



## **SAFEGUARDING & PROTECTING CHILDREN IN RUGBY LEAGUE**

### **Newsletter 15 – August 2008**

### **“The Child’s Welfare is Paramount”**



#### **NEW RESPECT BROCHURE & POSTER**

The new RESPECT brochure is now available to order from Red Hall. Existing orders which have already been received should have been sent out by now. Please distribute the brochure widely within your club. As well as updating the photographs there have been some amendments to the text mostly to make it more child centered in particular see the highlighted addition in the extract below. There is also a new Children’s section see below. The new RESPECT poster is also available to download from the RFL website or by order.

#### **RESPECT – an extract**

Rugby League prides itself on being a family game which is inclusive, uncompromising and passionate, and the principles of RESPECT, set out the obligations on all participants to maintain the game's high standards.

The game will take positive action to ensure that high standards of behaviour are maintained at all times in Rugby League. RESPECT sets out the standards of behaviour which the game expects from the entire Rugby League family. Rugby League is passionate about, and prides itself, on its reputation as "The Family Game" and as such, will take responsibility to ensure that this reputation is maintained and improved. The Game is an inclusive sport, is committed to the principles of equal opportunities and will not tolerate any form of discrimination.

In order to uphold these values participants in the game of Rugby League - players, parents, spectators, coaches, match officials, other volunteers and administrators of all ages – should:

- Discourage all instances of unsporting behaviour, foul or illegal play, or acts of violence, both on and off the field.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person regardless of their age, ethnic origin, gender, special needs, including learning and physical disabilities, class or social background, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, colour or political persuasion.

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- **Accept the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures to provide a duty of care for children (under the age of 18), safeguard their wellbeing and protect them from abuse and poor practice.**
- Condemn the use of recreational and performance- enhancing drugs and doping practices; their use endangers the health of players and is contrary to the concept of fair play.

Important – Every person who attends a Rugby League match does so with the permission and licence of the home club &/or league.

Breaches of this Code of Conduct may result in penalties up to and including a fine, loss of team match points and suspension.

## **TOUCH LINE MANAGER PROGRAMME PRESENTATION**

This is available to download as a PowerPoint presentation by clicking on the RESPECT logo on the RFL website.

## **RESPECT BEST PRACTICE**

A number of clubs have included RESPECT logos on their kits, include information about RESPECT on their website, distribute the brochures, talk to parents, coaches and players about the club's attitude to RESPECT and of course train touch line managers.

## **TOUCH LINE BEHAVIOUR**

As the new season is about to start for many leagues it's a good time to consider touch line behaviour. Whilst more and more clubs are starting to change the touch line culture unfortunately we still receive too many reports of appalling behaviour and language from coaches and parents.

Verbal abuse of this type is **Poor Practice** and as such is in contravention of the RFL Safeguarding Policy. Extreme behaviour can cross the line into Abuse – either **Emotional Abuse** when children are subjected to constant criticism, name calling and sarcasm or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations or **Bullying** when a parent or coach pushes their child or player too hard or shouts or humiliates children.

## **RESPECT – CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE**

**After consultation with children and young people this is what they would like to see from others involved in the game:**

- Keep training and games fun - winning is not the primary objective for young people playing the game; having fun is.
- Everyone makes mistakes. There should be no undue criticism of any player who makes a mistake – encouragement reaps more benefits.
- Coaches should not lose their temper.
- All adults should be role models in everything they do – do not swear, abuse officials, show unsporting behaviour, encourage foul play, enter the field of play or drink or smoke when around children and young people.
- Report any incidents of bad behaviour.

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### **After consultation, children and young people agree to:**

- Give 100% effort at all times.
- Encourage team mates who make mistakes.
- Not argue with the referee.
- Listen to the coach.
- Play as a team.
- Dress smartly
- Welcome all new players, from all backgrounds, whether or not they have played before.
- Treat the other team with RESPECT.
- Attend all training sessions when possible.
- No bullying.

### **THE REFEREE IS A CHILD TOO!!**

The RFL has recently carried out a Youth Forum with junior Match Officials and found that without exception they suffered from verbal abuse from adults – coaches and parents - at matches. They often found the atmosphere intimidating at many grounds. One of the fundamental principles of the RFL Safeguarding Policy is that every child who takes part in the game should be able to do so in a safe and enjoyable environment - Junior Match Officials have the same rights under the Safeguarding Policy.

### **VIEWS FROM YOUTH FORUMS**

At all the Youth Forums we have held so far children have consistently listed abuse from the touch lines as one of the things they like least about the game.

### **TOUCH LINE RESPECT BARRIER – Special offer ends this month**

Having a pitch side barrier is a huge help in managing crowd behaviour and preventing spectators encroaching on the playing area. Junior Match Officials have also reported that they find behaviour is usually better when a barrier is in place. The RESPECT barriers are still available to purchase see details below.



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Designed and developed in partnership with the Rugby Football League and the Football Association, the Touchline Respect Barrier is both eye-catching and resilient. The barrier can be erected in less than 5 minutes and by only one person.

This Touchline Respect Barrier is lightweight, simple and easy to erect - it takes as long to put up as it does to walk round the area to be fenced off. It is easy to dismantle with the unique reeling system and can be operated by just one person. The uniquely designed safety pole grabs the ground to provide a rigid support for the fence webbing, yet represents a very safe alternative to the traditional ropes and metal stakes.

The product is easily transportable in its own bag, wipes clean and is very low maintenance.

Months of pilot testing have proved to Teams, Leagues and Governing bodies what a superb psychological effect this barrier has in people's behaviour at spectator sports events.

The Touchline Respect Barrier comes complete with a carry bag, 10 Safety Poles, Mallet, Pegs, Unique reeling system, and 120m of webbing which caters for two sides of a mini rugby pitch.

Due to a strong partnership with the sport we have agreed a discounted 'Special Offer' price to Rugby League clubs that will last up until the end of August. The 'Special Offer' prices are as follows:

- **Mini Pitch (2 sides of 50m Tape) is £120 + vat.** Usual Retail Price £166 + vat
- **Full Pitch (2 sides of 100m Tape) is £172 + vat.** Usual Retail Price £250 + vat

**This Special Offer price is only available until the end of August 2008**



**For more information about  
the Touchline Respect  
Barrier call Paul Berry at  
SponsorBank –  
Performance Sports on  
01706 233 888 or  
[pberry@sponsorbank.org.uk](mailto:pberry@sponsorbank.org.uk)**

## **OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT & OTHER CONTACT DETAILS**

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