valued and listened to.
- It's a good idea to familiarise yourself with the different types of sexuality and gender identity terminology. You'll probably encounter some of this terminology when working with young people, who may be seeking your support or wanting to know more themselves.
- More information on the correct use of pronouns can be found on the [Pronouns.org website](#) or [Stonewall's International Pronouns Day webpage](#). You can also find a full glossary of LGBTQ+ terms on [Stonewall's website](#).
- If you're part of an NGB or Active Partnership you may have an equality and diversity champion or lead who can support you with advice and guidance to have a more inclusive club.

## **Banter or bullying behaviour**

- Banter is often passed off as being acceptable within a sports setting. However, where is the line between banter and bullying behaviour? Banter may not include all the same elements as bullying, but it doesn't mean it is acceptable.



- All language that is upsetting, offensive, threatening, abusive or violent should be challenged and dealt with appropriately. Just because someone uses certain language to refer to themselves, it doesn't necessarily mean it's acceptable for them to use this language towards others. If you think something is banter or a joke, it doesn't mean others will feel the same.
- It's important to have open communication with everyone involved in your club or activity around acceptable use of language and behaviour, this will help ensure that everyone is aware what is acceptable and what isn't. Information regarding use of inclusive language should be part of your club's or activity's [codes of conduct](#) and promoted across the organisation.
- For further information, take a look at our [guidance on homophobic and transphobic bullying in youth sport](#).

## Challenging sporting stereotypes

- In the past, certain sports have been deemed as gender specific and although there have been vast developments in equality and diversity within sports, there is still a way to go. For example, language such as 'football is a man's sport' and 'ballet is an activity for girls'.
- These stereotypes have generally been based on birth genders and stereotypical gender roles within our wider society and culture. As these roles have developed and changed alongside our everyday life, sport has developed too.
- However, there are still pre-existing gender stereotypes that are hard to shake, such as females being the weaker gender or that males should be tough and not show emotions. These gender stereotypes should be challenged and level the playfield for everyone taking part within your sport or activity.
- Sports organisations should also consider any specific requirements they have around sports kits to ensure inclusivity. Rather than having gender specific kits, young people should be free to wear the kit that they feel most comfortable in.
- Please note that requirements around safety equipment should not be compromised when selecting kit.

## Celebrating difference

- Having positive role models within sports can influence children and young people to first take part in their chosen sport. If a young person sees someone like



themselves taking part in a particular sport or activity, they can identify more closely with the person and the sport and therefore may be inspired to take up this sport.

### ECB/Cricket Regulator resources ;

<https://www.ecb.co.uk/about/policies/safeguarding/policies-and-procedures>

1. Changing and Showering Policy
2. The Anti Bullying Policy
3. Transgender policy
4. Disparity policy

There's a wealth of resources for safeguarding LGBTQ+ young people in sport – we list some of the most useful ones here.

## CPSU and NSPCC resources

- [Childline is celebrating pride](#) – NSPCC Childline is celebrating Pride
- [Homophobic and transphobic bullying in youth sport](#) – CPSU briefing, which includes how to prevent and respond to incidents of homophobia
- [Safeguarding LGBTQ+ children and young people](#) – NSPCC Learning guidance
- [Safeguarding LGBTQ+ young people in sport](#) – CPSU webinar
- [Sexual and gender identity](#) – Childline guidance for young people on sexual orientation, identity, trans identity, transition and sexuality

## Sports resources

- [Guidance for transgender inclusion in domestic sport \(PDF\)](#) – the Sports Councils' Equality Group
- [Equality, diversity and inclusion framework](#) – England Hockey
- [Equality and diversity for clubs](#) – Swim England
- [Equality in sport](#) – the Equality standards for sports
- [LGBT football](#) – FA information and resources
- [Paralympics Games lead the way in celebrating differences](#) – European Commission
- [Rainbow Laces](#) – an LGBTQ+ campaign from Stonewall
- [Transgender inclusion in grassroots sports](#) - Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) and Gendered Intelligence
- [You can play](#) – Play by the Rules Australia campaign to tackle homophobia in sport

## Other useful resources and websites

- [Ditch the Label](#) – one of the UK's largest anti-bullying charities

**Commented [LS1]:** We would be happy to be included here if helpful. Out4cricket.org.uk - we are an education, research and advocacy organisation that promotes LGBTQ+ participation and inclusion in cricket.



- [EACH \(Educational Action Challenging Homophobia\)](#) – set up to challenge homophobia, it offers training and consultancy, and runs an action line for people to report homophobic bullying
- [FFLAG \(Friends and Families of Lesbians and Gays\)](#) – charity established to support the friends and families of people who identify as lesbian, gay and bisexual
- [Gov.UK guide for parents of LGBT+ children](#) - GOV.UK guidance for parents
- [Gendered Intelligence](#) – a not-for-profit community-interest company that aims to increase understanding of gender diversity
- [Just Like Us](#) – LGBTQ+ charity working directly with schools and supporting LGBTQ+ young people through mentors
- [LGBT Consortium](#) – national membership organisation for LGBT groups and charities
- [Pride sport](#) – A UK organisation for LGBTQ+ sports development and equality Pride Youth Games Pride Youth Games.
- [The Proud Trust](#) – community organisation offering advice for young people and education resources
- [Stonewall](#) – working for equality and justice for lesbians, gay men and bisexuals
- [Stonewall FC](#) – London's famous gay football club. The club provides a platform for openly gay players of all levels and abilities to play competitive football
- [Stonewall working with parents, carers and the wider community](#) - information for parents of LGBTQ+ young people
- [Switchboard LGBT+ helpline](#) - a national free helpline that offers a confidential support for the LGBTQ+ community
- [The call](#) - a video about Switchboard LGBT+ helpline

## Publications

- [Homophobia in sport](#) (Feb 2017) – House of Commons report on homophobic attitudes in sport