



SAFEGUARDING & PROTECTING CHILDREN IN RUGBY LEAGUE

Newsletter 19 – December 2008

“The Child’s Welfare is Paramount”

MERRY CHRISTMAS & A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL INVOLVED IN SAFEGUARDING THROUGHOUT RUGBY LEAGUE!

As another year draws to an end I thought it was a good opportunity to review where we are in Safeguarding terms and what we can hope and expect from the New Year.

CWOs

During 2008 almost a hundred additional CWOs have registered with the RFL. In December last year only 40% of clubs (or other relevant organisations) had a CWO in post – this year the total is 65%. Whilst that is a huge increase there are still 35% of clubs etc without a registered CWO. Playing Leagues and RWOs are helping those clubs still without a CWO to find a suitable volunteer. The RFL’s commitment to help and support CWOs remains in place and will be extended in the New Year.

RWOs

The RWOs were all recruited and took post during 2008. There is now at least one RWO in every Playing League and geographical region. The RWOs have all received Time To Listen training and are available to help and support clubs at a regional level.

CRB CHECKS/VETTING & BARRING

The RFL carried out a record number of CRB checks during 2008 almost 50% up on the number in 2007 which was itself a record year. We appreciate all the work that goes into completing CRB forms and will be looking again to see how we can make it easier for clubs and CWOs in 2008.

The number of coaches and volunteers who haven’t been CRB checked remains a concern particularly with the roll out of the Vetting and Barring Scheme with go live scheduled for October 2009. The RFL will be working with the Independent Safeguarding Authority and the CRB to ensure the smoothest change over possible and will provide as much help, information and assistance to clubs as possible.

SAFEGUARDING CONFERENCE

The inaugural Safeguarding Conference took place on probably the hottest day of the year, Sunday 27 July, at the Earl of Doncaster hotel – next year we’ll make sure the venue has air con!! Feedback was very positive with the majority of the speakers going down very well - we’ll be repeating the event in 2009 – please let us have any suggestions for topics.

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RESOURCES

During 2008 the RFL has produced an array of resources from the Parent's Leaflet, Children's/Young Person's Leaflet, Coach Code of Conduct and many policy documents. Hopefully these resources make it easier to roll out safeguarding principles at club level.

TRAINING COURSES

As many of you will know, we have continued to roll out the 2 RFL Safeguarding courses this year; the basic awareness course for all volunteers Safeguarding & Protecting Children, and Time to Listen which is a more advanced course aimed at primarily volunteers.

The RFL will be developing an education schedule next year to increase the amount of courses available. The education of relevant volunteers is essential to ensuring that clubs can implement best practice in order to safeguard children and make Rugby League clubs a fun and safe place to be. Another very important part of the education is how to recognise signs of abuse or neglect and what to do if you spot them.

All of our courses are subsidized by the RFL and delivered by Rugby League specific tutors.

VIEWS OF CLUBS, CWOS & CHILDREN

The RFL will continue to seek the views of those out in the club environment. There will be another Safeguarding Survey early in the New Year to help us monitor the quality of our service and the requirements of our stakeholders.

The RFL ran 10 Youth Forums in total in 2008 and in 2009 will continue to talk to children to get their views on the game and relevant issues. Some detailed information from the 2008 Youth Forums will be provided in the New Year.

CASES

The RFL has had a substantial case load this year. Some cases are dealt with in liaison with Children's Social Services and/or the Police. Others dealt with by the RFL Compliance Team and many unfortunately involve coaches or other volunteers running on the pitch and assaulting children usually during brawls. The RFL will continue to investigate and take action against those found guilty. The RFL will also promote the RESPECT programme during 2009 as a key method of changing touch line behaviour.

IN SUMMARY

In 2008 the game has made great progress on Safeguarding issues and the Safeguarding Team would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all your time and effort in achieving this. In 2009 it would be great to say that **every** child who takes part in Rugby League can do so in a safe and enjoyable environment. We look forward to working with you to achieve this aim.

CONTACT DETAILS OVER THE HOLIDAY PERIOD

The RFL offices are open until 12 noon on Christmas Eve, reopen on Monday 29 December and close again at 12 noon on New Years Eve. During office hours the safeguarding@rfl.uk.com inbox will be constantly monitored and a member of the Safeguarding team will be available on 0844 477 7113 option 6. Outside these hours emergency cover is available on 07850 483736.

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