

Sexual and gender-based harassment in sports

In cooperation with: The Finnish Olympic Committee, Finnish Center for Integrity in Sports and Väestöliitto (the Family Federation of Finland)



Harassment in sports

- Harassment and bullying also occur in sports
- Risk factors include, for example, an authoritarian coaching style and strong gender stereotypes
- Common understanding is the key in prevention
 - What is allowed–what is not
- Touching is part of various sports in various ways
 - Different ways of touching: guaranteeing safety, guiding and helping, encouraging
 - Verbalising touching and asking for permission
 - The right to refuse touching

Increasing the means that sports clubs have for the prevention of harassment



Does your club have detailed rules for adults working with children and adolescents?



Hopefully young girls would be able to talk about things more openly and not have to experience any kind of harassment.

I mainly saw the harassment as sort of sexual jokes and inappropriate comments about sex and my body. I usually ignored it but there were times when a line was definitely crossed. The coach comes too close to me in training, for example, and touches me even when not trying to explain things like how to swing the racket.

A girl in the national team --- said that the team's coach had touched her bum and asked about her period ---

I have heard and seen coaches send harassing messages to athletes and verbally harass and insinuate. Calling people a whore is actually very common and I've witnessed it many, many times.

At first, I was too scared to tell anyone except my friends, and when I heard that they had experienced the same things, we told people in our club as well as the federation, but no one did anything about it.

The coach comes too close to me in training, for example, and touches me even when not trying to explain things like how to swing the racket.

However, this [sexually charged comments or jokes] should be addressed in certain situations, especially when the athletes are younger and sensitive and their bodies and minds are still developing.

I was asked to send nude photos. The boy was older than me. He asked for photos a couple of times but I refused. Then he stopped.

At tournaments, in training, on the road. Not just during one year, either; this has been the case more or less throughout my sports career.

≡ What is sexual harassment?

Unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical sexual behaviour

- Sexually suggestive gestures or facial expressions
- Sexual talk, double entendres, calling people gay or a whore, comments and questions about people's bodies, clothes or intimate private life
- Sexually charged messages, e-mails, telephone calls, images and videos, posts on social media

Sexually harassing a person under the age of 16 may constitute an offence

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≡ What is gender-based harassment?

Unwanted behaviour targeted at gender, gender identity or the expression of gender

- Derogatory comments on another person's gender
- Bullying based on the gender of the person being bullied

My abilities as an ice hockey player or as an athlete altogether are quite often questioned based on my gender. It's definitely men who say these things.

≡ What is a sex offence?

An act violating the bodily integrity of a person or the normal development of a child

- Sexual abuse of a child
 - persuading a child for sexual purposes
 - touching a child's breasts, genitals, backside or thighs
 - sexual proposals, comments and messages targeted at a person under the age of 16
 - showing sexual materials to a child
 - having intercourse with a person under the age of 16
- Sexual harassment
- Rape



Consequences of harassment

Harassment can have serious consequences



- Depression
- Anxiety
- Self-esteem issues
- Guilt
- Stress
- Difficulties in sports
(absences, weakened performance)

≡ Encourage people to talk

Talking about sexual harassment is difficult, especially due to the harasser's position of authority (e.g. coaching relationship), the shame and the fear of consequences

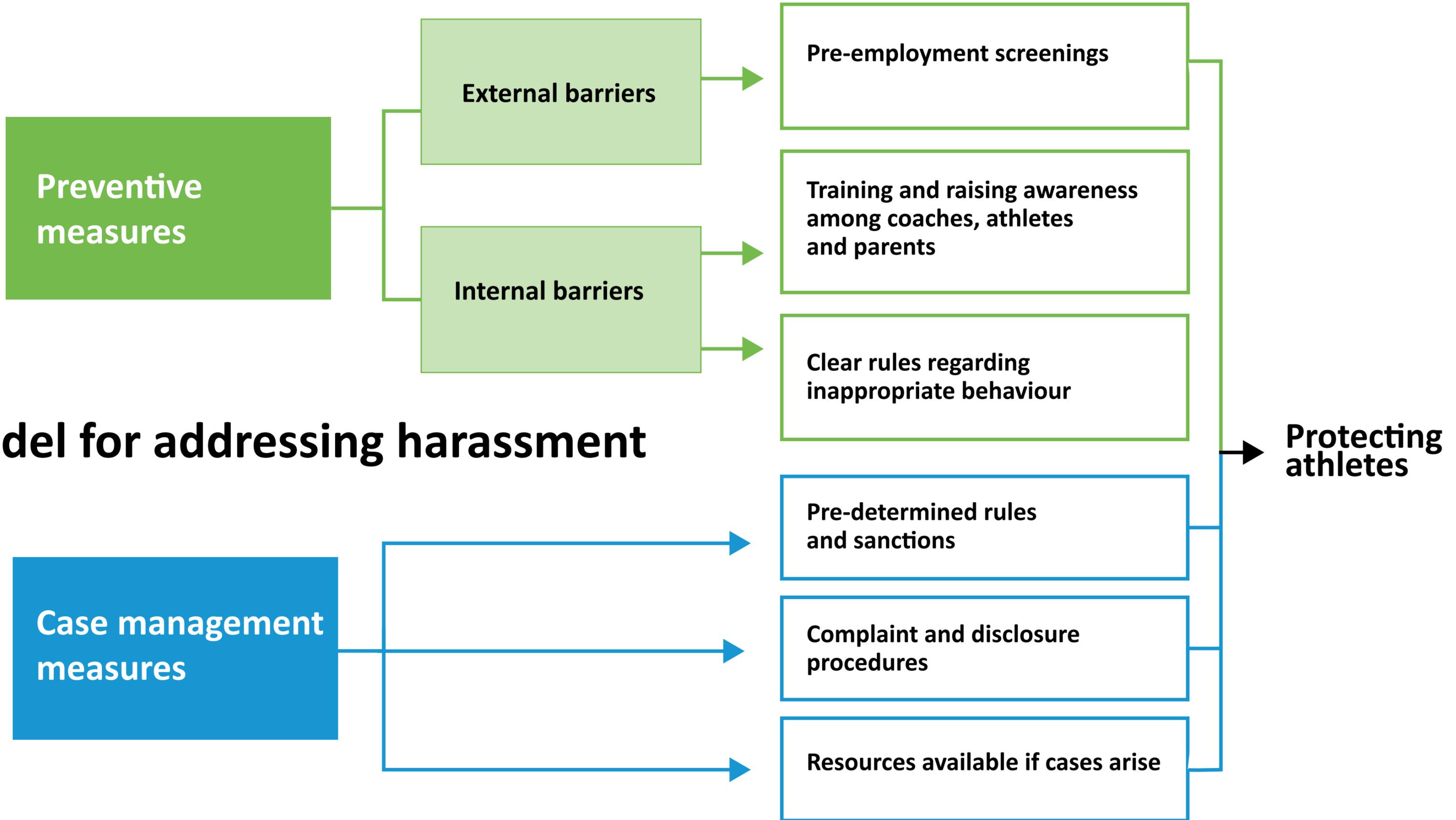
--- I wanted to avoid conflict and be nice so that I wouldn't get into trouble. Fellow athletes also do not want the sport or team to be "tarnished" by unfavourable stories. We love our sport and we want to raise awareness of it, which is why we sugar-coat and hide unpleasant things (I have also done this, as have those around me).

≡ All sport club operators must know

- What is or is not allowed
- What are the approaches for addressing harassment
 - Who to tell or how to act if someone experiences inappropriate treatment
- How the club addresses occurrences of inappropriate treatment

Actively collecting feedback from athletes is one way to encourage people to open up

Model for addressing harassment



≡ Preventing inappropriate behaviour

1. Check criminal background
2. Draw up common rules
3. Appoint persons in charge
4. Communicate the rules and persons in charge on the website
5. Create an operating model for addressing inappropriate behaviour
6. Educate and train your personnel
7. Raise awareness of harassment as a phenomenon
8. Collect feedback on the satisfaction of the amateurs, athletes and employees

Instructions on actions to be taken if harassment is suspected

1. Receive the complaint and take it seriously
2. Decide who will handle the case
3. Assess the need for reporting an offence or contacting child welfare services
If you are unsure, contact the police for advice
4. When there is no reason to suspect a crime: Listen to all sides
5. Make decisions
6. Draw up a written summary
7. Inform the individuals involved of your decision

≡ What to do when suspecting a sex offence

1. Contact the police
2. Submit a child welfare notification
3. Do not share information on an ongoing investigation but address the inappropriate behaviour
4. Organise professional help

If you are unsure about whether there is reason to suspect a sex offence, always consult the police or contact services such as Victim Support Finland or Et ole yksin ('You are not alone').



USKALLA PUHUA

www.etoleyksin.fi

Väestöliitto

Materials for various parties:

- Preventing inappropriate behaviour in sports clubs
- Material bank
- Online training (available in December 2019)



SOITA / MA-TI 14-17.30
0800 144 644

CHATTA / KE-TO 14-17.30
www.etoleyksin.fi

The Finnish Olympic Committee

- [Lupa välittää, lupa puuttua](#) (*'Permission to care, permission to intervene'*) [guidebook](#) (link)
- [Material bank](#)



Finnish Center for Integrity in Sports (FINCIS)

- FINCIS surveys
- ILMO – report an ethical violation



SAMALLA VIIVALLA

Selvitys liikunnan ja urheilun tasa-arvoisuudesta ja yhdenvertaisuudesta Suomessa

Miika Kyllönen

SUEK ry:n julkaisuja urheilun eettisyydestä

2019

VAIKENEMINEN OLE VAIHTOEHTO

Katsaus häirintää ja kiusaamista käsittelevää tutkimustietoon liikunnan ja urheilun näkökulmasta

Miika Kyllönen

SUEK ry:n julkaisuja urheilun eettisyydestä

2019

HÄIRINTÄ JALKAPALLO- JA JÄÄKIEKKOMAAJOUKKUEISSA

Selvitys pelaajien kokemasta seksuaalisesta ja sukupuoleen perustuvasta häirinnästä

Johanna Hentunen, Nina Laakso ja Jouko Ikonen
Suomen urheilun eettinen keskus SUEK ry
2018

Suomen urheilun eettinen keskus SUEK ry edistää urheilun eettisyyttä yhdessä koko urheiluyhteisön kanssa. SUEK:n tehtäviä ovat antidopingtoiminta, kilpailumanipulaation torjunta sekä katsomoturvallisuuden ja -viihtyvyyden edistäminen.

SUEK toteuttaa tehtävänsä koulutuksen, tutkimuksen, viestinnän ja sidosryhmäyhteistyön keinoin. Se tekee laaja-alaista yhteistyötä niin kansallisten kuin kansainvälisten urheilutoimijoiden ja viranomaisten kanssa.

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SEKSUAALINEN HÄIRINTÄ TENNISSESSÄ

Selvitys kansainväliseen kilpailutoimintaan vuosina 2008-2018 osallistuneiden suomalaisurheilijoiden kokemasta häirinnästä

Suomen urheilun eettinen keskus SUEK ry
Johanna Hentunen, Jouko Ikonen ja Nina Laakso
2019

Suomen urheilun eettinen keskus SUEK ry:n

tehtävänä on yhteistyössä urheilutoimijoiden kanssa taata kaikille yhdenvertainen oikeus eettisesti kestäväin urheiluun. SUEK:n tehtäviä ovat urheilun eettiset asiat, antidopingtoiminta, kilpailumanipulaation torjunta sekä katsomoturvallisuuden ja -viihtyvyyden edistäminen. SUEK toteuttaa tehtävänsä koulutuksen, tutkimuksen, viestinnän ja sidosryhmäyhteistyön keinoin. Se tekee laaja-alaista yhteistyötä niin kansallisten kuin kansainvälisten urheilutoimijoiden ja viranomaisten kanssa.

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Know your responsibility

Always take things
seriously and take
actions

Clear rules protect everyone
and help address and handle
the situation

If you are unsure,
ask for advice