

ITTF Child Safeguarding Policy Effective from 12-DEC-2019

Introduction

The International Table Tennis Federation (“**ITTF**”) Child Safeguarding Policy (this “**Policy**”) outlines the ITTF principles and approach to safeguarding athletes under the age of 18 from harassment and abuse in sport. This document provides also guidelines on how the ITTF will administer this Policy, and with the correct procedures to follow.

The ITTF is committed to growing the sport of table tennis globally. An essential building block of this growth is youth sport. Therefore, ITTF recognizes the need for a global policy safeguarding children involved in table tennis in any capacity.

The ITTF will keep this Policy current and relevant. From time to time it will be necessary to modify and amend some sections of this Policy, or to add new procedures. ITTF will notify you when such amendments have been made and it is your responsibility to clarify and adhere to such amendments.

Any suggestions, recommendations or feedback on this Policy and its procedures are welcome and should be sent to the ITTF Ethics Commission Officer <integrity@ittf.com>, who administers this Policy.

Purpose

This Policy has been established to ensure that table tennis remains a safe and enjoyable sport for children globally when participating in table tennis event and/or activity which is organised by the ITTF, on behalf of the ITTF, or otherwise approved by the ITTF, including competition and training camp (“**ITTF Event**”). Every child and their guardian should be safe in the knowledge that every step has been taken to safeguard them from harassment and abuse whilst at an ITTF Event. The following policy aims to outline a framework for safeguarding underaged athletes during ITTF Events taking place across a wide range of countries and cultures. Therefore, a common sense approach should be taken in the implementation of it.

Scope

This Policy applies to any individual participating in any capacity in an ITTF Event. This includes, without limitation:

- Continental Federations;
- National Associations;
- athletes;
- athletes’ entourage members;
- coaches;
- officials;
- administrative staff;
- medical staff;
- volunteers;
- parents; and
- any other person (whether human or an organisation) connected in any way to the ITTF Event in question.

The immediate beneficiaries (the “**Child Athlete**”) of this Policy are:

- persons under the age of 18; and
- participating in any ITTF Event.

Key concepts

Harassment and abuse

The ITTF complies with the International Olympic Committee (“**IOC**”) Code of Ethics¹ which rejects all forms of harassment and abuse.²

ITTF subscribes to the IOC’s definition of harassment and abuse, outlined in the IOC Consensus Statement (2016) as follows:

“Harassment and abuse can be expressed in five forms which may occur in combination or in isolation. These include i) psychological abuse, ii) physical abuse, iii) sexual harassment, iv) sexual abuse, and v) neglect.

These forms of abuse are defined here as:

- *Psychological abuse — means any unwelcome act including confinement, isolation, verbal assault, humiliation, intimidation, infantilization, or any other treatment which may diminish the sense of identity, dignity, and self-worth.*
- *Physical abuse — means any deliberate and unwelcome act – such as for example punching, beating, kicking, biting and burning – that causes physical trauma or injury. Such act can also consist of forced or inappropriate physical activity (e.g., age-, or physique- inappropriate training loads; when injured or in pain), forced alcohol consumption, or forced doping practices.*
- *Sexual harassment — any unwanted and unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal, non-verbal or physical. Sexual harassment can take the form of sexual abuse.*
- *Sexual abuse — any conduct of a sexual nature, whether non-contact, contact or penetrative, where consent is coerced/manipulated or is not or cannot be given.*
- *Neglect — within the meaning of this document means the failure of a coach or another person with a duty of care towards the athlete to provide a minimum level of care to the athlete, which is causing harm, allowing harm to be caused, or creating an imminent danger of harm.*

Harassment and abuse can be based on any grounds including race, religion, colour, creed, ethnic origin, physical attributes, gender, sexual orientation, age disability, socio-economic status and athletic ability. It can include a one-off incident or a series of incidents. It may be in person or online. Harassment may be deliberate, unsolicited and coercive.

Harassment and abuse often result from an abuse of authority, meaning the improper use of a position of influence, power or authority by an individual against another person. The IOC Consensus Statement 2008, considers that harassment and abuse are on a continuum; and therefore should not be separated.”

Every child has the right to feel safe and secure without the threat of harassment and abuse when participating in the sport of table tennis. In order to protect Child Athletes from being exposed to undue harm and influence, the ITTF sets out the following guidelines for Child Athletes participating in any ITTF Event.

Minors at ITTF Events

During all ITTF Events, the welfare of the Child Athlete is paramount. Therefore, the ITTF encourages National Associations to send coaches along with their athletes to the ITTF Events, especially to those concerning Child Athletes. Besides providing educational and developmental opportunities to the accompanying adult, it first and foremost ensures the safeguarding of the Child Athlete by an adult authorised and sanctioned by the National Association; for this reason,

¹ <https://www.olympic.org/code-of-ethics>

² ITTF Code of Ethics (2019) page 161 of the ITTF Handbook

the accompanying adult would ideally work with the Child Athlete on a regular basis, therefore also ensuring proper supervision by an authorised and trusted adult.

At certain ITTF Events, such as the ITTF World Hopes Week and Challenge or the Hopes Team training camps, an athlete will not be permitted to participate unless accompanied by a coach certified by his or her National Association, or a member of the management staff attending along with the athlete and responsible for his or her wellbeing throughout the activity and the travel to and from said activity.

Travel to and from activities

All Child Athletes participating at ITTF Events must have safe travel plans in place. Every Child Athlete must be supervised by an authorised adult when travelling, such as the accompanying coach, a parent, or an authorised member of staff of the relevant National Association. The responsible adult travelling with the Child Athlete must be made aware by the activity organiser that they are legally and morally responsible for the wellbeing of the athlete.

The organisers of the ITTF Event as well as the designated ITTF staff member must be informed of these travel plans as soon as possible, but at the latest by the deadline specified in the prospectus of the activity the underaged athlete is travelling to. Should for any reason the travel arrangements change, the ITTF and the organiser need to be informed immediately and jointly. It is vital that the National Association is aware that should travel arrangements be made known later than the deadline specified in the prospectus, transfer may not be guaranteed by the organiser and the National Association will have to cover all costs incurred in that situation.

In extraordinary circumstances where it becomes evident that it will be unavoidable that Child Athletes travel by themselves to and from an ITTF Event, the below section applies.

Unaccompanied Child Athletes travelling to ITTF Event

The ITTF is committed to safeguarding Child Athletes. When a Child Athlete participates in activities organised by the ITTF, it is therefore vital that they be accompanied by an adult chaperone. The ITTF actively discourages its member associations from sending underaged athletes to activities without adult supervision, as proper safeguarding cannot be ensured when a child is travelling alone. In the case that unsupervised travel cannot be avoided, it is the member association's responsibility to ensure that all necessary precautions have been taken for the Child Athlete to travel unaccompanied. This includes but may not be limited to:

- contacting the airline the Child Athlete will travel on well in advance of the proposed travel date to ensure their policies regarding unaccompanied minors is respected;
- informing the contact person nominated by the ITTF for the specified ITTF Event well in advance that the Child Athlete will have to travel alone;
- ensuring both the ITTF contact person and the organiser are aware that the child will travel alone;
- nominating an adult chaperone in coordination with the ITTF contact person and the local organiser's contact person who will be responsible for picking up the unaccompanied Child Athlete from their arrival airport; and
- ensuring the Child Athlete is equipped with contact phone numbers for the ITTF contact or the local organiser's contact.

The responsibility for ensuring the wellbeing of a Child Athlete travelling without a coach remains with their National Association.

Accommodation arrangements at ITTF Event.

All Child Athletes will be expected to share rooms with their fellow Child Athletes when participating at an ITTF High Performance and Development (“**HPD**”) activity. Coaches must not share a room with a Child Athlete unless the coach is also their parent or sibling. In this case, sharing will only be permitted if no other Child Athlete is available to share a room.

It is the responsibility of the organiser to provide safe and appropriate sleeping arrangements for Child Athletes. This includes:

- an appropriate number of Child Athletes within one hotel room (i.e. the maximum number of adults permitted in the hotel room as per hotel policy)
- One single bed for each participant
- No sharing between males and females
- En-suite bathrooms preferred to ensure safety
- Rooms not accessible to the public
- Doors lockable from inside and outside
- Rooms to be clean and safe

Child Athletes of different genders should also not be present in each other’s rooms at any time with the door closed. It is the responsibility of the Child Athletes’ coaches to ensure this is observed.

Curfews

At all ITTF Events involving Child Athletes, a strict curfew must be observed. It is the responsibility of the athletes’ coaches to ensure that the curfew outlined by the ITTF Expert on duty is observed. Should a Child Athlete be attending an ITTF HPD activity without a coach, they are to follow the ITTF Expert’s instructions on this matter. Should the Child Athlete fail to observe these instructions, ITTF HPD reserves the right to exclude them from this and all further activities. The responsibility for the wellbeing of an Child Athlete travelling without a coach remains with their National Association.

Training Hall

Child Athletes of different genders are expected to share a training hall and to cooperate with each other during all training activities. A separation of Child Athletes based on gender during regular training activities will not be permitted under any circumstances.

Appropriate male and female changing rooms and showers must be provided for the Child Athletes. Under no circumstances should a coach use the changing room or showers in the presence of a Child Athlete.

It remains the responsibility of the accompanying coach to ensure that these guidelines are followed.

Positive guidance [Discipline]

We strive to ensure that the Child Athletes are aware of the acceptable limits of their behaviour so that we can provide a positive experience for all participants. However, there are times when participating coaches or staff may be required to use appropriate techniques and behaviour management strategies to ensure:

- an effective and positive environment; and
- the safety and/or wellbeing of Child Athletes, coaches or staff participating in sport.

We require **all persons** to use strategies that are fair, respectful and appropriate to the developmental stage of the Child Athlete involved. The Child Athlete needs to be provided with clear directions and given an opportunity to redirect their misbehaviour in a positive manner.

Under no circumstances are **any person involved** to take disciplinary action involving physical punishment or any form of treatment that could reasonably be considered as degrading, cruel, frightening or humiliating.

Sexual misconduct

Under no circumstances is any form of 'sexual behaviour' to occur between, with, or in the presence of, the Child Athlete. Engaging in sexual behaviour while participating in our activities is prohibited even if the Child Athlete involved may be above the legal age of consent.

'Sexual behaviour' needs to be interpreted widely, to encompass the entire range of actions that would reasonably be considered to be sexual in nature, including but not limited to:

- 'contact behaviour', such as sexual intercourse, kissing, fondling, sexual penetration or exploiting a child through prostitution.
- 'non-contact behaviour', such as flirting, sexual innuendo, inappropriate text messaging, inappropriate photography or exposure to pornography or nudity.

Reporting a breach of this Policy

Under Swiss law, if you are a specialist from the field of sport and have regular contact with children (such as a coach), you are obliged to report if there is a clear indication that the physical, psychological or sexual integrity of a child is at risk and that you cannot remedy the threat as part of your professional activity.³

In this regard, you can report any suspected breach of this Policy to the ITTF Ethics Commission Officer who administers this Policy by filling up the form in Appendix A.

Extent of policy

This Policy is not meant to be exhaustive, but to be a living document developing according to the needs of our Child Athletes. As such, it may at times be amended, extended or altered as deemed appropriate for the safeguarding of children within our sport. It is at times supplemented by Guidelines and Agreements specific to a certain activity, which only further strengthen the child safeguarding framework within Table Tennis. This Policy complements the ITTF Handbook and its constituent policies (such as the Anti-Harassment Policy and Procedures), the ITTF Athletes Safeguarding (General) Policy, and it is specifically oriented for Athletes under the age of 18.

Because of ITTF's operations internationally, ITTF also complies with various applicable laws. This Policy comprises internationally accepted child safeguarding principles outlined by organisations such as the International Olympic Committee, forms a **baseline** for ITTF's child safeguarding efforts, and does not displace any applicable national laws. Applicable national laws will take precedence if they conflict with this Policy or when they have stricter requirements than this Policy. Where there is no national legislation on child safeguarding, the content of this Policy will still apply in ITTF's practices.

Consequences of breach of this Policy

If you are found to be or likely to be in a breach of this Policy at first sight, the ITTF may conduct an inquiry according to applicable policies and procedures to assess whether you are indeed in breach of this Policy.

³ Swiss Civil Code (Status as of 01 January 2019), Article 314d.

If you are found to be in breach this Policy following the inquiry, depending on the severity of such breach and without limitation to any other measures that ITTF may take, if you are:

- an ITTF Expert, the ITTF may discontinue, without any incurring any liability to you, any engagement it has with you currently and/or any future engagements, if you are on a long-term contract with ITTF.
- a parent or guardian of a Child Athlete, the ITTF may not select your child for future ITTF HPD or ITTF-sanctioned activities.
- a national association or a person affiliated with a national association organising the ITTF-sanctioned activities, the ITTF may reduce the contribution payable to that national association for organising the ITTF-sanctioned activity.

In addition to be above, you may also be convicted for offences under the laws of various applicable jurisdictions.

Document history

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	ITTF Executive Board
Administrator	Head of Integrity & Head of Legal
Next Review Date	30-SEP-2024

Approval and amendment history	Details
Original Approval Authority and Date	ITTF Executive Committee - 12 DEC 2019
Amendment Authority and Date	Amendment planned in 2024
Notes	To be approved by the EB

Appendix A: Reporting Form

PART I: YOUR INFORMATION	
Your name:	Name of organisation:
Your role:	
Your contact information: Address: Contact number: Email address:	
PART II: CHILD ATHLETE AND PARENT'S / CARER'S INFORMATION	
Child Athlete's name:	Child Athlete's date of birth:
Child Athlete's ethnic origin:	Does the Child Athlete have a disability: yes / no <i>If yes, please specify:</i>
Child's sex: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Others, please specify:	
Parent's / carer's name(s):	
Contact information (parents/carers): Address: Contact number: Email address:	
Have parent's / carer's been notified of this incident? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, please provide details of what was said/action agreed:	
PART III: INCIDENT DETAILS	
Are you reporting your own concerns or concerns raised by someone else: <input type="checkbox"/> own concerns <input type="checkbox"/> concerns raised by someone else If responding to concerns raised by someone else , please provide their information: <i>Their name:</i> <i>Name of their organisation:</i> <i>Position within the sport or relationship to the child:</i> <i>Address:</i> <i>Contact numbers:</i> <i>Email address:</i>	
Date and times of incident: Location of incident: Name of related ITTF Event:	
Details of the incident or concerns: <i>Include other relevant information, such as description of any injuries and whether you are recording this incident as fact, opinion or hearsay.</i>	

Child's account of the incident:			
Please provide any witness accounts of the incident:			
Please provide details of any witnesses to the incident: <i>Name:</i> <i>Position within the club or relationship to the child:</i> <i>Date of birth (if under 18 years old):</i> <i>Address:</i> <i>Contact number:</i> <i>Email address:</i>			
Please provide details of any person involved in this incident or alleged to have caused the incident / injury: <i>Name:</i> <i>Position within the club or relationship to the child:</i> <i>Date of birth (if under 18 years old):</i> <i>Address:</i> <i>Contact number:</i> <i>Email address:</i>			
Please provide details of action taken to date:			
Has the incident been reported to any external agencies? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, please provide further details: <i>Name of organisation / agency:</i> <i>Contact person:</i> <i>Contact number:</i> <i>Email address:</i> <i>Agreed action or advice given:</i>			
Your Signature:		Date:	