

Conversation cards

Coaches



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Discussion cards



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Instruction card

This set of 12 "Discussion cards" has been designed to help initiate conversations about safe sport between coaches. The cards are divided in three themes:



The theme is indicated on each card by a symbol. To begin, select one card at a time to discuss with your group. Be sure to take the time to consider each question carefully and to encourage both reflection and the sharing of thoughts and experiences on each topic. Remember, it is not about finding a solution or providing the right answer but rather to generate a dialogue.

Have fun!

Aims

- Engage in an open conversation on various topics that contribute to a safe sport climate.
- Exchange examples of best practice in creating and fostering a safe sport environment.
- Share, reflect and learn from the experiences of fellow coaches.

1. Conversation cards

As a coach, what is your communication style?

- Do you tend to be strict and keep distance or are you friendly and close with the sport participants?
- Does your communication style change depending on the age of the sport participants?
- In what way do you convey your coaching/messaging to the sport participants? What works and what doesn't?



1. Conversation cards

**In what ways do
you want the sport
participants you
coach to
communicate
with you?**

1. Conversation cards



How do you encourage open and honest communication between you and the sport participants?

- What qualities support/enable a sport participant talking to you about something that might make you unhappy as a coach (e.g., an injury, not feeling well, a schedule conflict, etc.)?
- Do you have tips on making yourself approachable as a person and still having the authority to address sport participants as their coach?



1. Conversation cards

How do you bring up a difficult topic within the team?

- What are a few different ways that you can approach or start a difficult conversation?
- How do you create a climate where sport participants feel safe to openly express their opinions about heavy, hard, or unpopular topics?



1. Conversation cards

How do you increase the team spirit in the team?

- Are there team building exercises you use during training sessions?
- How do you organize the creation of small groups for a specific exercise?
- What do you do to make sure that all sport participants get along and there are no cliques?



1. Conversation cards

How do you ensure that the sport participants interact with each other in a positive way?

- In what ways do you explicitly look for this during your training sessions?
- How do you create an environment where sport participants respect each other for who they are?



1. Conversation cards

How do you show respect to the team?

- What does respect mean to you?
- Can you give a few examples of how you show your respect to the sport participants?
- Do the sport participants you coach show that they respect you as a coach? In what ways?



How do you show respect to your fellow coaches?

- Can you give an example?
- What does respect mean to you?
- Can you give a few examples of how you show respect to your fellow coaches and colleagues?
- Do your fellow coaches/colleagues show that they respect you as a coach? In what ways?



How do you create a safe sport environment for the sport participants?

- What does a safe sport environment mean to you?
- What would an unsafe sport environment look like?
- How can you, as a coach, actively contribute to the creation and perpetuation of a safe sport environment (both physically and mentally safe) for all sport participants?



1. Conversation cards

How do you handle (small) conflicts between sport participants?

- How would you handle a conflict between yourself, as a coach, and a sport participant?
- What do you struggle with when there is a conflict within the group of sport participants?



1. Conversation cards

Share a situation where you noticed bullying on the team and describe the impact.

- How did you handle the situation as a coach?
- What steps did you take and who did you involve to assist you?
- Looking back, would you have done anything differently?
- What advice would you give to fellow coaches if they are faced with a bullying situation in the team/group?



Do sport participants have a clear understanding of harassment and abuse, and do they know what to do or who to talk to if they see or hear something that concerns them within the sports club?

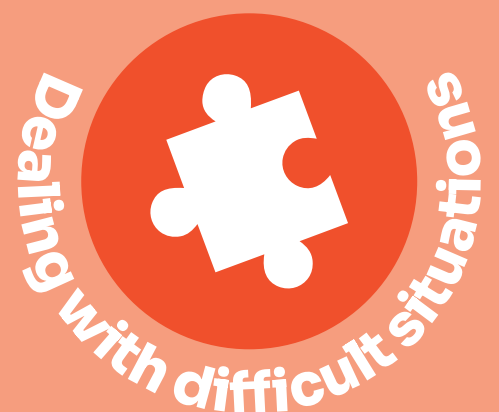
- What makes you feel that sport participants know/don't know what they can do if they are concerned?
- Do you feel that you, as a coach, are adequately informed about the club's safeguarding policy and reporting procedures?



1. Conversation cards

Have you had a conversation with the sport participants on the topic of bullying?

- If so, how did the sport participants respond to this conversation? If not, why?
- What prompted you to organize the conversation?
- What tips would you give to other coaches or colleagues if they organize a conversation on bullying?



Ranking competition



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Ranking competition

Harassment and abuse comes in different forms (physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual harassment and abuse, and neglect) and in varying severities. The boundaries for considering a behavior acceptable or unacceptable can be different for different people or cultures and may change over time. This can sometimes complicate the assessment of situations of harassment and abuse.

This assignment wants coaches to think about what criteria can be used to assess the seriousness of a situation. It is based on the Boundary points system (based on the Sensoa Flag System).

This set contains 5 different cards:

- Instruction card part 1
- Instruction card part 2
- Situation Card - Team sport
- Situation Card - Individual sport
- Card with background information

Instruction card

Part 1

1. Ranking on Severity

- Before starting, create teams of 2 to 4 people (depending on the group size)
- Choose the situation card you want to rank (Team sport or Individual sport)
- Share the situation with all of the teams, and rank the behaviors in order of severity (1 = least severe, 7 = most severe)
- After ranking, discuss your ranking with the other group(s). Use the discussion questions below.
 - How did you decide on the ranking of the severity of these behaviors?
 - Are there certain things that you feel weigh more heavily in your assessment than others?

2. Ranking competition

Instruction card

Part 2

2. Classify according intervening

- In part 2 let the coaches divide the situations into two groups:
 - Situations you would respond to yourself as a coach
 - Situations you would seek help to address
- You can use the following discussion questions below to classify the situations
 - What types of situations are you more likely to seek help for?
 - What would you do in the situations you would respond to yourself?

Aims

- Learn about the criteria that fellow coaches use to assess the seriousness of a situation.
- Have an open conversation with fellow coaches as to what degree of harassment and abuse a situation falls.
- Become familiar with the criteria of the Boundary point system.

2. Ranking competition

Situation card



Team sport

- A. A member of the boys' team (16 years old) sometimes slaps ears old) sometimes slaps or pinches the backside of a member of the girls' team (16 years old) during training.
- B. The head coach continuously makes small comments about the weight of one of the sport participants (14 years old) in front of the entire team.
- C. Bart (21 years old), a sport participant, often stares at a group of girls from the sports club (15 years old) while they are training on the field next to his team. This makes them feel uncomfortable.
- D. Members of a team (16 years old) exclude one of their teammates from their WhatsApp group.
- E. A group of players (14 years old) sitting on the bench during their game throw cans of soda in the direction of their opponent's during the break.
- F. Frank (42 years old) shouts and offends the adult players of his team when the opposing team scores during the cup final.
- G. Aster (age 15) is asked by the coach to focus completely on their sports career and to waste as little time as possible on homework and school.

2. Ranking competition

Situation card



Individual sport

- A. A male sport participant (16 years old) sometimes slaps or pinches the backside of a female sport participant (16 years old) which whom he often trains with.
- B. Sofie, the head coach, continuously makes small comments about the weight of one of the sport participants (14 years old) in front of other sport participants.
- C. Bart (21 years old), a sport participant who often trains in the same gym, regularly stares at a girl from the club (15 years old). This makes her feel uncomfortable.
- D. Members of a team (16 years old) exclude one of their teammates from their WhatsApp group. They do not train together, but are from the same club.
- E. After an event, a parent scolds their child and calls them a "loser" and "good-for-nothing" in front of other parents and sport participants because, according to them, the child did not do their best.
- F. After a long practice, Frank, a 40-year-old coach, is not satisfied with the performance of Lou (16 years old). As punishment, Lou is given additional exercises and may not stop until coach Frank is happy.
- G. Aster (age 15) is asked by the coach to focus completely on their sports career and to waste as little time as possible on homework and school.

2. Ranking competition

Background Information

The Boundary point system determines when certain behavior is acceptable or not acceptable following objective criteria. For more information about the application of this system in sport, please contact info@ethischsporten.be.



1. Individual consent / societal agreement for the behavior:

Look at the individual level to see if the people involved consent to the specified behavior. It is also important to see if there are social agreements (formal/informal) around certain behaviors about how you treat each other.



2. Voluntary engagement

Voluntary engagement refers to being in the situation by choice and interacting with the other person completely voluntarily. It also means that at any time you can say stop and step out of the situation.



3. Equality:

A situation can cross boundaries as soon as there is an inequality between those involved. This happens when there is an imbalance of power in terms of age, knowledge, intelligence, prestige, power, position, ... It is not the inequality that makes the situation crossing a line, but the fact that this inequality is abused to take advantage of it.



4. Development or functional level:

We expect adults to have a minimum level of emotional and behavioral self-direction and maturity to function in social and sexual situation. Behavior of children and adolescents depends more on the developmental stage they are currently in. This does not mean we approve of them, but it sometimes sheds a different light on the situation.



5. Context:

Depending on the etiquette and rules of a context, the situation becomes less severe or is even completely okay. Or conversely, the more inappropriate the behavior is in one particular context, the more severe the situation will become.



6. Impact:

Is there any negative impact or harm to those involved (whether to the person initiating the behavior, the person undergoing the behavior, to other people involved or the sport context)?

2. Ranking competition

What would you do?



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Instruction card

Harassment and abuse can take many different forms. If you see a situation of harassment and abuse, or if someone tells you about a situation, it is important to know how to be a **positive bystander**.

In this exercise you will find three different "Situation cards" and three cards with background information. Each card describes a possible situation of harassment and abuse. Read the situation out loud to the group and discuss using the discussion questions provided.

Aims

- Discuss what to do in situations involving harassment and abuse.
- Learn to assess when it is appropriate to respond by themselves or when it is better to seek additional help.
- More easily recognize harassment & abuse making it more likely to take action.



3. What would you do?

1

Situation card

Fernando and Jonathan are youth coaches at the local sports club. They are well liked and trusted and spend a lot of time with the young sport participants. Because of this, they hear a lot of stories. One such story is about Arthur, a 14-year-old sport participant. Apparently, Arthur is systematically being excluded and not invited to social activities organized by his teammates. He does not know this because his teammates have a WhatsApp group without him in it.

Fernando and Jonathan also heard that the teammates occasionally hide Arthur's clothes and belongings in the locker room while he is taking a shower. They also all agree to not speak to Arthur, and sometimes give him a push, a shove, or a punch during training. On the field, Arthur gets made fun of and sometimes tackled viciously. Fernando noticed that Arthur is becoming more and more withdrawn lately.

Discussion questions:

- What do you think about this situation?
- Do you recognize the characteristics of bullying behavior in this situation?
- As a coach, what would you do in this situation?
- What are the reasons to intervene or not intervene?
- What impact might this situation have on the performance of the sport participants and/or team if you do nothing?

3. What would you do?

1

Background information

Because this case is about bullying, the good first step would be to inform and discuss the situation with the club safeguarding officer and work together to see how to best address the issue.

Next, it is important to talk to Arthur to discuss how he feels, what he needs, and how you can help him. It is best to do this first before approaching the sport participants who are doing the bullying. It is important that Arthur is included in the steps that will be taken and that he feels comfortable with these steps.

- Have a separate conversation with Arthur. It is recommended to choose a room where you will not be interrupted by other people.
- Tell Arthur what you overheard and listen to what Arthur has to say about it.
"I heard that the other sport participants have been hiding your clothes and belongings and that they are shutting you out. Can you tell me a little more about this?"
- Listen to Arthur's story and give room for emotions:
"I can tell you're upset. How are you feeling? What do you need?"
- Indicate that boundaries were crossed and that you disapprove this behavior.
- Together, discuss the options and what steps can be taken. Try to persuade Arthur to include people he trusts (e.g., parents, friends, a helpline). Make clear agreements about what steps you will take, (e.g., group discussion, involvement of club safeguarding officer, etc.) and how you will keep Arthur informed.

Some tips for talking to young sport participants:

- Since the bullying incidents are severe, you could address the sport participants directly about their hurtful, harassing, and abusive behavior.
- Indicate what makes the behavior(s) unacceptable & clearly name the incorrect behavior. For example:
 - "I hear you exclude Arthur and hide his things from him in the locker room"
 - "It's not okay to exclude someone or take someone's stuff. Know that this behavior allows for sanctions to be taken. We choose to address this through conversation first. If your behavior does not stop, there will be consequences."

Ask why the sport participants have engaged in this behavior and their thoughts on what should be done:

- "What made you do this?"
- "How would you feel if you were treated in this way?"
- "What do you think we should do concerning this behavior?"
- "What can you do to better as individuals and as a group?"
- "What steps are you willing to take in order to make the situation again?"

Make sure that they understand the seriousness of the situation

"Serious sanction can be taken for this kind of behavior. We chose to address this through conversation first, but if your behavior does not change, there will be more serious consequences."

Schedule another meeting, agree on how the behavior will be followed up on, and make sure there is a clear understanding of what the consequences will be if this behavior recurs.

3. What would you do?

2

Situation card

Elisabeth, a 15-year-old field hockey player, is just coming off a long rehabilitation period due to a back injury. The day before an important game, she starts training again. Elisabeth is still suffering a bit from her injury but was able to participate in about half of the training and it went really well. You, as coach of the younger field hockey players, overhear a conversation between Elisabeth and her coach Céline. Céline is begging Elisabeth to play in the game tomorrow despite her just coming back. Céline says that without her, the team has no chance.

Elisabeth's doctor indicated that she should first complete two full training sessions before she plays a game. Elisabeth herself can't wait to play again and absolutely wants to participate. She is confident that everything will work out and that her body is ready, just like her teammate Sarah who came back early from an injury. Elisabeth doesn't want to disappoint her coach or her team and is determined to help them win this game.

Discussion questions

- What do you think about this situation?
- As a coach, what would you do in this situation?
- What would be a reason to intervene or not intervene?
- What impact might this situation have on the performance of the sport participants and/or team if you do nothing?

3. What would you do?

2

Background information

We are aware that intervening and/or questioning the decision of a fellow coach is not an easy step to take, although in this situation, it is important to talk with coach Céline. If you do not feel comfortable addressing Céline directly, you can go to the club safeguarding officer.

In this situation it is important that coach Céline is approached, and that it is made clear that it is not okay for players to participate against doctor's advice.

You can also talk with Elisabeth about what you heard. Discuss with her that it is not right for her coach to ask her to play a game when she is not physically ready or against doctor's orders. From a motivational point of view, it is important to stress that her determination and efforts to return are admirable and part of what makes her so important to the team, but that it is important to take the time to recover and get back in shape. Emphasize that it is essential to follow the doctor's advice.

Because Elisabeth is so determined to be part of this important match, you can work with her to see how she can contribute although she cannot play herself.

Lastly, you can also contact Elisabeth's parents since it is quite a severe incident and Elisabeth is a minor. It can be important to inform the parents about the position of the club so that they can make sure that the doctor's advice is always followed. In this way, the parents are involved, and they can keep an eye on their daughter to make sure their boundaries are not crossed. If Elisabeth herself does not have the courage to go against the coach, it is important that parents know who they can turn to for reporting this kind of situation.

3. What would you do?

3

Situation card

After the training of a mixed group of 12-year-old sport participants, you notice Emiel and Jonas walk towards the girls' changing rooms and showers. You didn't pay much attention to it at the time, but the next day one of the girls comes to you and tells you that Emiel and Jonas were secretly taking pictures in the girls' showers with their mobiles. The girls have heard that the pictures were sent to the entire boys' team in a WhatsApp group. The girls are really upset and are afraid that the pictures will be passed around to others.

Discussion questions

- What do you think about this situation?
- As a coach, what would you do in this situation?
- What would be a reason to intervene or not intervene?
- What impact might this situation have on the performance of the sport participants and/or team if you do nothing?

3. What would you do?

3

Background information

Because this situation is very severe, it is best for the coach to immediately call in the club safeguarding officer to oversee and handle this particular situation. In a case such as this, the club safeguarding officer will most likely be assisted by the federation safeguarding officer.

It may also be a good idea to contact a specialist child protection agency or the police since this includes spreading pictures through social media. Often, they can help to remove these pictures from the Internet. In addition, you can also seek advice from a helpline for information regarding violence and child abuse.

In this case, a serious conversation with the boys, the girls and the parents will be required. This conversation should be supervised by the club safeguarding officer.

The club will also need to communicate with all involved parties about the steps club management will take. A specific contact person for parents, sport participants and coaches will most likely be designated. As a coach, it is best to leave this communication and interaction to the club management.



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