Photography and Use of Images Policy

Use of Mobile Phones

Those whose work with children and young people need to be aware of the opportunities for abuse through the misuse of mobile phones, text messaging and the use of images in social media or whats app groups. While good use of such media can be beneficial, we must be vigilant and alert to the possibilities of misuse and consequent harm that can result to young people. Leaders must also take care to protect themselves.

1. Leaders involved in youth and children's activities should only have children's and young people's mobile numbers if the natures of their involvement require them to phone or text them. (Such leaders might include those running an instructor course, or an employed youth or a volunteer involved in co-ordinating school sailing courses or partaking in club coaching programmes.)
2. Parental permission should be sought if the leader in this role will be contacting children or young people via mobile phone.
3. A method of accountability should be arranged e.g. copies/c.c. of texts could also be sent to the head coach, club children's officer or to parents or include them in same mail.
4. If a leader had a child/young person's phone number it should only be used for the purposes it has been given, i.e., the leader should not share this information.

Texting – Communication not Conversation!

1. Texts should be used for the purposes of reminding children or young people about events or changes to programme due to weather etc. which are forthcoming.
2. Texts may on occasion also be used as a means to encourage children or young people if it is appropriate to do so themoment, e.g., 'Hope exam goes ok.'
3. If it turns into a conversation, communications should be ended. A leader can suggest discussing the subject further at the next event or, if they are concerned about the child/young person, arrange to meet up to talk further (within the usual child protection parameters).

Camera Phones

Camera phones should be used safely and responsibly.

Pictures can be very powerful and stir up strong emotions. Camera phone users should respect the private lives of others and not take or distribute pictures of other people if it could invade their privacy.

Leaders and children/young people should not send pictures that are obscene, indecent, or menacing and should be sensitive about other people's gender identity, sexual identity, racial heritage, religion, or personal background. Both leaders and children/young people should be made aware that it is a criminal offence to take, make, permit to be taken, distribute, show, or possess an indecent or sexually explicit image of a child under 18. For further guidance please see attached 'Sexting and the Law' leaflet.

When commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to an activity the leader in charge should ensure they are clear about expectations of them in relation to child protection. Professional photographers/film/video operators wishing to record an activity should seek accreditation from leaders by producing their professional identification for the details to be recorded. The leader should then:

- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour
- Issue the photographer with identification which should be worn at all times.
- Keep a record of accreditations.
- Inform leaders, children/young people, and parents, that a photographer will be in attendance is at the activity and check that they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs.
- Not allow unsupervised access to children/young people or one-to-one photo sessions.
- Not approve/allow photo sessions outside the activity or at a child/young person's home.
- Anyone concerned about any photography taking place should discuss his or her concerns with the leader in charge or a member of the parish or central events panel.

Camera phones can be used to make children/young people safer. Older children, for example, using a taxi can send a picture of the car's registration to a friend before they begin the trip, or can simply use the phone to show parents where they are.

- Children/young people can only be photography when permission has been provide in writing from their parent/guardian.
- The scope of the use of photographs must also be stated as part of the parental permission.
- Children/young people should not be named individually in photographs unless necessary, for example, if the child/young concerned was winning a prize worthy of publication.
- When posting photographs on social media settings should be such that children/young people cannot be individually tagged.
- All photographs must be stored in a secure places either electronically in a password protected file or physically in a locked cabinet.
- If any electronic device/memory which contain photographs is disposed of or passed on, then the device must be wiped of all photographs in such a way that they cannot be recovered on that device.

Use of Mobile phones during activities

Groups should, with parents and children/young people, develop a policy on the use of mobile phones during youth activities. This policy should be communicated to all parents and youth members. This policy could include:

- Confirmation that when on activities a named leader is the primary point of communication and is to be contacted if there is an emergency or change to previously agreed arrangements.
- That the usage of mobiles phones including text messaging or playing games cannot be allowed to be a distraction from a safe awareness of the environment or be allowed to interfere with full participation in the activity.
- That when on camps or overnight activities, there is a stated preferred time period when parents may make contact, if they wish. Parents should be advised that contact outside of this time may not be possible due to activities.
- Consider that use of phones while away can worsen rather than alleviate homesickness. In this context it can be good to encourage children/young people to consider that 'no news is good news.'

Use of computers/tables/web-enabled games consoles/smart TVs

If such devices are used as part of activities within the organisation, guidelines should be produced to ensure that they are used for the correct purpose, and include, for example, what websites are suitable for the age of children/young people that the leaders are worth with.

Other information and sources for parents and carers on E-Safety

The following websites provide information for leaders, parents, and carers about e-safety to help them protect their children from harm:

- Webwise Internet Ireland https://www.webwise.ie/
- Cyber Safe Ireland https://cybersafeireland.org/
- Childnet www.childnet.com
- ISPCC Ireland Helpline 1800-666-666 or TEXT 50101