

TORONTO BUCCANEERS RFC
SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING
YOUNG PEOPLE



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1. KEY PRINCIPLES

- A.** Anyone under the age of 18 should be considered as a child or young person for the purposes of this document.
- B.** The welfare of all children and young people is paramount.
- C.** All children and young people, regardless of age, gender, ability, race, religion, ethnic origin, nationality, social status or sexual orientation should be able to enjoy the game in an environment safe from abuse of any kind.
- D.** It is the responsibility of child protection professionals to determine whether abuse has taken place but is everyone’s responsibility within the sport of rugby union to report concerns.
- E.** All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately as per TORONTO BUCCANEERS Policy and Procedures.
- F.** Working in partnership with parents / guardians is essential for the protection of young people.
- G.** TORONTO BUCCANEERS RFC recognizes the roles and responsibilities of statutory agencies in relation to safeguarding children / young people and promoting their welfare.
- H.** TORONTO BUCCANEERS RFC has appointed a Child Protection Officer to ensure that the appropriate procedures are followed.

2. RECOGNIZING ABUSE IN RUGBY UNION

In order to provide young people with the best possible experiences and opportunities in the sport of rugby union, it is imperative that everyone operates within an accepted ethical framework and demonstrates exemplary behavior. This not only ensures the game makes a positive contribution to the development of young people, it also safeguards them and promotes their welfare.

It is not always easy to differentiate poor practice from abuse. It is not the responsibility of employees or volunteers in the sport of rugby union to determine whether or not abuse is taking place. It is their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse and to act if they have a concern about the welfare of a child or young person.

THE FOUR MAIN TYPES OF ABUSE

A. EMOTIONAL ABUSE

This occurs when individuals persistently fail to show young people due care with regard to their emotional welfare, when a young person may be constantly shout at, threatened or taunted, or be subjected to sarcasm and unrealistic pressures. There may also be over-protection, preventing young people from socializing, or bullying to perform to unreasonably high expectations. The young person may lose self-confidence and may become withdrawn and nervous.

In a rugby situation, emotional abuse may occur when coaches, volunteers or parents:

- provide repeated negative feedback
- repeatedly ignore a young player's efforts to progress
- repeatedly demand performance levels above the young players' capability.
- over-emphasize the winning ethic

B. ABUSE BY NEGLECT

This occurs when a young person's essential needs for food, warmth and care both physical and emotional are not met.

In a rugby situation neglect may occur when a young player or players are:

- left alone without proper supervision.
- exposed to unnecessary heat or cold.
- not provided with necessary fluids for re-hydration
- exposed to an unacceptable risk of injury.

C. PHYSICAL ABUSE

This occurs when individuals including other young people, deliberately inflict injuries on a child or young person, or knowingly do not prevent such injuries.

It includes injuries caused by hitting, shaking, squeezing, biting or using excessive force. It also occurs when young people are given alcohol, or inappropriate drugs, or there is a failure to supervise their access to these substances.

In a rugby situation physical abuse may also occur when young players are:

- exposed to exercise / training which disregards the capacity of the player's immature and growing body.
- exposed to over-playing, over-training or fatigue.
- provided with or encouraged to take prohibited substances including performance enhancing drugs.

D. SEXUAL ABUSE

Girls or boys can be abused by adults (both male and female) or other young people. This may include encouraging or forcing a child or young person to take part in sexual activity.

In a rugby situation sexual abuse may occur when:

- an adult uses the context of a training session to touch young people in an inappropriate sexual way.
- coaches, managers or volunteers use their position of power and authority to coerce young players into a sexual relationship.
- coaches or managers imply better progression of the player in return for sexual favors.

3. BULLYING

Bullying is not always easy to define and will not always be an adult abusing a young person. It is often the case that the bully is a young person.

There are three main types of bullying:

- Physical
- Verbal
- Emotional

In a rugby situation bullying may occur when:

- a coach adopts a win-at-all-costs philosophy
- a player intimidates others
- an official is over officious

4. POOR PRACTICE

Poor practice includes any behavior which contravenes any of the following:

- TORONTO BUCCANEERS Coaches Code of Conduct
- TORONTO BUCCANEERS Equity Policy
- TORONTO BUCCANEERS Anti-bullying Policy

All of the above policies are available from the Youth Development Officer or on:

<http://buccaneersrugby.com>

5. PROCEDURES TO MANAGE ALLEGATIONS

As a volunteer coach, parent or member at TORONTO BUCCANEERS RFC the following guidelines are to be followed where there is a concern relating to the welfare of a young person:

- If the young person is in immediate danger or has been physically injured, ensure they are safe and contact police or social services.
- If the young person is not in immediate danger but you have concerns either discuss the concerns with the Child Protection Officer who will advise on the correct procedure for referring your concern appropriately.

6. RESPONDING TO SUSPICIONS

If you become aware of anything which causes you to feel uncomfortable you should talk to the Child Protection Officer. This means being aware of the attitudes of staff, coaches and volunteers and of the interactions between them and the children with each other. Adults must also be alert to any unusual incidents or activities which take place where staff, coaches or volunteers are putting young people and themselves in a vulnerable position.

In all cases of reported poor practice / abuse you should:

DO

- **Stay Calm** – do not rush into inappropriate action - react calmly in order not to alarm the young person.
- **Reassure the young person** – Tell them they are not to blame and confirm that you know how difficult it must be to confide.
- **Listen sympathetically** – Listen to what the young person says and show that you are taking them seriously.
- **Ensure you clearly understand what the young person has said** – in order that the information can be passed on to the appropriate agencies.
- **Consult** - with the Child Protection Officer ensuring that you communicate all the information accurately.
- **Maintain Confidentiality** – all incidents will be treated with an open mind and handled in a fair and equitable manner. Information will only be shared on a need to know basis. Confidentiality must be maintained until a case is proven.
- **Ensure the safety of the young person** - if urgent medical attention is required, then call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concerns and ensure they are aware that this is a child protection issue.

DON'T

- Don't Panic – or allow your feelings to be evident to the young person.
- Don't make promises you cannot keep - explain that you will need to tell other people.
- Don't make the young person repeat the story unnecessarily.
- Don't speculate or make assumptions.
- Don't approach the alleged abuser.
- Don't take sole responsibility.

In all cases, if you are not sure what to do you should contact the TORONTO BUCCANEERS Child Protection Officer.

7 TAKING APPROPRIATE ACTION

A Concerns about poor practice and possible abuse within the rugby setting.

Allegations will often relate to poor practice where an adult's behavior is inappropriate and is causing concern.

Poor practice constitutes any behavior which:

- Infringes on an individual's rights.
- Is a failure to fulfill the highest standards of care.

Poor practice is unacceptable in TORONTO BUCCANEERS RFC and the sport of rugby union and will be treated seriously and appropriate action in line with Rugby Canada regulations will be taken.

B Action to take if a young person informs you that he / she is concerned about someone's behavior towards them in the rugby setting.

Everyone should follow the procedures as set out in section 5.
You must complete a TORONTO BUCCANEERS RFC Incident Record Form.
Information passed to external agencies must be as helpful as possible.
It will be necessary to make a detailed report at the time of disclosure.

Your report should contain the following detail:

- The young person's name, address and date of birth and any disability.
- The nature of the allegation.
- A description of any injuries / bruising.
- Any observations about the behavior / emotional state of the young person.
- The young person/s account in their own words of what has happened.
- Actions that have been taken as a result of your concerns.
- Whether the person writing the report is expressing their own concerns or those of a third party.

Remember to:

- Sign and date it.
- Keep a copy.
- Keep a record of the name and designation of the Social Services member of staff or Police Officer to whom concerns were passed.

You must not investigate yourself.

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You must:

- make a full record of what has been said, heard or seen as soon as possible.
- inform TORONTO BUCCANEERS RFC Child Protection Officer immediately.
The Child Protection Officer will report the matter to the RUGBY CANADA Child Protection Officer.

POOR PRACTICE

Following guidance from RUGBY Canada Child Protection Officer that the issue is Poor Practice then the TORONTO BUCCANEERS Child Protection Officer must:

- Forward a written report to the RUGBY CANADA Child Protection Officer.

ABUSE

Following a decision that the issue is to be investigated as Child Protection / Abuse then the TORONTO BUCCANEERS Child Protection Officer must:

- refer the allegation to the Police or Social Services. They will give advice concerning who should contact the young person's parents, carers or guardians.
- Inform the RUGBY CANADA Child Protection Officer, forwarding a written report utilizing the Incident Referral Form who will take the report to the RUGBY CANADA Child Protection Referral Management Group.

Non-action is not an option.

THE WELFARE OF THE YOUNG PERSON IS PARAMOUNT.

C Action to take if you become aware through your own observations or through a third party of possible abuse occurring in a setting other than rugby.

If this happens you should:

- Ensure the safety of the young person. If he / she requires immediate treatment then call an ambulance, inform doctors of concerns and ensure they are aware that this is a Child Protection Issue. If the young person is taken to hospital Social Services must be informed immediately.
- Report all concerns to the TORONTO BUCCANEERS Child Protection Officer.
- The TORONTO BUCCANEERS Child Protection Officer will seek advice from the RUGBY CANADA Child Protection Officer

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- If there is any delay in receiving advice from the TORONTO BUCCANEERS Child Protection Officer then contact must be made with Social Services.
- If a formal referral is made, make it clear to Social Services or the Police that this is a Child Protection referral.
- All Police forces have dedicated Child Abuse Investigation Teams (CAITs) which deal with allegations of abuse within the family setting and by people in positions of trust. If you believe that a young person is in immediate danger or has come to any physical harm, dial 911.
- Parents or guardians should only be contacted following advice from the Police or Social Services.

Non- action is not an option

THE WELFARE OF THE YOUNG PERSON IS PARAMOUNT TO EVERY OTHER CONSIDERATION. DELAY IN ACTING CAN INCREASE THE RISK TO THE CHILD / YOUNG PERSON.

D General Advice.

In all cases please always remember the following:

- It is often more difficult for some young people to disclose abuse than others.
- Previous experiences of prejudice may lead them to believe that those in authority do not really care about their well-being.
- Disabled young people may have to overcome additional barriers before feeling that they can disclose abuse as they may rely on their abuser for their daily care and not know of alternative sources of care.
- The abuse may be their only attention or affection they have ever experienced.
- There may be communication differences which block our willingness to believe they may be abused.
- They may use their medical condition to explain away indicators which in an able-bodied young person would concern us.

These groups of people need us to be extra vigilant and to give thought as to how we will respond.

Information should be handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis only, following advice from social services / police. This may include the following people:

- The TORONTO BUCCANEERS Child Protection Officer.
- Designated Officers within RUGBY CANADA.
- Parents or guardians of the young person alleged to have been abused.

8. RECRUITMENT OF COACHES AND VOLUNTEERS

COACHES AND VOLUNTEERS

TORONTO BUCCANEERS strives to ensure that all coaches and volunteers are of the highest caliber.

TORONTO BUCCANEERS will endeavor to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent people from entering the sport of rugby at TORONTO BUCCANEERS as coaches or volunteers, who may pose a threat to the safety and welfare of the young people.

TRAINING

TORONTO BUCCANEERS will provide training or mentoring to ensure that all staff, coaches and volunteers recognize their responsibilities with regard to their own good practice and the reporting of poor practice or concerns of possible abuse.

MONITORING AND APPRAISALS

Appraisals and monitoring will be carried out at regular intervals. This will include a formal supervised appraisal. After each appraisal feedback will be given on the appraisal.

This monitoring and appraisals enables the Youth Development Officer and the members of staff to:

- Identify any training / mentoring requirements
- Set new or further goals
- Highlight any concerns about inappropriate behavior / poor practice or abuse

9. GOOD PRACTICE IN THE RUGBY SETTING

TORONTO BUCCANEERS want all young people to enjoy rugby in a safe enjoyable setting. The following section sets out Good Practice Procedures which all our staff, coaches and volunteers adhere to.

A Codes of Conduct will ensure that all young people enjoy the game IN A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

- They must always be publicly open when working with young people.
- They must avoid situations where the adult and an individual young person are alone and or unobserved, e.g. individual skill sessions after a team training session.
- They must work in pairs and never alone with an individual.

B Rugby is a physical game and situations will occur when in order to teach or coach certain techniques, it is necessary to make contact with the player.

However the following must apply:

- Parents and young people must be made aware of situations in which this may happen.
- Physical handling must only be used for safety reasons or where there is no other way of coaching the technique.
- You must always have the permission of the young person and their parent, carer or guardian.
- Contact should not involve touching genital areas, buttocks, breasts or any other part of the body that might cause a child distress or embarrassment.
- Physical contact should always take place in an open or public environment and in a secret or out of the sight of others.
- In the case of an Emergency or First Aid being required, all contact and / or treatment must be given by a qualified First Aider / Ambulance crew or Doctor.

C Any contact or touching which is inappropriate (not directly related to coaching or First Aid context) or is aggressive is poor practice and is unacceptable.

D If groups are to be supervised in changing rooms always ensure that individuals work in pairs, and that gender is appropriate. Children / Young people must not change at the same time or in the same place as adults.

E TORONTO BUCCANEERS encourage young players to shower after training sessions and matches not only for basic hygiene reasons but also for the comfort of the players and fellow members of the club.

- In order to avoid any embarrassment, inappropriate behavior or abuse all players are encouraged to keep, their under shorts, cycling shorts or shorts on whilst showering.

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- Children / Young people must not shower at the same time or in the same place as any Adults at anytime.

F Where mixed teams compete away from home they must always be accompanied by at least one male and one female adult.

G Volunteers and professionals must respect the rights, dignity and worth of all and treat everyone with equality.

H Coaches must place the well-being and safety of the players above the development of performance.

This means that coaches must adhere to the following:

- Overplaying of players (particularly talented players) – all players need, deserve and have the right to equal opportunities of play and rest.
- Remember that young people play for fun and enjoyment and that winning is only a part of it.
- Motivate young people through positive feedback and constructive criticism
- Ensure that contact skills are taught in a safe, secure manner paying due regard to the physical development of young players.
- Never allow young players to train or play when injured. If you are unsure, err on the side of caution.
- All injured players should be encouraged to seek professional advice either from their GP / local hospital (if required) or the club physiotherapist and to follow any advice given.
- All injured players must get a Fit to Play consent form from the club Physiotherapist before being allowed to return to training or playing
- Ensure all equipment and facilities are safe and appropriate to the age and ability of all the players within your age group / team

I At least one coach per age group must hold a current RUGBY CANADA coaching award or a recognize award. All other coaches must be working towards one.

J Coaches must keep up-to-date with knowledge and technical skills and should be aware of their own limitations. Coaches must only work within the limitations of their knowledge and qualifications.

K Coaches must ensure that the activities which they direct or advocate are appropriate to the age, maturity and ability of the players.

L Coaches, managers, volunteers and parents must always promote the positive aspects of their sport (e.g. fair play) and never condone law violations or use of prohibited substances.

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M All Coaches and Team Managers must consistently display high standards of personal behavior and appearance.

N All Coaches, volunteers and parents must never overtly criticize players or use language or actions which may cause the player to lose self-esteem or confidence.

10. PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Physical contact in rugby should always be intended to meet the child's / young persons' needs, NOT the adult's.

The adult should only use physical contact if their aim is to:

- Develop sports skills or techniques
- Treat an injury
- Prevent an injury or accident from occurring
- Meet the requirements of the game

The adult should explain the nature and reason for any physical contact to the child reinforcing the teaching or coaching skill. Unless the situation is an emergency, the adult should ask the child / young person for their permission and where possible the parents or guardians.

At TORONTO BUCCANEERS RFC we encourage all our children / young people to voice any of their concerns they may have, especially if any physical contact makes them feel uncomfortable, threatened or uneasy.

Contact should not involve touching genital areas, buttocks, breasts or any other part of the body that might cause a child / young person distress or embarrassment.

Physical contact should always take place in an open or public place environment and not in secret or out of the sight of others.

SPECIFIC SITUATIONS

A Physical Punishment

Any form of physical punishment of children is unlawful by coaches, volunteers and professionals, as is any form of physical response to misbehavior unless it is by way of restraint.

It is particularly important that adults understand this both to protect their own position and the overall reputation of the organization in which they are involved.

B Contact as part of coaching sessions

There are specific circumstances within the sport of rugby union which will require coaches or assistant coaches to come into physical contact with children and young people from time to time in the course of their duties.

Examples will include activities where safe practice is critical, e.g. the introduction /and / or the development of scrummaging.

- All Adults should be aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place, and of the possibility of such contact being misinterpreted
- It should be recognized that physical contact between an Adult and a Young Person that may occur during legitimate coaching or teaching may be misconstrued or misunderstood by a player, young person, parent, guardian or observer.
- Touching young participants, including well intentioned informal and formal gestures such as putting a hand on the shoulder or arm, can if repeated regularly, lead to the possibility of questions being raised.
- As a general principle Adults in Positions of Trust and or responsibility should not make gratuitous or unnecessary physical contact with children or young people.
- It is particularly unwise to attribute frequent touching to their teaching or coaching style or as a way of relating to young participants.

C Responding to distress and success

There may be occasions where a distressed young person needs comfort and reassurance which may include physical comforting, such as a caring parent would give. Physical contact may also be required to prevent an accident or injury and this would be wholly appropriate. A young person or coach may also want to mark a success or achievement with a hug or other gesture. Adults should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is seen (and what is seen by others present) is normal and natural and does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same young person over a period of time.

It should also be considered that what, to an Adult may seem to be appropriate, may not be shared by a young person.

D Sport science and medicine (First Aid / Emergencies)

There may be some roles within Rugby Union where physical contact is and / or a requirement of the role, particularly sports science or medicine.

These tasks should only be undertaken by properly trained or qualified practitioners.

11. PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGES (INCLUDING THOSE TAKEN BY MOBILE TELEPHONES)

TORONTO BUCCANEERS recognizes that publicity and pictures of young people enjoying rugby are essential to promote rugby and a healthy lifestyle.

In order to facilitate this we abide by the following principles and rules:

- All the principles and rules apply to all photographs taken on a camera, digital camera, video camera and images taken by mobile telephones.
- Anyone taking or planning to take photographs must always get permission from the parent or guardian of the young person before taking any images / photographs of the young person/s.
- Never take or allow any photographs to be taken of any young person when a parents, guardians or the young person themselves have refused their permission.
- TORONTO BUCCANEERS RFC will never use the image of a young person for display or publicity purposes without receiving their permission first.
- All young people must be appropriately dressed for the activity taking place before any images or photographs may be taken.
- TORONTO BUCCANEERS RFC will only use images in the club, on the website of young people who have completed and returned (giving their consent) Image Consent Forms.
- All parents, guardians and young people will be given prior notification of any images that are to be used in the press or on any other media publications, even when there is a completed Image Consent Form.
- Parents, guardians and young people can change their mind about their images being used by TORONTO BUCCANEERS RFC at any point during the year.

Please Note:

We will required you to complete a new Image Consent Form – changing your consent

- Should any parent, guardian or young person wish an image to be removed from a display, publication, notice board or website that was previously consented to, they must contact the Youth Development Officer and complete a new Image Consent Form