**NSPCC – Safeguarding in Sport Transcript**

Hello

My name is Jude Toasland and I’m a senior consultant at the Child Protection in Sport Unit.

CPSU are part of the NSPCC and funded by the Sports Councils.

Today I’m going to be talking about safeguarding in sport, and particularly the impact of the pandemic upon safeguarding. I’ll be asking the question “where do we go from here?”

As Nelson Mandela says, ”sport has the power to change the world.” Sport and physical activity is second to education in its reach to children and young people. It can provide a safe space for many young people and, with a safe and fun culture, can help us to safeguard children.

Children are at the heart of safeguarding so I thought I’d start by hearing what they are saying. In this video we hear why children and young people love sport

However, over the past year or more, sport and physical activity has not been available for many young people. As clubs and activities return we are hearing more from young people about their concerns. These quotes come from contact with the NSPCC’s Childline.

Calls to the NSPCC helpline have highlighted a number of concerns over the past year where the pandemic has had a direct impact on the safety of children and young people. This includes:

* abuse getting worse during lockdown – with nowhere to go, such as to a club or activity, children are stuck with their family and this may not be a safe space. In addition, pressures upon families has been huge, leading to an increase in reports of domestic abuse, emotional abuse and physical abuse.
* remote coaching has been an innovative way to engage with participants but needs to be done safely, following good safeguarding practice. CPSU have guidance on remote coaching on our website – www.thecpsu.org.uk
* online abuse and bullying has become a more significant concern as young people have spent an increasing amount of time online – an important space to keep in touch with friends, coaches and teachers but also an opportunity for online groomers and abusers, as well as cyber bullies.
* finding support – with isolation for many over the past year, young people have had to rely on online sources of support and information. NSPCC and Childline have campaigned to encourage children and adults to contact them with concerns through the “still here for children” campaign.

As return to play, it is important that we continue to safeguard children. We need to provide opportunities and spaces for young people to tell us about concerns. Procedures should always ensure that children are at the heart and safeguards are not compromised in response to rapidly changing Covid guidance. This is an opportunity for sport and physical activity to emphasise that they are a safe space for children. The “old normal” is unlikely to return so moving forward, we are likely to have a mix of face to face and virtual activities, including virtual training and events. All safeguarding procedures should be adapted but not compromised to these new environments.

It is essential that safeguards are still in place. The welfare of the child is our paramount concern.

In addition to the pandemic, there have been a number of safeguarding reviews and reports across sport. The largest of these are the Whyte Report into concerns about gymnastics, which will report later this year, and the Sheldon Review into concerns within football. Several key themes emerge from these reviews:

* It is essential that safeguarding is prioritised from the top, leading to a safeguarding culture across organisations where keeping children safe is the most important consideration.
* Parents should be consulted with, kept informed and be clear what to expect within a safe club or activity.
* The voice of young people should be central to everything we do. When children and young people are listened to and consulted, they are also more likely to tell us about their worries and concerns.

But instead of hearing this from me, here are what children and young people are telling us about the importance of listening to them.

Thank you for listening to this presentation. For more information and resources please visit our website www.thecpsu.org. or follow us on Twitter @TheCPSU.