



MOVE THE MIND

EMPOWERMENT FOR MENTAL WELL-BEING THROUGH SPORT.

LEARNING UNIT A.4 – ONLINE VERSION

AN INTRODUCTION TO SAFEGUARDING



LEARNING OUTCOMES.





After this learning unit you will...

- understand the meaning of safeguarding.
- recognise who may be “at-risk” or “vulnerable”.
- recognise why vulnerable adults may need special considerations.
- appreciate the relationship between safeguarding and mental well-being.
- understand your role as coach in safeguarding
- know practical ways to provide a safe space in your trainings
- be aware of principles of safeguarding





**PART A:
AN INTRODUCTION
TO SAFEGUARDING.**



Safeguarding is an important topic when working with people. So, let's find out why and how safeguarding plays a key role and what it means for us.



What does safeguarding mean in our context?

For us, safeguarding is about protecting our participants' health and well-being by preventing both the risks and experiences of abuse or neglect.

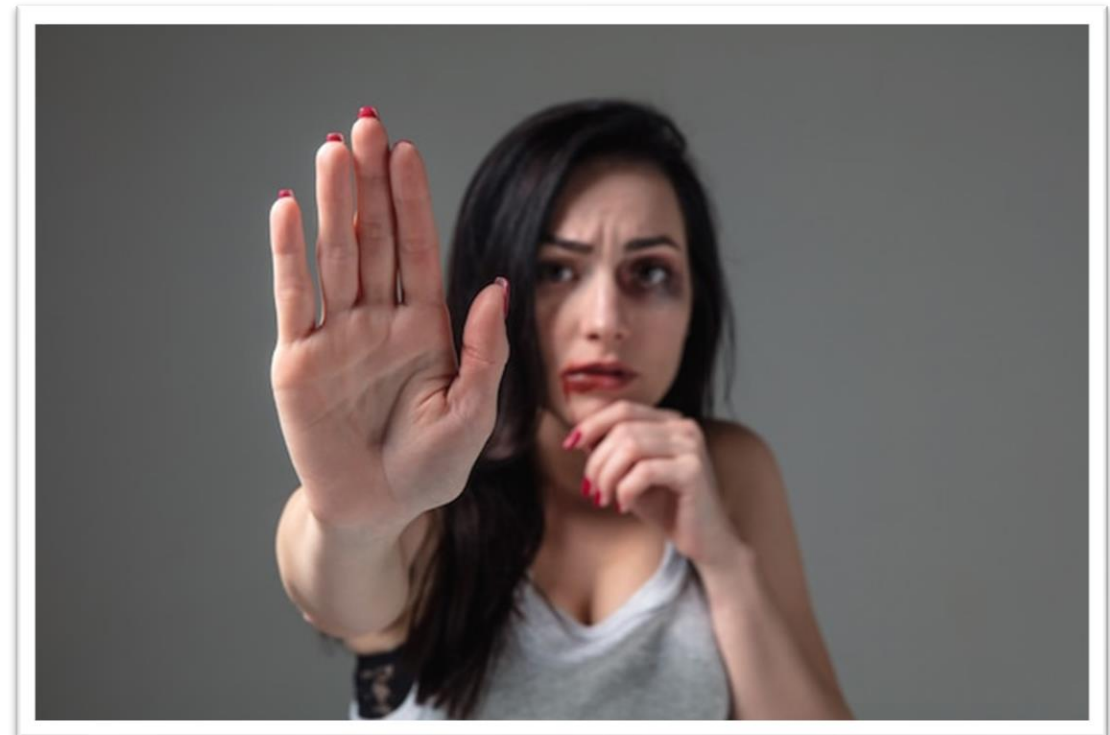
It is about ensuring each person's human right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

For it, coaches, participants and other sport club stakeholders need to work together (cf. UK Care Act 2014).



What are possible examples of safeguarding issues?

- abuse of power,
- domestic abuse,
- bullying,
- discrimination,
- sexual exploitation,
- violence or
- incidents of self-harm.



Who are “at risk” or “vulnerable” persons?

- A person facing abuse of power, bullying, discrimination, sexual exploitation, violence etc. in their life.
- A person with a physical or mental health condition that is at higher risk of facing these issues.





But why do vulnerable people need our special consideration?

Because a person who is

- vulnerable due to their physical or mental health condition, or
- already suffering from abuse or neglect

may not be able to recognize and protect themselves from (further) danger.



This means that for us as coaches, safeguarding these persons is our duty!

In some countries, like the UK, this is even a legal responsibility:

The Care Act 2014 states clearly that

safeguarding adults is everybody's

business within communities.



So, what does safeguarding then mean for our sport courses?

There are two levels of safeguarding:

1. We need to protect all our participants from harm while playing sport and being active, thus promoting mental well-being.
2. And for participants at risk, we have an added responsibility to protect them from (further) harm; firstly, at our sport sessions.



So, how may we conclude on the relationship between sport, mental well-being and safeguarding?

Firstly, it is important to provide sporting opportunities. Because they help to maintain good mental health and to improve mental well-being.

Secondly, it is important that these sporting opportunities are safe. Because safeguarding and mental well-being are closely related.



When a sport environment is safe, both physically and mentally, participants can thrive.

A physically safe environment is one without danger of injury or harm.

A mentally safe environment is one which allows participants to participate in positive sport, without danger of harm.

When these two elements are present, a sport participant's mental well-being is not only protected, but also improved.



A SHORT ASSESSMENT.





QUIZ

- Who is responsible for safeguarding?

- What is the meaning of safeguarding?

- How does safeguarding play a role in improving mental well-being?



QUIZ – SOLUTION

- Who is responsible for safeguarding?

ANSWER: We all are.



- What is the meaning of safeguarding?


ANSWER: Protect the health, well-being and human rights of individuals.



- How does safeguarding play a role in improving mental well-being?

ANSWER: By providing a safe physical and mental environment for sport





**PART B:
IMPLEMENTING
SAFEGUARDING
FOR AT-RISK ADULTS**



Unfortunately, the statistics for the numbers of people who experience assault, domestic abuse and other forms of physical and mental violence are alarming. More than one in four Europeans were victims of harassment. And 22 million are physically attacked in one year. But victims typically do not report their experiences. They often have difficulties accessing their rights and may feel voiceless.





Although sport coaches may not be experts in stopping abuse or treating victims of abuse, as coaches, it is our responsibility to be equipped to handle situations that may arise, or that we may notice in our sporting sessions. Therefore, we now have a look to typical signs we need to look for and how to deal with these issues.



The signs we need to look out for include ...

- changes to someone's appearance, behaviour, or routines
- sudden weight gain or loss
- appearing frightened in the presence of certain people
- unexplained lack of money or inability to maintain their lifestyle
- appearing withdrawn and isolated
- unexplained marks/bruising to the body



What is a coach's role in safeguarding if there is an issue?

- 1. Recognise** – Be able to identify abuse and neglect and raise a concern. If you are concerned about someone, don't keep it to yourself. Check your organization's safeguarding policy and procedures. If you're not sure what to do or don't have a safeguarding lead, you can call your local authority for advice.
- 2. Respond** – Reassure the person, be non-judgemental, tell them what you will need to do (you may need to tell someone so don't promise confidentiality), ask them what they want to happen.
- 3. Refer** - Remember, it is not your job to “solve” the problem. Maintain boundaries while providing support. Refer them to the right authority, expert or support group whenever relevant.





How to deal with an issue?

Once a coach is clear on their role in safeguarding (Recognise, Respond & Refer), the question arises of how best to support the participant and the resolution of the issue. After all, we have learnt earlier that safeguarding is everybody's business, so even though it may not be the sole responsibility of the coach to find solutions, you should support the participants to the extent that is possible.





While providing any such support, it is key to keep the following 6 principles of safeguarding in mind.

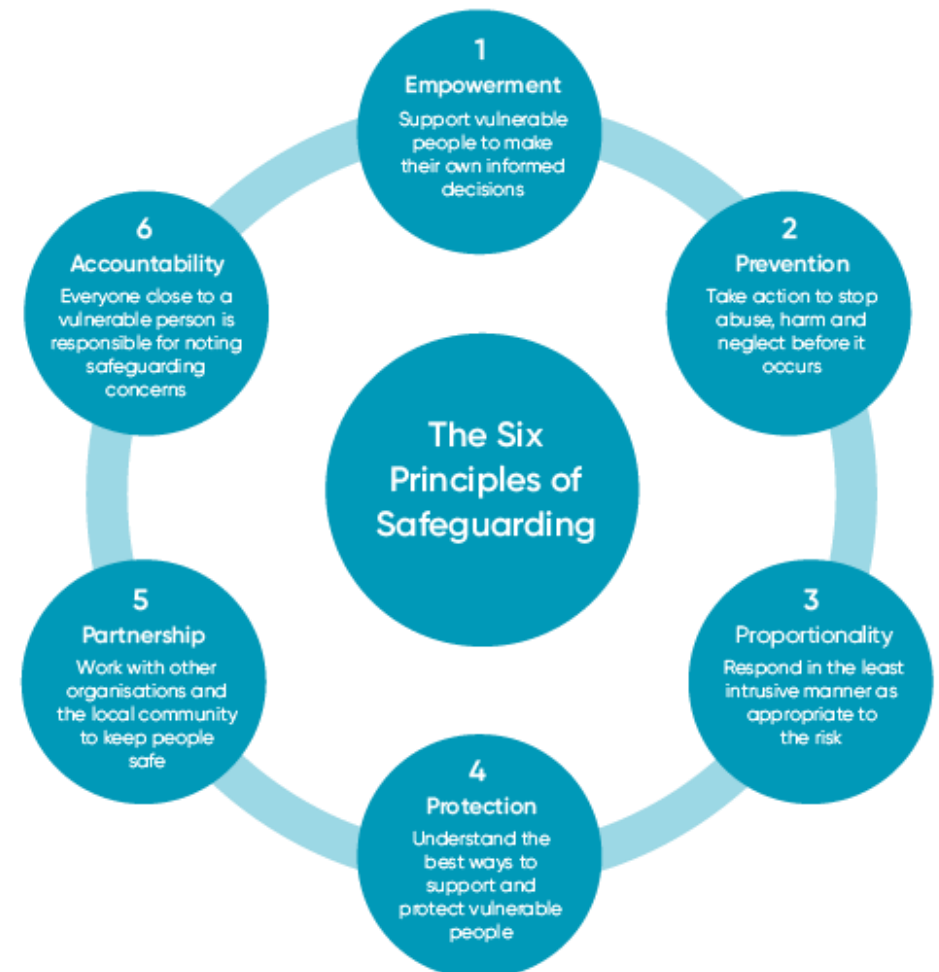


PRINCIPLES OF SAFEGUARDING (as defined by The Care Act 2014)

The 6 principles of safeguarding underpin what safeguarding is all about: ensuring that the health, wellbeing and human rights of children and vulnerable adults are protected.

The principles are:

1. Empowerment
2. Prevention
3. Proportionality
4. Protection
5. Partnership
6. Accountability

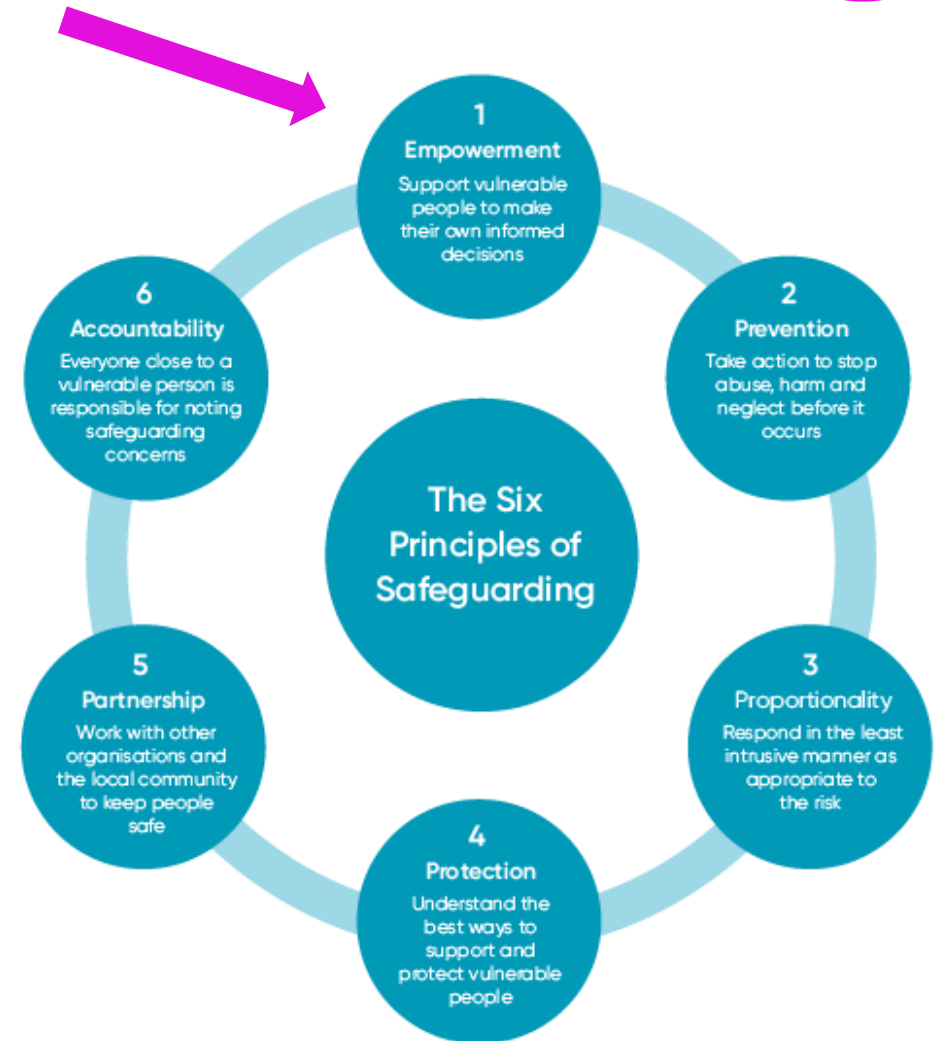


1. EMPOWERMENT

People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.

You should:

- Talk to the adult if there are concerns –ask them what they want to happen
- Give people choice and control over decisions – get consent wherever possible for any safeguarding referrals. Only the adult themselves can consent.



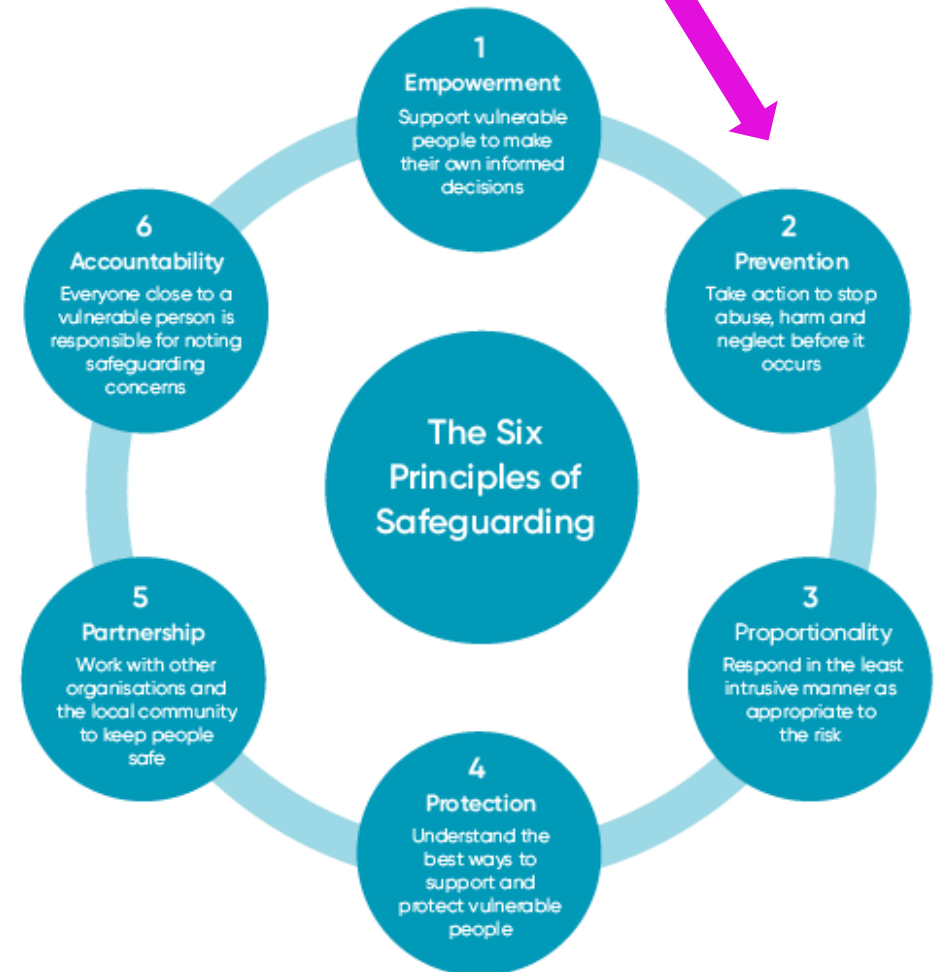


2. PREVENTION

It is better to take action before harm occurs.

You should:

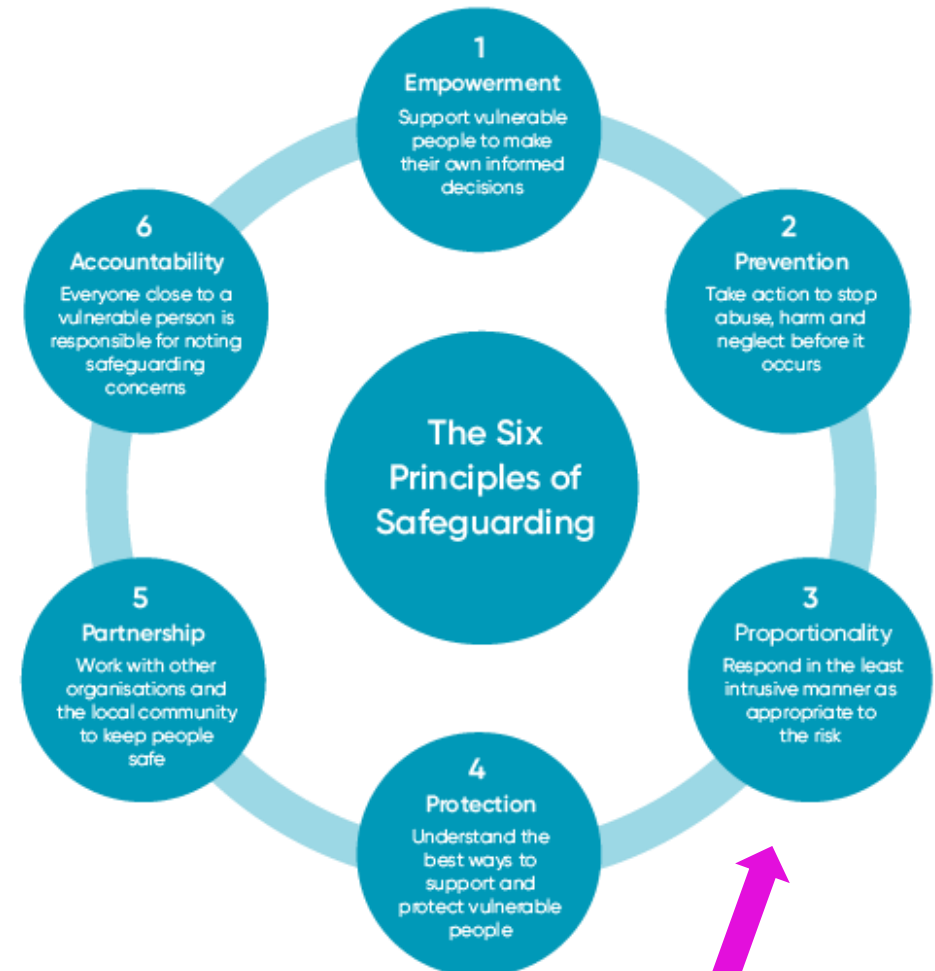
- Create a culture that means participants feel able to discuss issues and know where to go if they have a concern.



3. PROPORTIONALITY

The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented. You should:

- When dealing with abuse situations, think about the risk.
- Make responses appropriate to the risk presented.
- Respect the person, think about what is best for them and only get involved as much as needed.



4. PROTECTION

Support and representation for those in greatest need. You should:

- Know what to do if there are concerns
- Know how to offer help and support for people who are at risk



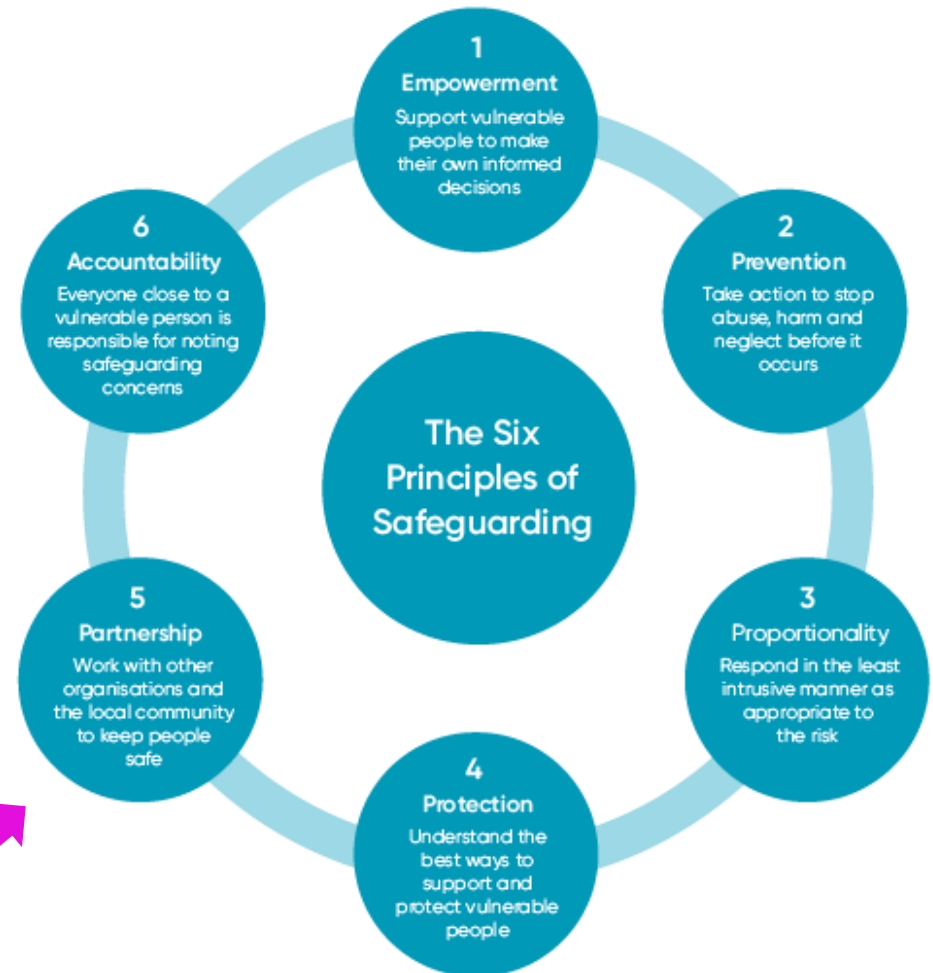
5. PARTNERSHIP

Refer someone in need to the appropriate expert. This could be a psychologist, support group or the local authorities.

Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

You should:

- Play a part in preventing, detecting and reporting abuse.

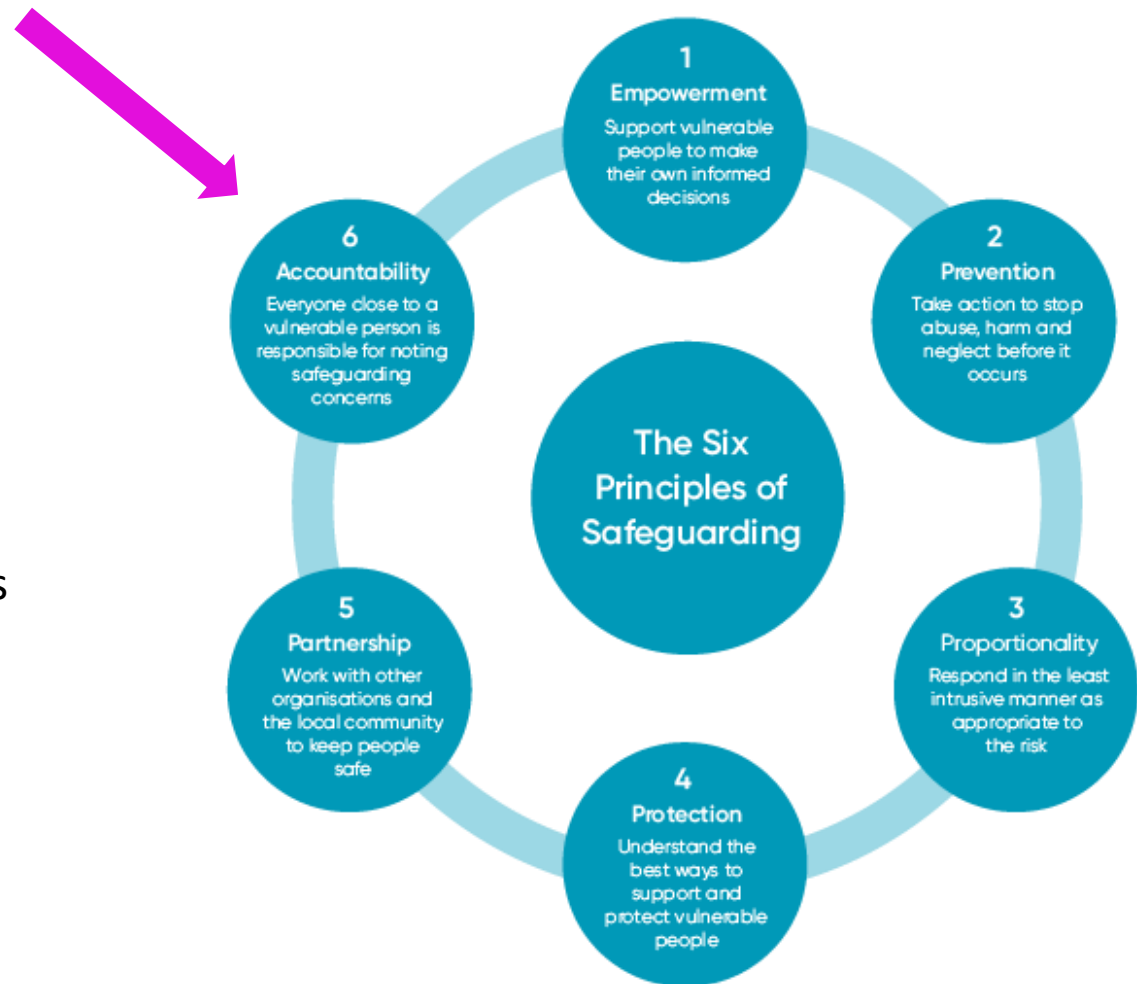


6. ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

You should:

- Understand that safeguarding adults is everybody's business.





Are there related laws and regulations we must adhere to?

Yes, but national regulations vary for issues like coaching licences, working with minors and working with or for vulnerable people. So, we recommend to look up and certainly follow national laws and regulations (if any) for your specific situation.

For example, in the UK, the Equality Act 2010 calls on organisations to make reasonable adjustments so that a person with a disability receives a similar level of service to someone who is not disabled. This may include designated parking spots, access ramps etc. In case of mental health issues, similar laws apply. Similarly, the Care Act 2014 is the legal framework that safeguards adults for the first time ever.



A SHORT ASSESSMENT.





QUIZ

- What is a coach's role in safeguarding?

- What are the principles of safeguarding?



QUIZ – SOLUTION

- What is a coach's role in safeguarding?

ANSWER: Recognise, Respond & Refer



- What are the principles of safeguarding?

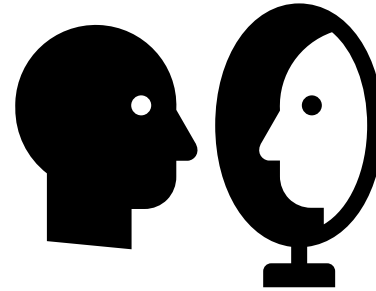
*ANSWER: Empowerment, Prevention, Proportionality, Protection,
Partnership & Accountability.*



**PRACTICAL
SELF-REFLECTION
EXERCISE.**



PRACTICAL EXERCISE FOR SELF-REFLECTION



- Does your training session safeguard the most vulnerable of the group? Y/N
- Does your training method create an atmosphere that allows the health and well-being of ALL your participants to flourish? Y/N
- Is there a safeguarding strategy / policy at your organisation? Y/N
- If so, are you aware of the policy and who to contact in case the need arises? Y/N
- Do you feel better prepared to handle an incident with safeguarding in future? Y/N



**EMPOWERMENT
FOR MENTAL WELL-BEING
THROUGH SPORT.**

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First, take a minute to reflect on the learning from the module. And think about your training sessions and club, and answer the following questions honestly:

- Does your training session safeguard the most vulnerable of the group? Y/N
- Does your training method create an atmosphere that allows the health and well-being of ALL your participants to flourish? Y/N
- Is there a safeguarding strategy / policy at your organisation? Y/N
- Are you aware of the policy and who to contact in case the need arises? Y/N
- Do you feel better prepared to handle an issue with safeguarding in future? Y/N

Now, make a note for yourself, focusing on 2 aspects of safeguarding you would like to implement or improve in your trainings. Also note how you think this would contribute to the mental well-being of your participants.

LU A.4 - HANDOUT 1

WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG

- RECOGNISE
- RESPOND
- REFER

Be able to identify abuse and neglect and raise a concern

Reassure the person, ask them what they want to happen

Refer them to the right authority

PRINCIPLES OF SAFEGUARDING



Source: Safeguarding Adults: The Essential Guide for Sport & Activity, Ann Craft Trust