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# Guidelines for Sport Organizations to apply PCSOS Action Theory



## PROTECTING CHILDREN IN SPORT: DEVELOPING SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SPORT ORGANIZATIONS





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## 1. Background

The PCSOS (Protection of Children in Sports Organizations) Action Plan is designed to enhance the safety and well-being of children participating in sports activities by systematically addressing potential risks and implementing robust child protection strategies. Recognizing the vulnerability of children in sports environments to various forms of abuse, the plan aims to equip sports organizations with the necessary tools and knowledge to develop and sustain effective protection programs. The primary objective is to create a secure and supportive environment where children can engage in sports free from harm, fostering physical, psychological, and social development.

The PCSOS Action Plan outlines a comprehensive framework that includes setting clear objectives, analyzing the current situation, developing strategic actions, and continuous monitoring and evaluation to achieve these goals. It emphasizes the importance of multi-stakeholder engagement in developing and implementing child protection policies, including those of coaches, parents, and sports administrators. By integrating international best practices and tailoring them to local contexts, the action plan ensures that sports organizations can respond effectively to the unique challenges they face in safeguarding children. This strategic approach not only prevents harm but also enhances the overall sports experience for young participants, contributing to their health and well-being.



## 2. Examples of Cases for Sport Organization

### 2.1. Case Study 1: Implementing a Child Protection Program in a Youth Football League

#### Goal Setting and Prioritization:

- **Goal Definition:** The league aims to implement a comprehensive child protection program that includes abuse prevention, response protocols, and regular training sessions for all staff and volunteers.
- **Prioritization:** Given limited resources, priority is given to training programs and the establishment of a transparent reporting system for incidents deemed most critical due to recent concerns raised by parents and coaches.

#### Situation Analysis:

- **Review of Current Policies:** The league needs formalized child protection policies. A task force develops these based on best practices observed in similar sports organizations.
- **Risk Assessment:** A thorough risk assessment identifies the most common risks as inadequate supervision and lack of knowledge about signs of abuse among staff.

#### Strategy and Action Plan Development:

- **Action Plan Preparation:** An action plan is developed, immediate training for current staff is scheduled, and child protection policies are integrated into the onboarding process for new hires.
- **Resource Identification and Distribution:** Resources are allocated for training development and hiring two part-time child safety officers.

#### Education and Awareness Raising:

- **Training Programs Development:** Regular training sessions are established, focusing on recognizing and preventing abuse.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Launch an awareness campaign through newsletters and community meetings to educate parents and athletes about the new child protection measures.

#### Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation:

- **Monitoring and Reporting:** Set up a monitoring system to track the implementation of the new policies and the effectiveness of training programs.
- **Improvement:** Collect feedback from staff and parents to continuously improve the training content and policy implementation.





## 2.2 Case Study 2: Enhancing Safety Protocols in a Gymnastics Club

### Goal Setting and Prioritization:

- **Goal Definition:** To enhance safety protocols to prevent physical and emotional abuse in training sessions.
- **Prioritization:** Focus is placed on areas with the highest risk of injury and emotional stress, particularly in competitive practice sessions.

### Situation Analysis:

- **Review of Current Policies:** Current policies are outdated and lack specifics on handling emotional abuse. A new set of guidelines is drafted, focusing on coach-athlete interactions.
- **Risk Assessment:** Identifies high-risk maneuvers and situations where athletes may feel pressured or stressed, necessitating new safety protocols.

### Strategy and Action Plan Development:

- **Action Plan Preparation:** Develop a phased plan to implement new safety protocols and emotional abuse awareness programs.
- **Resource Identification and Distribution:** Allocate a budget for additional safety equipment and professional development sessions on emotional well-being.

### Education and Awareness Raising:

- **Training Programs Development:** Introduce mandatory workshops on emotional well-being for coaches and athletes.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Start a "Safe Sport, Strong Minds" campaign to promote awareness of emotional abuse in sports.

### Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation:

- **Monitoring and Reporting:** Regular assessments by an external body to ensure compliance with new safety protocols.
- **Improvement:** Quarterly review meetings with staff and athletes to discuss potential areas of improvement in the safety protocols and training environment.

## 2.3 Case Study 3: Developing a Child Protection Policy in a Swimming Federation

### Goal Setting and Prioritization:

- **Goal Definition:** Develop a federation-wide child protection policy with guidelines for all affiliated clubs.



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- **Prioritization:** Immediate focus on creating a uniform policy that addresses physical and online safety due to the rise of virtual training sessions.

#### Situation Analysis:

- **Review of Current Policies:** Findings show that most clubs need more unified policies, particularly online interactions.
- **Risk Assessment:** Conduct an extensive risk assessment focusing on physical venues and digital platforms used for training.

#### Strategy and Action Plan Development:

- **Action Plan Preparation:** Outline steps to create and disseminate the new child protection policy to all clubs.
- **Resource Identification and Distribution:** Identify legal consultation needs, and IT support to develop comprehensive online safety protocols.

#### Education and Awareness Raising:

- **Training Programs Development:** Plan federation-wide training on the new policies, emphasizing physical and online safety.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Launch an online safety awareness week featuring webinars and resource sharing.

#### Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation:

- **Monitoring and Reporting:** Establish a central reporting system for incidents and a dashboard for monitoring policy adoption across clubs.
- **Improvement:** Annual reviews of policy effectiveness and updates based on technological advancements and evolving risks.

### 3. Education and Awareness Raising for Sports Organizations

- Development of Training Programs

- *Practical Information:* We have developed training programs for administrators, coaches, and athletes. These programs include child protection policies, risk recognition, and reporting procedures.

- *Training Examples:* Held workshops and seminars with interactive sessions and case studies. Coaches trained to recognize and prevent psychological abuse.

- *Seminars:* I organized two small educational seminars focused on safety in sports, cyber safety, and bullying, providing crucial information and practical guidance to children, coaches, and parents.



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- Awareness Campaigns

- *Initiatives:* Conducting awareness campaigns in the club and local media. We have created informative posts, videos, and brochures distributed at sessions and competitions.

- *Results:* Increased awareness among members, leading to higher reporting of suspicious activities and better communication within the club.

#### 4. Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation

- Monitoring and Reporting

- *Implementation Monitoring:* Establish a system for regular inspections and reporting to ensure adherence to child protection policies.

- *Reports:* Preparing regular progress reports for the board, including effectiveness analysis and improvement recommendations.

- Improvement

- *Feedback Mechanisms:* Establishing mechanisms to collect feedback from coaches, athletes, and parents. Regular updates to the plan will be made based on this feedback.

- *Examples of Improvements:* Introducing additional training on safeguarding and cyberbullying in response to feedback from the community.

#### 5. Collaboration with Stakeholders

- Stakeholder Collaboration

- *Identifying Stakeholders:* Identifying key stakeholders, including schools, health institutions, NGOs, and parents. Initial meetings have been held to create collaboration.

- *Collaboration Opportunities:* Engaging in discussions for joint projects, including workshops on child safety in sports and cooperation with NGOs to develop comprehensive support systems.

- *Enhanced Partnerships:* Initiating partnerships with local health institutions to provide mental health support and physical wellness programs for athletes. These collaborations aim to create a holistic approach to athlete well-being, integrating physical, emotional, and social health.



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## 6. Conclusion

The PCSOS Action Plan offers a comprehensive, systematic approach for sports organizations to safeguard children, ensuring their physical, emotional, and psychological well-being. By establishing clear objectives, conducting detailed situation analyses, and developing strategic actions, sports organizations can create safer environments for young athletes. The outlined case studies provide tangible examples of how different sports entities can successfully implement child protection measures, underscoring the versatility and adaptability of the plan across various sports contexts.

A vital component of the PCSOS Action Plan is the emphasis on education and awareness. Developing and delivering targeted training programs for administrators, coaches, athletes, and parents is essential for building a community that is well-versed in recognizing and mitigating risks. Awareness campaigns further reinforce this knowledge, promoting a culture of vigilance and proactive protection. These initiatives ensure that all stakeholders have the tools and information to identify and respond to potential threats effectively.

Continuous monitoring and evaluation are vital for maintaining the integrity and effectiveness of child protection policies. Regular inspections, progress reports, and feedback mechanisms enable organizations to assess the success of their strategies and make necessary adjustments. This dynamic approach ensures that child protection measures remain relevant and responsive to new challenges and risks. Collaboration with key stakeholders, such as schools, health institutions, NGOs, and parents, enhances the protective framework by integrating diverse perspectives and resources. These partnerships enable the development of comprehensive support systems that address the holistic needs of young athletes, including their mental and physical health. By working together, stakeholders can create a unified front against abuse and ensure that children receive the support they need to thrive in their sports endeavors.

In conclusion, the PCSOS Action Plan represents a significant step in promoting child safety in sports. By adopting and implementing this plan, sports organizations can foster an environment of trust, safety, and growth for young athletes. This commitment protects children from harm and enhances their overall sports experience, contributing to their development as healthy, confident, and resilient individuals. The vision of a safe and supportive sports environment for all children can become a reality through sustained efforts and collaborative partnerships.

