

Safeguarding and Protection information for Tennis Officials

The LTA believes all children, young people and adults at risk should be safeguarded in all tennis related activities. As an LTA Official, you have a responsibility to support this by promoting the welfare of all children, young people and adults at risk in tennis. This will enable a safe, inclusive and fun tennis competition experience.

We have devised this factsheet to support you as an LTA Official at Grades 1 – 7 competitions.

To help you as an LTA Official in promoting safeguarding and protection at competitions, we have sectioned this into four separate areas:

1. **Recognise** – the signs and indicators of abuse and neglect;
2. **Respond** – to safeguarding concerns in a competition environment;
3. **Refer** – know who to share the information with;
4. **Record** – know what information you need to write down and where.

Section One: Recognise

Definitions

Child

A child is anyone up to their 18th birthday.

Adult at Risk

An adult at risk is someone who is aged 18 or over whom:

- ✓ has care and support needs;
- ✓ is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect; and
- ✓ because of their care and support needs cannot protect themselves against actual or potential abuse or neglect.

Safeguarding and Protection

Safeguarding is being proactive and preventing abuse and neglect from occurring, whereas Protection is when abuse or neglect has occurred and intervention needs to take place.

Abuse Categories for Children and Young People

1. Sexual Abuse
2. Physical Abuse
3. Emotional Abuse
4. Neglect

Below are the definitions of abuse for each category and an example from a tennis competition:

Abuse Category	Definition	Tennis example
Sexual Abuse	<p>Forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.</p> <p>May involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.</p> <p>Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)</p>	<p>At a competition a child may disclose to you that they have been sexually abused.</p> <p>You see bruising in a strange location, e.g. inner thigh.</p> <p>You see another adult inappropriately touch or kiss a child.</p>
Physical Abuse	<p>A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical</p>	<p>A parent hitting or kicking their child at the competition for losing</p>

	harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.	their match.
Emotional Abuse	Persistent emotional maltreatment of a child which may cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Communicating to children that they are unloved or placing the child into situations which are beyond their developmental years. Includes serious bullying and cyber bullying as well as seeing the ill-treatment of another.	A parent constantly putting their child down, belittling them for losing the match and making the child feel inadequate and worthless.
Neglect	Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs which is likely to result in serious impairment including failing to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, adequate supervision or providing appropriate medical care. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.	Frequently failing to pick a child up from a competition. Not allowing the child to receive medical attention when they are injured or hurt at a tennis competition because they don't want them to receive withdrawal points.

Abuse Categories for Adults at Risk

1. Sexual Abuse
2. Physical Abuse
3. Psychological Abuse
4. Neglect or Omission to Act
5. Financial Abuse
6. Discriminatory Abuse
7. Institutional Abuse

Below are the definitions of abuse for each category and an example from a tennis competition:

Abuse Category	Definition	Tennis example
Sexual Abuse	Rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting.	An adult at risk disclosing they have been sexually abused to you at a competition. You see bruising in a

		<p>strange location, e.g. inner thigh.</p> <p>You see another adult inappropriately touch or kiss them.</p>
Physical Abuse	Examples of physical assault are hitting, pushing, pinching, shaking, misusing medication, scalding, the misuse or illegal use of restraint, inappropriate sanctions, exposure to heat or cold and not giving adequate food or drink.	Not allowing the adult at risk to have food, drink or medication at the competition as it may impact on their performance.
Psychological Abuse	Threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.	Constantly verbally abusing the adult at risk by laughing at them and mocking their disability or mental ill health.
Neglect or Omission to Act	Behaviour that can lead to neglect includes including ignoring medical or physical needs, failing to allow access to appropriate health, social care and educational services, and withholding the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition, hydration or heating.	Withholding medication because it makes the adult drowsy and cause them to lose points.
Financial Abuse	Using someone's property, money or any resources without their permission or knowledge or withholding money (i.e. theft, fraud, exploitation, etc).	Observing a wheelchair tennis player's coach take all of their money off them for competition entry even though the entry fee has already been paid prior to the competition.
Discriminatory	Treating someone in a less favourable way and causing them harm, because of their age, gender, sexuality, gender identity, disability, socio-economic status, ethnic origin, religion and any other visible or non-visible difference.	Seeing a coach verbally abusing a homosexual person at the visually impaired championships and making comments that they hit like a girl.
Institutional	When the needs of an individual are not met due to a culture of poor practice or abusive behaviour within an organisation.	An older player discloses that they are being abused by their carers' at their care home and do not want to go home.

Examples of Safeguarding and Protection as an LTA Official

Safeguarding	Protection
<p>At the start of a competition explaining to all players and spectators the expected level of behaviour by using the Fair Play principles – for example calling correct line calls, and spectators not getting involved in matches.</p> <p>Ensuring all players and spectators know they can speak with you as an Official or the Referee, if they are concerned or have an issue during the competition.</p> <p>Intervening and challenging inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour from players and or spectators.</p> <p>Ensuring the Fair Play banner and Fair Play pledge are visible at the competition so that you can encourage all players and spectators to abide by those behaviours and values.</p> <p>Encouraging the Referee to ensure the tournament team are briefed about how to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns and to inform the Referee of any actions which you have taken. Ensuring you promote the Fair Play Values to players, parents, coaches and other spectators.</p>	<p>After you have warned a parent, spectator or coach several times about their abusive or threatening behaviour (e.g. swearing at you or others) yet they continue to behave in that manner. You will need to involve the LTA Safe and Inclusive Team or Police if required.</p> <p>When a child, young person or adult at risk tells you they have or are being abused.</p> <p>When you see a player, parent, spectator or coach is acting aggressively or abusively towards a child, young person or adult at risk – for example a parent hitting their child for losing their tennis match.</p> <p>When you are receiving abusive or threatening behaviour from a player, parent, coach or spectator. You will need the support from the venue management, the LTA Safe and Inclusive Team and/or the Police if appropriate.</p> <p>Intervening where there is inappropriate behaviour or safeguarding concerns and refer them your concerns to the Referee who in turn consults the LTA Safe and Inclusive Team.</p>

Section Two: Respond

As an LTA Official it is essential that you can confidently respond to a variety of situations. You will be aware of this as you will be called to courts regarding decisions on line call disputes and code violations.

If you encounter an issue in relation to safeguarding and/or protection you will also need to respond.

Below are some sample situations and examples of how you can respond:

Example situation	Possible ways to respond
<p>On the side of court a parent is constantly putting their child down for losing set points, the child is becoming visually distressed.</p>	<p>Remind the parent of the Fair Play values and inform them that their behaviour is unacceptable. On the second occasion, you may wish to issue or give a warning that you will issue a code violation due to the behaviour.</p> <p>After this if the behaviour continues, you should tell the parent that you will need to inform the venue management, Referee and LTA Safe and Inclusive Team. You may want to ask them to leave court side and advise them you can default their child. However, defaulting the child should be the very last option if the situation does not improve.</p>
<p>At a Mini Tennis tournament you see a parent dragging their child to the car at the end of the competition, the child is crying and screaming and the parent is shouting loud and scaring other children.</p>	<p>If you feel comfortable in doing so, you should try and intervene to speak with the parent about their behaviour and make them aware that they are upsetting other children. If you don't feel comfortable in challenging, you should find someone within the venue that can intervene. Inform the Referee and LTA Safe and Inclusive Team of any actions.</p>
<p>A child or adult at risk discloses that they have been or are being abused.</p>	<p>Listen and do not interrupt the child / adult. When they have finished, praise the child / adult using phrases like: "thank you for telling me"; "you have done the right thing telling me". After the child / adult has finished you can ask them if there is anything else they wish to tell you. You should then inform the child / adult that you cannot keep this a 'secret' or 'confidential' as it meets the threshold of abuse. As a matter of best practice you should seek their consent to share the information; however you do not need a child's consent to share the information with the Referee and the LTA Safe and Inclusive Team. If an adult does not give consent to share the information but you believe the adult is at risk of harm to themselves or others or someone has committed or likely to commit a criminal offence against them you can share the information.</p> <p>You should, where possible gain parental consent to share information unless it puts the child or someone else at risk of harm.</p>

<p>During a match, a coach is overheard giving instructions to his player and shouting that the opponent is cheating. The other player is getting frustrated and upset.</p>	<p>Whilst a difficult situation, the other player is not at risk. Therefore, you should approach the coach and tell them to be quiet. If they continue, you should issue a code violation.</p> <p>If, however, the coach becomes physically or verbally aggressive towards you or someone else, you should contact venue management, the Safe and Inclusive Team and Police if required.</p>
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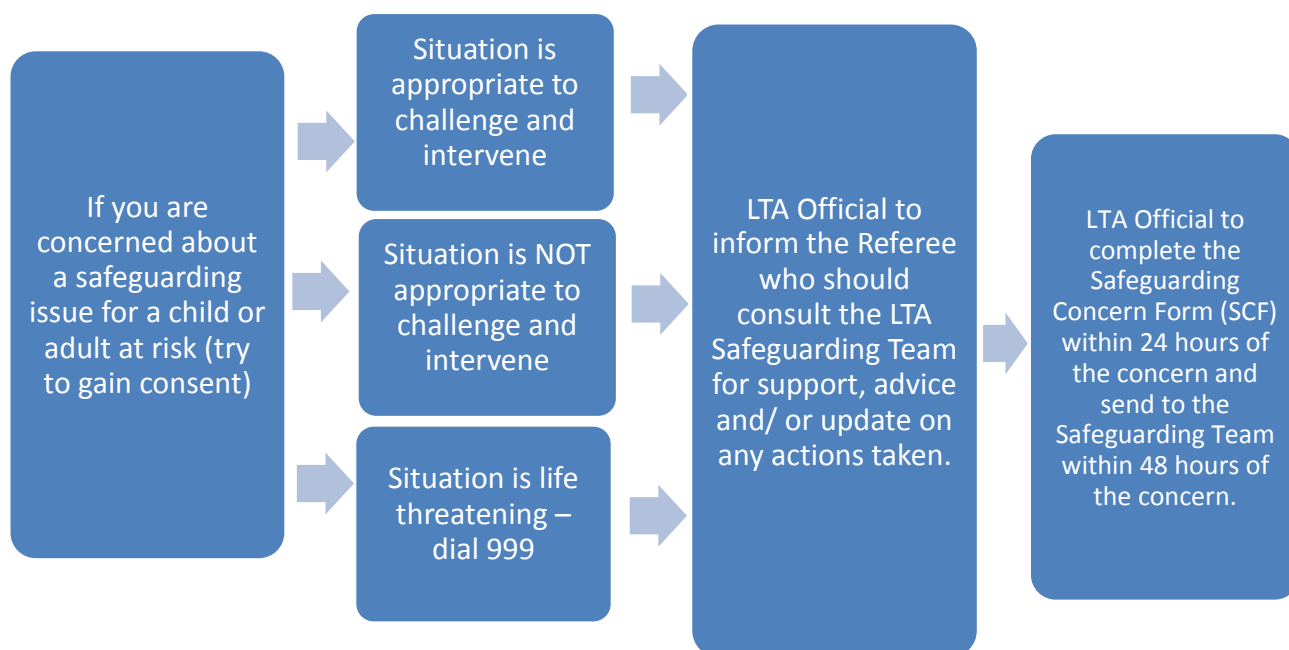
Section Three: Refer

At a competition you will see, hear and notice concerns as well as receive concerns from other people. If the issue is not a safeguarding concern relating to a child, young person or adult at risk, where possible you will need to intervene and take action i.e. give a code violation for a parent who is coaching their child from the side of court.

If there is a safeguarding or protection concern you will need to inform the Referee who should contact the LTA Safe and Inclusive Team by telephone – 0208 487 7000 or email – Safeandinclusive@lta.org.uk.

The British Tennis Services Team are available on weekends and during the evening and will be able to support you in your role to a certain degree if the Safe and Inclusive Team are unavailable.

Below is a simple flowchart to follow if you have a concern:



Section Four: Record

After you have seen, heard, been made aware of, or noticed a concern, you will need to complete the Reporting a Concern Form (RCF) within 24 hours and send it to Safeandinclusive@LTA.org.uk within 48 hours.

You can download the form from www.lta.org.uk/safeguarding.