

SafeSport Pathways

SafeSport Pathways Rapid Response & Referral Guide

Safeguarding Migrant Youth in Sport

Recognise. Respond. Record. Refer. Review.

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DISCLAIMER

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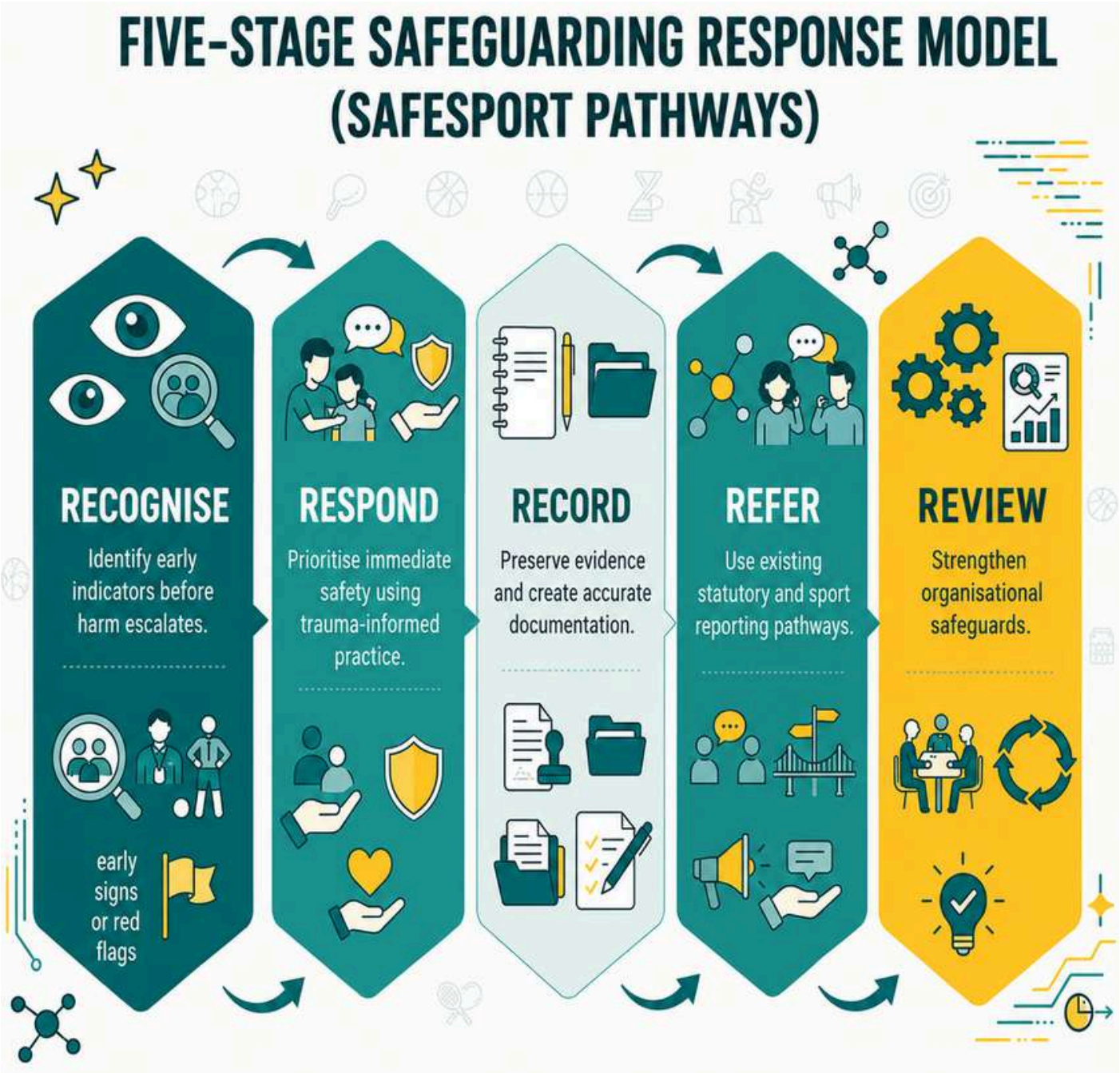
SAFESPORT RAPID RESPONSE GUIDE

Professional duty of care

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Early action prevents escalation from poor practice to abuse, exploitation and trafficking.

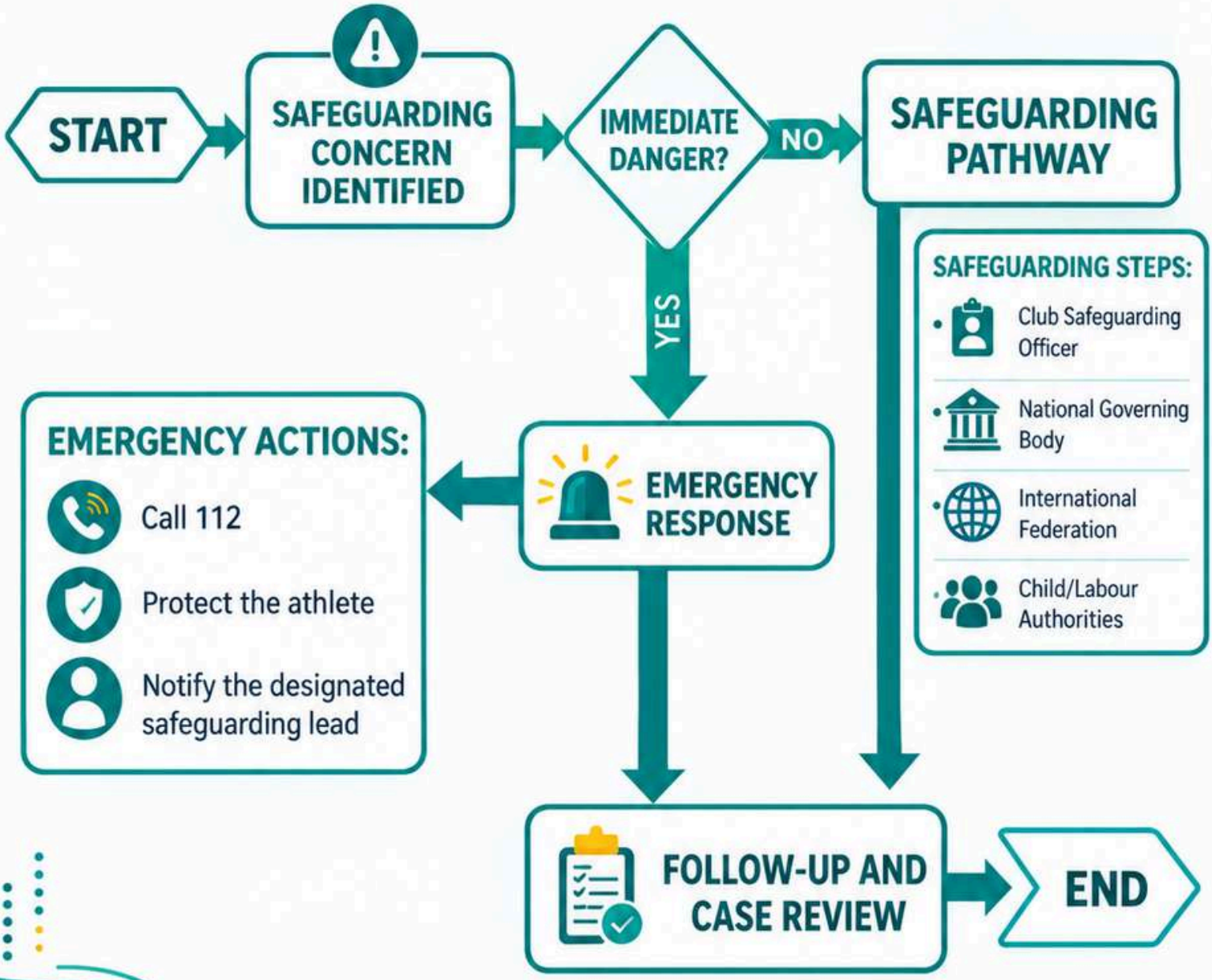
The Rapid Response and Referral Guide follows a five-stage safeguarding response model as advocated in the SafeSport Pathways Practitioners' Toolkit:

Recognise: Identify early indicators before harm escalates.
Respond: Prioritise immediate safety using trauma-informed practice.
Record: Preserve evidence and create accurate documentation.
Refer: Use existing statutory and sport reporting pathways.
Review: Strengthen organisational safeguards.



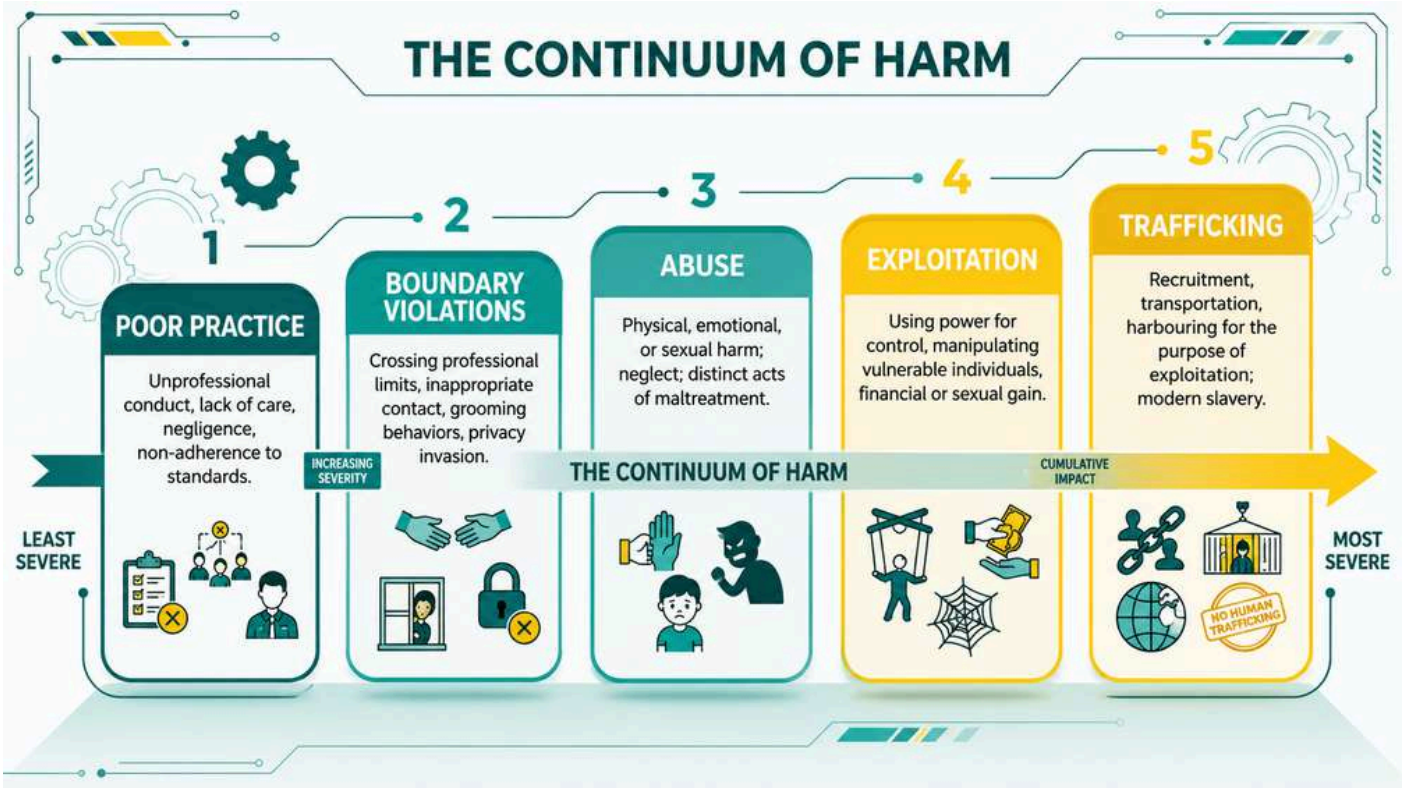
UNIVERSAL REPORTING MODEL: SAFEGUARDING ESCALATION PATHWAY

(REGARDLESS OF THE SPORT, PRACTITIONERS SHOULD FOLLOW THE SAME ESCALATION PATHWAY.)



THE CONTINUUM OF HARM

Harm rarely begins with trafficking. Practitioners should recognise escalation.



Examples include:

Stage	Example
Poor practice	The sports organisation has no designated safeguarding lead, no staff training on exploitation indicators, and no clear reporting pathway for concerns.
Boundary issue	A staff member begins private late-night messaging with a vulnerable young athlete, sharing personal details and offering “special help” outside formal channels.
Abuse	Psychological abuse escalates: the person is isolated from family/friends, subjected to gaslighting, threats of exposure or abandonment, and made to feel solely dependent on the abuser.
Exploitation	Documents (passport, ID, work permit) are confiscated “for safekeeping”; wages are withheld or heavily docked under false “debts”; movement and communication are tightly controlled.
Trafficking	The person is moved (or held) under false recruitment promises of legitimate work/education, then forced into labour, sexual exploitation, or criminal activity through ongoing coercion, debt bondage, and fear of authorities or harm to loved ones.

Early intervention is significantly easier than responding once exploitation has become entrenched.

HIGH-RISK RECRUITMENT INDICATORS

Use this table during trials, academy admissions, and overseas recruitment. Indicators are ordered by severity.

Indicator	Risk Level	Why it matters
Passport or ID documents retained by recruiter/agent	Critical	Classic control tactic; prevents free movement and escape
Isolation from family / restricted contact	Critical	Cuts off support networks and enables coercion
Pressure to travel alone or at short notice	Critical	Removes parental/guardian oversight, especially for minors
Guaranteed professional contract or “certain” academy place	High	Legitimate pathways never offer guarantees
Large upfront fees, “trial fees”, or finder’s fees	High	Legitimate clubs and licensed agents do not charge players this way
Tourist / visitor visa used for trials or training	High	Indicates irregular migration pathway and lack of proper work/study permission
No written contract or only vague verbal promises	High	Leaves the player with no enforceable rights
Secret or private communications (e.g. late-night WhatsApp, personal social media)	High	Bypasses official channels and parental involvement
Unlicensed agent or “scout” who cannot prove international / national association status	High	High correlation with fraudulent recruitment networks
Recruiter demands payment for “training”, accommodation, or “processing” after arrival	High	Often escalates into debt bondage

QUICK-USE GUIDANCE

Any Critical indicator: Pause the process immediately and escalate to the safeguarding lead.

Two or more High indicators: Treat as high-risk; require independent verification (club confirmation, licensed agent check, written offer) before proceeding.

Always verify the agent's licence through the official sport governing body or national association channels and insist that the player retain personal control of all documents.

Safeguarding risks, abuse and trafficking can occur in any sport. While the specific pathways differ, the underlying patterns of deception, isolation, dependency, document control and financial exploitation remain remarkably consistent. Evidence is strongest in football, where fake or unlicensed agents and overseas trial or academy scams are well documented, and moderately strong in basketball (particularly cross-border academy and scholarship recruitment) and athletics (overseas training camps and control of earnings or documents). Similar vulnerabilities appear in tennis and gymnastics through international academies and residential training environments, in combat sports and swimming through intense private-coach dependency, and in rugby, volleyball, cycling and handball through academy contracts, club transfers and youth exchanges. Esports presents emerging risks via online recruitment and remote contracts. Safesport practitioners should treat overseas travel, large upfront fees, unlicensed intermediaries, restricted family contact or retention of documents as high-risk indicators, regardless of the sport involved.

BEHAVIOURAL AND PHYSICAL INDICATORS

The SafeSport practitioner toolkit recommends looking beyond disclosure. Victims rarely self-identify, so practitioners should watch for clusters of behavioural, emotional and relational changes. No single indicator confirms abuse, exploitation or trafficking, but several appearing together warrant further exploration and safeguarding action.

Emotional and behavioural changes

- Sudden withdrawal, isolation or loss of interest in sport or social activities
- Heightened anxiety, fear or hyper-vigilance, especially around a particular coach, agent, staff member or peer
- Unexplained mood swings, irritability, low self-esteem or signs of depression
- Reluctance or refusal to discuss training arrangements, travel or living conditions

Control and communication indicators

- Lacks access to identity documents or personal belongings
- Inability or clear fear of contacting family or friends freely
- Use of secretive or restricted communication channels
- Someone else consistently speaking or deciding on the individual's behalf

Financial and practical indicators

- Unexplained debt, sudden requests for money, or talk of "owing" an agent, coach or intermediary
- Lack of access to their own earnings, bank accounts or personal funds
- Fear of deportation, irregular immigration status, or threats linked to visa or documentation issues

Physical and presentation indicators

- Unexplained injuries, fatigue or deterioration in physical condition
- Poor personal presentation, inadequate equipment or living conditions inconsistent with the claimed opportunity
- Signs of malnourishment, sleep deprivation or neglected medical needs

These indicators should be considered in context and alongside the continuum of harm and high-risk recruitment red flags. When several are present, practitioners should record concerns, seek advice from the designated safeguarding lead, and prioritise the individual's safety and wellbeing without requiring a formal disclosure in the first instance.

INDICATORS OF POTENTIAL EXPLOITATION & TRAFFICKING

BEHAVIOURAL AND PHYSICAL INDICATORS TOOLKIT

1 EMOTIONAL & BEHAVIOURAL CHANGES



EMOTIONAL & BEHAVIOURAL CHANGES

- Sudden Withdrawal
- Isolation
- Anxiety/Fear (especially around specific people)
- Mood Swings
- Low Self-Esteem

2 CONTROL & COMMUNICATION INDICATORS



CONTROL & COMMUNICATION INDICATORS

- Phones/Documents Controlled
- Family/Friends Contact Fear
- Secretive Channels
- External Decision-Making

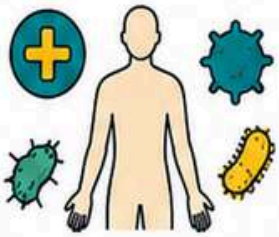
3 FINANCIAL & PRACTICAL INDICATORS



FINANCIAL & PRACTICAL INDICATORS

- Unexplained Debt
- "Owing" Money
- Lack of Financial Access
- deportation/visa fears

4 PHYSICAL & PRESENTATION INDICATORS



PHYSICAL & PRESENTATION INDICATORS

- Unexplained Injuries
- Fatigue
- Physical Deterioration
- Poor Appearance
- Malnourishment
- Sleep Deprivation

WHEN CLUSTERS ARE PRESENT:



Record concerns



Seek advice from designated safeguarding lead



Prioritize safety and well-being



Look beyond disclosure. No single indicator confirms; consider in context with the continuum of harm and red flags.

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE PROTOCOL

Step 1: Ensure Safety

Immediate safety takes priority over everything else.

DO

- Separate the athlete from the alleged perpetrator as soon as it is safe to do so.
- Call emergency services (112 or local equivalent) without delay if there is any immediate risk of harm.
- Involve child-protection or adult-safeguarding authorities promptly when the individual is a minor or a vulnerable adult, or when local law requires it.
- Move the athlete to a private, quiet space where they feel secure and can speak freely if they wish.

NEVER

- Confront or challenge the alleged offender yourself.
- Delay calling emergency services or making a mandatory referral because you are unsure or waiting for more information.
- Leave the athlete alone with the alleged perpetrator or return them to an unsafe environment.

Inaction is not an option. Once a concern reaches the threshold of risk, practitioners have a clear duty to act.

Step 2: Respond to Disclosure

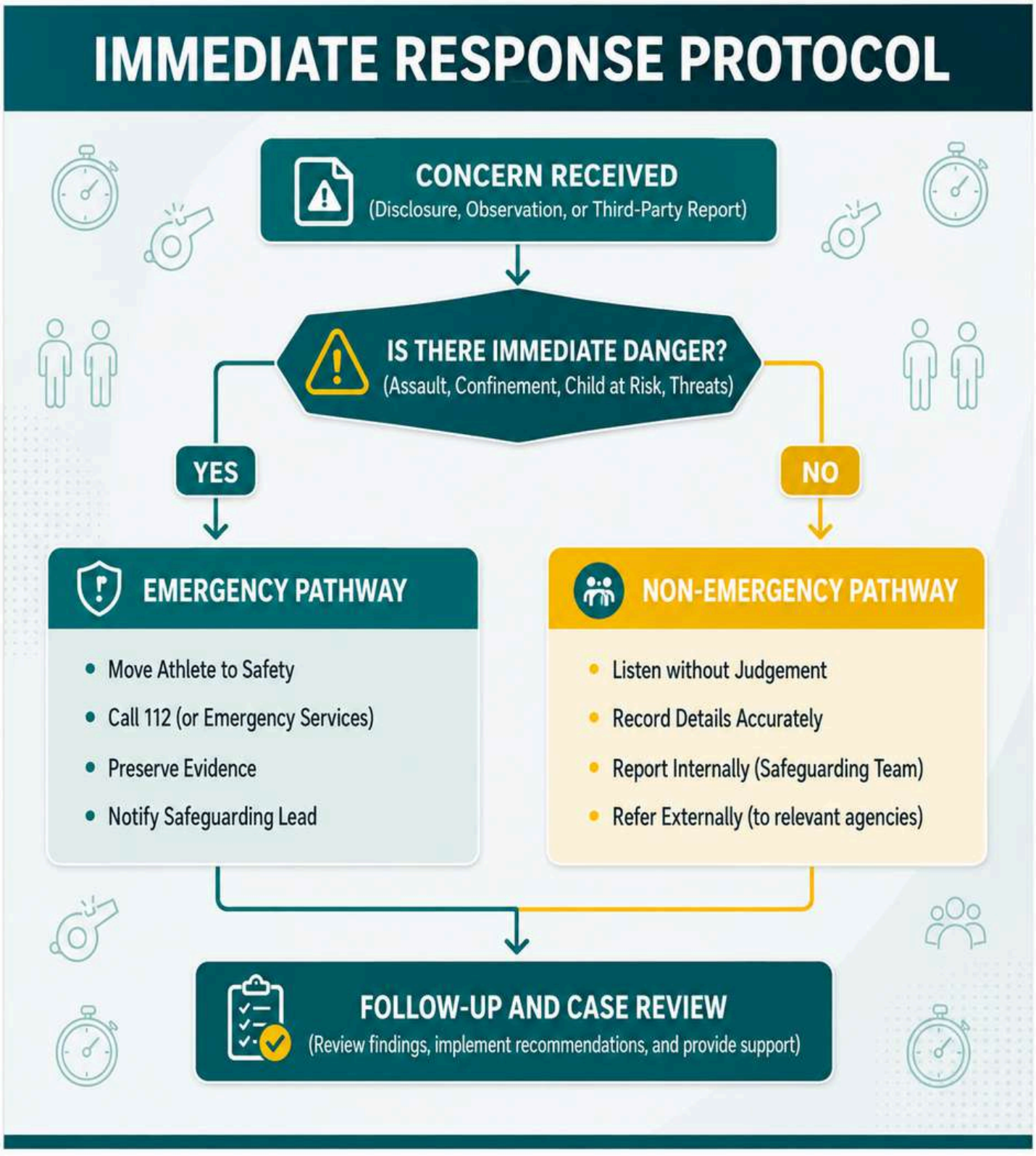
When an athlete discloses abuse, exploitation or trafficking concerns, use theLISTEN model to guide your response:

Do	Don't
Listen carefully and without interruption	Interrogate or ask leading questions
Inquire gently with open, non-judgmental questions if needed	Promise absolute secrecy
Stay calm and control your own reaction	Blame the athlete or question their account
Thank them for trusting you	Conduct your own investigation
Explain clearly what will happen next and who needs to be informed	Minimise or dismiss what they have said
Notify the designated safeguarding lead and follow reporting procedures	Delay or decide alone that the concern is not serious enough

Key principles

- Believe the athlete at the point of disclosure.
- Keep the conversation focused on their immediate safety and well-being.
- Record what is said as accurately and promptly as possible, using the athlete's own words where feasible.
- Do not investigate, gather evidence, or speak to potential witnesses yourself – that is the role of the safeguarding lead and statutory authorities.

These steps apply across all sports and age groups. Always follow your organisation's safeguarding policy and local legal requirements in parallel.



REFERRAL PATHWAYS

Referral pathways ensure concerns are escalated to the right authorities at the right time. Practitioners do not investigate or decide whether abuse or trafficking has occurred; your role is to recognise, respond, record and refer. Exact procedures vary by Member State. Always follow national law and your organisation's policy.

1. Immediate Safety Pathway (Emergency)

Use when there is an imminent risk of harm.

- Call the single European emergency number 112 or your local police station.
- Separate the athlete from the alleged perpetrator if it is safe to do so.
- Notify your sport organisation's Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.
- If the person is a child or an adult at risk, contact the national or local child-protection / adult-safeguarding services without delay.

2. Internal Organisational Pathway

Most concerns should first go through the sport organisation's internal process.
Report the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

The DSL assesses the concern and decides the next steps:

- Manage as poor practice (internal disciplinary process, additional training, monitoring).
- Escalate as possible abuse, exploitation or trafficking.

The DSL records the concern using the sport organisation's incident form (or using the template found in the SafeSport practitioners' Toolkit if the organisation does not have one of their own) and stores it securely in line with the GDPR.

Where required, the DSL refers the matter externally and informs the original reporter or complainant that action has been taken (without sharing confidential details).

3. External / Statutory Pathway

Escalate immediately when the concern involves possible abuse, exploitation, trafficking or a criminal offence. Contact points differ by Member State.

Concern type	Primary external referral	Additional / specialist referrals
Child at risk of significant harm	Local / national child protection or social services	Police (if a crime is suspected)
Adult at risk	Local / national adult safeguarding or social services	Police if needed
Possible criminal offence (including sexual abuse, assault, harassment, etc)	Police	Victim support services
Human trafficking / modern slavery	Police and national referral mechanism (or equivalent national system)	Specialised anti-trafficking NGOs or victim-support services
Person in a position of trust (coach, official, etc.)	Relevant national, regional or international federation / sports governing body	Police / social services (depending on the nature of the allegation)
Cross-border or EU-wide concerns	National authorities and, where relevant, Europol	

4. Sport Governing Body and National SafeSport Pathways

In addition to statutory referrals:

- Report to the national sports governing body or an independent safeguarding body where one exists.
- Follow the reporting routes stipulated by the relevant sports governing body or federation.
- Many Member States have dedicated independent reporting channels or ombudspersons for sport; use these in parallel with statutory referrals when required.

5. Key Principles for All Referrals

- **Do not investigate –** gather only the minimum information needed for a clear referral.
- **GDPR and data protection:** Share personal data only on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with national data-protection law and the GDPR. Document the legal basis for sharing.
- **Consent:** Seek the athlete's (or parent/carer's) views where safe and appropriate. Never delay a referral if seeking consent would increase risk. Children at risk can be referred without consent when necessary to protect them.
- **Record everything:** Use a structured incident record and note exactly who was referred to, when, and by what method.
- **Follow up:** Confirm that the referral has been received and clarify any further action required from the organisation.
- **Support the athlete:** Link them to appropriate welfare, psychological or specialist victim-support services while formal processes run.
- **Cross-border cases:** When athletes, coaches or incidents involve more than one Member State, inform the national authorities in all relevant countries and, where appropriate, seek guidance from national anti-trafficking coordinators or Europol.

When in doubt, consult the Designated Safeguarding Lead or your country's national child-protection / adult-safeguarding helpline. Always prioritise the athlete's immediate safety.



ROLE-SPECIFIC GUIDANCE

For Coaches

Coaches are often the adults with the most consistent day-to-day contact with migrant youth athletes. This places them in a critical early-warning position. The coach's role is to observe, maintain professional boundaries, create conditions for trust, and report concerns promptly – not to investigate.
Daily Responsibilities

Before training:

- observe athlete wellbeing (energy levels, mood)
- check attendance patterns
- take note of any behavioural changes (withdrawal, irritability, hyper-compliance, anxiety around particular adults or peers)

During training:

- avoid unnecessary one-to-one isolation
- maintain professional boundaries
- challenge humiliating practices, degrading or overly controlling practices

After training:

- record concerns immediately
- report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Coaches must report concerns rather than investigate them independently.

Key Risk Indicators That Coaches Are Well Placed To Notice



Boundary Expectations

- Keep all interactions transparent and related to the athlete's sporting development and welfare.
- Do not hold or control an athlete's identity documents.
- Do not create situations of dependency (financial, emotional or practical).
- Avoid dual relationships that blur professional roles.

When Concerns Arise

- Prioritise the athlete's immediate safety.
- Listen calmly if a disclosure is made (use the LISTEN model).
- Record what is observed or said factually, using the athlete's own words where possible.
- Notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay.
- Do not confront the alleged perpetrator, conduct your own investigation, or promise absolute secrecy.

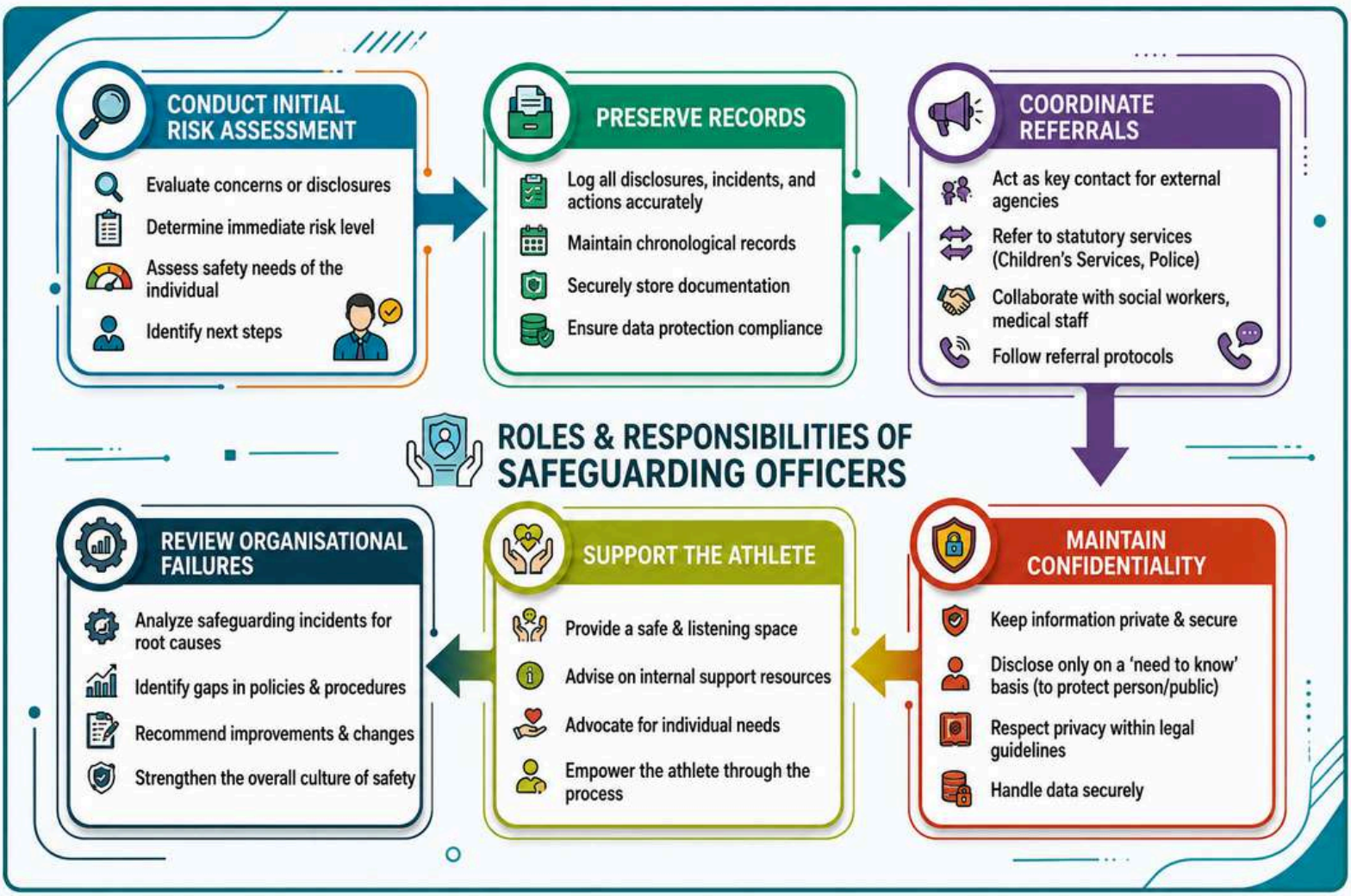
Coaches must report concerns rather than investigate them independently. Early, factual reporting is one of the most effective ways to interrupt the continuum of harm before it escalates into exploitation or trafficking.

For Safeguarding Officers

Safeguarding Officers (Designated Safeguarding Leads) hold primary responsibility for receiving concerns, assessing risk, coordinating responses, and ensuring that organisational systems function effectively. When working with migrant youth athletes, this role requires particular attention to multi-system coordination, legal-status vulnerabilities, and the continuum of harm.

Key Areas of Responsibility

- Receive and triage all safeguarding concerns promptly and without minimisation.
- Conduct an initial risk assessment that considers both immediate safety and layered vulnerability factors (age, migration status, isolation, dependency, financial pressure).
- Preserve accurate, factual records in line with the 10-Point Incident Record and GDPR requirements.
- Coordinate internal and external referrals, including child-protection services, adult safeguarding, police, national referral mechanisms for trafficking, and relevant sport governing bodies.
- Maintain confidentiality on a strict need-to-know basis while ensuring information is shared appropriately to protect the athlete.
- Support the athlete throughout the process, ensuring access to interpretation, independent advice, and welfare services.
- Review organisational practices after incidents to identify systemic gaps (recruitment, accommodation, agent verification, training, reporting culture) and drive improvement.

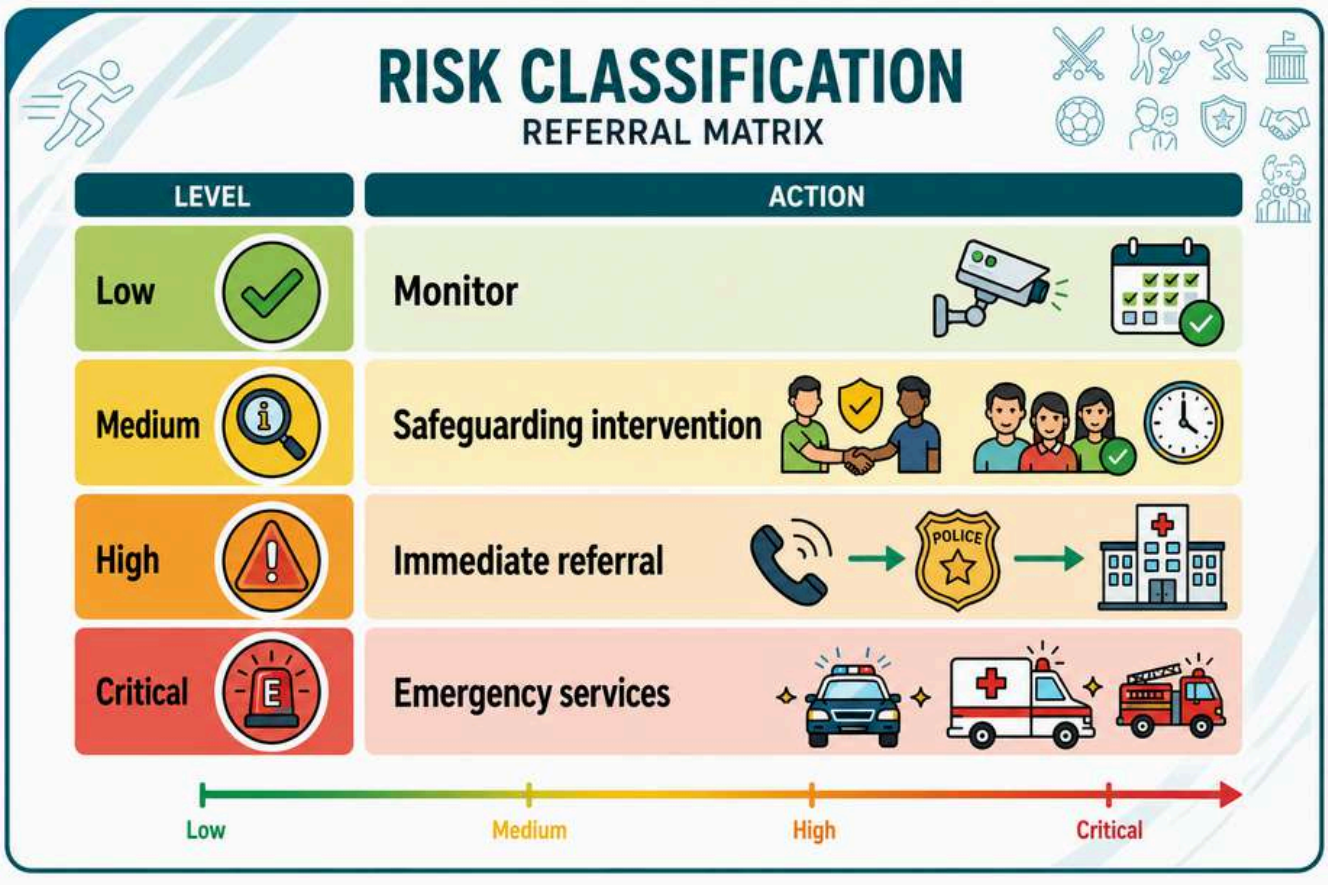


Specific Considerations For Migrant Youth Athletes

- Treat insecure legal status, restricted document control, limited family contact, and dependence on a single adult as significant risk multipliers.
- Verify that the athlete can communicate freely and privately, including access to independent interpretation when needed.
- Assess living arrangements, education continuity, healthcare access, and financial control as standard elements of any risk assessment.
- Recognise that fear of deportation, contract termination, or retaliation may suppress disclosure; do not interpret silence or compliance as absence of risk.
- Ensure parallel reporting pathways are activated when concerns involve possible exploitation or trafficking (refer to both the sport governing body and statutory authorities).

Operational Priorities

- Immediate safety first: separate the athlete from any alleged source of harm when safe to do so and involve emergency services (112) if required.
- Do not investigate criminal matters yourself; gather only the minimum information needed for clear referral.
- Keep the athlete informed, in an age-appropriate and trauma-informed manner, about next steps and who will be involved.
- Confirm that every referral has been received and record the outcome of follow-up.
- Use incidents as opportunities to test and strengthen the organisation's readiness (policy, training, referral directory, accommodation checks, agent verification).



Safeguarding Officers set the tone for the organisation's response. Consistent, timely, and well-documented action protects individual athletes and reduces the likelihood that poor practice will escalate along the continuum of harm.

For Social Workers

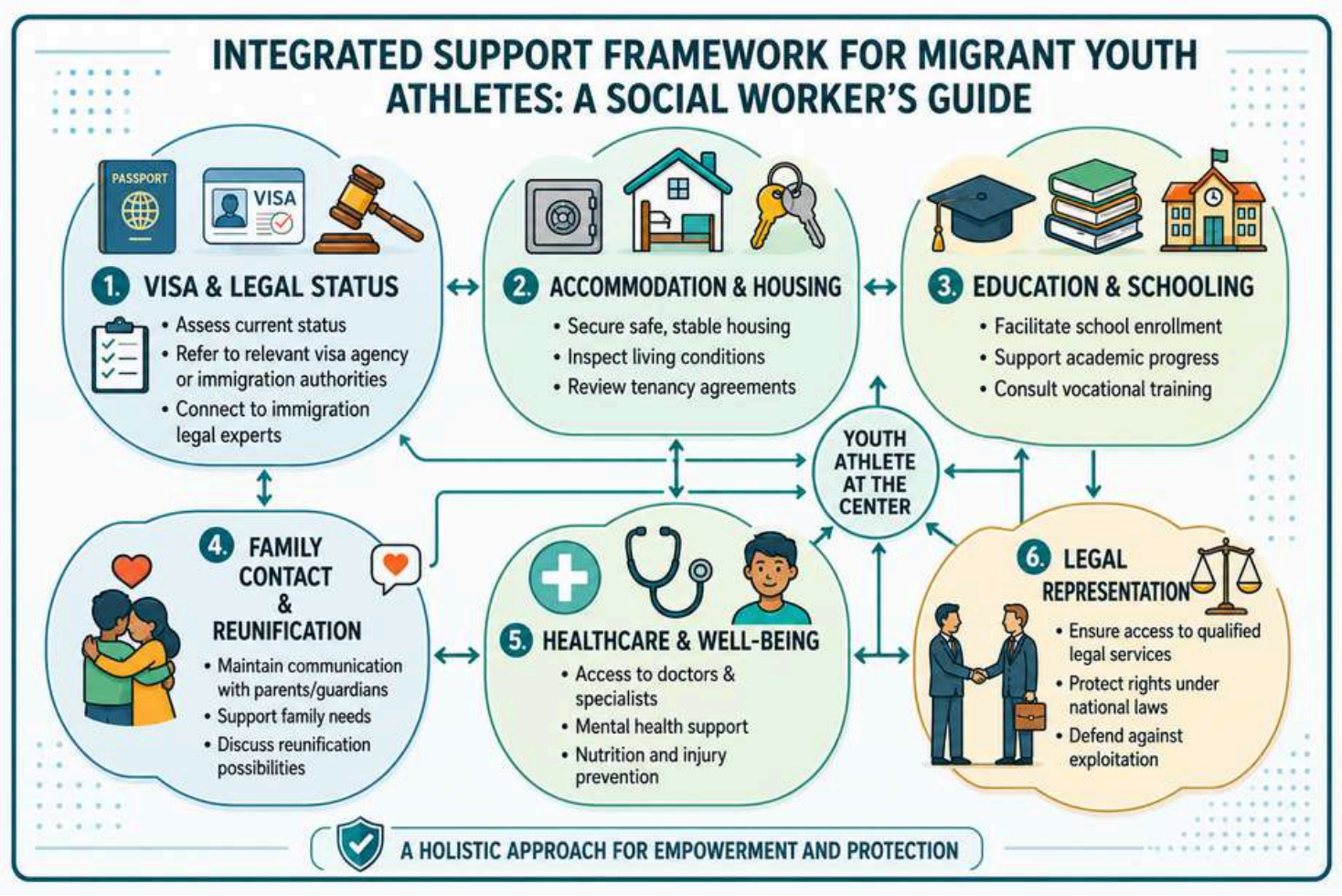
Effective practice requires multi-system coordination, a trauma-informed stance, and careful attention to legal status as a risk multiplier.

Core Responsibilities

- Conduct holistic assessments that go beyond sporting performance to include legal status, living conditions, family contact, education continuity, financial arrangements, physical and mental health, and access to identity documents.
- Map the athlete's support network and identify gaps in protection (e.g., isolation from family, dependency on a single coach or agent, insecure housing).
- Coordinate across agencies: child-protection services, immigration authorities, healthcare providers, education providers, specialist anti-trafficking organisations, and the sport organisation's Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Advocate for the athlete's best interests, particularly where power imbalances or immigration fears may silence disclosure.
- Ensure that any assessment or welfare conversation occurs in private, without the presence of agents, coaches or other parties who may be implicated.

Key Considerations

- **Visa and immigration status:** Documented athletes whose status is tied to a club contract face coercion risks if they fear contract termination. Asylum seekers and refugees may depend heavily on the club for basic needs. Undocumented athletes face the highest barriers to reporting due to fear of deportation. Always assess how legal status shapes willingness to disclose and access to services.
- **Accommodation:** Verify that housing arrangements meet safeguarding standards (privacy, freedom of movement, adequate supervision, no link between performance and continued housing).
- **Education:** Check whether the athlete is enrolled in school or vocational training and whether training schedules allow meaningful participation.
- **Family contact:** Assess frequency and quality of contact with parents/guardians. Restricted or monitored contact is a significant red flag.
- **Healthcare and psychosocial support:** Screen for indicators of trauma, malnutrition, untreated injuries, sleep deprivation or mental-health distress. Link athletes to appropriate services promptly.
- **Legal representation:** Facilitate access to independent legal advice on contracts, immigration status and rights. Never rely solely on advice provided by agents or clubs.
- **Financial arrangements:** Explore whether earnings are controlled by third parties, whether debt has been incurred for recruitment or travel, and whether the family depends on remittances.



Trauma-Informed Practice

- Recognise that prior experiences of displacement, violence or exploitation may affect memory, trust, emotional regulation and willingness to speak.
- Expect delayed, partial or indirect disclosure. Avoid interpreting silence or compliance as evidence that nothing is wrong.
- Prioritise safety, choice, collaboration and empowerment in every interaction.
- Document factually and share information only on a need-to-know basis in line with GDPR and national data-protection rules.

Immediate Actions When Concerns Arise

- Ensure the athlete's physical safety.
- Notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Activate relevant statutory pathways (child protection, adult safeguarding, police, national referral mechanism for trafficking).
- Arrange interpreter support where needed.
- Develop a multi-agency welfare and safety plan.

Social workers should treat layered vulnerability as a high-risk combination even in the absence of a formal disclosure.

For Academy Staff

Academy environments concentrate risk: residential living, intensive training, limited external oversight, and high-performance pressure. Staff (coaches, house parents, education officers, medical staff, administrators) are often the first to observe changes in behaviour, living conditions or relationships.

Key Responsibilities

- Maintain professional boundaries at all times and model appropriate adult-athlete relationships.
- Observe daily well-being indicators (attendance, mood, physical condition, peer relationships, contact with family).
- Ensure athletes retain control of their own identity documents and have independent means of communication.
- Report any concern (however minor) to the Designated Safeguarding Lead without investigating independently.
- Support the implementation of safer recruitment, agent-verification and accommodation-check procedures.
- Facilitate access to education, healthcare and independent advice.
- Create opportunities for athletes to speak privately and without fear of sporting consequences.

Key Areas of Focus

- Monitor for signs of isolation, restricted movement, unexplained debt, fear of deportation, or excessive control by a single adult.
- Challenge normalised harmful practices (training through injury, verbal humiliation, extreme lifestyle control).
- Ensure that any "special attention," gifts, private messaging or unsupervised contact is recorded and reviewed.
- Verify that living arrangements meet safeguarding standards and that athletes can leave accommodation freely.
- Academy staff should view themselves as part of the early-warning system. Early, factual reporting prevents escalation along the continuum of harm.

For Grassroots Organisations

Grassroots clubs and organisations are frequently the first point of contact for migrant youth athletes and may operate with limited resources. Clear, simple systems are essential.

Minimum Organisational Requirements

- Appoint and train a Designated Safeguarding Lead whose contact details are known to all staff, volunteers and athletes.
- Adopt a written safeguarding and reporting policy that explicitly addresses risks to migrant youth (trafficking, exploitation, irregular status, isolation).
- Implement basic safer-recruitment checks for all adults who have contact with young people.
- Maintain a referral directory (emergency services, local child-protection services, police, national anti-trafficking hotline, relevant embassies, specialist support organisations).
- Provide regular safeguarding training that includes indicators of exploitation and trafficking, responding to disclosure, and cultural sensitivity.
- Ensure access to interpretation support when needed.
- Verify that any accommodation or hosting arrangements meet basic welfare and safeguarding standards.
- Encourage athletes to retain control of their own documents and maintain independent family contact.

Day-To-Day Practice

- Observe attendance patterns, behavioural changes and living conditions.
- Treat private messaging, guaranteed contracts, large upfront fees, tourist visas for training, and document retention as high-risk indicators.
- Respond to disclosures using the LISTEN model and escalate promptly.
- Record concerns using a standardised incident form.
- Prioritise the athlete's safety over sporting outcomes or organisational reputation.



ORGANISATIONAL READINESS CHECKLIST

For clubs and organisations working with migrant youth athletes.
Every club working with migrant youth should be able to demonstrate the following:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
• Named individual with clear responsibilities, contact details, and appropriate training.
Safeguarding and Reporting Policy
• Written policy that covers recognition, response, recording and referral of concerns, including specific risks related to migrant athletes (trafficking, exploitation, irregular status, isolation).
Safe Recruitment and Vetting Procedures
• Consistent background checks, references, and suitability assessments for all staff, coaches, volunteers and contractors who have contact with young people.
Agent and Intermediary Verification Process
• Clear procedure to verify the licence, identity and legitimacy of any agent, scout or intermediary involved in recruitment or transfers.
Standardised Incident Reporting Form
• Easy-to-use form (aligned with the 10-Point Incident Record) that captures factual information promptly and consistently.
Referral Directory
Up-to-date list of internal and external contacts, including:
• Emergency services (112)
• Local child-protection / adult-safeguarding services
• Police
• National referral mechanism (or equivalent) for trafficking
• National sports governing body / Safe Sport / Integrity unit
• Relevant embassies or consular support
• Specialist migrant and anti-trafficking support organisations
Emergency Contact List
• Readily accessible list of key internal and external emergency contacts, including out-of-hours arrangements.
Mandatory Staff Training
• Regular safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers that includes: indicators of exploitation and trafficking, responding to disclosure, working with migrant youth, and cultural sensitivity.
Translation and Interpretation Support
• Arrangements for timely access to professional interpreters or translated materials so that young people can understand and communicate concerns in a language they understand.
Safe Accommodation Checks
• Procedures to verify that any housing, host families or residential arrangements provided for migrant youth meet safeguarding and welfare standards (including privacy, supervision, and freedom of movement).
Clear process for checking immigration/visa status and ensuring young people retain control of their own documents.
Welfare support plan that addresses isolation, cultural adjustment and family contact.
Regular review and testing of the above systems (at least annually).

Clubs should be able to evidence that these measures are in place, understood by staff, and actively used.

RED FLAG OBSERVATION CARD: PRACTICAL SAFEGUARDING TOOL

Observe	Yes	No	Observe	Yes	No
 Passport retained	☐	☐	 Wrong visa 	☐	☐
 Athlete isolated	☐	☐	 Fear of speaking	☐	☐
 Unexplained debt	☐	☐	 Private messaging	☐	☐

Three or more "Yes" responses require immediate safeguarding review.

Date Observed: _____

Observer Name: _____

Athlete/Person Name (Optional): _____

RED FLAG OBSERVATION CARD

Quick-reference tool for practitioners working with athletes (especially migrant or newly recruited youth). Use this card during trials, academy admissions, overseas placements, accommodation visits or routine welfare checks. Mark each indicator based on direct observation or reliable information.

Observe / Indicator	Yes	No
Passport or identity documents retained by others	☐	☐
Athlete appears isolated from family or peers	☐	☐
Unexplained debt or talk of “owing” money	☐	☐
Wrong or unsuitable visa (e.g. tourist visa for training/work)	☐	☐
Clear fear of speaking openly	☐	☐
Fear of deportation	☐	☐
Private / secretive messaging with coach, agent or intermediary	☐	☐
Reluctance to hand over phone or personal devices	☐	☐
Someone else consistently speaks or decides for the athlete	☐	☐
Restricted movement or controlled living arrangements	☐	☐
Sudden withdrawal, anxiety or unexplained behavioural change	☐	☐

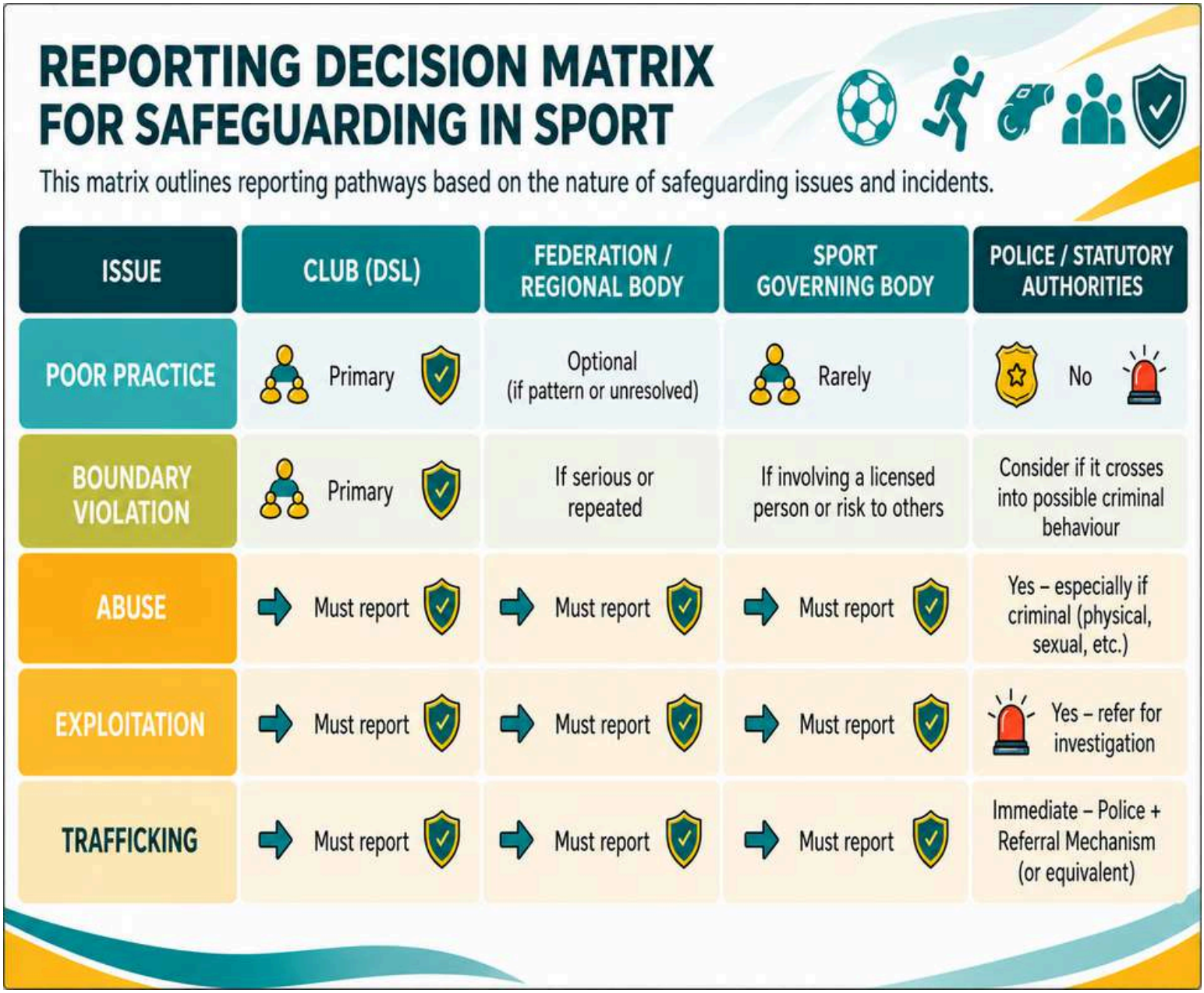
Action Threshold

Three or more "Yes" responses = Immediate safeguarding review.
Notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay and follow your organisation's referral pathway.
Any single Critical indicator (passport retention, isolation with control, fear of deportation linked to threats) also requires immediate escalation, even if fewer than three boxes are marked.

Notes

Record the date, time, location and your observations factually.
Do not confront the athlete or alleged perpetrator.
Prioritise the athlete's safety and welfare at all times.

This card supports, but does not replace, full incident recording and formal reporting procedures.



REPORTING DECISION MATRIX

Use this matrix to decide where to report a concern. Escalate to the highest relevant level. In many cases, multiple reports will be required. Always follow your organisation's safeguarding policy and national law.

Issue	Club (DSL)	Federation	Sport Governing Body	Police/Statutory Authorities
Poor practice	✓	Optional (if pattern or unresolved)	Rarely	No
Boundary violation	✓	✓ (Serious or repeated)	✓	Consider if it crosses into possible criminal behaviour
Abuse	✓	✓	✓	✓ Must report
Exploitation	✓	✓	✓	✓ Must report
Trafficking	✓	✓	✓	✓ Must report

Key guidance

Poor practice: Usually managed internally (additional training, monitoring, code-of-conduct action). Escalate if it continues or forms a pattern.

Boundary violation: Report internally and to the federation/governing body when it involves a coach, agent or person in a position of trust.

Abuse, Exploitation and Trafficking: Always report to the Club Designated Safeguarding Lead and external authorities (the police). Do not investigate yourself.

When in doubt, report higher rather than lower. Parallel reporting (club + governing body + police) is often required.

Record every report using your organisation's incident form and note exactly who was notified, when, and by what method.

TRAUMA-INFORMED COMMUNICATION CHECKLIST

BEFORE MEETING



- Private space





- No interruptions

DURING CONVERSATION



- Calm tone

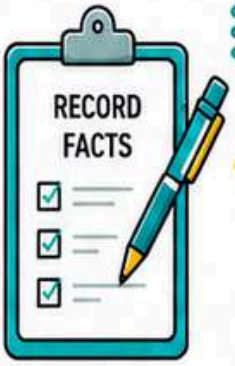


- Open questions



- No leading questions

AFTERWARDS



- Record facts

- Explain referrals





- Maintain contact

#TRAUMAINFORMEDCARE #SUPPORTIVECOMMUNICATION

ONE-PAGE EMERGENCY CARD

NEED HELP? QUICK ACCESS CONTACTS

CONTACT	DETAILS
Emergency	112
Child Helpline	116 111
Missing Child	116 000
Victim Support	116 006 (Operational in Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, The Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden)

EU EMERGENCY DIRECTORY (WITH QR CODES)

FOOTBALL

FIFA

FIFA provides a confidential (private), dedicated, highly secure and web-based whistleblowing system so that individuals can report any safeguarding concern. Users can attach supporting documentation and create an anonymous postbox to correspond with FIFA without submitting personal information. The reporting portal is available in English, French, Spanish, and Arabic. Scan the QR code to access the reporting portal or follow this link: https://fifa.gan-compliance.com/p/Case?locale=en-GB

UEFA

Report safeguarding and integrity issues confidentially here: https://uefa.integrityline.io/ or using the QR code below.

EUROPEAN FOOTBALL CLUBS (EFC)

(Formerly known as European Club Association (ECA) - https://www.efcfootball.com/en/contact-us

ATHLETICS

EUROPEAN ATHLETICS

The European Athletics reporting platform is fully secured to ensure it is independent of European Athletics. Your report cannot be traced back to you if you report anonymously. You can access it using the following link: https://european-athletics.integrityline.io/ or QR code below.

WORLD ATHLETICS

World Athletics allows you to report anonymously online, via email or WhatsApp.

Email: Integrity.Line@athleticsintegrity.realresponse.ch

WhatsApp:

Report Anonymously through WhatsApp

To report online use the following link: https://app.realresponse.ch/respond/m2lb9m/start or QR code below.

BASKETBALL

FIBA

FIBA's Speak Up Platform allows you to report safeguarding concerns safely and confidentially. You can choose to create an account or remain completely anonymous and report as a guest, using this link: https://fiba.whispli.com/speakup?locale=en or the QR code below.

VOLLEYBALL

CEV/FIVB

At the time that this guide was published, there was no publicly available information on the CEV website on where to submit a safeguarding report or who to contact. A safeguarding report can be made to FIVB: https://www.fivb.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/FIVB-M-13-Safeguarding-form-2021.pdf
Email: legal@fivb.com / medical@fivb.com

HANDBALL

EUROPEAN HANDBALL FEDERATION

Use the EHF's Whistleblowing Platform to report any safeguarding issues confidentially and anonymously using the following link: https://report.whistleb.com/en/ehf or QR code:

RUGBY

EUROPEAN RUGBY

World Rugby the global governing body encourages safeguarding concerns to be first reported to the pertinent rugby union in the country that you are based in: https://www.world.rugby/organisation/membership/europe
If your union does not have a reporting mechanism, you may also escalate the safeguarding concern by emailing World Rugby: safeguarding@worldrugby.org

SWIMMING AND ACQUATICS

EUROPEAN ACQUATICS

The European Aquatics Integrity Reporting Hotline is the primary portal for reporting official ethics, harassment, or abuse violations in the European swimming, diving, and water polo disciplines. The Acting Head Integrity Officer is Marc Cavaliero.
Email: mc@cavaliero-cambreleng.com

ACQUI

The Aquatics Integrity Unit Safe Sport Portal operates an independent global framework that oversees safeguarding compliance, tracks active cases, and provides direct incident reporting channels. Reports can be made using this link: https://aquaticsintegrity.com/make-a-report-form/ or QR code below.

CYCLING

UCI

You can report safeguarding concerns, harassment, or abuse in cycling confidentially and securely using the UCI SpeakUp Reporting Platform by following this link: https://uci.integrityline.io/ or using the QR code below.

TENNIS

WORLD (ITF) TENNIS

Report any safeguarding concerns by completing the following incident report: Incident Report Form Link, by email to safeguarding@itftennis.com, by telephone to +44 (0) 208 392 4701, by SMS to +44 (0) 7786 200690 (Include ITFSAFE in the message to receive a confirmation of receipt).

The Safeguarding Reporting Form: Link https://forms.cloud.microsoft/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=Q6QBUwAIeECd4uDyC4BWWyXwfnaPietJrYbmGm4biOtURUVCNk9WODMwMzRPWDU4SDBOMDBRRUlDNy4u&route=shorturl

GYMNASTICS

Instances or threats of non-accidental violence, harassment, abuse, and/or neglect may be reported to the Gymnastics Ethics Foundation (GEF), alongside the appropriate channels at the national level. These incidents can include any form of psychological or physical abuse, sexual harassment or abuse, bullying, hazing, neglect, or poor practice. You can report online: https://www.gymnasticsethicsfoundation.org/reporting, via phone or WhatsApp: https://wa.me/message/OI4TLNQNYCO4O1.

GYMNASTICS

WhatsApp QR Code:

COMBAT SPORT

EUROPEAN/INTERNATIONAL JUDO FEDERATION

Reports of harassment, abuse, exploitation or integrity issues can be made directly to the IJF using this link: https://reportabuse.judobase.org/form or QR code below.

TAEKWANDO

Safeguarding concerns can be reported via email to World Taekwondo safeguarding@worldtaekwondo.org using the incident reporting form found in its safeguarding policy: https://europetaekwondo.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/15.-WT-Safeguarding-Policy-As-of-Dec-5-2019.pdf

WRESTLING

Reports of any alleged misconduct can be made to United World Wrestling using the anonymous Integrity and Safeguarding Reporting Form or emailing UWW: integrity@uww.org. The QR code to the anonymous reporting form is below.

FENCING

The European Fencing Confederation Safe Sport provides an official EFC Reporting Form: https://www.fencing-efc.eu/safesport that is to be emailed to the safeguarding@fencing-efc.eu

OLYMPIC SPORT

IOC

The International Olympic Committee's Integrity and Compliance Hotline provides a confidential reporting platform for safeguarding concerns. Use the following link The European Fencing Confederation Safe Sport provides an official EFC Reporting Form: https://www.fencing-efc.eu/safesport that is to be emailed to the safeguarding@fencing-efc.eu or QR code below.

CHILD PROTECTION ORGANISATIONS

CHILD HELPLINE INTERNATIONAL

Child Helpline International is located in 130 countries. CHI provides help, support, and counselling services to children and youth. Their services are available both online and offline. To find your local child helpline in Europe, use the following link: https://childhelplineinternational.org/helplines/#Europe or call 116111.

SAVE THE CHILDREN

Save the Children is located in more than 100 countries. You can find your local Save the Children chapter, using the following link: https://www.savethechildren.net/about-us/contact-us or QR code below.

IOM (INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION)

https://www.iom.int/contact-us

EU ANTI TRAFFICKING

Investigating complex or emerging forms of human trafficking, specifically assessing legal nuances between human trafficking and severe labor exploitation.
Contact: home-antitrafficking@ec.europa.eu
European Commission National Hotlines: https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/internal-security/organised-crime/together-against-trafficking-human-beings/national-hotlines_en

GLOBAL EMBASSIES DIRECTORY

Find the relevant embassy or consulate abroad. Click on the name of the country or use the search function to find it, and the specific consulate or embassy within the country you are situated, using the following link: https://www.embassypages.com/ or QR code below.



SafeSport Pathways

SafeSport Pathways

SAFESPORT PATHWAYS RAPID RESPONSE & REFERRAL GUIDE:

Safeguarding Migrant Youth in Sport

- *For Coaches • Safeguarding Officers • Social Workers • Academy Staff • Grassroots Organisations*

PROJECT:

SafeSport Pathways – *Safe career development and protection for young migrant athletes Coordinator:* ***Mission 89 (Belgium)*** *Partner:* ***Association Kampos Saint Denis (France)***

This project has been co-funded by ***the European Union's Erasmus+ Sport Programme under Grant Agreement*** *101242519*

MISSION 89

Co-funded by the European Union

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