

Bulgarian Cheer Union

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Introduction

The Bulgarian Cheer Union (BCU) is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all participants, especially children and young people. This Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy outlines our commitment to protecting children from harm and abuse and ensuring their welfare is a top priority.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect children and young people who participate in cheerleading and baton twirling activities organized by the BCU.
- Provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.
- Ensure that all members understand their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All members of the BCU, including staff, volunteers, coaches, officials, and board members.
- All children and young people under the age of 18 participating in BCU activities.

3. Definitions

- **Child:** Any person under the age of 18.
- **Safeguarding:** The actions taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.
- **Child Protection:** The specific actions required to protect children who are suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm.

4. Principles

- **Best Interests of the Child:** The welfare of the child is paramount. All actions taken by the BCU will prioritize the best interests of the child.
- **Zero Tolerance:** The BCU has zero tolerance for abuse or neglect. Any allegations or concerns will be taken seriously and responded to promptly.

- **Empowerment:** Children will be encouraged to speak out about concerns and will be provided with appropriate support and guidance.
- **Confidentiality:** Information about safeguarding concerns will be shared only with those who need to know in order to protect the child.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Board of Directors:** Ensure the implementation and regular review of this policy.
- **Safeguarding Officer:** Appointed to oversee the implementation of this policy, manage concerns, and provide guidance to staff and volunteers.
- **Staff and Volunteers:** Must understand and comply with this policy, attend regular training, and report any concerns about a child's welfare.

6. Code of Conduct

- **Behavioral Expectations:** All members must behave appropriately and act as positive role models for children.
- **Appropriate Relationships:** Maintain professional boundaries with children and avoid any behavior that could be misinterpreted.
- **Reporting Concerns:** Any concerns about a child's welfare or the behavior of an adult towards a child must be reported to the Safeguarding Officer immediately.

7. Reporting Procedures

- **Recognizing Abuse:** Be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect, including physical, emotional, sexual abuse, and neglect.
- **How to Report:** Report any concerns to the Safeguarding Officer. If a child is in immediate danger, contact emergency services.
- **Recording Concerns:** Document all concerns and actions taken in a clear and accurate manner.

8. Recruitment and Training

- **Safe Recruitment:** Implement robust recruitment procedures, including background checks, to ensure that those working with children are suitable.
- **Training:** Provide regular training on safeguarding and child protection to all staff and volunteers. Ensure they understand their responsibilities and the procedures for reporting concerns.

9. Responding to Allegations

- **Procedure:** Follow a clear procedure for responding to allegations or concerns about abuse. Ensure the safety of the child is the primary consideration.
- **Support:** Provide appropriate support to the child and any affected individuals. This may include referral to external agencies for additional support.
- **Investigation:** Conduct thorough and impartial investigations into any allegations. Cooperate fully with law enforcement and child protection agencies.

10. Monitoring and Review

- **Regular Review:** This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to significant changes in legislation or guidance.
- **Feedback:** Seek feedback from children, parents, staff, and volunteers to improve safeguarding practices.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Implement changes and improvements based on the findings of reviews and feedback.

Conclusion

The Bulgarian Cheer Union is dedicated to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people involved in our activities. By adhering to this policy, we ensure a safe and supportive environment where children can thrive and enjoy the sport of cheerleading.

This Anti-Doping Policy is effective as of 12.05.2019 and is subject to periodic review and amendments as deemed necessary by the Bulgarian Cheer Union.