

# National Independent Tae-Kwon-Do Association

## N.I.T.A.

### Child Protection Policy

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Updated 29<sup>th</sup> May 2011

#### Introduction.

N.I.T.A. takes its commitment to the safety of children and young adults who attend N.I.T.A. (National Independent Taekwondo Association) or other organisations classes and events very seriously. For the purpose of this policy this includes all students up to the age of 18 or adults with learning disabilities.

All children have a right to protection from all forms of abuse.

It is a N.I.T.A. mandate that all instructors, assistants, helpers and anyone who is in contact with children are fully aware of the content of this policy and their responsibility to adhere to it.

This document will also be made available to parents/carers upon request.

The implementation of this policy is primarily for the protection of the children but also the instructors/assistants/volunteers and N.I.T.A. as an organisation.

This policy provides definitions, policy statements and guidance on a variety of topics. If anyone has any questions relating to the contents of this policy, or any other question about child safety, they should immediately contact the N.I.T.A. child protection officer (C.P.O.) whose details can be found at the end of this document.

#### Role of the Child Protection Officer.

N.I.T.A. has appointed a dedicated child protection officer to:

- Report directly to the N.I.T.A. committee on all aspects of child protection.
- Formulate and distribute child protection policy to N.I.T.A. instructors.
- Provide advice and assistance to instructors on how to implement the policy and on other child protection matters.
- Collate and distribute instances of both good and bad practice so that all N.I.T.A. members may benefit.
- Ensure that instructors are correctly implementing the policy.
- Maintain records on aspects pertaining to child protection.
- Keep all aspects of confidentiality as a priority.
- Undertake all action to escalate reports of abuse on behalf of instructors.

## **Definitions of abuse and what to look for.**

### **Neglect**

- Where an adult fails to meet the child's essential physical needs such as adequate food, warmth, clothing, hygiene etc. It also includes failure to provide an adequately safe environment for the child such as leaving them alone and unsupervised, or exposing them to undue risks or extremes of temperature.

### **Physical abuse**

- Where parents, adults or other children deliberately cause injury by such action as hitting, shaking, biting, burning, squeezing or using excessive force. It also includes giving children inappropriate drugs, alcohol or poison, or attempts to suffocate or drown.
- Physical abuse can also be said to occur if the nature of training is inappropriate to the child's immature and growing body, or predisposes the child to injury from fatigue or overuse. Training that's appropriate for adults may not be right for children.

### **Emotional abuse**

- This includes persistent lack of attention or love, shouting, screaming, taunting, sarcasm, over-protection (leading to poor social skills).
- In our arena, it also includes making unrealistic demands for achievement, failing to respond to child's efforts or progress. It also includes use of taunts, shouts or sarcasm when teaching that causes the child to lose self-confidence.

### **Sexual abuse**

- Both boys and girls are at risk of being sexually abused.
- Sexual abuse includes making children take part in full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, fondling, exposure to pornographic material or making children take part in producing pornographic videos or photography. It also includes suggestions that sexual favours can help (or refusal can hinder) progression in TKD.

### **Other abuse**

- Abuse of trust - Where young people are indoctrinated with attitudes to training, drugs, and cheating, social, political, or religious views that are unacceptable to the young person's family.
- All kinds of bullying, both verbal and physical, from other children or adults, are a form of abuse. N.I.T.A. has rules on how to conduct one self which should be adhered to at all times.

### **Identifying abuse**

- It is not the responsibility of N.I.T.A. members to decide that child abuse is occurring. It is our responsibility to follow through on any concerns. However, we do need to exercise care. It is possible to find these signs and symptoms in many completely healthy, unabused children.
- Possible signs include:
  - Unexplained changes in the child's behaviour, attitude or commitment (becoming quiet and withdrawn, or displaying sudden outbursts of temper).
  - Gossip amongst other students, helpers etc.
  - Bruises and injuries that cannot be easily explained (such as burns, belt marks).

- Self mutilation
- Discomfort or pain.
- Reluctance to change or shower.
- Increasing problems with hygiene.
- Unexplained weight loss/gain.
- Constant hunger.
- Nervousness when approached or touched.
- Fear of particular other people.
- Children who are always alone, unaccompanied or prevented from socialising with other children.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- Reluctance to go home.

### **What to do if you suspect abuse.**

- The following is a list of the things that should be done if you suspect abuse, or if a child tells you of abuse.
  - Take everything that is said seriously.
  - Maintain confidentiality at all times.
  - Listen and be reassuring but make it clear that you cannot keep secrets and you will have to talk to another person who can help.
  - Record what has been said to you as accurately as possible, using the exact words spoken by the child. Write it down as soon as you can.
  - Do not ask the child to repeat or elaborate. Keep questions to a minimum, but find out if they have told anyone else.
  - NOTE: The law is very strict and a child abuse case can be dismissed if it appears that the child has been led or words/ideas have been suggested.
  - Ensure that you are clear about all the facts of the allegation including name, age, address etc. of the child in question.
  - Contact the C.P.O. identified at the back of this document and communicate all information at your disposal.
- Once the C.P.O. has been contacted, they assume responsibility for the situation, allowing the 'trusted' adult to return to a normal instructor/student relationship.
- On no account should the instructor attempt to contact parents, relatives or other agencies. This is so that all communications come through one person. The instructor should strive to maintain a normal but watchful role, recording and reporting any new developments to the C.P.O. immediately.
- If requested by Police or Social Services, details of the adult making a referral will be passed to them so they can make direct contact.

### **Discipline.**

- Instructors have a need and right to maintain discipline within their class. However, any disciplinary measures must not compromise the dignity, self-confidence, safety and self-esteem of the child.

### **Requirements for instructors.**

- The items in this section are mandatory. All instructors must carry them out.
- Instructors are responsible for ensuring that all assistants and helpers have read and understood this policy and are putting into practice the child protection needs and all less than 16 years of age have had the child protection induction pack.

- All instructors are responsible for ensuring all assistants and helpers have an up to date (within the last 3 years) enhanced C.R.B. form.
- All instructors must have an adequate first aid kit and trained person available at all classes.
- All instructors must consider safety procedures and drills appropriate to their training venues. These must be communicated regularly to all students. Items to be considered include:
  - Safe accesses and egress from the venue.
  - Fire alarms, exits, muster points.
  - Hazards in the Dojang (equipment, trips, electrical etc.)

### **Guidance for instructors and assistants.**

- Although the legal age of consent is 16, N.I.T.A. does not permit instructors to enter into relationships with students under the age of 18. To do so is perceived as an abuse of the student/instructor trust.
- Always be publicly open when working with children. Always invite parents to stay and watch training. Try to avoid situations where you and an individual child are together unobserved.
- It is sometimes necessary for instructors to adjust children's stances, hand position or belt manually. However, you should be aware that some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive to this. You should first encourage the children to correct themselves.
- If, for reasons of safety, you have to accompany a child to the changing rooms or toilet, it is good practice to check the room, and then wait outside for the child to finish.
- Children must always be treated with kindness and respect. Adults must always display high standards when dealing with children.
- Instructors and assistants must be aware of the danger to children at the start and end of classes. Parents and carers should be asked to come into the Dojang to drop off and pick up children.
- It is not acceptable for any person in a position of authority to transport children to or from any event such as a competition or grading. Parents have sole responsibility for providing or arranging transport. Instructors may not suggest or endorse individuals to carry out this role.
- Always brief children and their parents/carers about the training environment and any safety issues. This should include what you consider to be parental responsibility such as picking up and dropping off, toilets and changing room's etc.
- Instructors and assistants should make sure that the content of classes is appropriate to the age group under tuition.
- Never engage in rough physical or sexually provocative games, make suggestive comments (even in fun) or do things of a personal nature that the child can do for themselves.
- You must take all accusations or allegations seriously.
- If you believe that there has been a misunderstanding or the potential for a misunderstanding, you should report it to the C.P.O. as soon as possible to avoid future problems.

### **Guidance to parents.**

- Parents need to understand that, although all reasonably practical measures will be taken to ensure the safety and protection of their children, the ultimate responsibility remains with them.
- Parents should always, wherever possible, remain on hand during training to supervise changing room and toilet visits.
- However, if parents have any concerns, even outside of the N.I.T.A. environment, they are welcome to seek advice from the C.P.O.

The N.I.T.A. Child Protection Officer is: Mrs Jill Wanklyn (Tewkesbury) and can be contacted on [jill@white-tiger-tkd.com](mailto:jill@white-tiger-tkd.com) or 07920866839.

