



WELCOME TO HALT4KIDS

HALT4Kids is a EU funded project (2023-25), focused on developing awareness about harassment and abuse in sports among child athletes (specifically of ages 5-12 years). The project also aims to educate the coaches, athletes/former athletes, physical education students, physical education teachers and other stakeholders of sports who work with young athletes and to support them to recognize and avoid harassment and abuse among child athletes.

HALT4Kids project boasts innovative methods of sensitizing its young audience in terms of designing and creating digital tools and education material, which are relevant and understandable by the young target audience.

The core objectives of the Project are going to be achieved mainly under the following objectives:

- a. **Develop Online Communities of Practice (CoP)** for Kids for awareness and knowledge about harassment and abuse in sports among athletes, coaches, academic experts and sport sector stakeholders to enable synergies and collaborative learning about state-of-art about harassment and abuse prevention in sports.
- b. **Enable knowledge sharing** and the emergence of best practices on child athletes' awareness and knowledge about harassment and abuse in sport; developing e-learning material; minimizing the risk of offending behaviour of people involved in sports; identifying new areas for policy intervention.
- c. **Design and develop digital tools:** Digital Storytelling (ST), Serious Games (SG) and gamified digital interfaces to support child athletes to (a) recognize and (b) avoid harassment and abuse.
- d. **Design and create a Mobile Application (MA)** for child athletes as a protective measure against harassment and abuse in sports.

During the past months, a number of deliverables were completed and submitted to the EACEA as per the project timeline. Below is the brief update about the same:



1. Quality Assurance and Internal Evaluation Plan (Deliverable 1.1)

This document describes the quality approach focused on the HALT4Kids project. The Quality Assurance (QA) Plan defines the overall policies, the participant roles and responsibilities, the quality procedures and the means of ensuring that all the activities (reporting and delivering activities, deliverable writing, etc.) are in conformance with the contract provisions and specifications.

The second part of this deliverable is the project internal evaluation plan. The main purpose is to assess the project process and its effectiveness. In addition to the above, the document also includes an Impact Assessment Framework.

Since this is an internal document (categorized as sensitive) for the project partners, the same is not being shared with the stakeholders.

2. Survey on Harassment and Abuse in Sport for Child athletes & the Needs (Deliverable D2.1)

This deliverable consists of three self-contained sub-reports.

First part is a desk-research which captures the practices of the partner countries (i.e., namely Greece, Cyprus, Austria, Spain and Italy – based on survey of stakeholders of the partner organizations of the HALT4Kids project) being implemented for preventing harassment and abuse in sports for kid athletes. Specifically, in this report is described the status of safeguarding for child athletes concerning: (a) policy, (b) best practices (Training programs for coaches/sport officials, programs for parents/children, interventions, mechanisms, etc), (c) the legislation for safeguarding kid athletes, and (d) the status of academic research on safeguarding of young athletes, in the participant countries.

The second part explores sports stakeholders' perspectives on the management of harassment and abuse in children's sports and assembled them into issues that raise awareness and understanding of the factors that impinge on the promotion of healthy sports environments.

The third part is the summary of the results of the aforesaid survey which was conducted by filling in an e-questionnaire consisting of 18 questions related to the protection and welfare of athletes. A total of 294 participants took part in the survey. The participants were adult men and women, aged >20 years old, with many years of experience in sports (as athletes, and coaches, sports administrators) and all of them had attended a dissemination day of the HALT4Kid project in their respective countries.

The main takeaways of the survey suggested increased focus on athlete protection policies, increase in partnerships with relevant agencies, non-governmental organizations, and local community groups, with the aim of supporting and protecting children, establishment of clear procedures, conducting regular trainings, criminal background checks on all sports personnel, designated experts/personnels for regular monitoring and evaluation of the policy's effectiveness, of code of conduct, mechanisms, staff support, among various other recommendations.

The report can be accessed and downloaded [here](#). All the stakeholders are requested to review the same and use the knowledge to improve the policies and practices of your organization. The HALT4Kids project consortium is open to collaboration and assistance if needed.

3. Community of Practice (CoP) Operation Framework (Deliverable 2.2)


HALT4kids is dedicated to developing Communities of Practice among coaches, athletes/former athletes, physical education students, teachers, and sport sector stakeholders. These communities foster awareness and knowledge about harassment and abuse in sports, ensuring a supportive network for young athletes.

The present deliverable provides the operational framework for the first ever virtual community for Halting Harassment and Abuse in Sports for kids' education in the world. This framework has been developed based on the results found under Deliverable 2.1, specifically the findings of the [survey](#) of the participants of the dissemination day of the HALT4Kids projects in Greece, Cyprus, Austria, Spain, and Italy and also the [focus group interviews](#) which were conducted with the sports stakeholders, to examine their perspectives on the management of harassment and abuse in children's sports. The analysis of the results of the above have been summarized under various heads which shall act as guiding light for the CoP for the project partners and future stakeholders.

It is important to note here that the core infrastructure for the Virtual Community of Practice platform is ready and is accessible in <http://haltvm.phed.auth.gr/>.

4. Design and Creation of Mobile Application (Deliverable D3.2)

The HALT4Kids system, designed to support child athletes as a protective measure, has been created. This system can be identified as an alert system, wherein the main use case is for a minor to alert their guardian quickly and easily if they sense harassment or feel threatened at their location.



Email address

Password

[Forgot password?](#)

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The main objective of this system is to present the HALT4Kids system that has been designed and created for supporting child athletes, as a protective measure. At its most abstract form this system could be identified as an alert or a whistleblowing system, where the main use case is, when a minor senses harassment or feels threatened, with a quick and easy way to alert his/her guardian that something is going wrong at his/her location.

The system consists of:

- An online administration dashboard (<http://halt4kids.phed.auth.gr/application>)
- A mobile application for parents (<http://halt4kids.phed.auth.gr/mobile/guardians.apk>), and
- A mobile application for children (<http://halt4kids.phed.auth.gr/mobile/kids.apk>)

In addition to the above, any incident can also be reported directly on the website as a quick and



early warning system, wherein any adult or young person with concerns about a colleague, fellow athlete or themselves being at a risk, can use the portal to immediately, anonymously and securely report the same (http://halt.phed.auth.gr/whistleblowing/map_gr.php).

Lastly, the design and scenario for the digital storytelling are ready, and development steps are in progress, which will be shared with the stakeholders soon!

The user guide for the aforesaid mobile application, which was submitted to the EACEA in form of the Deliverable 3.2 documentation can be accessed [here](#).

NEWS AROUND THE WORLD

IOC marks Safe Sport Day with two new Athlete Safeguarding courses

To mark Safe Sport Day on 8 August 2023, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has launched two new online courses aimed at protecting the safety and well-being of athletes.

The move aligns with the IOC's continued commitment to fostering a sporting environment that is respectful, equitable and free from all forms of harassment and abuse.

The two new courses – “Safeguarding Essentials for Young Athletes” and “Safeguarding Essentials for Athlete Allies” (aimed at the members of the athletes’ entourage) – are [available on Athlete365](#). The courses are offered in 10 languages (English, French, Spanish, German, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Italian and Arabic) and aim to educate both athletes and members of their entourage about the various forms of harassment and abuse, how to recognise them, ways to prevent these behaviours and how to respond to concerns.

The HALT4Kids project aims to take a step further and educate and sensitize the community about the prevention of harassment and abuse against the young athletes (of age 5-12 years). The project shall employ non-conventional techniques and apply advanced technological means, including principles of gamification, allowing even young children to understand these core issues, in a very easy manner.

British Sports Federations ban coaches from weighing child athletes in new Safeguarding rules

As per the new rules of [British Gymnastics](#), coaches will no longer be able to weigh gymnasts under the rules designed to stop "harmful practices" which it says are "on the fringes of abuse". This included athletes having their bags searched for food in the "tyranny" of weight management.

This move comes after [The Whyte Review](#) exposed "systemic" abuse within the sport, highlighting cases where weigh-ins were misused for punishment, with incidents where the young athletes reported of being left "physically exhausted" after being subjected to inappropriate weight management techniques by Griffiths, who is no longer permitted to coach.

Key features of the new weigh-in protocol:

- Ban for Under-10s: Weighing gymnasts below the age of 10 is now strictly prohibited.
- Consent & Oversight: Gymnasts aged 10 and above can only be weighed with documented consent from both the athlete and their guardian.
- Qualified Professionals: All weigh-ins must be conducted by a qualified sports scientist or medical professional, with a clear and documented purpose.

Alongside the weighing rules, a new hydration policy says it is "physical abuse" to restrict a gymnast from drinking water or going to the toilet while in training. It stresses gymnasts should

be able and encouraged to take on fluids regularly, while visits to the toilet should be allowed "at the earliest available opportunity".

British Gymnastics emphasizes that these new rules aim to create a safer environment for athletes by preventing eating disorders and mental health issues associated with weight management pressures.

A similar suit was followed by [Swim England](#) wherein a new policy was adopted to ensure a 'duty of care' containing a 15-point best practice plan for weighing eligible athletes, the potential risks of weighing and key facts. The main aim of this policy is to ensure that there is enough education and support in place to help reduce the risks of athletes potentially developing an eating disorder/disordered eating, or other mental health concerns.

For personnels dealing with children among the readers, such protocols are a good learning practice, given the fact that the young athletes (especially those of 5-12 years of age) do not have the right understanding to differentiate between a training protocol vs. abuse. The HALT4Kids project aims to fill this gap by providing innovative learning tools to understand, prevent and report safeguarding violations.

HALT4Kids project is focused on developing awareness about harassment and abuse in sports among child athletes, coaches, athletes/former athletes, physical education students, physical education teachers and sport sector stakeholders.

Visit the website and follow the social media channels of the HALT4Kids project to keep yourself updated about the upcoming events and reports:

Website <http://halt4kids.phed.auth.gr>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100091602860387

INSTAGRAM: www.instagram.com/halt4kids/

X (formerly TWITTER): <https://X.com/HALT4kids>

Don't want to miss any update from HALT4Kids? [Click here](#) to join the mailing list and receive this Newsletter and other updates about the HALT4Kids project straight to your inbox.

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