



SAFEGUARDING & PROTECTING CHILDREN IN RUGBY LEAGUE

Newsletter 13 – June 2008

“The Child’s Welfare is Paramount”

SECOND YEAR OF NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the second year of the Safeguarding Newsletter. Feedback from the CWO Survey was that most CWOs find the newsletter very useful. We are working our way through the suggestions for newsletter items that were made in the survey – please let the Safeguarding team know if there is anything else you would like to see in the newsletter so that we can keep it relevant and interesting for you.

CWO CONFERENCE

The CWO Conference will be held on Sunday 27 July 2008 prior to the Carnegie Challenge Cup Semi Final to be played that day. The Conference will be held at the Earl of Doncaster hotel which is just 5 minutes from the Keepmoat Stadium. All delegates can have a complimentary ticket to the Carnegie Challenge Cup Semi Final - Wakefield Wildcats v Hull FC after the Conference.

The Conference subject matter is aimed at CWOs but anybody in the game with an interest in Safeguarding is very welcome to attend.

Speakers include a welcome from Nigel Wood the RFL Chief Executive and a key note speech from Gill Joyce of the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit. West Yorkshire Sport and West Yorkshire Police are running a session aimed at raising awareness of grooming behaviour and Kidscape (a national anti bullying charity) is leading a session on recognising and dealing with bullying. In addition RFL staff will deliver on “Giving Children a Voice” which will include preliminary results from the Youth Forums & launch the Children's Code of Conduct and Equality & Diversity a Safeguarding Perspective.

We will also have a CRB desk where you can ask about any CRB questions you may have and a resources table where you can see and collect/order resources from the RFL. Most of the Regional Welfare Officers will also be present so it’s a good opportunity to put a face to a name.

A Conference RSVP is enclosed with this newsletter – please let us know you’re coming as we need numbers for catering and seating arrangements.

CRB CHECKS - ASYLUM SEEKERS & REFUGEES

Volunteers who are Asylum Seekers and/or Refugees may find it difficult to provide enough evidence to obtain a CRB check. The RFL has provided guidance which can assist with this. Please contact the Safeguarding team or visit the RFL website for further information.

Issued by the RFL June 2008. Every effort has been made by the RFL to ensure accuracy in this information at the time of going to press. However this is meant as general advice and will not necessarily apply to all situations so for specific advice please contact the RFL direct.

WEBSITE

The Safeguarding section of the RFL Website has been revamped to be more user friendly and contain more information. To view this section, go to www.therfl.co.uk, click on In League Together and then click on Safeguarding.

We are working on a complete Safeguarding portal on the website which should be available in the next few months so this is a good time to let us have feedback and comments about the website. If there is anything you would like to see added to the site, please email safeguarding@rfl.uk.com

TRAINING COURSES – Time to Listen (TTL)

This is a course specifically for Club Welfare Officers and goes into more detail regarding policies and procedures than Safeguarding & Protecting Children (SPC). Candidates must have completed SPC prior to attending TTL, unless they have prior experience or qualifications that match the learning objectives of TTL.

The first course ran successfully at Halton Farnworth Hornets ARLFC on 16 June 2008. It was enjoyed by all – some of the feedback was: “Excellent Course”, “Really useful for the role of CWO”, “The resources will be very useful to refer back to so that the content stays fresh.”

The RFL continues to offer Safeguarding & Protecting Children courses for CWOs, coaches and other relevant volunteers. To book a place on either course please call 0113 237 5036 or email safeguarding@rfl.uk.com. Both courses cost £15. Presently we are only taking application from CWOs for Time To Listen, however, other volunteers may be added to the waiting list so that we can inform them, of local opportunities when appropriate.

RECORDING IMAGES – NEW POLICY

Please find enclosed the new RFL Policy on Recording Images which cover the use of DVD/video and stills photography. In general the RFL believes that recording images of children’s involvement in rugby league whether as photographs or DVDs is beneficial. In order to ensure that the potential for any misuse of images is minimised, however, it is important that this policy is followed. However the RFL believes the benefits of recording images in a responsible manner outweighs the potential concerns and the RFL would recommend that parents/guardians agree to the images of their child being recorded within the terms of this new policy.

PARENT’S MEETINGS

Many clubs find it beneficial to involve parents (or carers) in the club by having a Parent’s Meeting at the start of each season. These meetings enable parents to feel part of the club and it gives the club a great opportunity to inform parents about the club and the policies in place to ensure that their child/children are safe and have an enjoyable experience.

Some clubs have a Registration Day, where all players sign their registration documents and pay any subscriptions, which also features a Parent’s Meeting. Other clubs have a Fun Day where games are played, but registrations can also be completed. There are many benefits from running a Parent’s day as follows:

Issued by the RFL June 2008. Every effort has been made by the RFL to ensure accuracy in this information at the time of going to press. However this is meant as general advice and will not necessarily apply to all situations so for specific advice please contact the RFL direct.

- Ensure parents feel part of the club and give them the opportunity to input into the running of the club.
- Explain how the club operates.
- Reassure parents about the policies the club has in place.
- Introduce parents to the RESPECT programme, TACKLE IT! And the RFL's Safeguarding Policy.
- Ensure parents buy in to the behaviours expected at the club.
- Subscription payments can be discussed or collected.
- Ensure parents know who the Club Welfare Officer is in case they have any concerns.
- Encourage parents to volunteer at the club.

To support a club's Parent's Meeting, the RFL can provide resources to distribute to parents. These resources include, RFL Parents and Carers Leaflet, RFL Anti-Bullying Policy, Player Profile & Consent Form and RESPECT brochure.

CHILDRENS/TEAM MEETINGS

Most clubs run pre season children's or team meetings which are important to make sure that children understand what is expected of them and what they can expect from the club. The following are all areas that can be usefully covered at a Children's meeting. It is important to make sure that this meeting has a child focused approach and that the children's views are listened to and respected.

- Tie in with pre-season training - first session or with the parents meetings
- Agree Code of Conduct for players - get the players to contribute, e.g. if you don't train you don't play, always phone the coach if you can't make training, try your best, wear clean boots etc etc. Discuss what happens if someone breaches the code of conduct.
- Talk about discipline on field and unacceptable behaviour & language
- RESPECT - what is it – show the RESPECT DVD
- Tell them who the CWO is and what a CWO is there for
- Make sure children are aware of the Club's Anti Bullying policy and who to report any concerns to
- TACKLE IT! – make sure players that racism is unacceptable in the game
- Introduce new coaches/players etc
- Handout leaflets with CWO details, coach details, fixtures etc
- Handout/sell team clothing

To support a Children's meeting the RFL is working to complete a RFL Young Players Leaflet which will be available in the next few weeks.

To request resources from the RFL, please use the Resource Requisition Form enclosed, or email safeguarding@rfl.uk.com.

SAFEGUARDING DISABLED CHILDREN - AWARENESS OF INCREASED VULNERABILITY TO ABUSE

All those involved in Rugby League need to be aware that some children can be more vulnerable to abuse because of their needs and background. Disabled Children may be more vulnerable to abuse because they may:

Issued by the RFL June 2008. Every effort has been made by the RFL to ensure accuracy in this information at the time of going to press. However this is meant as general advice and will not necessarily apply to all situations so for specific advice please contact the RFL direct.

- Require intimate personal care
- Experience negative attitudes and abuse due to their disability
- May be ignored and excluded from activities if people fail to recognise that it is the barriers that society puts up which prevent their involvement not their disability per se
- May be dependent on their abuser for care
- Be less able to resist either verbally or physically
- Have a smaller network of friends to support and protect them
- Lack access to peer groups to discover what is acceptable behaviour
- Have significant communication difficulties including the use of sign language
- Be more likely to have their verbal or non verbal communication misinterpreted as relating to their disability rather than abusive experiences
- Have medical needs which may be used to explain abuse.

The RFL has drawn up a detailed policy “Safeguarding Disabled Children in Rugby League” which is available on request from the RFL or as a download on the website. The policy has sections on making Rugby League accessible and safe for disabled children and details some of the disabilities you are more likely to come across such as Autistic Spectrum Disorders, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Tourette’s Syndrome and learning disabilities. The policy includes strategies for clubs to adopt to ensure disabled players are able to reach their full potential covering communication, avoiding making assumptions or stereotyping and staff training and also covers useful contact details for getting more help. The RFL is also always prepared to assist clubs – contact the Safeguarding team – details below.

YOUTH FORUMS

Another six Youth Forums will be run this year – four before the end of July and a further two later in the summer. We will share the feedback from the children taking part with you in future newsletters.

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.

Issued by the RFL June 2008. Every effort has been made by the RFL to ensure accuracy in this information at the time of going to press. However this is meant as general advice and will not necessarily apply to all situations so for specific advice please contact the RFL direct.