



APPENDIX 13

GUIDANCE ON THE SAFE USE OF CHANGING ROOMS AND SHOWERING FACILITIES

It is important to think about how you can effectively meet the needs of all members of the football family, taking into account the facilities that are available, the number of people accessing them and the activities being undertaken.

Children are particularly vulnerable in changing areas due to various stages of dress/undress and because they are less supervised than at many other times. The risk of child-to-child problems, such as bullying, is also present when coaches or staff members are not supervising players or mascots. This is especially true in changing rooms. The following guidelines have been designed to help MAs develop their own policies to reduce the risk of misconduct or abuse in changing areas:

1. Where facilities are used by both adults and children at the same time, there must be access to separate changing, showering and toilet areas.
2. Under no circumstances should adults be undressed in front of children in changing rooms.
3. Adult staff and volunteers must not change or shower at the same time as children using the same facilities.
4. For mixed-gender activities, separate facilities must be available for boys and girls.
5. If a child feels uncomfortable changing or showering in public, then no pressure should be placed on him/her to do so. Instead, he/she should be encouraged to do so at home.
6. If disabled children need to use facilities, make sure they are accessible and the disabled child and his/her carer are involved in deciding if and how they should be assisted. Make sure the child is able to consent to the assistance that is offered.
7. The use of mobile phones and/or photographic equipment with video recording capabilities by staff and volunteers and children themselves should be prohibited in general and should not be used under any circumstance in changing rooms.
8. Where no changing facilities are available, children and their parents or guardians should be made aware of this prior to the game and advised to make alternative arrangements and take appropriate additional clothing.
9. Parents should be discouraged from entering changing rooms unless it is truly necessary. In such circumstances, only a parent of the same sex as the children may enter the changing room and he/she should let the coach know about this in advance. At least one member of the coaching staff of the same sex as the children involved should be present with the parent when other children are in the changing room.
10. Adult staff and volunteers, especially those of the opposite sex, should not be in the changing room when children are undressed.