

**Branch Children’s Officer Roles and Responsibilities**

**What is this?**

* This document includes the job description for the Branch Children’s Officer.
* The Branch is required to have a Children’s Officer because youth hockey competition and blitzes are run by the MBHI.

**Why is it important?**

* This is an essential role for the MBHI to meet its Code of Ethics requirements.
* The Children’s Officer is vital in making the MBHI a child friendly environment for youth players at all levels of participation and has a responsibility toward keeping them safe.
* The CO needs to be prepared to deal with a concern should it arise.

**How can it be used?**

* The job descriptions must be provided to the CO filling the role so that they have a clear understanding of their responsibilities.
* The job descriptions should also be circulated to other MBHI Management Committee so that they can understand the role and importantly why they would contact the CO.
* The job description should be made available during advertisement of position.
* It is advised that the CO either sits on or has access to the MBHI Management Committee.



**Branch Children’s Officer & Roles and Responsibilities**

The appointment of a Branch Children’s Officers is an essential element in the creation of a quality atmosphere for young people who participate in hockey in Munster. They act as a resource to clubs and their members with regard to children’s issues and also ensure that children have a voice and can talk freely about their experiences.

Government guidelines advise that a children’s officer should be appointed by all Provinces and this should be done at the AGM of the MBHI and in accordance with recommended selection and recruitment procedures. The Children’s Officer should be on the Management Committee or have access to the management committee.

The Children’s Officer should have the following functions:

* Familiarisation with and the promotion of Children First, Our Duty to Care, and the Code of Ethics and Good Practice in Children’s Sport so as to act as an information source to members of MBHI.
* Commitment to attendance at appropriate training as required in order to act as a resource to clubs in relation to children’s needs, including liaison with Local Sports Partnerships and the promotion of Safeguarding 1, Safeguarding 2, Safeguarding 3 and first aid training etc.
* The promotion of the values, attitudes and structures, which make sport enjoyable for children (Section 2.8.3 Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children’s Sport).
* Communication with Club Children’s Officers to ensure the distribution of the Code of Ethics and Good Practice in Children’s Sport and of Hockey’s Code of Conduct for Children’s Sport and promotion of related education programmes, materials and events.
* Where necessary advising club Children’s Officers on creating a child centred club and on implementation of Hockey’s Code of Ethics.
* Advising clubs on the necessity of appropriate record keeping and confidentiality, which allows for appropriate information to be passed to relevant authorities where necessary.
* Ensuring that the MBHI continues to update the Code of Conduct for Hockey for Young People in line with new legislation as necessary.
* To influence policy and practice and prioritise children’s needs.
* To liaise with, and assist MBHI age grade management teams to ensure all legal requirements are met and procedures are followed with regard to recruitment and Selection etc.
* To ensure that children know how and whom they can report their concerns to within the MBHI. Information disclosed by a child should be dealt with in accordance with the guidelines in the Code of Ethics for Hockey for Young People.
* To co-operate with parents to ensure that each child enjoys his/her participation in hockey.
* To report regularly to the management committee and liaise with Hockey Ireland and the National Children’s Officer.
* To monitor changes in membership and follow up on any unusual drop-out, absenteeism or club transfers by children or coaches/volunteers.

**Children’s Officers do not have the responsibility of investigating or validating child protection concerns within the Branch and have no counselling or therapeutic role. This responsibility lies with TUSLA (HSE) and the Gardai.**