



# ANGLING TRUST

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**Angling Trust**

PD50 Safeguarding – Guide to Social Media

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<b>Purpose</b>	To highlight the potential safeguarding issues surrounding Social Media and to offer advice on safe use for young and vulnerable people.

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1.0	Nov 2018	New Document	Richard Hadley
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1.2	Nov 2020	Tik Tok added as a social media platform. Logo change.	Richard Hadley

<b>Approvals</b>		
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The internet, mobile phones, online gaming, social networking and other interactive technologies have transformed the way we live, and offer exciting opportunities for clubs to communicate and engage with their members. But they also introduce a range of potential safeguarding risks for young people.

One of the aims of the Angling Trust is to help to promote the safe and responsible use of new communication technologies in young people. Many organisations, including AT believe that a blocking and banning approach merely limits exposure to risk and is not sustainable. Instead the focus should be on giving young people the skills and knowledge they need to use the technologies safely and manage the risks, wherever and whenever they go online.

### **Background**

The use of social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter etc are a huge phenomenon and are increasingly used as a communication tool. These sites permit users to chat online, post pictures, send messages, write 'blogs' and so on, using an online profile that can be publicly available or restricted to an approved circle of online 'friends'.

Facebook is the largest such site, reported to have in excess of 500 million users worldwide, including a third of the population of the UK.

Sites such as YouTube, Tik Tok and Instagram provide a platform for uploading and viewing video clips and photographs. The latest mobile telephone technology /Smart phones means that access to this media is becoming ever easier and can be almost instantaneous.

Twitter is a social networking and micro-blogging service that enables users to send and read other user messages, called 'tweets'. Tweets are like online text messages of up to a maximum of 140 characters, displayed on the author's profile page. Tweets are publicly visible by default, although the user can restrict message delivery to their friends only.

***For more detail about the use of social networking in sport, see Using Social Networking Services and Social Media: Promoting Safe and Responsible Use.***

### **Understanding the Technology**

For adults, the main obstacle when it comes to safeguarding young people who are using new social media and technologies is the gap between children's knowledge and their own.

Developing a basic knowledge of the technology used within the club/organisation can help staff members, coaches, volunteers and members manage risks and deal with incidents, as well as support junior members and parents who seek advice.

Further information, including a range of online guides for children, parents/carers and professionals about the benefits and risks of various technologies, are available from:

**Childnet** – A ‘know it all’ guide, [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com).

**Thinkuknow** – The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP), a UK law enforcement agency, provides awareness resources for parents, young people and professionals, <http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>.

### **Potential risks**

With all emerging technologies, there is the potential for misuse. Potential risks include cyberbullying (bullying online), grooming and potential abuse by online predators, identity theft and exposure to inappropriate content.

Cyberbullying is one of the worst, most menacing forms of bullying because it can be so hard to escape. It can follow children and young people around 24 hours a day, targeting them whenever they are online, even at home. Bullying online is as serious as bullying in the real world and must not be tolerated.

There are a growing number of cases in sport where adults have used social networking sites as a means of grooming children and young people for sexual abuse. The internet can be an environment where children lower their guard, as they may not see it for the public forum it is. If an adult is able to discover information about a young person’s interests and social habits, they can figure out ways to appeal to them and gain their trust. Any personal information offered may also allow them to identify and locate them offline.

There have also been a number of cases in sport where adults have used a child’s online identity (i.e. identity theft) in order to groom another child for sexual abuse.

The internet may expose children to inappropriate content including self-harm, racism, hate or adult pornography, or encourage them to post inappropriate content themselves.

### **ONLINE GROOMING**

The CPSU briefing provides more information about the potential indicators of online grooming and the sexual exploitation of children:

[www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/cpsu/resources/briefings/social\\_networking\\_services\\_wdf69029.pdf](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/cpsu/resources/briefings/social_networking_services_wdf69029.pdf)

Online grooming techniques may include:

Gathering personal details such as age, name, address, mobile phone number, name of school and photographs;

Promising meetings with sports idols or celebrities;

Offering cheap tickets to sports or other events, gifts including electronic games or software, or merchandise;

Paying a child/young person to appear naked or perform sexual acts;

Bullying and intimidating behaviour, such as threatening to tell a child/young person's parents about their communications, or saying they know where the child lives, plays golf, or goes to school.

Asking sexual-themed questions such as 'Do you have a boyfriend?' or 'Are you a virgin?'

Sending sexual-themed images to a child, depicting adult content of abuse of other children.

Masquerading as a minor or assuming a false online identity in order to deceive a child.

Using school or hobby websites (including sports) to gather information about a child's interests, likes and dislikes.

### **ADVICE FOR CLUBS**

#### **Review your Child Protection/Safeguarding policies and procedures:**

Clubs need to ensure that existing policy and procedures address the safeguarding of children and young people online, including how to report concerns and deal with any incidents. Safety online is an integral part of child Welfare Officer or Local Designated Officer is best placed to ensure that best practice is put in place. In any case any suspicions about grooming and illegal behaviour should be reported to the POLICE

Our Policy for safeguarding children hopes to cover these issues

The potential risks and indicators of online grooming and sexual exploitation of children and young people. We hope that they are reviewed on a regular basis in light of incidents dealt with by the club and cases known to law enforcement.

Procedures for the reporting of potentially illegal/abusive content or activity, including images of child sexual abuse and online grooming concerns.

In addition, we hope to ensure we:

Have a plan of action to deal with cyberbullying and use it to challenge any misuse. Adults should underline the message that cyberbullying is as serious as bullying in the real world, and encourage children to behave safely online. This plan of action should include these steps:

Show children and young people they can report misuse and that anyone who does will be supported.

We will collect evidence of any messages sent.

Find ways to prevent reoccurrence (e.g. blocking content).

Contain the incident by removing the content.

Direct children and young to support networks (beatbullying.org, cybermentors.org.uk).

Make volunteers/staff aware of the risks inherent in online use and advise them to protect their own privacy by good use of privacy settings.

Only ask for email addresses/mobile numbers/Facebook profiles of junior's members with the prior consent of their parents-copy parents into communications.

If the club uses texting and email to communicate with members, they should follow these safeguarding guidelines:

[www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/cpsu/resources/briefings/text\\_and\\_email\\_messaging\\_wdf66628.pdf](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/cpsu/resources/briefings/text_and_email_messaging_wdf66628.pdf)

These mainly relate to the use of 'bulk' (or bundled) texts, i.e. the same text being sent to several young people involved in an activity.

***Personal one-to-one texting between coaches, volunteers and young people should be strongly discouraged.***

Be clear about the processes by which children/parents may raise their concerns.

#### **REPORTING CONCERNS ABOUT POSSIBLE ONLINE ABUSE**

All Angling clubs should be familiar with reporting procedures and report any concerns in accordance with these procedures.

Illegal images of child sexual abuse should be reported to the Internet Watch Foundation ([www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk)) and to the police.

Reports about suspicious behaviour towards children and young people in an online environment should be made to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre, CEOP ([www.ceop.gov.uk](http://www.ceop.gov.uk)). Law enforcement agencies and the service provider may need to take urgent steps to locate the child and/or remove the content from the internet.

If potentially illegal material or activity is found or suspected on technology provided by the club, or that the club has access to, the evidence should be made secure and preserved. The police or the IWF can provide further advice on this when a report is made. In the case of reports about suspected illegal material held on personal devices owned by members, the report should include where the suspected illegal material can be found, for example a website address.

Potentially illegal material should not be circulated or distributed within the club. The number of people involved in making a report should be kept to an absolute minimum, and ideally should include the Club Welfare Officer.

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

## **ADVICE FOR INDIVIDUALS**

Do not accept children or young people as “friends” on social networking sites if you hold a position of trust with children/young people.

Where contact through social networking sites is used for professional reasons, restrict the communication to professional content and obtain written consent from parents prior to establishing contact.

Include a third party in any communications to children, e.g. copy parents into communications.

Use the privacy settings on the various sites to ensure that your content will only be viewed by appropriate people.

Ensure that any content you place on a social networking site is age-appropriate. Do not use the site to criticise or abuse others.

Know where to direct junior members and their parents for information, as described earlier in this section of the site.

Know how to report concerns.

Know how to keep data safe and secure. This should include the personal contact data of individuals, such as mobile numbers, email addresses and social networking profiles.

See Angling Trust Guide to Sexting

Ensure you follow text and email safeguarding guidelines:

[http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/cpsu/resources/briefings/text\\_and\\_email\\_messaging\\_wdf66628.pdf](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/cpsu/resources/briefings/text_and_email_messaging_wdf66628.pdf)

## **ADVICE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

Consider carefully who you invite to be your friend online and make sure they are who you actually think they are. There are websites that offer advice about protecting yourself online, such as [www.ceop.gov.uk](http://www.ceop.gov.uk) and [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com).

Make sure you use privacy settings so that that only friends can view your profile.

Remember that anything you post on websites may be shared with people you don't know.

Never post comments, photos, videos, etc., that may upset someone, that are untrue or that are hurtful. Think about whether you may regret posting the content at a later date.

If you are worried or upset about something that's been posted about you, or by texts you receive from other juniors or adults involved with the club, raise this with your parents, Club coach, in fact, anyone you can trust. Do not suffer alone. You will be listened to and your concerns will be taken seriously.

If you want to talk to someone anonymously, call Childline on 0800 1111, or contact them on the web at [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk). You can also call the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000.

### **ADVICE FOR PARENTS**

Make yourself knowledgeable about social networking platforms and how they work.

Go on the internet with your child and agree what sites are OK to visit. Regularly check that they are staying within the agreed limits.

Encourage your child to talk to you about what they have been doing on the internet. Make sure they feel able to speak to you if they ever feel uncomfortable, upset or threatened by anything they see online.

Encourage children to look out for each other when they're online. Explain that it's all part of staying safe and having fun together.

Explain to children that it's not safe to reveal personal information, such as their name, address or phone number on the internet. Encourage them to use a cool nickname rather than their own name.

Attachments and links in emails can contain viruses and may expose children and young people to inappropriate material. Teach children to only open attachments or click on links from people they know.

### **FURTHER ADVICE FOR PARENTS OF YOUNG ANGLERS**

If you are concerned about any texts, social networking posts or any other use of communication technology by members of the Angling club, volunteers or members of staff, raise this with the club welfare officer, or anybody at the club. They will look into the matter and take appropriate action.

You could immediately report possible online abuse to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) or the police. Law enforcement agencies and the internet service provider may need to take urgent steps to locate a child and/or remove the content from the internet. Where a young person may be in immediate danger, dial 999.

Do not post/send negative or critical comments or messages about other children in the club, staff or volunteers. If you have concerns about a person, these should be raised using appropriate channels within the club and not using social media.

If you wish to speak to an organisation for advice, you can contact the NSPCC

### **USEFUL SITES FOR REPORTING AND REMOVING IMAGERY.**

- Sharing sexual imagery NCA-CEOP at [www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre](http://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre)
- Removing Imagery <http://www.childline.org.uk/explore/onlinesafety/pages/sexting.aspx>