



SAFEGUARDING & PROTECTING CHILDREN IN RUGBY LEAGUE

Newsletter 15 – August 2008

“The Child’s Welfare is Paramount”

CLUB WELFARE OFFICER CARD HOLDER

All CWOs should find enclosed a contact card, pouch & RESPECT lanyard. The CWO contact card has been designed so that you have something which identifies your role around the club and allows you to slip your CWO ID card in so that it is always handy. It should also make it easy for children to know who is the CWO at the club. The card has contact numbers on it and space for you to include your local numbers. We have also included a list of all the RWO, LSCBs, Children’s Social Care and Police contact numbers so that you can transpose your local numbers onto your card for easy reference.

YOUNG PERSONS/CHILDREN’S LEAFLET

Hot off the press please find enclosed a sample of the U11 and U18 leaflets which are now available to order from the RFL. Existing orders will be sent out as soon as possible but we have only just received the leaflets so there may be a short delay.

CWO TICKETS FOR ENGLAND v WALES

As part of the RFL policy of rewarding volunteers we are pleased to announce that every CWO who is registered with the RFL is entitled to apply for two complimentary tickets to the Gillette International England v Wales to be played at the Keepmoat Stadium, Doncaster on Friday, 10 October. If you would like to take up your tickets please use the enclosed form.

ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER (ADHD) & TOURETTE’S

A large number and apparently increasing number of children in this country are being diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) refer to a range of behaviours associated with poor attention span including impulsiveness, restlessness and hyperactivity, as well as inattentiveness, and may make it more difficult for children to learn or obey instructions and also cause misunderstandings when socializing.

Tourette’s syndrome is often linked to or part of the symptoms of ADHD. Tourette’s may cause children to use inappropriate and verbally abusive words in an uncontrolled and unintentional manner.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a condition where a child or young person has trouble paying attention, is a great deal more energetic than others of a similar age and cannot control certain impulses. In everyday life, these children can get labelled as ‘difficult’

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or 'out of control' and their parents are sometimes regarded as 'bad parents'. We know that this is not the case as ADHD is a brain condition and is not simply bad behaviour.

Children with ADHD have three core symptoms:

- Overactive behaviour/marked restlessness – excessive running about or climbing, always on the go, unable to sit still and fidgeting
- Poor concentration/inattentive behaviour – seeming not to listen, difficulty in understanding instructions or completing tasks
- Impulsive behaviour – blurting out the first thing that occurs to them, interrupting or intruding on others' conversations and games, talking constantly.

Clubs will need to liaise with parents/carers and possibility professionals who help the player outside the club to draw up a plan to support the player within the club. The plan will need to be agreed by all concerned, e.g. coaches, parents and the child. However the vast majority of children with ADHD can be included within a club environment as long as the coaches and parents work together.

Unfortunately in some cases children with ADHD have been labelled difficult and excluded from a club without being given an opportunity to succeed. If have a child with behavioural problems at your club please consider that ADHD may be the underlying cause and discuss the any issues that arise with the parents before incidents are allowed to escalate.

If your club has any examples of good practice in this area that you would be prepared to share on an anonymous basis please let us know.

The Safeguarding Policy includes some more detailed information about ADHD including contact details to find more information or help.

COMMUNITY GAME ANTI-DOPING BOOKLET

Please find enclosed a copy of the new Community Game Anti-Doping booklet which is available to order from the RFL.

COMMUNITY GAME 100% ME ANTI-DOPING TRAINING

To ensure the safety of children and young people in the game the RFL feel that it is essential that individuals in the Community Game are aware of the risks of performance enhancing and illegal drugs.

The RFL, working together with UK Sport, have provided training to a number of individuals within the Community Game who can deliver anti-doping education sessions to Community clubs. These sessions are appropriate for players from U15 upwards, coaching staff and volunteers. To request a session, please contact the RFL using the below details. The RFL will then arrange for one of these individuals to deliver a session to your club when convenient.

VETTING & BARRING - CRBs

As you will be aware the new Vetting & Barring system goes live in the October 2009. While there is some uncertainty about the roll out of the new system it appears that those

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workers/volunteers with a current CRB in place will be the last to have to register under the new scheme. The RFL would urge all clubs to get as many relevant volunteers CRB checked now to buy themselves time before the new legislation comes into effect.

CRB APPLICATION FORMS

The RFL continues to receive a high proportion of forms (over 40%) which have to be returned to the club for one reason or another. In order to try to help CWOs complete the forms more accurately and to better understand the process we have introduced a simplified set of advice notes and a flow chart. Please let the Safeguarding team know if there is anything further you think we could do which would assist with the process.

SAFE PLAY

Children's Rugby League is supported by a SAFE PLAY code. This code has been written in order to promote safety and good conduct within the Modified and junior versions of Rugby League. In so doing it will provide the best possible on-field environment for the development of young Rugby League players, particularly in the areas of actively controlling undesirable actions and behaviour.

FITNESS and SKILL in Rugby League

All players want to be involved in enjoyable FUN activity that improves their levels of fitness, alongside their technical abilities and social awareness.

Occasionally there may be a child who is:-

- *unfit or noticeably overweight to the extent that they may be a potential danger to themselves or other children when playing contact rugby league.*
- *lacking the skill level to safely perform the technique required, especially when tackling*

In these circumstances, to afford the children the best possible opportunity they should be encouraged through training sessions, Touch RL, and Tag RL to gradually improve their fitness and skill level. Consideration should also be taken as to the child's ability and fitness levels during full contact games of Rugby League.

IN LEAGUE TOGETHER

Please find enclosed the latest In League Together newsletter – for further details contact Sarah Williams at the RFL.

GROOMING

The West Yorkshire Sport & West Yorkshire Police presentation on grooming at the recent CWO Conference was very thought provoking. Many CWOs stated that they would welcome more information. The Safeguarding Team will organise a Grooming Workshop with West Yorkshire Police if there is enough interest – please let Stacey know if you would like to attend a workshop. Below is the relevant extract from the Safeguarding Policy.

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The majority of adults working with children in Rugby League are committed to providing an enjoyable and safe environment in which to participate. However, a small proportion of adults actively seek opportunities to abuse children for their own sexual needs.

Sexual abuse of children is the result of a pre-meditated actions that are carefully planned. Preparing a child or organisation (i.e a Club) is described as 'grooming' and is illegal under the provisions of The Sexual Offences Act 2003. It is important to understand how an abuser can 'groom' a club or parents or a child by appearing trustworthy and helpful, therefore giving the impression that they can take responsibility for a young person/some young people. Abusers come from all sections of society, within and outside of the family and within and outside Rugby League. They may be perceived as 'respectable' people – the very last person anyone could suspect of abusing a child; this is usually the image they work hard to portray. Research into abuse demonstrates clearly that children are most likely to be abused by someone they know and who is likely to be in a position of trust with the child.

Sexual abusers use various techniques to 'groom' children, organizations and parents. These include:

- Seeking opportunities to be in contact with children, e.g. volunteering.
- Making friends with children, coaches, volunteers or parents
- Appearing trustworthy and helpful
- Giving presents to children or offering additional individual support/coaching
- Complimenting the child to make them feel comfortable and confident.
- Threatening (you wont get picked for the team) or bribing (you will get picked for the team)
- Telling the child that it's normal

Abusers target children who they see as particularly vulnerable, this may be due to the child having low self-esteem or it appearing that they have little parental support. Therefore, children's parents should always be encouraged to be part of the club as this can act as an extra safeguard. Any concerns relating to an adult's behaviour or intentions towards children should be reported appropriately.

OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT & OTHER CONTACT DETAILS

Emma Rosewarne emma.rosewarne@rfl.uk.com	Acting Lead Safeguarding Officer Direct Line 0113-237-5013 Mobile 07850 483736
Dean Hardman dean.hardman@rfl.uk.com	Deputy Safeguarding Officer & Lead Safeguarding Education Strategy Direct Line 0113-237-5041
Stacey Thompson stacey.thompson@rfl.uk.com	CRB Officer Direct Line 0113-237-5036

Emma Rosewarne's mobile number can be used as an emergency number to ask for support or to make an initial report of an incident at any time. Anybody who has an issue or a question can email the Operations team on the dedicated email address: safeguarding@rfl.uk.com

The NSPCC Child Protection Helpline is 0808 800 5000 - your Local Safeguarding Children Board will also be able to give advice in cases which you think needs statutory agency input.

The RFL would like to thank the CPSU and other sports, particularly the ECB & FA, for sharing their policies and templates and allowing the RFL to adapt materials for its own use.

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