

Adult to Minor Abuse Report

Response in First 24-48 Hours: Caring for the Victim and Family

Once an accusation of sexual abuse has been reported to a staff member or volunteer, this information should then be communicated to the ISCA CEO, who should contact the family of the minor (if they were not the initial reporting persons or the alleged perpetrator) to offer urgent notice and a prompt referral to the **Sexual Abuse Response Team . A member of the Sexual Abuse Response Team , perhaps in tandem with the CEO, offers** initial emotional support and to inform them of the process of care (as defined below).

If the allegation is against the CEO or ISCA staff member , then the accusation should be reported to an ISCA Board Member or else directly to a member of the **Sexual Abuse Response Team** who fulfills the same functions.

In the communication, the guardians /parents should be told:

- I. The names and background of the **Sexual Abuse Response Team** members:
 - a. **Name**, health-care professional,
 - b. **Name**, social worker,
 - c. **Name**, etc.

2. That the **Sexual Abuse Response Team** is comprised of people with professional background in working with crises and/or children, have received training to respond to this kind of situation, and have volunteered because of their devotion to child wellness and professional backgrounds.
3. That the **Sexual Abuse Response Team** members are not paid by ISCA so that there is no reason to think they would have a conflict of interest that would lead them to mishandle situations.

When a report is made of any potential sexual abuse, the statement from the box below should be provided to the person giving the report. This statement should be included in the policy section of any ISCA manual related to children or youth and any FAQ manual at the information desks.

How to respond if someone reports an allegation of sexual abuse against a minor:

Reply: “Thank you for having the courage and integrity to come forward with this information. *ISCA has a response team comprised of independent professionals who will help you ensure that the appropriate legal authorities are notified.* A member of this team is to contact you so the proper steps and care can be provided in addition to legal reports. You have done a good thing that allows us to ensure that the children in our care are safe and protected. Thank you.”

Action Step: Record the name, phone number, mailing address, and e-mail address of the person giving the report. Send this information directly to the ISCA CEO (email address). It is the responsibility of the CEO to inform the response team and initiate the response protocols.

The CEO should then contact a member of the **Sexual Abuse Response Team** to inform them of the accusation, and provide background insights, especially the contact information of the minor’s family. A list of all events at which the accused perpetrator has attended needs to be researched and provided.

The contacted **Sexual Abuse Response Team** member should contact the remaining members of the **Sexual Abuse Response Team** to alert them to the situation and coordinate availability. A member of the **Sexual Abuse Response Team** should contact the person to whom the disclosure of abuse was made and the family of the minor. When calling the guardians / parents, it is important for the **Sexual Abuse Response Team** to remember:

The guardians / parents are experiencing a crisis and are neither prepared nor trained to know what to do next. This conversation should also provide care to the guardians / parent(s) who rightfully feels angry, hurt, afraid, and let down by the sport and its agencies.

Introduce yourself and then begin by stating that your primary purpose is to ensure that safety of their child and any other children who may have been involved. In order to do this you are asking for the opportunity to:

- Learn if a report has already been made to DSS; if not, to help them make any needed report.
- Provide knowledge, support and experience by way of the **Sexual Abuse Response Team** expertise as a way to care for the child and family during this time.
- Provide a list of resources that would benefit the family during this time.

REPORT IF: *The accusation is potentially viable*; meaning the accusation is of an action that qualifies as sexual abuse and it could be true.

DO NOT REPORT ONLY IF: (1) The allegation violates the laws of physics (i.e., the accused was in Australia not at the meet as alleged). **(2)** The reports turn out not to be sexual abuse (i.e., “My friend made fun of me in the bathroom when I put on a wet swim suit.”)

Immediately after this conversation the interviewing **Sexual Abuse Response Team** member should document what was shared using attached form.

If a CPS report has not already been made, then the **Sexual Abuse Response Team** member(s) should *call CPS with the parent and/or person to whom the initial disclosure was made*. This allows (a) all relevant information to be given to CPS at that moment, and (b) ensure that parents and person to whom the disclosure was made know as much as possible about what will happen next.

These notes should be debriefed with the CEO in a joint meeting within 48 hours. A copy of the notes will be kept on file with a secure folder of the **Sexual Abuse Response Team**. The purpose of this meeting is to ensure the CEO can effectively fulfill their responsibilities towards the accused perpetrator and review preventative policies.

A purpose of this first 24 -48 hour response is to assure the child and family that ISCA takes these matters seriously. If a child has been harmed we want them to receive care quickly and for the necessary legal steps to be taken promptly. *How the people in the organization respond in a crisis goes a long way towards determining whether these individuals feel safe.*

If the **Sexual Abuse Response Team** is unable to meet with the reporting family in the time specified or if at any point the child or guardians / parents become uncooperative with the **Sexual Abuse Response Team** and there is not clear evidence that the allegation was physically impossible, then a report is to be filed based upon information gathered to that point.

Response Hours 48 – 96
(Unless Advised to Contrary by DSS or Law Enforcement):
Caring for the Alleged Perpetrator

The reporting of a sexual abuse accusation is a legal matter and . For this reason, a legal report may be filed without first talking to the alleged perpetrator. Even if the alleged perpetrator denies the action took place, it is not the role of the **Sexual Abuse Response Team** nor ISCA to determine what happened before honoring the laws of the state.

“Any person or institution who has cause to suspect that any juvenile is abused, neglected, or dependent... shall report the case of that juvenile to the director of the Department of Social Services in the county where the juvenile resides or is found (NCGS 7B-301).”

The **Sexual Abuse Response Team**, even if the information is disclosed in counseling, is not exempt under privilege from any expectation in state laws.

While reporting allegations of abuse, it is still prudent to be mindful of the care for the alleged perpetrator. Therefore, after the **Sexual Abuse Response Team** has interviewed the victim, assessed if there is reason to consider the allegation potentially viable, reported to DSS (if needed), and summarized the allegation to the CEO, a member of the **Sexual Abuse Response Team** visits the alleged perpetrator.

This visit may be delayed if DSS or law enforcement believes that this involvement would interfere with their processes.

- The **Sexual Abuse Response Team** member responsible to make this visit is to contact the CPS worker over the case, whose name and contact information will be recorded in the notes, before making this visit.

The purpose of this visit is to:

- I. Inform the alleged perpetrator of the allegation that has been made.

2. Allow for a time of confession (if guilty and willing to admit it).
3. Inform the alleged perpetrator of the legal steps that have been taken.
4. Inform the alleged perpetrator of the restrictions that will be placed upon him/her by ISCA until the matter reaches its legal conclusion. Have the alleged perpetrator sign the agreed upon plan (see attached document).
 - a. No involvement or physical presence with children or youth or areas of the team are to be allowed.
 - b. Asked to attend a different site from the alleged victim and be supervised while present.
 - c. No attempt should be made to: (1) determine who the alleged victim is or (2) contact that minor/family.
5. Begin the process of care.
 - a. If confession is made, provide the name of a counselor who will be recognized as an expert during the legal process and is trained to work with perpetrators of sexual abuse against a child. This counseling should not be done by a staff member or counselor affiliated with ISCA in order to prevent a conflict of interest.
 - b. If confession is not made but his/her response is civil, then maintain support during the legal process. If the legal process concludes that the allegation was unsubstantiated, then a consulting plan with the **Sexual Abuse Response Team** is to be crafted for discovery of the best source of counseling for the trauma of the process should be advisable.
 - c. If confession is not made and his/her response is uncivil, then reiterate that the restrictions are expected to be followed and that ISCA wants to be supportive, yet guarded, during this time.

During this time, ISCA will contact its insurance provider to inform of the current liability risk and an outside attorney in order to receive specific advisement about liability concerns specific to the details of the current situation.

Aftercare Responsibilities:

There are three areas that should be assessed and/or defined.

First, determine whether there were other victims who have not reported their abuse. A child molester seldom has a single victims before getting caught. The process of determining if there are other victims will begin from examining the list of roles by the alleged perpetrator and any names provided while interviewing the victim.

If specific names are given by the victim, then the **Sexual Abuse Response Team** should call the guardians / parents of that child and ask to meet about an important matter. This interview should be similar to the one conducted with the parents of the initial victim described above. The plan to implement this step (before) and the information garnered from these conversations (after) should be shared with the CPS worker over the case.

In the squads / classes taught by the alleged perpetrator, the **Sexual Abuse Response Team** should have a meeting with the guardians / parents in the class to give overview of what happened without mentioning names. Give helpful ideas of how to talk to their child, and explaining the response plan of ISCA.

The **Sexual Abuse Response Team members, or its representatives** (as substitute teachers / guest coaches) should offer to teach a practice / lead a team meeting with each squad affected. The aim is to describe what is right and acceptable for sports' leaders and volunteers to do. In this the **Sexual Abuse Response Team** should give examples of the kind of activities described by the alleged victim (i.e., shouldn't take you the bathroom alone). As a part of this class, the **Sexual Abuse Response Team** may play a game led by one member, allowing the other two members to interview the children individually about their experience with sport leaders.

Second, determine what to say to the ISCA membership and sports peers. The **Sexual Abuse Response Team** should decide what needed to be communicated at large and to segments. This information should be communicated to involved staff, victim's family, and alleged perpetrator's family before anything is communicated with a wider audience.

It should be expected that some awareness will leak into the teams and league. Therefore, a statement should be prepared and made available to any involved staff even if it is decided that no statement is made to the entire membership. The spirit of this communication is that the members should hear only truth while showing evidence of caring for the victim, the alleged perpetrator, and the members (many who will have their own abuse histories).

Third, prepare a statement if these events become part of the public media. An individual should be designated by the **Sexual Abuse Response Team** to speak on behalf of the process to the media. All staff should be advised to direct any media enquiry to the designated person.

This statement should include the following key points.

- We value children and have extensive preventative child protection policies.
- There are times when moral evil evades the best policies and this grieves us greatly.
- No attempt has been made to hide or cover up what has happened. We are cooperating fully with the legal process, but want to protect the privacy of those involved.
- We applaud the courage of anyone, especially a child, who speaks out about abuse.
- We are seeking to love and serve the families affected at this time and would invite everyone to pray and be mindful for those involved in this process.