

2011

Child Protection Policy Procedures Manual



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1.0 Establishing the Basic Facts

Once the concerns have been reported, the Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Officer will establish the basic facts by:

- Conduct an initial assessment of the facts in order to determine the appropriate course of action;
- Consult external agencies such as the police and social work services for advice at any time. This is important because they may hold other important information which, when considered alongside the current concerns builds a significant picture of concern.

2.0 Conduction the Initial Assessment

The Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Officer will conduct an initial assessment. The purpose of the initial assessment is to clarify the nature and context of the concerns. It should determine whether there is reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child has been abused/ harmed, or is at risk of abuse or harm. Every situation is unique therefore guidance cannot be prescriptive.

- Where the established facts support a concern about possible abuse, the initial assessment will not form part of the disciplinary investigation;
- Subject to the nature and seriousness of the situation, if it is not clear at this stage whether a criminal offence may have been committed the club member or volunteer may be approached as part of the information gathering process. Where the nature and seriousness of the information suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed, or that to assess the facts may jeopardize evidence, advice will be sought from the police before the member of staff is approached;
- An initial assessment of the basic facts may require the need to ask a child some basic, open-ended, non-leading questions *solely with a view to clarifying the basic facts*. It may also be necessary to ask similar basic questions of other children, or other appropriate individuals.
- Interviewing children about possible abuse and criminal offences are the sole jurisdiction of specially trained police officers and social workers. Questioning of children by those conducting an initial assessment should always be avoided as far as possible. If it is necessary to speak to the child in order to clarify the basic facts best practice suggests that consent from the parent be obtained.

3.0 Potential Outcomes of Initial Assessment

- No further action (facts do not substantiate complaint).
- Situation is dealt with under procedures to manage poor practice; and/or,
- Action under Disciplinary Regulations (by Rugby Ontario).

- Child protection investigation (jointly by police and social work services).
- Criminal investigation (by the police). The results of a criminal investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not in all cases.
- Civil proceedings (by the child/family who alleged abuse).

4.0 Initial Assessment Supports Concerns About Poor Practices and/or Misconduct, But NOT Child Abuse.

The Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Officer will deal with the situation in line with Rugby Ontario's Disciplinary Procedures. Pending the outcome of any investigation conducted under Disciplinary Regulation Procedures, precautionary suspension will be considered in all cases where there is significant concern about the conduct of a club member or volunteer towards a child or children.

5.0 Initial Assessment Support Concerns about possible child abuse

Where the initial assessment of information gives reasonable cause to suspect or believe possible child abuse the Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Officer will refer the concerns to the police and/or social work services as soon as possible on the day the information is received.

The Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Officer will make a written record of the name and position/rank of the social worker or the police officer to whom the concerns were passed together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow up is required.

Referrals to the Police/Social Work Services will be confirmed in writing by the Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Officer within 24 hours. A copy of the Rugby Ontario, Incident Referral Form should be provided to the police/social work services on request.

Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure the safety of the child or youth or who may be at risk. The parents of the child or youth involved will be informed as soon as possible following advice from the police/ social work services.

Advice will firstly be obtained from the Police/Social Services Agency about informing the club member or volunteer involved about the concerns. If the advice is to inform the club member or volunteer, they will be told that information has been received which may suggest an allegation of abuse. No details will be given unless advised by the police. All actions will ensure the best evidence is preserved for any criminal proceedings while at the same time safeguarding the rights of the club member or volunteer.

Rugby Ontario and its member clubs will take all reasonable steps to support a club member or volunteer against whom an allegation of abuse has been made.

6.0 Precautionary Suspension

Suspension of a club member or volunteer in the initial assessment phase while the investigation is being carried out is not a form of disciplinary action. Formal suspension will be carried out by Rugby Ontario, in accordance with Rugby Ontario's Disciplinary Procedures.

At the suspension interview, the club member or volunteer will be informed of the reason for suspension (within the confines of sharing information) and given the opportunity to make a statement should they wish to do so.

Notification of the suspension and the reasons will be conveyed in writing to the club member or volunteer in accordance with Rugby Ontario's, Disciplinary Procedures.

7.0 Disciplinary Actions

Following advice from the police, cases that also involve a criminal investigation, will not preclude disciplinary action being taken provided sufficient information is available to enable the Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Officer to make a decision, and that to do so would not jeopardize any criminal investigation.

8.0 False or Malicious Allegations

In the exceptional circumstances that an investigation establishes an allegation is false, unfounded or malicious:

- The club member or volunteer involved will receive an account of the circumstances and/or investigation and a letter confirming the conclusion of the matter. They may also wish to seek legal advice.
- All records pertaining to the circumstances and investigation will be destroyed.
- The Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Officer will take all reasonable steps to support the individual in this situation.
- In these circumstances Rugby Ontario will review the child's participation in rugby.

9.0 Media

All media enquiries relating to the conduct of a club member or volunteer with regard to children will be referred to the Rugby Ontario, Executive Director, and Child Protection Officer.

SECTION #1 - RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF PERSONS WORKING OR VOLUNTEERING WITH CHILDREN IN RUGBY

Rugby Ontario and its member clubs/societies will undertake all reasonable steps to ensure unsuitable persons are prevented from working, or volunteering, with children.

The following recommended procedures will be completed for all positions deemed to be working in a position of authority, or having regular supervisory contact, with children (as defined by the CPP) playing rugby within Ontario.

It is recommended that any advertising used to recruit and select coaches, referees, managers, administrators, trainers, therapists and volunteers working with children include the following:

- The aims of Rugby Ontario or member club/societies, and where appropriate, details of the particular program/position involved;
- A description of the position, including roles and responsibilities;
- The level of experience or qualifications required (e.g. coaching certification; qualifications must be verified.
- Details of Rugby Ontario's, Child Protection Policy;
- Advise persons applying for identified positions that a mandatory Police Record Check [Vulnerable Sector Screening] is required, and must be completed a minimum every two years, or subject to changes in legislation;

Important Note: Avoidance on the part of any candidate to secure adequate coaching/refereeing or other requirements when asked, or to undergo a Police Records Check [vulnerable sector screening], will serve as an indicator that the person is unsuitable for the position, and will not be permitted to work or volunteer with children and youth under Rugby Ontario's, Child Protection Policy.

Interview and Police Records Check Vulnerable Sector Screening

An interview is recommended for club members and volunteers wishing to be involved in working with children. The interview should be carried out according to acceptable protocol and recommendations. See Section 6, for additional information on discussions and interviews with volunteers.

In accordance with Rugby Ontario's Child Protection Policy, it is mandatory that all persons having regular supervisory contact, or positions of authority, with regards to children on a professional or volunteer basis, undergo a police records check [vulnerable sector screening] prior to working with children. A club member or volunteer will be permitted to take up his/her position only when a copy of their approved Police Record Check is presented to the club or constituent association. The copy of the PRC must be

retained securely by the club or constituent association, be produced when requested, and be disposed of according to guidelines.

Every person defined as having regular supervisory contact, or a position of authority, with children will also have:

- Their qualifications as a coach / official substantiated;
- The expectations, roles and responsibilities of the job clearly defined. [either through formal or informal processes [goal setting, coaching apprenticeship, etc].
- The RO, Child Protection Policy and implementation procedures explained and any training needs established.

The process for obtaining a Vulnerability Sector Screening has changed and all applications now have to go through your local police station (where you live not work) who will forward to the application to the RCMP for in depth screening. There will be a charge for this service and the length of time to get a approval/ rejection could be up to eight weeks. The price of this service may vary depending on the area that you live.

All results will be sent to the applicant who will give a copy to their club to keep on file. Rugby Ontario has the right to request a copy of the approval if deemed necessary from the applicants club. It is the clubs responsibility to ensure that all coaches are complying

Training, Monitoring and Appraisals

Checks and monitoring are only part of the process to protect children from possible abuse. Appropriate training will enable individuals to recognize their responsibilities with regards to their own good practice and the reporting of suspected poor practice/concerns of possible abuse. A range of child protection training opportunities will be communicated by Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Officer periodically to the membership.

On a regular basis or following a particular program/course, all club members and volunteers should be given the opportunity to receive formal [i.e. by means of an appraisal], or informal feedback, to identify training needs and set new goals. Club management should be sensitive to any concerns about poor practice or abuse and act on them at an early stage following the guidelines in this document. The club management should also offer appropriate levels of support through liaison with the RO, Child Protection Officer, to those who report concerns.

Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures

Rugby Ontario and its constituent clubs/societies should also ensure that parents, children and youth are aware of the Child Protection Policy and of the complaints and disciplinary procedures contained in this document.

SECTION #2 – WHAT ARE WE PROTECTING CHILDREN AGAINST

Rugby Ontario recognizes the responsibility to promote safe practices and to protect children from harm, abuse, bullying and harassment. The following are examples of ways in which children may be abused or harmed, either within or outside the sport of rugby.

CHILD ABUSE

All instances of suspected, disclosed or witnessed abuse of a child, must be reported immediately to the nearest Police Services Branch, Children’s Aid Society and the Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Officer. An Incident Report Form should also be completed as soon as possible after reporting the abuse.

No member or volunteer of Rugby Ontario and its member clubs, shall investigate allegations of abuse, or decide whether or not a child has been abused.

Children may be in need of protection where their basic needs are not being met in a manner appropriate to their age and stage of development, and they will be at risk through avoidable acts of commission or omission on the part of their parent(s), sibling(s) or other relative(s), or a foster parent/guardian (i.e. a person, while not a parent, who has actual custody of the child).

This includes placing a child at risk through something a person has done to them, or something a person is failing to do for them. For those working in the field of child care and protection the definition of child abuse is reduced further into categories of abuse, namely;

- Emotional Abuse
- Physical Abuse and Injury
- Neglect
- Sexual Abuse.

These categories are not mutually exclusive. A child experiencing physical abuse is undoubtedly experiencing emotional abuse as well.

Identifying Child Abuse

Although the physical and behavioural signs listed may be symptomatic of abuse, they may not always be an indicator and, conversely, children experiencing abuse may not demonstrate any of these signs. Child abuse is often difficult to recognize.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse may be defined as a failure to provide for a child’s basic emotional needs such as to have a severe effect on the behaviour and development of the child. This includes persistent patterns of demeaning or threatening a child. It may be intentional or not, and can be invisible or gradual.

This could include making a child feel worthless or unloved, inadequate or not valued; inappropriate expectations being imposed on children for their age or stage of development; the corruption or exploitation of a child, or causing them frequently to feel frightened or in danger; persistent exposure to domestic abuse; failing to provide a child with love, care and affection.

Emotional abuse in rugby may also occur if children are subjected to constant criticism, name-calling, sarcasm, or bullying. Examples of emotional abuse in a sports environment may include (but not limited to):

- Persistent failure to show any respect to a child; This can consist of continually ignoring a child, giving the ‘silent treatment’, swearing at a child, etc;
- Constantly blaming or humiliating a child by telling them they are stupid or ‘slow’, sometimes accompanied by persistent and demeaning correction;
- Continually being aggressive towards a child by making them feel frightened, withholding of praise or using praise/affection as a control device;
- Acting in a way which is detrimental to the child’s uniqueness and self-esteem;

Signs which **may** raise concerns about emotional abuse include:

- low self-esteem
- significant decline in concentration
- running away
- indiscriminate friendliness and neediness
- extremes of passivity or aggression
- self-harm or mutilation

Physical Abuse

Defined as an actual or attempted physical injury to a child, including the administration of toxic substances, where there is knowledge or reasonable suspicion, that the injury was knowingly inflicted or not prevented. It involves deliberately using force against a child in such a way that the child is either injured or is at risk of being injured.

Physical abuse includes deliberately hitting, shaking, throwing or otherwise harming a child. Physical injury may also occur where someone knowingly fails to take action to protect a child from physical harm. Most children sustain accidental cuts and bruises throughout childhood. These are likely to occur in parts of the body like elbows, shins and knees. An important indicator of physical abuse is where the bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation does not fit the injury, or the injury appears on parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely [e.g. on the cheeks or thighs].

The age of the child must also be considered. It is possible that some physical injuries may have occurred for other reasons [e.g. skin disorders, bone diseases]. Examples of physical abuse in a sports environment may include (but not limited to):

- Bodily harm that may be caused by:
 - the nature and intensity of training or competition exceeds the capacity of the child / youth's immature and growing body;
 - over playing an athlete;
 - failure to do a risk assessment of physical limits or pre-existing medical conditions;
 - administering, condoning, or failure to intervene in drug use; or
 - administering drugs to enhance performance

Signs which **may** raise concerns about physical abuse include:

- refusal to discuss injuries
- aggression towards others
- improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- running away
- untreated injuries
- excessive physical punishment
- avoiding activities due to injuries or possibility of injuries being discovered
- unexplained injuries, particularly if recurrent

Neglect

Neglect is a form of abuse manifested through ignoring or discrediting emotional and or physical needs. Neglect occurs where a child's essential needs are not met and this is likely to cause impairment to the physical or emotional health and development of a child. Such needs include food and water, clothing, cleanliness, shelter and warmth. Physical neglect can also comprise the poor practice of inadequate supervision.

Emotional neglect can consist of a lack of encouragement, praise, or direct listening to the child. It leaves no scars but can be emotionally devastating, leading to feelings of abandonment, confusion, low self-esteem and delayed emotional development.

A lack of appropriate care, including deprivation of access to health care, may result in persistent or severe exposure, through negligence, to circumstances which endanger the child.

As well as being the result of a deliberate act, neglect can also be caused through the omission or the failure to act or protect [e.g. the failure to obtain medical attention for a child]. Examples of neglect in a sports environment may include (but not limited to):

- exposing a child to extreme weather conditions;
- failing to seek medical attention for injuries;
- exposing a child to risk of injury through the use of unsafe equipment;
- exposing a child to a hazardous environment without a proper risk assessment of the activity;
- failing to provide adequate water and water breaks; or
- failure to properly supervise activities

Signs which **may** raise concerns about physical neglect include:

- constant hunger/thirst;
- poor personal hygiene and/or poor state of clothing;
- constant tiredness;
- frequent lateness or unexplained non-attendance at practices or games;
- untreated medical problems
- low self-esteem
- poor peer relationships
- stealing

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse of a child is an abuse of power and trust – it is manipulating or forcing a child to serve an adult for sexual purposes. A child may be deemed to have been sexually abused when any person(s), by design or neglect, exploits the child, directly or indirectly, in any activity intended to lead to the sexual arousal or other forms of gratification of that person or other person(s). This includes forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities whether or not they are aware of or consent to what is happening. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, and non-contact acts such as forcing children to look at, or be involved in, the production of pornographic material, to watch sexual activities or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate manners.

The definition of sexual abuse holds whether or not there has been genital contact, and whether or not the child is said to have initiated, or consented to, the behaviour.

Sexual abuse involves a child in acts such as fondling (touching a child in a sexual way); coercing/forcing the child to touch an adult; oral sex, inserting fingers, penis, or objects into the vagina or anus, exposing oneself, allowing a child to watch pornography, or involving a child in pornography or prostitution.

Boys and girls are sexually abused by males and females, including persons to whom they may or may not be related, and by other young people. This includes people from all walks of life within and outside the sports environment.

Some children may never be able to tell someone they have been sexually abused. Changes in a child's behaviour **may** be a sign something has happened. In some cases there may be no physical or behavioural signs to suggest that a child has been sexually abused.

In sport, coaching techniques which involve physical contact with children and youth, could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. The authority of the coach over children and youth, if misused, may also lead to abusive situations developing. Examples of sexual abuse in a sports environment may include (but not limited to):

- exposure to sexually explicit inappropriate language or jokes;
- showing a child pornographic material or using a child to produce such material;
- inappropriate touching; or
- sexual intercourse and/or sexual activity with a child as defined by law in Ontario.

The following signs *may* raise concerns about sexual abuse:

- lack of trust in adults, or over familiarity with adults;
- fear of a particular adult, or fear of an adult with whom a close relationship would normally be expected;
- someone else expresses concerns about possible sexual abuse of a child;
- social isolation – being withdrawn or introverted, poor peer relationships;
- reluctance or refusal to participate in physical activity or to change clothes for games;
- displays of sexual knowledge beyond the child’s age;
- description by a child or youth, of what appears to be an act of a sexual nature involving him/her

Bullying

This Child Protection Policy does not prevent a person from taking immediate, informal, corrective action in response to behavior that, in their view, constitutes a minor incident of bullying or harassment involving children.

Less serious incidents of bullying and harassment may be handled by the club through the suggested good practice guidelines that are listed at the end of this section.

Serious, and/or repeated incidents of bullying or harassment should be reported to the RO, Child Protection Officer, and an Incident Report Form completed as soon as possible.

Bullying has become a significant issue for children and parents. Bullying may emerge as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. For the purposes of this CPP, it can be defined as ‘repeated, systematic, and aggressive verbal, psychological or physical conduct by an individual or group against another child or youth’. It can take many forms including children being bullied by adults, and in some cases by members of their families. It can occur that the perpetrator may be a child or youth in the case of bullying. Bullying can be difficult to identify because it often happens away from others and those who are bullied often do not tell anyone. Although anyone can be the target of bullying, children that are typically shy, sensitive and perhaps anxious or insecure are often the victims. Sometimes they may be singled out for physical reasons – being overweight, physically small, having a disability or belonging to a different race, faith or culture.

The competitive nature of the sport of rugby can make it an ideal environment for the bully. The bully can be a parent who pushes too hard, a coach who adopts a ‘win-at-all-costs’ philosophy, a player who intimidates inappropriately, a club official who places unfair pressure on a person, or a spectator who shouts abuse. Examples of bullying in a sports environment may include (but not limited to):

- **Physical:** theft, hitting, kicking - in some cases, this might constitute a criminal offense;
- **Verbal:** racist or homophobic taunts, threats, graffiti, gestures, spreading rumors, teasing, threats or name-calling, racist, religious, ethnic or cultural slurs or defamatory remarks;
- **Emotional:** tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating and ignoring a child, isolating a child during a group activity or discouraging social acceptance of a child’s teammates / peer group.
- **Sexual:** unwanted physical contact or abusive/suggestive comments

Signs which **may** raise concerns about bullying include changes such as:

- reduced concentration or becoming withdrawn;
- hesitation or reluctance to attend training sessions or games;
- often last one picked for a team or group activity for no apparent reason, or being picked on when they think your back is turned;
- reluctance to go to certain places or work with a certain individual;
- clothing or personal possessions go missing or get damaged;
- bruising or other injuries;
- ‘losing’ pocket money repeatedly;
- becoming nervous and withdrawn; or
- suddenly prone to lashing out at people, either physically or verbally, when normally quiet

Guidelines for managing bullying and harassment regarding children

The damage inflicted by bullying/harassment can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to a child to the extent that it affects their health and development.

There are a number of good practices which can be followed in cases involving bullying of children and youth. Actions to help the victim(s) and prevent bullying/harassment include:

- Take all allegations of bullying/harassment seriously and take action to ensure the victim(s) are safe. Speak with the victim and the bully separately.

- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns. Help the victim(s) to speak out and inform the person in charge or someone in authority. Create an open and safe environment;
- Reassure the victim(s) that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise not to tell others;
- Keep records of what is said [i.e. what happened, by whom and when]
- Report any serious or repeated incidents of bullying or harassment to the RO, Child Protection Officer and complete a Rugby Ontario, Incident Report Form as soon as possible.

Action towards the Bully/Harasser:

- Talk with the bully/harasser, explain the situation and try to get the bully to understand the consequences of their behaviour;
- Seek an apology from the bully/harasser to the victim(s);
- Inform the bully's/harasser's parents/guardians;
- If appropriate, insist on the return of 'borrowed' items and that the bully compensates the victim;
- Impose sanctions as determined by the Child Protection Officer and/or Child Protection Disciplinary Panel;
- Encourage and support the bully/harasser to change behaviour; and
- Keep a written record of actions taken.

In addition to the above, it may be advisable to hold a team or club meeting about bullying/harassment.

HARASSMENT

This Child Protection Policy does not prevent a person from taking immediate, informal, corrective action in response to behavior that, in their view, constitutes a minor incident of harassment or bullying involving children.

Less serious incidents of harassment or bullying may be dealt with through the suggested good practice guidelines that are listed under the topic of bullying.

Serious, and/or repeated incidents of harassment or bullying should be reported to the RO, Child Protection Officer, and an Incident Report Form completed as soon as possible.

Harassment can take many forms but, generally, can be defined for the purposes of this CPP as continued comments, conduct or gestures directed towards a child which is, or is likely to be, construed as insulting, intimidating, humiliating, malicious, degrading or offensive, especially where the child or youth against whom the behaviour is directed has clearly requested the perpetrator(s) to cease, or where he or she by verbal or body language, has expressed distress or dismay at the behaviour in question.

Children and youth may experience harassment or negative discrimination because of their race or ethnic origin, socio-economic status, culture, age, disability, gender, sexuality or religious beliefs. This can have a very detrimental effect on a child. Children from minority ethnic groups or communities (and their parents) may have experienced harassment, racial discrimination, and institutional racism prior to engaging in the sport of rugby.

Although not formally recognized as a form of child abuse, racism can be emotionally harmful to children. Some racist acts may also involve acts of physical violence towards individuals or groups.

Rugby Ontario and its member clubs in working with children and parents, including those where minority ethnic individuals, groups or communities are numerically small, must remain aware and responsive to these issues.

All serious incidents of harassment or bullying will be reported to and dealt with by the RO, Child Protection Officer, in conjunction with the Child Protection Disciplinary Panel and applicable procedures and processes as outline

SECTION #3 – RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS - GENERAL

It takes considerable courage for a child to disclose abuse, bullying or harassment. Disclosures need to be handled very carefully and sensitively to avoid causing further distress to the child.

All concerns must be responded to in a way that ensures that a child receives appropriate help and support, to ensure that appropriate action is taken against those who pose a risk to children and to protect not only the child involved but all other children. Clear and understandable procedures for responding to concerns will:

- help to avoid those receiving information from engaging in judgments;
- reassure those who report concerns that an appropriate course of action will ensue;
- support those charged with managing concerns by providing them with a step-by-step process to follow; and
- safeguard the rights of those against whom complaints or allegations have been made

Concerns not involving Child Abuse

Rugby Ontario is committed to working in partnership with parents whenever there are concerns about a child or youth. Parents have the primary responsibility for the safety and well being of their children.

In most situations, not involving the possibility of the abuse of a child, concerns should be discussed with parents. For example, if a child seems withdrawn, he/she may have experienced an upset in the family, such as a parental separation, divorce or bereavement. Common sense is advised in these situations.

Any significant, improper or unusual incidents which cause concern about the welfare of a child should be reported to the Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Officer as soon as possible. Parents should also be informed of the circumstances as soon as possible.

Advice should be sought from the Rugby Ontario Child Protection Officer if there is any uncertainty about the appropriate course of action where there are concerns about the general welfare of a child.

Confidentiality

Information provided to Rugby Ontario and its member clubs/societies should remain confidential unless permission has been given to share the information by the individual concerned or the safety of that person or another person may be at risk.

If there is a reasonable concern that a child or youth may be at risk of significant harm, this will always override a professional or organizational requirement to keep information confidential.

It is good practice to inform parents and children about the kind of situations which may lead to them having to share information with other agencies, such as:

- when criminal conduct may be involved;
- when it is believed necessary to protect others from harassment or bullying;
- when required to ensure fairness or natural justice in the procedures of this policy;
- in the course of an investigation by a law enforcement agency;
- to protect the interests of Rugby Ontario; or
- when required by law

Issues regarding defamation

Concerned adults are sometimes reluctant to report concerns about abuse for fear that the person suspected will sue them for defamation if the allegation turns out to be unfounded.

To be defamatory a statement must first of all be untrue. Even if subsequently shown to be untrue, the statement will be protected by ‘qualified privilege’ if it is made to the appropriate authority in response to a duty, whether legal, moral or social or in the protection of an interest. Unjustified repetition of the allegations to other persons will not be protected by privilege. The qualification on privilege refers to statements made by malice. If a statement, even to the appropriate authority, can be shown to be motivated by malice, then an action of defamation could be successful.

Equity

Rugby Ontario is opposed to discrimination of any form and will promote measures to prevent discrimination, in whatever form, from being expressed.

All those involved in rugby in Ontario must respect the rights and choices of all human beings, treating everyone equally and sensitively regardless of their gender, ethnic origin, cultural background, sexual orientation religion or political affiliation.

The Rugby Ontario, Code of Conduct must be adhered to at all times so that rugby can be enjoyed by all.

PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD

Allegations of abuse must always be taken seriously. False allegations are very rare. If a child says or indicates they are being abused or information is obtained which gives reason to believe that a child is being abused, the information must be reported on the same day, in line with the following procedures.

Where there is uncertainty about what to do with the information, Rugby Ontario's Child Protection Officer can first be consulted for advice on the appropriate course of action.

If Rugby Ontario's Child Protection Officer is unavailable or an immediate response is required the police and social work services/children's aid society must be consulted for advice. These organizations have a statutory responsibility for the protection of children, and they may already hold other concerning information about the child. Record any advice provided to them.

IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE IMMEDIATE SAFETY OF A CHILD:

Take whatever action is required to ensure the child's Immediate safety

Pass the information immediately to the police and seek their advice

Note: No member or volunteer of Rugby Ontario and its member clubs, shall investigate allegations of abuse, or decide whether or not a child has been abused. This is the responsibility of professional authorities and agencies entrusted with welfare and safety of children. It is however, everyone's responsibility to immediately report their concerns.

The following procedures apply to all members and volunteers involved in Rugby Ontario and Its member clubs/societies in responding to concerns about the abuse of a child.

Responding***Good Practice:***

- React calmly, so as not to frighten the child.
- Listen to the child and take what they say seriously. Do not show skepticism.
- Reassure the child they are not to blame and were right to tell someone.
- Be aware of interpreting what a child says, especially if they have learning or physical disabilities which affect their ability to communicate or English is not their first language.
- Do not assume that the experience was bad or painful - it may have been neutral or even pleasurable.
- Avoid projecting your own reactions onto the child.
- Avoid asking any questions. If necessary only ask enough questions to gain basic information to establish the *possibility* that abuse may have occurred. Only use open-ended, non-leading questions e.g. Who? Where? When?
- Do not introduce personal information from either your own experiences or those of other children.

Avoid:

- Panicking;
- Showing shock or distaste;
- Probing for more information than is offered;
- Speculating or making assumptions;
- Making negative comments about the person against whom the allegation has been made;
- Approaching the individual against whom the allegation has been made; or
- Making promises or agreeing to keep secrets and giving a guarantee of confidentiality.

Recording

Make a written record of the information as soon as possible using the Rugby Ontario Incident Referral Form, completing as much of the form as possible. The following information will help the Child Protection Officer, Police and/or Social Services Agency decides what action to take next:

- Child's name, age and date of birth;
- Child's home address and telephone number;
- Any times, dates or other relevant information concerning the incident;
- Whether the person making the report is expressing their own concern or the concerns of another person;

- The child’s account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any injuries occurred *using the child’s own words*;
- The nature of the concern (include all of the information obtained during the initial account e.g. time, date, location);
- A description of any visible (when normally dressed) injuries or bruising, behavioral signs, indirect signs (do not physically examine the child);
- Details of any witnesses;
- Whether the child’s parents have been informed;
- Details of anyone else who has been consulted and the information obtained from them;
- If it is not the child making the report, note whether the child has been spoken to, if so what was said *using the child’s own words*; and
- The child’s views on the situation.

Reporting

Print a copy, sign and date. Send the Incident Report Form to the Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Officer, police or social work services the same day. If the Incident Report Form can be completed electronically, do not save copies to the hard drive or floppy disk. Print a copy, sign and date and then delete immediately.

Where there are concerns that the parent(s) may be responsible for, or have knowledge of the abuse, sharing concerns with the parent(s) may place the child at further risk.

In such cases advice must always firstly be sought from the police or social work services as to who informs the parents.

PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT THE CONTACT OF A CLUB MEMBER OR VOLUNTEER

The following section details the procedures to be followed where the concern is about a club member or volunteer.

These procedures are to ensure that all concerns about the conduct of a club member or volunteer are dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner.

No member of Rugby Ontario or its member clubs in receipt of information that causes concern about the conduct of a club member or volunteer towards children shall keep that information to himself or herself, or attempt to deal with the matter on their own.

In the event of an investigation in to the conduct of a club member or volunteer all actions will progress from:

- Club members and volunteers being made aware of the nature of concern or complaint;
- Where the concern is about possible child abuse, advice will first be taken from the police, as to what can be said to the club member or volunteer;
- The club member or volunteer being given an opportunity to put forward their case; and
- Rugby Ontario will act in good faith; ensure the matter is dealt with impartially and as quickly as possible in the circumstances.

In all cases where there are concerns about the conduct of a club member or volunteer towards children, the welfare of the child will be the paramount consideration.

At any point in the management of concerns about the conduct of a club member or volunteer, advice may be sought from the police or social work services.

The following procedures apply to all members and volunteers involved in Rugby Ontario and its member clubs in responding to concerns about the conduct of a club member or volunteer.

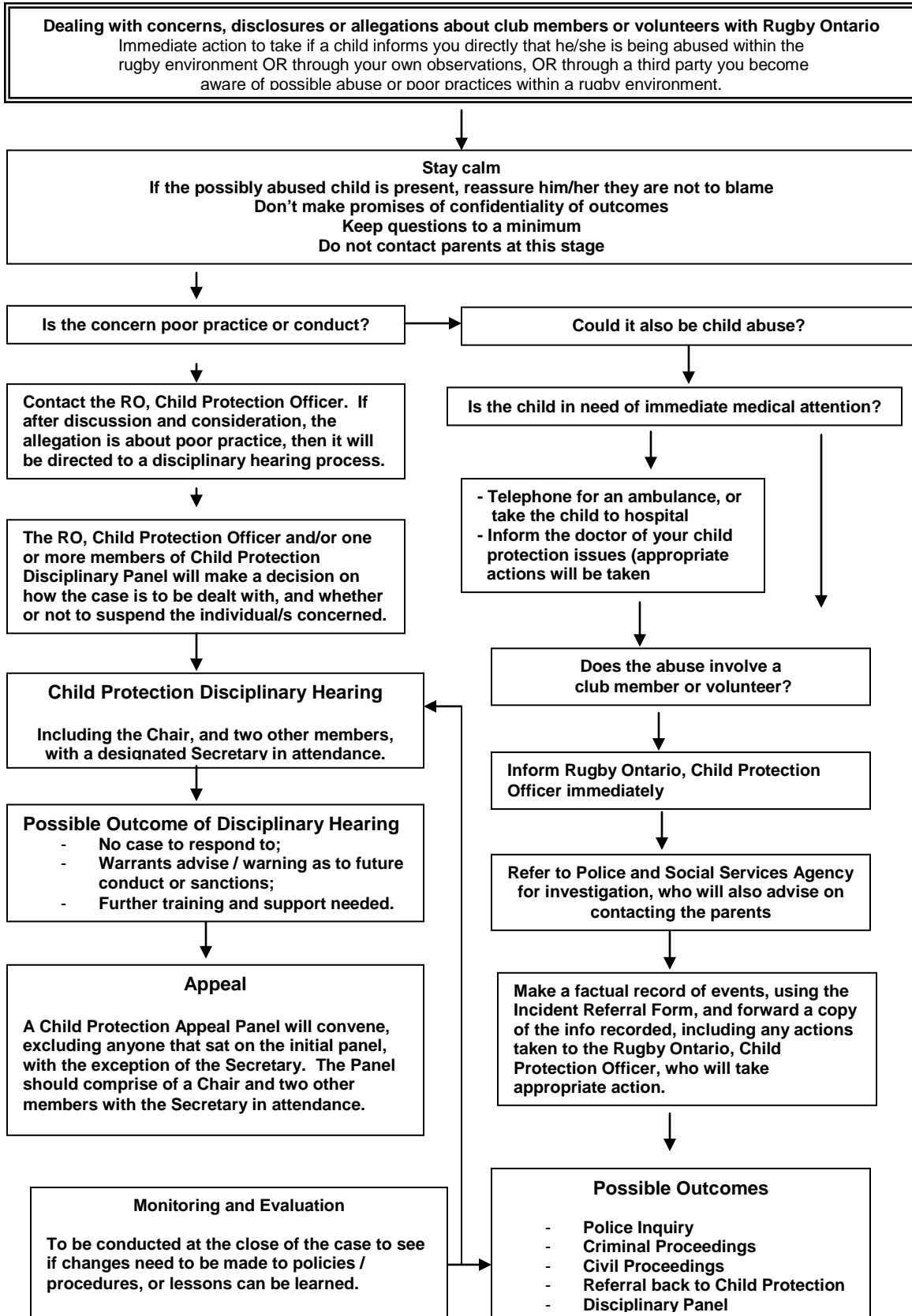
Responding

Any concerns for the welfare of a child arising from the conduct of a club member or volunteer must be reported to the Rugby Ontario, Child and Youth Protection Officer on the day the concern arises or, as soon as practically possible.

Where the concern is about the Rugby Ontario, Child and Youth Protection Officer, it must be reported to the President and Executive Director of Rugby Ontario.

Recording & Reporting

Concerns must be recorded using the Rugby Ontario, Incident Referral Form as soon as possible. Reporting the concerns to the Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Officer should **NOT** be delayed by gathering information to complete the form, or until a written record has been made. All subsequent actions taken and reasons for decisions shall be contemporaneously recorded on the Incident Referral Form, signed and dated by the Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Officer, or the person appointed to manage the response to the concerns. Guidance on the storage, sharing and retention of such records is contained in the relevant procedure.



SECTION #4 – CONDUCT & BEHAVIOUR

CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOUR GUIDELINES FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN IN RUGBY

Guidelines for conduct have a number of important functions. They:

- sets out what behaviour is acceptable and unacceptable;
- defines standards of practice expected from those to whom it applies;
- forms the basis for challenging and improving practices;
- helps to safeguard members and volunteers by encouraging them to adhere to agreed standards of practice;
- sets out for children and parents the standards of practice which they and the organization should expect from those who work/volunteer with children;

Rugby Ontario encourages its members to become aware and observe the following standards of practice, including verbal and non-verbal actions when involved in activities with children. Serious incidents of conduct and behaviour around children should be report to the Rugby Ontario, Protection Officer.

Good practice guidelines:

- Make rugby fun, enjoyable and promote fair play.
- Treat all children equally, with respect, dignity and fairness.
- Involve parents wherever possible.
- Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust that empower and include children in the decision-making process.
- Always work in an open environment. Avoid private or unobserved situations.
- Put the welfare of each child first before winning or achieving performance goals.
- Be an excellent role model including, dressing appropriately, not smoking, Drinking alcohol or using drugs in the company of children.
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognize the developmental needs and capacity of children and avoid excessive training and competition, pushing them against their will and putting undue pressure on them.

Practices to be avoided:

In the context of your role and responsibilities within Rugby Ontario or member club, the following practices should be avoided:

- Having ‘favorites’ – this could lead to resentment and jealousy by other children and could be misinterpreted by others.
- Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others; do not take children alone on car trips, however short.
- Entering children’s bedrooms on trips away from home, unless in an emergency situation or in the interest of health and safety. If it is necessary to enter rooms, alert the occupants by knocking and announcing your intention to enter. The door should remain open, if appropriate.
- Where possible, doing things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.

Practices that are NEVER condoned

In the context of your role and responsibility within Rugby Ontario or member club, the following practices are not sanctioned under any circumstances:

- Engaging in sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Engaging in rough or physical contact except as permitted within the rules of the game or competition.
- Forming intimate emotional, physical or sexual relationships with children.
- Allowing or engaging in touching a child in a sexually suggestive manner.
- Allowing children to swear or use sexualized language unchallenged.
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Reducing a child to tears as a form of control.
- Allowing allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Inviting or allowing children to stay with you at your home.
- Coaches and other leaders sharing a room alone with a child for sleeping accommodation

Some accommodation facilities offer dormitory sleeping arrangements where leaders may be required to share with children. In such circumstances organizers must ensure that at least two adults who have been recruited and selected using the recommended procedure are present, preferably one male and one female, and that such arrangements have been discussed and agreed with children and parents in advance.

In some circumstances older children may be required to share rooms with senior teammates (i.e. over 18s). If this is necessary, it should be discussed and agreed in advance with the young person and the parents (where appropriate and practicable). The young people involved should also be aware of whom they should speak to if they have any worries or concerns during this time.

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN RUGBY

These guidelines have been included to provide practical guidance for those coaching and/or volunteering directly with children on practices to keep the child safe and to promote a safe training and playing environment for the club member or volunteer. All constituent members of Rugby Ontario are strongly recommended to be aware of and employ these guidelines.

All rugby organizations have a duty and standard of care towards all children involved in its activities.

Children under the age of 16 years should not be placed in positions of responsibility in relation to other children. Common sense should be applied when considering the circumstances of older children, and all children should have the opportunity to express their views on matters which affect them, should they wish to do so.

As children’s rugby takes place in many different locations, environments and formats, it is impossible to provide specific guidance on many of the issues covered. The following guidelines are therefore based on generally recognized good practice and common sense. Ultimately, most practical situations will require a judgment to be made about what is practicable and reasonable in the circumstances.

Recommended Adult-To-Child Ratios in Children’s Rugby

In general practice, the average ratio of adult-to-child is:

Age Range	Ratio Adult : Child(ren)
4 yrs old & over	1 : 8
8 yrs old & over	1 : 10

All activities should be planned to involve *at least* two adults, (preferably one male and one female). As a general guide, the following factors will also be taken in to consideration in deciding how many adults are required to safely supervise children:

- The number of children involved in the activity.
- The age, maturity and experience of the children.

- Whether any of the coaches or children has a learning or physical disability or special needs and requirements
- Whether any of the children have challenging behaviour.
- The particular hazards associated with the activity.
- The particular hazards associated with the environment.
- The level of qualification and experience of the coaches.
- The program of activities.

There may also be other considerations which are specific to the sport of rugby in Ontario which may take place.

Physical Contact with Players

All forms of physical contact should respect and be sensitive to the needs and wishes of the child and should take place in a manner of dignity and respect for all children. Parents and children should be made aware of the situations in which contact of a physical nature [especially in coaching] may happen when they join the club. Children should be encouraged to express their views on physical contact.

Coaching instruction should be clearly explained with a description of how it is proposed to handle or have contact with the child before doing so. This should be accompanied by checking if the child is comfortable. Manual support should be provided openly and must always be proportionate to the circumstances.

If it is necessary to help a child with personal tasks e.g. toileting or changing, the child and parents should be encouraged to express a preference regarding the support and should be encouraged to speak out about methods of support with which they are uncomfortable. Club members and volunteers should work with parents and children to develop practiced routines regarding their personal care so that parents and children know what to expect.

Do not take on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

First Aid & the treatment of injuries

All coaches/managers/administrators and volunteers must ensure:

- There is an accessible and well-stocked first aid kit at the venue at all times.
- There should also be a cell phone or telephone.
- Be aware of any pre-existing medical conditions, medicines being taken by participants or existing injuries and treatment required.

- Only those with a current, recognized first aid qualification treat injuries. In more serious cases assistance should be obtained from a medically qualified professional as soon as possible.
- A Rugby Ontario Injury Report Form is completed if a child sustains a significant injury along with the details of any treatment given.
- Where possible, access to medical advice and / or assistance is available,
- A child's parents are informed of any injury and action taken as soon as possible.
- The circumstances in which any accidents occur are reviewed to avoid future repetitions.

Managing challenging behaviour

Coaches/Managers/Administrators/Officials and Volunteers who deliver activities to children may, from time to time, require to deal with a child's challenging behaviour.

These guidelines aim to promote good practice and to encourage a proactive response to supporting children to manage their own behaviour. They suggest some strategies and deterrents which can be used, and also identify unacceptable sanctions or interventions which must *never* be used by club members or volunteers.

These guidelines are based on the following principles:

- The welfare and safety of the child is the paramount consideration;
- A risk assessment should be completed for all activities which take in to consideration the needs of the all children involved in the activity;
- Children must never be subject to any form of treatment that is harmful, abusive, humiliating or degrading and should always be able to maintain their respect and dignity;
- No coaches, managers, administrators, referees, or volunteers should attempt to respond to challenging behaviour by using techniques for which they have not been trained.

Planning Activities

Good coaching practice requires planning sessions around the group as a whole but also involves taking into consideration the needs of each individual athlete within that group. As part of a risk assessment, coaches should consider whether any members of the group have presented in the past, or are likely to present, any difficulties in relation to either, the tasks involved, the other participants or the rugby environment.

Where coaches/managers/administrators/officials or volunteers identify any potential risks, strategies to manage those risks should be agreed in advance of the session, event or activity. The risk assessment should also identify the appropriate number of adults

required to safely manage and support the session including being able to adequately respond to any challenging behaviour and to safeguard other members of the group and the staff / volunteers involved.

All those delivering activities to children should receive training on these guidelines and should be supported to address issues of challenging behaviour through regular supervision.

Agreeing on acceptable and unacceptable behaviours

Coaches, managers, administrators, officials, volunteers, children and parents should be involved in developing an agreed statement of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and the range of sanctions which may be applied in response to unacceptable behaviour.

Issues of behaviour and control should regularly be discussed with staff, volunteers, parents and children in the context of rights and responsibilities. When children are specifically asked, as a group, to draw up a 'List of Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviours and Sanctions for Unacceptable Behaviour' that will govern their participation in the group or on the team, they tend to arrive at a very sensible and working set of 'rules'. If and when such a list is compiled, every member of the group can be asked to sign it, as can new members as they join.

Managing challenging behaviour

In dealing with children who display risk-taking or challenging behaviours, coaches/managers/administrators, and volunteers might consider the following options:

- Time out- from the activity, group or individual work
- Reparation - the act or process of making amends
- Restitution - the act of giving something back
- Behavioural reinforcement - rewards for good behaviour, consequences for negative behaviour
- De-escalation of the situation - talking through with the child
- Increased supervision by staff / volunteers
- Use of individual 'contracts' or agreements for their future or continued participation
- Sanctions or consequences e.g. missing an outing.

Adults and children shall never be permitted to use any of the following as a means of managing a child's behaviour:

- Physical punishment or the threat of such.
- The withdrawal of communication with the child.
- Being deprived of food, water or access to changing facilities or toilets.
- Verbal intimidation, ridicule or humiliation.

Staff and volunteers should review the needs of any child for whom deterrents are frequently necessary. This review should involve the child and parents to ensure an informed decision is made about the child's future or continued participation in the group or activity. Whilst it would always be against the wishes of everyone involved in rugby, ultimately, if a child continues to present a high level of risk or danger to him or herself, or others, he or she may have to be barred from activity in rugby.

Physical interventions

The use of physical interventions should always be avoided unless it is absolutely necessary in order to prevent a child injuring themselves, injuring others or causing serious damage to property. All forms of physical intervention shall form part of a broader approach to the management of challenging behaviour.

Physical contact to prevent something happening should always be the result of conscious decision-making and not a reaction. Before physically intervening, the member of club member or volunteer should ask themselves, 'Is this the only option in order to manage the situation and ensure safety?'

The following must always be considered:

- Contact should be avoided with buttocks, genitals and breasts. Club members & volunteers should never behave in a way which could be interpreted as sexual;
- Any form of physical intervention should achieve an outcome that is in the best interests of the child whose behaviour is of immediate concern.
- Club members & volunteers should consider the circumstances, the risks associated with employing physical intervention compared with the risks of not employing physical intervention.
- The scale and nature of physical intervention must always be proportionate to the behaviour of the young person and the nature of harm / damage they might cause.
- All forms of physical intervention should employ only a reasonable amount of force - the minimum force needed to avert injury to a person or serious damage to property – applied for the shortest period of time.

- Club members / volunteers should never employ physical interventions which are deemed to present an unreasonable risk to children or club members & volunteers.
- Club members / volunteers shall never use physical intervention as a form of punishment.

Any physical intervention used should be recorded as soon as possible after the incident by the staff / volunteers involved, and passed to the Child Protection Officer as soon as possible.

A timely debriefing for staff / volunteers, the child and parents should always take place following an incident where physical intervention has been used. This should include ensuring that the physical and emotional well-being of those involved has been addressed and ongoing support offered where necessary. Club members / volunteers, children and parents should be given an opportunity to talk about what happened in a calm and safe environment.

There should also be a discussion with the child and parents about the child's needs and continued safe participation in the rugby activity.

Transporting Children

Where it is necessary to transport children, the following good practice is required:

- Where parents make arrangements for the transportation of children to and from an activity, without the knowledge of Rugby Ontario or its member Clubs, it will be the responsibility of the parents to satisfy themselves about the appropriateness and safety of the arrangements.
- Where Rugby Ontario makes arrangements for the transportation of children and youth, the club members and volunteers involved will undertake a risk assessment of the transportation required. This will include an assessment of the following areas:
 - Ensuring that all vehicles are correctly insured for the purpose.
 - Ensuring the driver has a valid and appropriate license for the vehicle being used.
 - All reasonable safety measures are available i.e. fitted, working seatbelts.
 - An appropriate ratio of adults per child.
 - Ensuring drivers have adequate breaks and rest stops.
 - When transporting children, wherever possible they should be in the back seat of the car for health and safety reasons.
 - Where practicable and planned, written parental consent will be requested if club members or volunteers are required to transport children.

To safeguard the club member / volunteer the following good practice is required:

- Agree on a pick-up policy with parents which will include a clear and shared understanding of arrangements for pickup at the end of a session.
- Always tell another member that you are transporting a child, give details of the route and the anticipated length of the journey.
- Take all reasonable safety measures e.g. children in the back seat, seatbelts worn.
- Where possible, have another adult accompany you on the journey.
- Call ahead to inform the child's parents that you are giving them a lift and inform them when you expect to arrive

Trips Away from Home involving overnight stays

Designate a Child Protection Officer for the Trip

Those in charge of the group will be responsible for the safety and well being of children in their care. It is recommended that one of the group leaders co-ordinates the arrangements to safeguard the safety and welfare of children during the trip.

The Child Protection Officer should ensure all practical arrangements have been addressed and act as the main contact for dealing with any concerns about the safety and welfare of children while away from home. A detailed itinerary will be prepared and copies provided to the designated contact for Scottish Rugby and parents.

Risk Assessment

Potential areas of risk should be identified at the planning stage through a risk assessment. Safeguards should be put in place to manage the risks, where appropriate. Risk assessment should be an on-going process throughout the trip as groups can often find themselves in unexpected situations despite the best developed plans.

Travel Arrangements

Organizers must ensure there is adequate and relevant insurance cover (including travel and medical insurance). If the trip involves travel out of the country. Organizers shall ensure they are aware of local procedures for dealing with concerns about the welfare of children and are familiar with the details of the emergency services, including hospitals, in the location of the visit.

Adult-to-Child Ratios

All trips away should be planned to involve *at least* two adults, preferably one male and one female where possible. The guidelines on adult to child ratios will inform an assessment of the numbers of adults required to safely supervise the group.

Those involved should be recruited and selected in accordance with the procedure for recruiting and selecting volunteers to work with children.

Tour managers should be familiar with and agree to abide by Rugby Ontario's, Child and Youth Protection Policy, Procedures and Code of Conduct.

Accommodation

Organizers should find out as much as possible about the accommodation and the surroundings at the planning stage. *Where possible*, an initial visit to the venue/ accommodation should take place to help those organizing the trip identify all practical issues and allow time to address them in advance, in consultation with children and parents where appropriate.

The following is a (non-exhaustive) list of some of the practical things which should be considered in advance about the arrangements for accommodation:

- Location: central and remote locations both present different challenges.
- Sleeping arrangements: These will enable suitable sharing in terms of age and gender and appropriately located staff / volunteer bedrooms for both supervision and ease of access in case of emergency. Parents and children should be consulted in advance about arrangements for sharing where possible and appropriate.
- Appropriate safeguards where others have access to the sleeping quarters.
- Special access or adaptive aids required by group leaders, children or volunteers.
- Environmental factors.
- Personal safety issues.

Exchange Visits / Hosting;

Before departure, organizers should ensure there is a shared understanding of the standards expected during home stays between them, host organization / families, parents and children themselves. These standards should include arrangements for the supervision of children during the visit.

Host families references should be checked by the hosting club, Organizers, parents and children should all be provided with a copy of emergency contact numbers. Children should be aware of who they should talk to if problems arise during the visit. Daily contact should be made with all children to ensure they are safe and well.

Accommodation at a Hotel / Facility / Centre;

Organizers should ensure the accommodation facility is appropriately licensed and has adequate and relevant insurance cover in place. Adequate security arrangements should be in place and accommodation facility employees should have been screened (where appropriate). All accommodation or facility staff involved in the training or instruction of children must be appropriately qualified and trained [i.e. swimming pools, etc). Organizers should ensure there is adequate supervision of the group for the duration of the stay, particularly when the facility is being shared with other groups.

Parental Involvement

Where possible, a meeting should be held with parents before departure to share information about the trip, answer their questions and make joint decisions about arrangements where appropriate. Guidelines on behaviour and conduct should be agreed with children and parents in advance of the trip along with sanctions for unacceptable behaviour. Parents must provide emergency contact details.

In the event of an emergency at home during the trip, parents should be encouraged to make contact with the tour group leaders so that arrangements can be put in to place to support the child on hearing any distressing news.

During the Trip

Organizers must ensure arrangements are in place for the supervision and risk assessment of activities during free time. Children should not be allowed to wander alone in unfamiliar places. Group leaders should have clear roles and responsibilities for the duration of the trip. They must not be over familiar, or fraternize with, children during the trip, and must remember that they are in a position of trust at all times. The use of alcohol and / or drugs or engaging in sexual relationships (between two young people) should not be condoned during the trip. Group leaders should maintain an overview of the well being of all children during the trip. This can help to identify issues at an early stage and resolve them as quickly as possible. Children can participate in this process by, for example, taking turns to complete a daily diary about the trip. This can be an overt or discreet way for them to communicate things (both positive and negative) that they want you to know.

After the Trip

Where appropriate, a de-briefing will take place with all those involved in the trip, including children. This will provide an opportunity to reflect on what went well, not so well and what could have been done differently. Feedback will be used to inform future trips.

Information & Communications technology guidelines

The aim of these guidelines is to not to prevent bona fide persons from recording activities for performance development reasons or the recording of achievements. They aspire to ensure that children are protected from the misuse of opportunities to take or manipulate film and video footage in a way that harms children or places them at risk of harm.

Some rugby fixtures take place in areas where club members and volunteers have little or no control over the environment; such as training/playing fields in areas to which the public have general rights of access. In these circumstances, club members and volunteers should take all reasonable steps to promote the safe use of photographing and filming and to respond to any concerns raised.

Photographs, Film & Video**Scope**

Rugby Ontario and its member clubs will take all reasonable steps to promote the safe use of photographing and filming at all events and activities with which it is associated. However, Rugby Ontario has no power to prevent individuals photographing or filming in public places. Rugby Ontario reserves the right at all times to prohibit the use of photography, film or video at any event or activity with which it is associated.

Notification

- Parents and children will be informed they may, from time to time, be photographed or filmed while participating in rugby. This could be for one of the following reasons:
 - (i) Video footage for performance development.
 - (ii) Media coverage of an event or achievement.
 - (iii) Promotional purposes e.g. website or publication.

- Materials promoting events will state, where possible, photography and filming will take place.
- Those who have sought and obtained permission to photograph or film will be formally identifiable.
- Information about what to do if concerned about photographing and filming should be available at all events.
- Registration of intention to photograph can be required on the day. This enables racking of the equipment and operator should concerns arise in the future.

Permission

- Parents will be offered the opportunity to withhold their permission to photographing and filming. In the absence of any expressed objection, parental agreement will be assumed.
- Where appropriate, children will be asked their views. Where a child is able to provide an informed view, this will be taken into consideration by Rugby Ontario and its member clubs.
- Rugby Ontario will do everything reasonable in the individual circumstances to give effect to the wishes of parents and children. All actions by Rugby Ontario will be based on the best interests of the child.

Use of Images and Information

- No unsupervised access or one-to-one sessions will be allowed unless this has been explicitly agreed with the child and parent.
- No photographing or filming will be permitted in changing areas.
- Rugby Ontario will ensure that all negatives, copies of videos and digital photograph files in its possession are stored in a secure place. These will not be kept for any longer than is necessary having regard to the purposes for which they were taken.
- Images will not be shared with external agencies unless express permission is obtained from the child and parent.

Concerns

- Anyone behaving in a way which could reasonably be construed as inappropriate in relation to filming or photographing should be reported to the person in charge on the event/activity. They should be approached for an explanation. If a satisfactory explanation is not provided, the circumstances should be reported to the person in charge on the event/activity, or Rugby Ontario's Child Protection Officer.
- Where appropriate, concerns should also be reported to the police.

Internet*Permission*

- Written consent must be obtained from the child's parent before publishing any information about a child. If the material is changed from the time of consent, the parents must be informed and consent provided for the changes.
- Special care must be taken in relation to vulnerable children e.g. child fleeing domestic violence or a child with a disability, and consideration given to whether publication would place the child at risk.
- Young athletes who have a public profile as a result of their achievements are entitled to the same protection as all other children. In these cases, common sense is required when implementing these guidelines. All decisions should reflect the best interests of the child.

Use of Images and Information

- Information posted on RO and member club websites must never include personal information that could identify a child [e.g. home address, e-mail address, telephone number]. All contact must be directed to Rugby Ontario or the appropriate member club. Credit for achievements by a child should be restricted to first names [e.g. Tracey was Player of the Year 2002].
- Children must never be portrayed in a demeaning, tasteless or a provocative manner. Children should never be portrayed in a state of partial undress, other than when depicting an action shot within the context of the sport. Attire such as tracksuits or t-shirts may be more appropriate.
- Information about specific events or meetings [e.g. coaching sessions] must not be distributed to any individuals, other than to those directly concerned.

Concerns

- Any concerns or enquiries about publications or the internet should be reported to the appropriate member club or Rugby Ontario Child Protection Officer.

Cell Phones

Text messaging is a quick and easy way to communicate with others and is a popular and often preferred means of communication with children. Club members and volunteers must be aware that intimidating, bullying or even abusive messages can be discreetly sent by text. Information sent in this way, even where well-meaning, could be misinterpreted.

Text Messaging

Club members / volunteers must consider whether it is necessary and appropriate to hold the cell phone numbers of children. The general principle is that all communications with children should be open, transparent and appropriate to the nature of the relationship.

Consequently, contact should always be made at the phone number the parent has provided on the child's behalf. Good practice would include agreeing with children and parents what kind of information will be communicated directly to children by text messages or email.

This information should only be "need to know" information such as the last minute cancellation of a training session.

The following good practice is also required:

- the cell phone numbers of children will be carefully stored and access will only be provided to those who need access for a legitimate reason
- club members / volunteers must never engage in personal or sensitive communications with children via text message
- all concerns about the inappropriate use of text messaging should be reported to the Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Officer

Cell Phones with Camera / Video Capability

There have already been a number of cases where children have been placed at risk as a result of the ability to discreetly record and transmit images through cell phones. The use of cell phones in this way can be very difficult to monitor. The procedure for the use of photographs, film and video should be observed in relation to the use of cell phones as cameras / videos. Particular care is required in areas where personal privacy is important [e.g. changing rooms, bathrooms and sleeping quarters]. No photographs or video footage should ever be permitted in such areas of personal privacy.

All concerns about the inappropriate use of cell phones to record photographs or video footage should be reported to the Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Officer, and will be dealt with accordingly. This may include the concerns being reported to the police.

SECTION #5 – GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Child For the purposes of this policy the words “child” will be used to refer to any person under the age of 16 (sixteen) or any person between the ages of 16 and 18, where the person, due to developmental, mental or physical incapacity is, or appears to be, unable to protect himself or herself.

Child Abuse Abuse can be categorized into four basic areas: sexual, physical, neglect and emotional. Each area is clearly defined in Section 2 of this document.

Child Protection Officer

A position within Rugby Ontario whose responsibility involves the development, planning, implementation, application and review of the Child Protection Policy and procedures within the Rugby Ontario.

Concern A suspicion or belief that a child might be in need of help or protection. For the purpose of these guidelines can also include a suspicion or belief that the conduct of an adult or another child is actually or potentially harmful towards another child.

Consent Permission or agreement.

Disclosure In this context, the act of a child (or adult) making information about abusive or harmful experiences known to others. In many cases the child will have been keeping the information secret.

Duty of Care To be negligent someone must first have been in circumstances which created a duty of care to ensure the reasonable safety of another person. For example: coaches have a duty to players, directors have duties to members of an organization, and tour managers have duties to those participating on a trip. A duty of care is owed to anyone who we can reasonably foresee will be affected by our actions. See also Standard of Care.

Harassment The act of causing worry or torment to another person.

Harm Includes, but is not restricted to, physical harm. Actions or behaviours by others which have a detrimental effect on a child’s physical and emotional health and well being. This means that “*harm*” would not only cover the deliberate infliction of physical or emotional harm but also where harm resulted, or might have resulted, from a degree of carelessness or neglect which amounted to misconduct.

Neglect Failing to provide for, or to secure for a child, the basic needs of food, warmth, clothing, emotional security, physical safety and well being. Also includes exposing a child to risk where it could have been avoided.

Negligence In general terms, negligence refers to behaviour or action which falls below a ‘reasonable’ standard of care. Canadian law requires that we behave in a particular manner so that others are not exposed to an unreasonable risk or harm. It is widely accepted that there is a certain amount of risk in many sport activities and, such is risks are knowable, foreseeable and acceptable. What is unacceptable in sport is behaviour which places others in a situation of unreasonable risk or danger. Any action is deemed negligent when all four of the following conditions are met:

1. a duty of care is owed to someone;
2. the standard of care imposed by the duty is not met
3. a harm or loss is suffered; and
4. the failure to meet the standard causes or substantially contributes to the harm or loss.

Misconduct Unacceptable or improper behaviour

Parents Those who have parental rights and responsibilities in relation to the child. For the purpose of these guidelines it also covers common law relationships, care-givers, guardians, co-habitees and others who have the primary responsibility for the care of the child.

Policy A course or principle of action adopted or proposed by Rugby Ontario.

Poor Practice In the CPP context can be described, but is not limited to:

- Behaviour or practices which are contrary to the behaviours or practices set out in the Code of Conduct.
- Behaviour which is not in keeping with professional standards or leadership as defined by the sport of rugby.
- Practices which, if not challenged, result in risks to the safety, development and welfare of children or a group of children.
- Behaviour which fails to meet the required standard of performance or conduct where the shortfall is of a minor nature.

Position of Trust All adults who work with children are in a position of trust which has been invested in them by the parents, the sport and the child. This relationship can be described as one in which the adult is in a position of power and influence by virtue of their role. In rugby, most adults in a position of trust recognize that there are certain boundaries in the coach/volunteer–player relationship which must not be crossed.

Prevention To stop something from happening or developing

Racism Conduct, words or practices which disadvantage or advantage people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be subtle or overt, intentional or unwitting and occur at different levels: individual, cultural or institutional.

Rights Entitlements enshrined in treaties, legislation or regulation.

Risk Exposure to harm or hazards.

Risk Assessment The process of identifying hazards and who might be affected by them and determining what action needs to be taken to reduce and manage the hazard.

Standard of Care: Part of the definition of negligence, standard of care is difficult to define precisely because it is always influenced by the risk inherent in the surrounding circumstances. Thus, the duty to act responsibly remains constant, but the specific behaviour required to meet the standard of responsibility will change with the circumstances. The standard of care in any given circumstance is influenced by four factors:

1. Written Standards – government regulations, laws, standards voluntary guidelines, policy and procedural documents, and organizations risk management plan, etc.
2. Unwritten standards – common practices of the sport that may not be written, but are known and accepted. [i.e. yelling a ‘heads up’ when a ball is going into the spectator section of a match].
3. Case Law – these are court decisions about similar fact situations prior decisions may act as a guide or precedent for future decisions where the circumstances are similar.
4. Common Sense – this means simply doing what feels right, or avoiding what feels wrong. Common sense is the sum of your knowledge – trusting your commend sense is always a good rule of thumb.

Statutory Responsibilities A responsibility enshrined in treaty, legislation, and/or regulation.

Welfare The health, happiness and fortunes of a person or group. Action or procedure designed to promote the basic physical and material wellbeing of people in need.

Volunteer Someone offering services in an unpaid capacity for an organization.

Vulnerable Exposed to being harmed or attacked.

SECTION #6 – INFORMATION/FAQ'S & FORMS

GUIDELINES ON COMPLETING POLICE RECORD CHECK FORMS

Please read these notes before completing a Police Records Check form.

Who must complete the Police Record Check Form?

It is the policy of Rugby Ontario to require **all persons** who are seeking to work on a professional or volunteer basis in positions that involve regular supervisory contact, or positions of authority with children in a rugby environment to submit an approved police records check for vulnerable sector screening.

Where can I obtain a Police Records Check (PRC) form?

Police Record Check forms are generally available at your nearest Police Services Station. Upon completion, and submission of the form in person to the police, you may also be asked to provide identification so that the personal details you provide can be verified.

Once the police have completed the required background check, they will mail the form to your home address. Please make a copy so that it may be kept in a secure manner on file with the rugby club or constituent association.

Additionally, you can complete a Police Records Check with CCCI, a private firm with whom Rugby Ontario has developed a strategic partnership. Information at: www.cccinc.ca

Who gets to read the Police Records Check form?

The Police Records Check should be completed by you, and delivered in person to the nearest police station. Only police authorities doing the necessary background checks will be able to read your PRC form.

What happens to the Police Records Check Form after the background check has been completed?

The Police Records Check, once completed by the authorities, is mailed to your home address. You should then bring a copy of the form to the Child Protection Officer or other designated official on the club, regional or provincial organization for a copy to be kept on confidential record

Are there any persons who are ‘exempted’ from a Police Records Check?

Currently, Rugby Ontario recognizes that persons in some professions, who may also take part in children’s and youth rugby, may be exempted because of the standard of requirements for their jobs.

What happens if I do not wish to complete a Police Records Check Form?

In accordance with our child protection policy and procedures you will not be allowed to work or volunteer in any position that directly involves working with children within Rugby Ontario and its member clubs.

SUGGESTED INTERVIEW / DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR PERSONS WISHING TO WORK OR VOLUNTEER WITH CHILDREN IN RUGBY

Interviews are a two way process of gathering information. The best way to do this is to ask questions that seek to explore a person’s previous experiences, their attitudes and to look at how they have used those experiences and their awareness of attitudes.

Questions that allow for simple ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ answer should be avoided. The following suggested questions will help you to plan the interview/ discussion and should be built around other information gathering questions. The questions are accompanied by the sorts of words and phrases that interviewers might look for in a good candidate.

Question:	Answer should demonstrate:
Can you tell us why you want to take on the post of [insert]?	<i>A commitment to helping young people enjoy the sport safely and to share knowledge and experience</i>
Can you tell us about your experience of caring for, working with, or coaching children and young people?	<i>Experiences as a parent, employment or voluntary work.</i>
Interviewers must also assess what level of direct, unsupervised contact was involved.	
What do you think are the attributes/skills required in a good coach/team manager of children and young people?	<i>An understanding of issues that affect children.</i>
<i>Communication skills</i>	<i>The importance of promoting enjoyment, not just achievement. Promoting healthy competitiveness. Being sensitive to the ability of children. Encouragement, not criticism</i>
Can you give us examples of where and how you have used some of those skills?	<i>Experience at work (perhaps working with adults, but the skills should be evident) or in voluntary work.</i>
Can you think of an example where you have been critical towards a child? How could you have handled it differently?	<i>Positively demonstrating or explaining how child could have acted/behaved.</i>

<p>If we approached people who know you well, what would they say were your strengths so far as this post/role is concerned?</p>	<p><i>Patience. Supportive. Encouraging attitude, etc.</i></p>
<p>If a child approaches you to say they're being bullied by others in the team, how will you handle this?</p>	<p><i>Interviewers should refer to the relevant section in the procedures and compare applicant's response.</i></p>
<p>How will you gain the respect and trust of children and young people? Can you give any examples?</p>	<p><i>Being fair, consistent, not having favorites, being clear in what I say and do, Being honest, positive, . Listening, Respect</i></p>
<p>Can you give us an example of where you have seen or heard someone treating a child inappropriately (verbally or physically) (at sports match, in the home, in the street)? What was the adult doing wrong?</p>	<p><i>Venting their frustration. Failing to understand the child's perspective. Failing to recognize that they are an adult and dealing with a child (using adult orientated language etc).</i></p>
<p>Imagine you've had a rotten day at work. Now, this evening, you have a coaching session. You're feeling very irritable and could take this out on the young people. What do you do about that?</p>	<p><i>Asking another adult to assist at the session. Being aware that that was work, this is now port. Focusing on the session and the young people.</i></p>
<p>A young child is lingering in the showers after a game. He says he can't dry himself properly and asks you to do it. What do you do?</p>	<p><i>Interviewers should refer to Code of Conduct and compare applicant's response. Ask child why. Get another adult to view (unobtrusively) actions.</i></p>
<p>Can you tell us what has given you greatest pleasure with your own children (or children of relatives/friends etc)?</p>	<p><i>Seeing them happy. Seeing them succeed. Seeing them participate in Helping them solve problems/acquire new skills</i></p>
<p>Will you undertake training sessions for coaches?</p>	<p><i>If the answer is 'No' then you do not have a successful candidate.</i></p>
<p>Will you undertake to read and abide by the Child Protection Policy and Procedures of Rugby Ontario?</p>	<p><i>If the answer is 'No' then you do not have a successful candidate.</i></p>

Responsibilities

- Assume a leadership role in the development, application, promotion and review of the RO Child Protection Policy and procedures, and will report to the Rugby Ontario, Board of Directors through the Risk Management Committee Chair, as required through the Secretary of the Board;
- Chair, the Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Disciplinary Panel, ensuring prompt, confidential and fair processes for the evaluation and monitoring of decisions that are taken;
- Act as the official Rugby Ontario contact for club members, volunteers, parents, and children regarding all matters pertaining to the protection of children and youth;
- Assist branches and clubs who wish to implement a Child Protection Officer position in their area;
- Establish and act as the official Rugby Ontario contact with local statutory agencies and coordinate the maintenance of records of reported cases, actions taken, ensuring prompt access to all necessary information;
- Keep current on developments and communicate with branches, clubs and members information on data protection, confidentiality and other legal issues that impact on the protection of children;
- Organize training courses in cooperation with branches, clubs and members with regards to child protection and safety [i.e. 'speak out' sessions, guest speakers, printed/website info, etc.];
- Have a child-focused approach and be perceived as being approachable, fair minded and impartial;
- Regularly (at least on a 3-year basis) monitor and review the Rugby Ontario Child Protection Policy and procedures; and
- Ensure there are mechanisms in place for active monitoring and evaluation for the purposes of this policy, including verification of valid police records checks for those defined under the Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Policy.
- Hold a current, valid police records check for volunteering with children and youth

Knowledge and Core Competencies:

- Ideally, a Child Protection Officer will have a background in working with children, such as teachers, social workers, child health workers, police services, etc. However, candidates do not need to be a child protection 'expert'. [That is the role and responsibility of statutory agencies such as Police Services and Social Work Agencies];

They should however demonstrate:

- A basic knowledge of legislation, government guidance and the Rugby Canada national framework for child protection;
- A basic knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of statutory agencies
- A knowledge of managing child protection and reporting procedures;
- A knowledge of behavior that is harmful to children – poor practices and abuse;
- An understanding of the core values and principles that support good practices;
- An awareness of equity issues in relation to child protection;
- Basic knowledge of how abusers 'target' and 'groom' organizations to abuse children, and to respond through developing best practices directed towards the prevention of these threats;
- Ability to advance and promote all areas of the RO, Child Protection Policy, and Code of Conduct and Ethics.

Responsibilities

- Assume a leadership role in the development, application, promotion and review of the RO Child Protection Policy and procedures, and will report to the Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Officer, as and when required;
- Chair, Rugby Ontario Branch, Child Protection Disciplinary Panel, ensuring prompt, confidential and fair processes for the evaluation and monitoring of decisions that are taken, or participate as a CPO of a branch in a Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Disciplinary Panel;
- Act as the official Rugby Ontario contact for club members, volunteers, parents, and children regarding all matters pertaining to the protection of children and youth within the branch union;
- Assist clubs who wish to implement a Child Protection Officer position in their area;
- Establish and act as the official Rugby Ontario contact with local statutory agencies and coordinate the maintenance of records of reported cases, actions taken, ensuring prompt access to all necessary information;
- Keep current on developments and communicate with clubs and members information on data protection, confidentiality and other legal issues that impact on the protection of children;
- Organize training courses in cooperation with the RO, CPO for clubs and members with regards to child protection and safety [i.e. ‘speak out’ sessions, guest speakers, printed/website info, etc;]
- Have a child-focused approach and be perceived as being approachable, fair minded and
- impartial;
- Regularly (at least on a 3-year basis) monitor and review the Rugby Ontario Child
- Protection Policy and procedures as they apply to the branch; and
Ensure there are mechanisms in place for active monitoring and evaluation for the purposes of the RO CPP, including verification of valid police records checks for those defined under the Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Policy.
- Hold a current, valid police records check for volunteering with children and youth

Knowledge and Core Competencies:

- Ideally, a Child Protection Officer will have a background in working with children, such as teachers, social workers, child health workers, police services, etc. However, candidates do not need to be a child protection ‘expert’. [That is the role and responsibility of statutory agencies such as Police Services and Social Work Agencies];

They should however demonstrate:

- A basic knowledge of legislation, government guidance and the Rugby Canada national framework for child protection;
- A basic knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of statutory agencies
- A knowledge of managing child protection and reporting procedures;
- A knowledge of behavior that is harmful to children – poor practices and abuse;
- An understanding of the core values and principles that support good practices;
- An awareness of equity issues in relation to child protection;
- Basic knowledge of how abusers ‘target’ and ‘groom’ organizations to abuse children, and to respond through developing best practices directed towards the prevention of these threats;
- Ability to advance and promote all areas of the RO, Child Protection Policy, and Code of Conduct and Ethics.

Responsibilities

- Assume a leadership role in the development, application, promotion and review of the RO Child Protection Policy and procedures on a rugby club, and will report to the Branch or Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Officer, as and when required;
- Participate on branch or provincial Child Protection Disciplinary Panels, ensuring prompt, confidential and fair processes for the evaluation and monitoring of decisions that are taken;
- Act as the official Rugby Ontario contact for his/her club members, volunteers, parents, and children regarding all matters pertaining to the protection of children and youth within the branch union;
- Act in cooperation with the Branch or RO CPO as the official Rugby Ontario contact with local statutory agencies and coordinate the maintenance of records of reported cases, actions taken, ensuring prompt access to all necessary information;
- Keep current on developments and communicate with club members information on data protection, confidentiality and other legal issues that impact on the protection of children;
- Organize in cooperation with Branch or RO CPO, training courses in cooperation with club, his/her club membership with regards to child protection and safety [i.e. 'speak out' sessions, guest speakers, printed/website info, etc;]
- Have a child-focused approach and be perceived as being approachable, fair minded and
- impartial;
- Regularly (at least on a 3-year basis) monitor and review the Rugby Ontario Child Protection Policy and procedures as they apply to the club ensure there are mechanisms in place for active monitoring and evaluation for the purposes of the RO CPP, including verification of valid police records checks for those defined under the Rugby Ontario, Child Protection Policy.
- Hold a current, valid police records check for volunteering with children and youth

Knowledge and Core Competencies:

- Ideally, a Child Protection Officer will have a background in working with children, such as teachers, social workers, child health workers, police services, etc. However, candidates do not need to be a child protection 'expert'. [That is the role and responsibility of statutory agencies such as Police Services and Social Work Agencies];

They should however demonstrate:

- A basic knowledge of legislation, government guidance and the Rugby Canada national framework for child protection;
- A basic knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of statutory agencies
- A knowledge of managing child protection and reporting procedures;
- A knowledge of behavior that is harmful to children – poor practices and abuse;
- An understanding of the core values and principles that support good practices;
- An awareness of equity issues in relation to child protection;
- Basic knowledge of how abusers 'target' and 'groom' organizations to abuse children, and to respond through developing best practices directed towards the prevention of these threats;
- Ability to advance and promote all areas of the RO, Child Protection Policy, and Code of Conduct and Ethics.



RUGBY ONTARIO INCIDENT REFERRAL FORM

If a child requires IMMEDIATE ATTENTION, please call the POLICE or your LOCAL CHILD AID SERVICES.

Please fill out this form if you suspect or have been a witness to any form of abuse in a rugby setting. .

CLUB OR RUGBY ONTARIO EVENT	
YOUR NAME	YOUR AFFLIATION WITH THIS CLUB OR RUGBY ONTARIO EVENT

1. Participant's Information

SURNAME		GIVEN NAMES	
DATE OF BIRTH	YYYY MM DD	SEX	AREA CODE TELEPHONE NUMBER (RES.)
ADDRESS	APT/UNIT #	CITY	POSTAL CODE
CHILD'S DISABILITY (IF ANY)	CHILD'S ETHNIC ORIGIN		
PARENTS/GUARDIAN NAME:			

2. Incident Report:

Date and time of incident:

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Your observations (please be specific):

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Please record exactly what the child said to you (Remember do not lead the child - record actual details. Continue on separate sheet is necessary)

Action taken so far:

3. External Agencies Contacted:

Police: Yes / No

If YES, which

Name and contact number: _____

Details of advice received:

Local Child Aid Society: Yes / No

If YES, which

Name and contact number: _____

Details of advice received:

Rugby Ontario: Yes / No

If YES, with whom did you speak with:

Name and contact number: _____

Details of advice received:

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Other: Yes / No

Which:

--

Name and contact number: _____

Details of advice received:

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DATE	SIGNATURE OF INDIVIDUAL FILING THIS REPORT	PRINTED NAME
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Please remember to maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis – only if it will protect the child. Do not discuss the incident with anyone other than those who need to know.

A copy of this form should be sent to the local Child Aid services following a telephone report and to the Rugby Ontario Child Protection Officer at 215 – 3 Concorde Gate, Toronto, ON M3C 3N7.