



'Think Before you Post' Good Practice Guidelines for the safe use of Social Networking Sites

May 2011

Who is this guidance for?

This guidance will be useful for all those involved in a hockey organisation considering or using social networking. While social networking can bring many advantages it is important that your organisation takes ownership for safeguarding children and young people online and takes steps to ensure safeguarding policies, strategies and procedures address safety issues.

This guidance aims to support an organisation's:

- Communication Coordinator
- Welfare Officer
- Development Coordinator
- Webmaster

Introduction

England Hockey Board (EHB) recognise that the use of social networking sites, such as Bebo, Facebook, MySpace and Twitter, allow organisations to create their own content and share it with a vast network of individuals sometimes referred to as online communities.

Social networking provides unique opportunities for hockey organisations to engage connect and develop unique relationships with people in a creative and dynamic medium where users are active participants. Information about an event or campaign can be dissipated virally (via email or social networking) amongst supporters within online communities.

Whilst these technologies provide exciting opportunities, they are accompanied by dangers and negative consequences if abused by users; these include cyber bullying, grooming, identity theft and exposure to inappropriate content.

It is important for hockey organisations to give careful consideration to the use of social networks in hockey and balance the benefits of creativity, spontaneity and immediacy of the communication with the potential risks, especially the risks to young people.

As with all communication between people in a position of trust and young people the organisation must consider that messages are appropriate in terms of content and format in order to avoid misinterpretation.

Your organisation will need to make decisions about:

- How to best present its activities online
- What type of content to upload (e.g. photos, blogs, video clips, podcasting, slide shows, discussion groups)
- How to interact with users in such a dynamic environment



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Good Practice guidelines

The following guidelines contain practical safety measures to hockey organisations and provide a useful starting point for the development of your organisation's online safeguarding strategy.

1. Understand the safety aspects including what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour on a social networking sites

Become familiar with social networking sites and their interactive services **before** setting up your organisations presence on a social networking site or other interactive services, including privacy and safety tools, the terms of service (the terms of service usually contain what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour), and how users can contact the site if they should have a concern or complaint.

Setting up a presence on social networks involves providing interactive content which engages and connects with people. It requires a continuous interaction with your audience or they may become bored with a 'static' webpage/profile.

Be clear to all users what the site is and isn't to be used for – i.e. not for abusing umpires / players / other club members.

2. Ensure that online safeguarding issues are fully integrated into your existing safeguarding strategy, policies and procedures

EHB Policies, Procedures and Good Practice Guidance

Hockey organisations should be aware that they and their members are bound by the following:

- EHB Safeguarding and Protecting Young People Policies, Procedures and Good Practice guidance, downloadable from www.englishockey.org/safe
- EHB's 'Respect' Code of Ethics and Behaviour applies, downloadable from www.englishockey.org/respect

All EHB policies and guidance applies equally to online and offline environments, it promotes a safe and responsible use of social networking sites. Your organisation should include links or downloads of these documents on your pages.

Adhere to good practice guidelines

Ensure that the webpage/profile adheres to existing EHB policies and good practice guidelines, including Safeguarding and Child Protection, Data Protection, the Use of Photographic and Recorded Images, Anti-Bulling and Code of Ethics and Behaviour.

Review existing safeguarding policies and procedures

Review your existing safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that they address online safeguarding issues, including the potential risks to children and young people online, sexual



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exploitation, online grooming and cyber bullying. Remember that personal and group disputes can easily overspill from the offline to the online world.

Report online concerns about possible abuse

Reporting procedures should include the reporting of potentially illegal/abusive content or activity, including sexual imagery and online grooming. Concerns arising online should be reported in line with EHB procedures, available from www.englandhockey.co.uk/safe. Please see section eight for further information and contacts.

Where a child or young person may be in immediate danger, always dial 999 for police assistance.

3. Decide how your webpage/profile will be managed within your organisation

Management of the webpage/profile

EHB recommend you limit the number of people with editorial access to the webpage/profile to a minimum, but recommend that this is more than one person to allow for transparency and also share the workload. Your organisation will need to decide who will have responsibility for: the setting up; management; and moderation (overseeing/reviewing/responding to posted content) of the webpage/profile. This includes the content you upload to appear, what you accept to be linked to your webpage/profile, and the communication or interaction with users.

Training

This person(s) is most likely to have online contact with younger users, interacting with the webpage/profile. This person should be appropriately trained; it is recommended that they complete EHB's online Safeguarding & Protecting Young People in Hockey Course, for details click [here](#).

Involve your Welfare Officer

If you are engaging a social networks or moderation company to manage and moderate your webpage/profile it is important that the organisations Welfare Officer are kept informed. They have a responsibility for the management and moderation of the webpage/profile to ensure that any online safeguarding concerns are handled in line with EHB safeguarding policies and procedures.

Rules and Regulations

Rules and regulations should be set and clearly stated from the beginning whether the webpage/profile is created internally or by a third party.

4. Registration or 'signing up' your organisation:

Choose an appropriate email address to register/set up a profile/account

This requires an email address; use an official sports organisation email address rather than a personal email address (e.g. joebloggs@hockeyassociation.co.uk rather than joebloggs@hotmail.com). This will reduce the risk of the establishment of imposter or fake profiles,



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and is important in relation to any liability or risk for an individual/employee required to set up the profile on behalf of the organisation. Similarly ensure that only organisational rather than personal email addresses are made available on or through a profile.

Security

Keep the log-in details to the account (including the password to the account) secure within your organisation. This will reduce the risk of the webpage/profile being hacked into.

5. Privacy and safety settings:

Set the appropriate privacy level

Consider each of the privacy and safety settings available across all aspects of the sites i.e. photos, blog entries, image galleries and set the appropriate level of privacy taking into consideration your target audience and who you wish to see the content. Failing to set appropriate privacy levels could result in messages which are defamatory, libellous or obscene appearing on your profile before you have a chance to remove it. This may result in significant personal distress, risk to the reputation of the individual, organisation and hockey, and may require the intervention of EHB, the site providers and possibly the police.

Accept 'friends' setting and minimum user age

Agree a policy for who can and can't use the site, members of the organisation only or wider circulation. You may wish to check a user profile before accepting them. Do not accept friend requests from children under the minimum age for the site (usually 13 years).

The policy will need to include how this will be communicated to the organisations members, how will you communicate with under 18s and under 13s. EHB recommend involving parents/ person with parental responsibility in this communication.

'Accept comment' setting

This allows a user to approve or pre-moderate a comment from another user, usually a 'friend' before it appears on their webpage/profile.

Ensure that all messages are checked before they appear on your organisations webpage/profile to ensure that any inappropriate messages are blocked or reported through the correct channels, to the necessary. You may wish to contact the site provider to establish if steps could be taken to adjust the privacy and safety settings for your needs.

6. Ensure that staff and volunteers, including coaches and athletes are aware of the need to protect their privacy online

Make sure that your staff and coaches (paid and volunteers), members and parents, are aware of the need to protect their own privacy online. They should understand the risks in posting and



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sharing content which may damage theirs and your organisations reputation before they link their webpage/profile to the organisations profile.

7. Address safety when adding content to your webpage/profile:

Organisations contact details

Add information about how to contact your organisation including a website address. Also include offline contact details for your organisation and information of your Welfare Officer. This allows users to contact your organisations directly and verify your organisation as well as knowing who to contact with any online queries.

Links to safety and help organisations

Provide links to safety and support organisations on the profile, or better still accept these organisations as 'Friends' so that they appear on the organisations webpage/profile in the 'Friends' section. Suggested organisations are at the end of this document.

Avoid taking personal details of children and young people

Do not ask users to divulge personal details including home and email addresses, schools, or mobile numbers that may help locate a child. It is best to provide the details of the event and signpost to where users can obtain further information e.g. further information can be obtained from....

Uploading Content – 'think before you post'

Consider any messages, photos, videos or information – do they comply with existing policies within your organisation? E.g. use of photographs of children. Is the content e.g. photographs and text appropriate to the audience? Always seek young person/parental permission to use the photos of those featured before adding to the sports webpage/ profile.

Check lists

- Do you understand e-safety issues and risks?
- Are you aware of EHBs policies & procedures which address safeguarding and behaviour?
- Does the organisation state clearly what is and isn't acceptable when using communication technologies?
- Do you raise awareness of e-safety issues with all members and parents?
- Do you know where to direct members and parents to sources of advice and information about e-safety
- Do you know how to report an issue or concern?
- Do you know how to keep personal data secure and safe?

Remember

Think before you post! - What is illegal offline is also illegal online.



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8. Further information

If you or your organisation requires further information on Social Networking or Safeguarding and Protection Children and Young People online, below are the details and contacts for a number of organisations.

EHB

The Governing Body for hockey in England, for further information or any questions or queries regarding Safeguarding and Protecting Young People in Hockey please see www.englandhockey.co.uk/safe or contact EHB on 01628 897500 or childwelfare@englandhockey.org

The CPSU

The Child Protection in Sport Unit's (CPSU) briefing document 'Social networking site, social media and sport: Guidelines for safeguarding children and young people' gives more in-depth guidance and can be accessed via www.cpsu.org.uk

CEOP

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre is dedicated to eradicating the sexual abuse of children for further information see www.ceop.police.uk/.

Think You Know

A project from the CEOP with the latest information on websites, mobiles and new technology. There is information on what's good, what's not and what you can do about it at www.thinkuknow.co.uk

IWF

The Internet Watch Foundation is the UK's hotline for reporting criminal online content. Go to www.iwf.org.uk to report any concerns confidentially.

UK Council for Child Internet Safety

The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) brings together organisations from industry, charities and the public sector to work with the Government to deliver the recommendations from the Byron report, for further information see www.education.gov.uk/ukccis/index.cfm. The UK Council for Child Internet Safety have launched a 'Click Clever Click Safe' campaign, for more information see www.clickcleverclicksafe.direct.gov.uk

Get safe online

A joint initiative between the Government, law enforcement, leading businesses and the public sector has been launched with the aim to provide computer users and small organisations with free, independent, user-friendly advice that will allow them to use the internet confidently, safely and securely. www.getsafeonline.org



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Childnet and Kidsmart

Childnet International's mission is to work in partnership with others around the world to help make the Internet a great and safe place for children find out more at www.childnet-int.org. Kidsmart is a unique Internet safety programme run by Childnet throughout the UK; it is based on schools but might be a useful tool www.kidsmart.org.uk

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