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Instructions for *Risk Assessments*

Risk assessments helps sporting organizations identify potential risks, threats, and vulnerabilities to participant safety **BEFORE** harm occurs.

They help examine an environment, activity, program, and event from a safeguarding perspective and determine mitigation strategies and safeguards to reduce those risks.





Note: #WeRideTogether provides pro bono consultation services for any organization with specific needs or concerns. If you don't know where to start, want a custom risk assessment template for your organization, or want #WeRideTogether to conduct a risk assessment for you, reach out to info@weridetogogether.today.

Legal Disclaimer: #WeRideTogether provides general information intended to guide parties on safeguarding best practices. We endeavor to keep our information current and up to date, but there is no guarantee of its accuracy or completeness. #WeRideTogether strongly encourages you to independently research and verify the information and to generate your own content. The information does not constitute legal advice. In this regard, you should not rely on any statements or representations made on this website or any third-party Internet sites referenced herein for legal advice or for any other purposes, and should consult an independent attorney for legal advice. #WeRideTogether does not assume any responsibility for actions or non-actions taken by people who have visited this site, and no one shall be entitled to a claim of any nature based on the information provided on this site, whether expressly, impliedly, or otherwise.



REVIEW SAFEGUARDING BASICS

What is safeguarding?

- Safeguarding (also called anti-abuse efforts or abuse prevention) refers to actions we take to keep participants safe from harm.

Why do we safeguard?

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- All participants in sport have a right to train, practice, and compete safely. When we protect our participants, we are working to preserve their opportunities to glean the benefits of sports. Safeguarding also works to protect coaches and sporting staff as well as the integrity and future of organizations, communities, and sports at large. Unfortunately, we know that sports are vulnerable areas for abuse to take place, with over 50% of all athletes experiencing some form of abuse in sports.

Who is responsible for safeguarding?

- We all have a role to play in keeping sports safe and healthy. Abuse can happen anywhere, to anyone, in any sport, and at every level of sport. Organizations play a key role in safeguarding through their ability to set the tone from the top down, establish policies, reporting, and procedures, and provide safeguarding education, awareness, and resources. When athletes, coaches, staff, and stakeholders are supported, sporting environments and success improve!

What does safeguarding look like?

- Safeguarding in an organization connects to both interpersonal interactions and policies and procedures. People and policy are interconnected, and there is a reciprocal process of effective safeguarding through experience, learning, and updating. Best practices for safeguarding come from reflection and collaboration, bridging education, interpersonal dynamics, and policies together. Organizations are poised to provide stakeholders with behavioral expectations and guidelines to keep participants safe.
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INTRODUCTION

Sporting organizations plan their programming and events. They decide who will participate, where and how, what equipment is needed, and what the schedule is, etc. But they also must consider where and how something could go wrong.

Risk assessment helps sporting organizations identify potential risks, threats, and vulnerabilities to participant safety BEFORE harm occurs. They help examine an environment, activity, program, and event from a safeguarding perspective and determine mitigation strategies and safeguards to reduce those risks.

This concept is likely already familiar to sporting organizations when it comes to physical safety. For example, ensuring the pool water is safe, the equipment is safe, fire alarms are in place, first aid kits are available, and weather-related stipulations are in place.

Safeguarding against abuse and misconduct needs the same proactive attention.

Furthermore, safeguarding risk assessments inform safeguarding policies and procedures and how they are operationalized in the sporting environment where interactions occur.

Each sporting organization and environment is unique; thus, safeguarding risks are unique. They depend on the sport, the participants involved, organizational culture, travel, accommodations, technology, staffing, etc.

Prevention starts with identifying risks, as it's hard to prevent risks you haven't considered.

Best practices for risk assessments:

- Conduct physical safety AND safeguarding risk assessments regularly – whenever programming or environments change, and annually. Risk changes.
- Be specific – for example, you may have a safeguarding policy prohibiting one-on-one interactions between adults and minors, but how does this apply in real-life situations, like when the last athlete is waiting to be picked up from practice?
- Engage all stakeholders – organizational staff will have a different perspective than coaches, athletes, parents, and volunteers. Evaluate the risk from all participants' perspectives and ensure their voices are heard.

This document provides the following examples of risk assessments organizations can use as a starting point for practicing risk management.

1. [Athlete Surveys for Assessing Risk](#)
2. [Risk Assessment Mapping Exercise](#)
3. [Safeguarding Essentials Template Risk Assessment](#)
4. [General Sports Program Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template](#)
5. [Sports Training Facility/Sports Camp Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template](#)
6. [Event Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template](#)

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Athlete Surveys for Assessing Risk



ATHLETE SURVEYS FOR ASSESSING RISK

Organizations can use this survey to include athlete voices, better understand their experiences of the sporting environment, and understand risks from their perspectives.

- *For use by any sporting organization on a regular basis. Distribute the survey via an online anonymous form through organizational social media, newsletters, or at the beginning and end of each season.*

Instructions

- Go to Google Forms (visit forms.google.com).
- Click the blank form (+) to start a new survey.
- Type in your survey title and description.
 - An example title could be “May 2025 Safeguarding Survey” (include the date to keep track of surveys and their corresponding responses).
 - An example description could be “Please complete the following anonymous survey to help our organization improve our safeguarding efforts.”
- Add survey questions (see next page). Use the plus (+) button on the right to add questions.
 - In this case, you’ll only add Yes/No questions (a form of multiple-choice questions) and long-answer questions, which will be labeled as *Paragraph* in Google Forms.
 - If you want all questions answered, you must mark them as Required.
- **Turn off Name & Email Collection:** In the top-right, click Settings (it will look like a tab).
 - **Under the Settings tab, click on the Responses tab:**
 - **Uncheck “Collect email addresses.”**
 - **Uncheck “Limit to 1 response” (this setting forces sign-in).**
 - *Please note: even if you make the survey anonymous, if your organization uses Google Workspace with sign-in required, check that the “Restrict to [yourorg.com] users” box is unchecked in settings – otherwise responses will still be tied to accounts.*
- **Do not include a “Name” question**
- Share your survey (click the Send button at the top right).
- Choose the link icon and copy the link. You can shorten the URL by checking “Shorten URL.”
- Share the link via email or social media.
- Responses will appear in the Responses tab.
- You can click the green Sheets icon to export results into Google Sheets for analysis.
- Ensure that responses are kept in a secure and confidential manner.

Example Survey Questions

- Do you know what to do if someone makes you feel uncomfortable or unsafe? (Yes/No)
- Do other athletes respect you? (Yes/No)
- Do you feel respected by coaches and athletic staff? (Yes/No)
- Do you feel safe at the facility? (Yes/No)
- Do you feel safe during practice? (Yes/No)
- Do you know how to report abuse or misconduct? (Yes/No)
- Do coaches or athletic staff try to contact you via text or social media? (Yes/No)
- Do the organization and other teammates ask your permission before taking photos or posting them? (Yes/No)
- Has anyone touched you without your permission? (Yes/No)
- Has anyone touched you in a way that made you feel uncomfortable, or that was inappropriate? (Yes/No)
- Do you feel safe during travel with your team? (Yes/No)
- Have you seen coaches or staff give gifts or show favoritism to you or other athletes? (Yes/No)
- Do you feel included on your team and at the organization? (Yes/No)
- What's your favorite or the best part of playing your sport? (Open Ended/Text Box)
- What's your least favorite or the worst part of playing your sport? (Open Ended/Text Box)
- What's one thing the organization, your coach, or your team could do to make your experience better? (Open Ended/Text Box)
- Do you have any additional thoughts or comments regarding athlete safeguarding, safety, or feedback? (Open Ended/Text Box)

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Risk Assessment Mapping Exercise



RISK ASSESSMENT MAPPING EXERCISE

This tool provides a simple and quick way to practice and introduce safeguarding risk assessment. This informal exercise helps organizational staff and participants view their sporting environments through a safeguarding lens.

- For entry-level use by sporting organizations and community members to visualize and think about risk in their sporting environment.

Visit: <https://www.weridetogether.today/blog-posts/risk-assessment-mapping-exercise>

This visual Risk Assessment Map can be used to analyze physical and online spaces and should be done regularly, repeatedly, and zoomed in and out. This exercise is great to have athletes, parents, coaches, and staff weigh in from their perspective and have them identify places or people that may be of concern.

Reflect upon your Risk Assessment Maps and reform your safeguarding practices, policies, and procedures consistently to match the accurate needs of your community. Start seeing your space differently through a safeguarding lens. When we create safe and healthy environments, we support our athletes and protect our sports.



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Safeguarding Essentials Template (SET) Risk Assessment



SAFEGUARDING ESSENTIALS TEMPLATE RISK ASSESSMENT

This broad-strokes baseline tool provides organizations with step-by-step instructions for conducting a risk assessment and automatically produces a completed one.

- *For use by organizations that want a simple and quick assessment template.*

About Risk Assessments:

The Risk Assessment is a standalone document. Risk Assessments can highlight safeguarding needs and concerns within your organization and its programming. All stakeholders must be reached and represented to assess risks and needs within your organization accurately.

What you will need to fill out this template:

- The commitment of your organization to safeguard participants.
- An understanding of your organization's scope: sports, activities, locations, and participant demographics.
- An understanding of your organization's stakeholder parties: leadership, staff, external parties (i.e., volunteers, ambassadors, interns), athletes, parents, coaches, etc.
- The information you gathered from organization stakeholders and participants' surveys, focus groups, and feedback per the SET Package Step 2.
- The regulations, standards, and best practice information that apply to your organization and the applicable jurisdiction about safeguarding, child abuse, and athlete safety.
- Review the example risk assessments provided below for inspiration and guidance.

[Visit #WeRideTogether's Safeguarding Essentials Template \(SET\) Package for more information.](#)

[Download #WeRideTogether's Safeguarding Essentials Template \(SET\) Package here.](#)

Instructions:

- Review the template below, then follow this link to the corresponding [Google Form](#) to complete it electronically and produce a PDF.
- Take the time to be thorough and work through this form from your perspective, as well as from the viewpoint of each organizational stakeholder group (coaches, parents, athletes, etc.).
- Walk through and/or visualize each aspect and element of your organizational activities, processes, and programming to identify any potential risks pertaining to safety and abuse prevention for all participants.

Identify each type of risk and label accordingly:

- Environmental risk
 - For example, this could include risks associated with weather, such as lightning and heat, or sports-related risks, including concussions.
- Safeguarding risk:
 - For example, this could include risks associated with abuse and misconduct. This could include online and in-person communication, travel arrangements, and both physical and non-physical interactions.
- Organizational risk:
 - For example, this could include financial and legal risks, institutional betrayal, or compliance issues.

Then, describe the necessary mitigation needed for each risk identified

- Training Needs:
 - For example, this could include that coaches need proper education and training on athlete mental health.
- Resource Needs:
 - For example, this could include that athletes need access to a neutral third-party helpline for support pertaining to safeguarding questions or concerns. Or putting lights in dark parking lots and cameras in certain areas.
- Policy Needs:
 - For example, this could include that coaches and staff need a more user-friendly and realistic reporting system that can be accessed electronically.
- Upon completion, highlight action steps necessary to reduce and eliminate the risks identified. Incorporate these needs into the following document creation templates.

Examples

Here are some examples of risk assessments for sporting organizations to aid in your process of assessing risk at your organization:

- [MULTI-SPORTS RISK ASSESSMENT](#)
- [Organisation Risk Assessment Form | Sport NZ](#)
- [THE SPORT SITUATIONAL PREVENTION APPROACH](#)
- [#WeRideTogether Risk Assessment Mapping Exercise](#)
- [RISK ASSESSMENT & RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN](#)
- [Risk Assessment Templates](#)

SET Risk Assessment Template

Section 1: Basic Information

1. Organization: <<Organization Name>>
2. Sport/Activity Covered: <<List of organizations activities, services, and/or programs>>
3. Location/Region: <<Place where the organization is based>>
4. Travel Inclusions: <<Transport and Lodging information>>
5. Age Group(s): <<Age demographic of participants served>>
6. Assessment Date: <<Date of completing this risk assessment>>

Section 2: Risk Identification

- Risks Identified:

Type of Risk	Description of the Risk	Mitigation Type Needed	Description of Mitigation Needed
<<Environmental, Safeguarding, Organizational>>	<<Description of Risk>>	<<Training Needed, Resource Needed, Policy Needed>>	<<Description of Mitigation Needed>>
<<2 Environmental, Safeguarding, Organizational>>	<<2 Description of Risk>>	<<2 Training Needed, Resource Needed, Policy Needed>>	<<2 Description of Mitigation Needed>>
<<3 Environmental, Safeguarding, Organizational>>	<<3 Description of Risk>>	<<3 Training Needed, Resource Needed, Policy Needed>>	<<3 Description of Mitigation Needed>>
<<4 Environmental, Safeguarding, Organizational>>	<<4 Description of Risk>>	<<4 Training Needed, Resource Needed, Policy Needed>>	<<4 Description of Mitigation Needed>>
<<5 Environmental, Safeguarding, Organizational>>	<<5 Description of Risk>>	<<5 Training Needed, Resource Needed, Policy Needed>>	<<5 Description of Mitigation Needed>>



Section 3: Action Plan

Based on the risks identified above, list your top 3 priorities for addressing risks. Think about the severity and likelihood of the risks identified to guide your priority action steps.

- Priority 1: <<Short Answer Field - Priority 1>>
- Priority 2: <<Short Answer Field - Priority 2>>
- Priority 3: <<Short Answer Field - Priority 3>>

Who is responsible for implementing these actions?

- <<Short Answer Field>>

What is the timeline for completion?

- <<Timeline for Completion>>

Additional Observation or Goals:

- <<Additional Goals and/or Observations>>

Section 4: Next Risk Assessment Due to Ensure Consistent Monitoring and Improvement

<<Date 6 months from today>>



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General Sports Program Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template



GENERAL SPORTS PROGRAM SAFEGUARDING RISK ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

This detailed, thorough tool provides organizations with granular questions and risk categories, plus step-by-step instructions for completing a risk assessment for sporting programs.

- *For use by community clubs, youth and adult sport programs, academies, leagues, and similar organizations across all sports. This risk assessment reviews the full program—not only the playing environment—including governance, coaching, facilities, travel, digital communication, reporting, athlete wellbeing, families, and organizational culture.*

Download or Make a Copy of Template Here:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/10VszjE6n3IJUNyM1i3uWaw3PM8z3IkXWsTnMUXz2Qjs/edit?usp=sharing>

This General Sports Program Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template has been developed by #WeRideTogether for sporting organizations to assess and mitigate safeguarding risks to all participants. This template suits community clubs, youth and adult sport programs, academies, leagues, and similar organizations across all sports.

This General Sports Program Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template benchmarks best practices across the following categories: Organizational Governance, Policies, and Accountability; Codes of Conduct, Boundaries, and Behavioral Expectations; Recruitment, Screening, Hiring, and Onboarding; Safeguarding Education and Training; Reporting, Case Management, and Response; Coaching Practices and Athlete Interactions; Team Practices, Training Facilities, and Physical Environment; Locker Rooms, Bathrooms, Changing, and Private Spaces; Athlete Health, Medical Care, and Wellbeing; Digital Communication, Social Media, and Technology; Photography, Video, Media, and Athlete Images; Parents, Caregivers, Spectators, and Community Culture; Inclusion, Accessibility, and Higher-Risk Participants; Transportation, Travel, and Away Competition; Competitions, Tournaments, and Special Activities; Emergency Preparedness and Crisis Response; Athlete Voice, Feedback, Monitoring, and Continuous Improvement.

Please be advised that this General Sports Program Safeguarding Risk Assessment applies ONLY to safeguarding risks of harassment, abuse, and misconduct.

This Safeguarding Assessment does NOT include physical and environmental safety concerns, such as water, equipment, infrastructure, and weather-related issues.

To protect participants holistically, we should conduct regular risk assessments covering these aspects by appropriately credentialed personnel, in addition to the General Sports Program Safeguarding Risk Assessment.

Instructions

This General Sports Program Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template has been developed for Safeguarding Officer(s)/Teams to conduct. Complete this General Sports Program Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template at least once a year. Safeguarding Officer(s)/Teams should engage other stakeholders (i.e., staff, coaches, athletes, parents) to include their viewpoints when completing the General Sports Program Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template. This stakeholder engagement can be through interviews, surveys, etc.

The Safeguarding Officer(s)/Teams should set aside ample time to complete the General Sports Program Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template and fill in the relevant sections for their organization's programming. Complete row by row, filling out columns C through K. Once you have addressed a risk area, complete column L.

Please also note that your organization or jurisdiction may need to modify or add to this General Sports Program Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template to meet local requirements and regulations and to strengthen focus on specific populations, including minors and vulnerable adults.

If you need assistance, please reach out to info@weridetgether.today.

Scales

Scale for 'Rating of Current Risk Compared to Best Practice Standard'

'N/A' Not Applicable: Section or standard does not apply.

- Best Practice Standard Not Met. Practices/policies are well below the best practice standard.
- Emerging Stage: Some basics exist, but are incomplete/inconsistent with notable weaknesses.
- Developing Stage: Foundations exist with some systems working, but gaps exist.
- Growing Stage: Mostly meets best practice standard, opportunities for minor improvements.
- Meeting Best Practice Standard: Comprehensively and consistently meeting the standard.

Scale for 'Risk Level'

- **Minimal Risk:** Very low likelihood of harm/occurrence.
- **Low Risk:** Low likelihood of harm/occurrence.
- **Moderate Risk:** Potential likelihood of harm/occurrence.
- **Moderate to High Risk:** Probable likelihood of harm/occurrence.
- **High Risk:** Significant likelihood of harm/occurrence.

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Sports Training Facility/Sports Camp Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template



SPORTS TRAINING FACILITY/SPORTS CAMP SAFEGUARDING RISK ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

This detailed, thorough tool provides organizations with granular questions, risk categories, and step-by-step instructions to complete a risk assessment for sports training centers and sports camps.

- *For use across sports training facilities, academies, training centers, day camps, residential/overnight camps, and sport development programs. Complete this risk assessment before programming begins and review whenever staffing, athletes, activities, accommodation, transport, venues, or conditions change.*

Download or Make a Copy of Template Here:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1kzUBrJrOm8OalsLMndsE2XIX8TrBfnDy1Z4Y3GjVUvg/edit?usp=sharing>

This Sports Training Facility/Sports Camp Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template has been developed by #WeRideTogether for sporting organizations and facilities to assess and mitigate safeguarding risks to all participants. This template suits sports training facilities, academies, training centers, day camps, residential/overnight camps, and sport development programs across all sports.

This Sports Training Facility/Sports Camp Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template benchmarks best practices across the following categories: Policies and Procedures; Personnel; Athlete Safety; Training Areas; Private Spaces; Coaching; Medical and Mental Health Care; Accommodation; Transportation and Travel; Meals, Free Time, Excursions; Facility Access; Media, Communication, Technology; Emergency Response, Incident Management; and Athlete Voice and Continuous Improvement.

Please be advised that this Sports Training Facility/Sports Camp Safeguarding Risk Assessment applies ONLY to safeguarding risks of harassment, abuse, and misconduct.

This Safeguarding Assessment does NOT include physical and environmental safety concerns, such as water, equipment, infrastructure, and weather-related issues.

To protect participants holistically, we should conduct regular risk assessments covering these aspects by appropriately credentialed personnel, in addition to the Sports Training Facility/Sports Camp Safeguarding Risk Assessment.

Instructions

This Sports Training Facility/Sports Camp Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template has been developed for Safeguarding Officer(s)/Teams to conduct. Complete this Sports Training Facility/Sports Camp Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template at least once a year. Safeguarding Officer(s)/Teams should engage other stakeholders (i.e., staff, coaches, athletes, parents) to include their viewpoints when completing the Sports Training Facility/Sports Camp Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template. This stakeholder engagement can take the form of interviews, surveys, etc.

The Safeguarding Officer(s)/Teams should set aside ample time to complete the Sports Training Facility/Sports Camp Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template, filling in the relevant sections for their organization's programming. Complete row by row, filling out columns C through K. Once you have addressed a risk area, complete column L.

Please also note that your organization or jurisdiction may need to modify or add to this Sports Training Facility/Sports Camp Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template to meet local requirements and regulations and to strengthen focus on specific populations, including minors and vulnerable adults.

If you need assistance, please reach out to info@weridetgether.today.

Scales

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Event Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template



EVENT SAFEGUARDING RISK ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

This detailed, thorough tool provides organizations with a risk assessment specific to sporting events. Events are different environments that may involve new participants and jurisdictions. Granular questions, risk categories, and step-by-step instructions are included.

- *For organizations to use before an athletic event/competition. Adapt sport-specific items as needed.*

Download or Make a Copy of Template Here:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1JQPxdB38PyZr1zSF5MmOUngHN0KHQ1I9cUUYhfoXq9c/edit?usp=sharing>

This Event Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template has been developed by #WeRideTogether for sporting organizations to assess and mitigate safeguarding risks to all participants. Organizations should use this template before an athletic event/competition.

This Event Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template benchmarks best practices across the following categories: Policies and Procedures; Personnel; Athlete Information; Venue Access and Locations; Operations and Interactions; Support Services; Travel, Transportation, Accommodation; Media and Public; Communication and Technology; and Incident Response.

Please be advised that this Event Safeguarding Risk Assessment applies ONLY to safeguarding risks of harassment, abuse, and misconduct.

This Safeguarding Assessment does NOT include physical and environmental safety concerns, such as water, equipment, infrastructure, and weather-related issues.

To protect participants holistically, we should conduct regular risk assessments covering these aspects by appropriately credentialed personnel, in addition to the Event Safeguarding Risk Assessment.

Instructions

This Event Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template has been developed for Safeguarding Officer(s)/Teams to conduct. Complete this Event Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template at least once a year. Safeguarding Officer(s)/Teams should engage other stakeholders (i.e., staff, coaches, athletes, parents) to include their viewpoints when completing the Event Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template. This stakeholder engagement can be through interviews, surveys, etc.

The Safeguarding Officer(s)/Teams should set aside ample time to complete the Event Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template, filling in the relevant sections for their organization's programming. Complete row by row, filling out columns C through K. Once you have addressed a risk area, complete column L.

Please also be advised that your organization or jurisdiction may need to modify or add to this Event Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template to meet local requirements and regulations and to strengthen focus on specific populations, including minors and vulnerable adults.

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We All Have a Role to Play

in protecting athletes by upholding best practices, staying informed, & destigmatizing conversations about misconduct and abuse.

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13-15

years old is the average age of the first incidence of abuse in sport

>50%

of athletes experience abuse in sport

Peers

and authority figures are the most common perpetrators of abuse in sport



Find **FREE** safeguarding education, abuse prevention resources, & coach and team support!



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