

Guidelines on Physical Contact with Children

Issues surrounding physical contact in sport can be controversial and complex. Some sports require physical contact between adults and children for skill development; others do not.

If physical contact is to occur, it should always be within clear guidelines to reduce the risk of inappropriate touching and to ensure people working with children e.g., coaches, officials etc. are not placed in situations where they could be accused of abuse.

Physical contact is appropriate if it:

- is used to assist in skill development
- is required for the child's safety
- treat an injury
- prevent an injury or accident from occurring;
- occurs with the player's understanding and permission
- is for the child's benefit, not adult gratification
- occurs in an open environment.

Physical contact is inappropriate if it:

- includes touching the groin, genital area, buttocks, breasts or any part of the body that may cause distress or embarrassment
- frightens, distresses or embarrasses a child
- destroys their trust
- occurs in a private place.