Research, Monitoring & Evaluation of ‘Child Protection’ in Sport Policy: A Case Study

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Lancashire, England
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000-1</td>
<td>RFL Develop Policy (with CPSU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>RFL Pilot Implementation of Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>EHU Evaluation Report on Pilot</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Launch of RFL CP Policy &amp; Guidelines</td>
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<td>2004-6</td>
<td>EHU Survey of 75 RFL Clubs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 Focus Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Re-established contact with Lead Officer and planned new study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Activation States Evaluation</td>
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UK Governing Body *Safeguarding Lead Officer* (2012):

Child Protection hasn’t been a traditional function of a governing body, so they are not quite sure what you’re going to be doing.

When I first went into the Lead Officer role it was a bit like “find out for yourself what you do and who you work with.” I found that quite a shock. I thought it’d be more structured than it was ...

I still think we’ve got a way to go for it to be genuinely embedded and owned across the organisation.

... many challenges at all levels
Early challenges ... “sledgehammer to crack a nut”

“With working in a social services environment I have knowledge of child protection issues. However what the policy does is enable me to be more aware of child protection in a sporting and community based context . . . there is a pressing need for all those involved in junior rugby league to become aware and equally importantly accept the need for there to be a child protection policy. I am regularly dismayed to hear comments that such policies are the thoughts of ‘do gooders’ and there are no such problems in junior rugby league.”
Critical Research

Hartill & Prescott (2007) **Serious Business or ‘Any Other Business’? Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in British Rugby League.**

- **Survey of 205 Rugby League clubs with youth section**
  - Postal questionnaire to individuals with responsibility for CP (CP Officer)
  - 37% Response Rate (N = 75)
Child protection officers’ *impression of impact* of policy on club (N = 75)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Response</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>(N)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive Response</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>(48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response: ‘No Impact’</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>(15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/Ambiguous</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Simple Schedule for Policy Implementation in Clubs

1. Adoption (or Revision) of policy
2. Selection & Training of Officer
3. Formal launch for all members
4. Monitoring & Evaluation of Policy
5. Structured programme of training
6. Review

Hartill & Prescott (2007)
The term ‘Activation States’ was adopted to indicate the **level of activation** of each stakeholder group towards CP in football.
Activation States

5 States:

1. **Opposed**
   - i.e. either overtly critical of, or covertly against, the CP initiative.

2. **Inactive**
   - i.e. demonstrating no knowledge or commitment to CP;

3. **Reactive**
   - i.e. demonstrating reluctant commitment and engagement;

4. **Active**
   - i.e. demonstrating satisfactory awareness and involvement;

5. **Proactive**
   - i.e. demonstrating full commitment and advocacy;
4 modes:

• **Voices/discourses**
  what people *say* about CP in football;

• **Knowledge and experience**
  what people *know* through experience/their awareness, interest or understanding;

• **Feelings**
  what people *feel* - their attitudes and emotions;

• **Action**
  what people do/have *done* - their achievements and behaviour.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voices/discourses</th>
<th>INACTIVE</th>
<th>REACTIVE</th>
<th>ACTIVE</th>
<th>PROACTIVE</th>
<th>OPPOSED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[What people say about CP in football]</td>
<td>Don’t know what you’re talking about.</td>
<td>Well, OK if I have to.</td>
<td>This is important.</td>
<td>We won’t get it right first time.</td>
<td>Overt/manifest/obvious:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nothing to do with me.</td>
<td>I’d rather not get involved.</td>
<td>We all share this responsibility.</td>
<td>There is always more to learn.</td>
<td>This is complete waste of time/money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never heard of it. What do you mean?</td>
<td>I suppose it has to be done.</td>
<td>It’s something that must be done.</td>
<td>We need to keep this under review.</td>
<td>You’ll never stop those paedophiles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I’m not sure if I know enough.</td>
<td></td>
<td>We need to learn from others.</td>
<td>Abuse just doesn’t happen here.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>What if I do something wrong?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>INACTIVE</td>
<td>REACTIVE</td>
<td>ACTIVE</td>
<td>PROACTIVE</td>
<td>OPPOSED</td>
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<tr>
<td>[What people do/have done – achievements &amp; behaviour]</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Professes ignorance</td>
<td>Applies knowledge</td>
<td>Keeps up to date</td>
<td>Overt/manifest/obvious:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resistant</td>
<td>Asks to be anonymous</td>
<td>Fulfils responsibilities</td>
<td>Seeks feedback</td>
<td>Actively opposes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bystander behaviour</td>
<td></td>
<td>Seeks learning &amp; experiences</td>
<td>Talks about how to improve</td>
<td>Covert/latent/hidden:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Attends training</td>
<td>Adapts &amp; responds</td>
<td>Own behaviour belies/contradicts commitment to CP.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reads literature</td>
<td>Seeks wider information sources</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Acts appropriately</td>
<td>Participates in or volunteers for CP role</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Engages actively</td>
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‘Activation states’ with regard to child protection in football CB Ltd.2002

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Measuring Change

Not a calibrated scale, but a device to “give a sense of how a new policy initiative has impacted on different stakeholder groups and where further action might be required.”

(Brackenridge et al., 2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>REACTIVE</th>
<th>ACTIVE</th>
<th>PROACTIVE</th>
<th>OPPOSED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VOICES</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>K &amp; EXP</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>FEELINGS</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ACTION</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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0 = 2013  1 = 2015
Background & Rationale

- 2011 – 10 years of child protection in UK sport: New Framework
- Baseline data prior to next ten years;

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Child Protection in Rugby League

Project Design:

• 3 stakeholder groups (“change agents”)
  • Club Welfare Officers (n = 25)
  • Club Coaches (n = 25)
  • Community Coaches (n = 25)
• Semi-structured Interview (approx. 1 hr)
• Illustration of early findings:

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Edge Hill University
CWO: Inactive Knowledge

Does the Club have a Disciplinary Panel?
I think they do yes. I’m not sure.
CWO: Active Knowledge

Does the Club have a Disciplinary Panel?

That’s made up of the Chairman or the Vice-Chairman depending on who can be there, the Child Welfare Officer, erm the Club Secretary and then we would have the Manager on board of whichever age group is having the disciplinary ...
CWO: Inactive Action

*Do you have set procedure by which you tell the young players, about the role of the Club Welfare Officer?*

Er, no, I would say, I would say not, no ... we try and, er, educate through the, through the sort of the coaches, um, and then to the sort of the, the parents ... Like I say, the minutes from the meetings are published on the, the website – child welfare issues can be, er, brought up on there. But I don’t think they actively talk to the children about it. It’s more education from the, from the parents and certainly from the coaches’ point of view.
CWO: Active Action

Err we put the little leaflets that the RFL produce in the booklet when they sign on. The posters are up in the main building of the Club House and again in the changing room. So it’s in both ends of the changing room. The Respect and the Safeguarding policies are all down in the changing rooms as well, err both on the foyer as you walk in and in all the changing rooms, so that, you know, it’s there in people’s faces. They can’t say “oh I didn’t know anything about it”.
Do you communicate with the children about how they can raise their voices?

Yeah, at the beginning of each season I do a pre-season children’s talk. So I go to a training session and sit down with the team, *without* the Coach present. And they will tell me any concerns. And they all know me.

The younger children are very forthcoming with what they, what they like and what they don’t like. The older, the, the you know, fifteen year olds will look at their shoes and grunt, but I make sure that they know that they can come to me.

And then there’s my Club Welfare phone, which is always charged up and it’s always with me. So they can contact me via that phone and they all know about that.
CWO: Proactive Action

Sometimes I’ll turn up unannounced and I’ll stand in car park, and I can hear them, and after the training session I’ll just say to him ‘do you know how many times you used the ‘f’ word in that training session? Do you know how many times you called someone a little S-H-I-T in that training session?’ – ‘I didn’t’ – ‘you did, next time I’ll video you, so you can see what’s happening’.

... Challenging the culture ...
CWO: Proactive Voice

I think there is a problem [with child maltreatment in sport] there - I don’t think it comes to light very often.

We’ve just started this new initiative to try and combat the touchline abuse ... just highlight things like, “would you normally treat your child like this?” “Do you realise how offensive your abuse is?” ...
CWO: Proactive Voice

My profile has been raised an awful lot over the last year and perhaps made people just a little bit more aware of their own rights and responsibilities. And also the rights of the children ... if I’m around you know, they might just change the way that they are speaking to children in a particular way and I think that’s got to be a good thing.

Q: Are you satisfied that Safeguarding is embedded in your club now, in all areas?

Err, I think there’s a way to go still. I think that we’re well on the way, but I don’t think you can ever do enough really.
Observations:

- Labour intensive method – resource implications
- Experience & training required

**Rigorous and ethical approach:**
- Allows probing and exploration of views & ideas
- Gives participant time to express views in full on range of issues
- Takes Stakeholders seriously
  - But aim is to develop a *stakeholder* profile, not individual profile
“Evidencing the **impact** of child protection is a complex task”

“The most potent indicator of change is the behaviour of *change agents*”.  
Key stakeholders: those in a position both to effect and to symbolise change.  
(Brackenridge et al., 2005)

**Research** evaluates change in order to inform policy development …
References:

