

## 8. RESPONDING TO CONCERNS, ALLEGATIONS AND DISCLOSURES<sup>1</sup>

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse very strong emotions. Whilst this is a completely normal response it is important not to allow these feelings to interfere with our judgement in terms of taking the appropriate action.

To help with this process Coerver Coaching have produced a clear set of guidelines for dealing with concerns, allegations and disclosures both within the coaching and playing environment and outside of the sport.

All individuals have a moral responsibility to report any concerns they may have about a child or young person in any context.

Concerns may arise if:

- A child or young person informs you directly that they are concerned about someone's behaviour towards them
- You become aware, through your own observations or through a third party, of possible abuse occurring.

In relation to allegations about a member of staff or a volunteer, Coerver Coaching will support anyone, who in good faith, reports a concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child or young person, even if the concern is ultimately proved to be unfounded.

Other key indicators of abuse highlighted in Section 7 include but are not limited to; changes in the child or young person's behaviour, appearance, attitude towards or relationship with others.

It is however important for coaches to continue to observe the appearance and behaviour of the children and young people they are working with and to report any concerns as soon as they arise.

Similarly, where the concern is outside of a Coerver Coaching environment, the matter should be reported to the local Police or Children's Social Care.

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<sup>1</sup> The term disclosure in this context is used to describe the sharing of a child protection concern(s) by one individual to another as opposed to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) which provides a formal record of an individual's convictions and other relevant information.