



Irish Shows Association

Photography Guidelines for Agricultural Shows

Parents and young people generally welcome opportunities to celebrate or publicise their involvement and achievements when taking part in events at agricultural shows by photographing children at events.

This guidance will help you ensure you're taking all necessary steps to protect children and young people from the inappropriate use of their images in resources and media publications, on the internet and elsewhere.

What are the risks?

Children may be identified, contacted or groomed

Including the child's personal information (full name, address) alongside their image can make them identifiable and therefore vulnerable to individuals looking to locate, contact or 'groom' children for abuse.

There's increased risk of identification of, and contact with, a child:

- by someone in circumstances where there are legal restrictions – such as if the child is in local-authority care or placed with an adoptive family
- where it's potentially dangerous to reveal the child's whereabouts to an estranged parent due to previous concerns about domestic violence

Someone might make inappropriate or illegal images of children.

Photo or video content may itself be inappropriate, or images may be used inappropriately or out of context:

- some individuals may deliberately target show events and set out to take inappropriate photos in ways that are potentially illegal and harmful, such as:
 - images of children changing



- photos taken in the toilets
- images can easily be copied and edited, perhaps to create child-abuse images
- images shared privately online can be re-shared, possibly entering the public domain on websites or social media.

Using images of young people for publication, promotion or coaching

The use of photos and videos on websites and social media, and in posters, the press or other publications, can pose direct and indirect risks to children and young people if not managed correctly.

Agricultural shows wishing to use or permit the use of images of children involved in their activities must therefore have a policy in place to safeguard them. You'll also need to consider whether parental permission for photography should be sought, and take storage and privacy considerations.

Minimizing the risks

- think carefully before using any images showing children and young people on your website, social media or other publications.
- choose images that present the activity in a positive light, and promote the best aspects of the organization.
- don't supply full names of children along with the images, unless:
 - it's in the child's best interests
 - the child and parent have consented
- only use images of children in suitable dress or kit, including recommended safety wear such as shin pads or gum shields.

Using official or professional photographers

You should establish and clarify many of these points as part of the commissioning or contracting process:



- inform parents and children that a photographer will be in attendance.
- ensure parents and children consent to both the taking and publication of films or photos – see our sample filming and photography consent form.
- check the photographer's identity, the validity of their role, and the purpose and use of the images to be taken.
- issue the photographer with identification, which must be worn at all times.
- provide the photographer with a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of image content and their behavior.
- clarify areas where all photography is prohibited (toilets, changing areas, first aid areas, and so on).
- inform the photographer about how to identify – and avoid taking images of – children **without the required parental consent** for photography.
- don't allow unsupervised access to children or one-to-one photo sessions at events
- clarify issues about ownership of and access to all images, and for how long they'll be retained and/or used

Responding to concerns

All staff, volunteers, children and parents should be informed that if they have any concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography (in terms of the way, by whom, or where photography is being undertaken), these should be reported to the Child Protection Officer, Chairperson or Secretary.

There must be a safeguarding procedure in place to ensure that reported concerns are dealt with in the same way as any other child-protection issue.

Ensure Child Protection Officer or Safeguarding Officer is informed.

If there are concerns or suspicions about potentially criminal behaviour this should include referral to the gardai.

When to seek parental permission



Close-up images

- seek parents' consent to take and use images of individual or smaller groups of participants in which their child would easily be recognizable.
- let parents know how, where and in what context an image may be used – for example, on a public website, through social media or in a printed resource
- make parents aware of your policy on using children's images, and of the way these represent the organization or activity
- complete a parental consent form for use of images of children, possibly as part of the process for registering and consenting the child's participation in the activity or event
- ask for the child's permission to use their image – you could have them fill in a permission form to ensure they're aware of how the image may be used

General images of events

At many events, organizers will wish to take wide-angle, more general images of the event, the site, opening and closing ceremonies, and so on.

It's usually not reasonable, practical or proportionate to secure consent for every participating child in order to take such images, or to preclude such photography on the basis of the concerns of a small number of parents.

In these circumstances, organizers should make clear to all participants and parents that these kinds of images will be taken, and for what purposes.

What to do when parental consent is not given

Organizers have a responsibility to put in place arrangements to ensure that any official or professional photographers can identify (or be informed about) which children should not be subject to close-up photography. This should be done in consultation with parents.

Some suggestions are:

- providing some type of recognizable badge, sticker or wrist band



- a system for the photographer to check with the activity organizer and/or team manager to ensure it's clear which groups or individuals should not feature in images

Secure storage of images

Images or video recordings of children must be kept securely:

- hard copies of images should be kept in a locked drawer
- electronic images should be in a protected folder with restricted access
- images should not be stored on unencrypted portable equipment such as laptops, memory sticks or mobile phones

Avoid using any personal equipment to take photos and record children.

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