

Promoting effectively the wellbeing of athletes

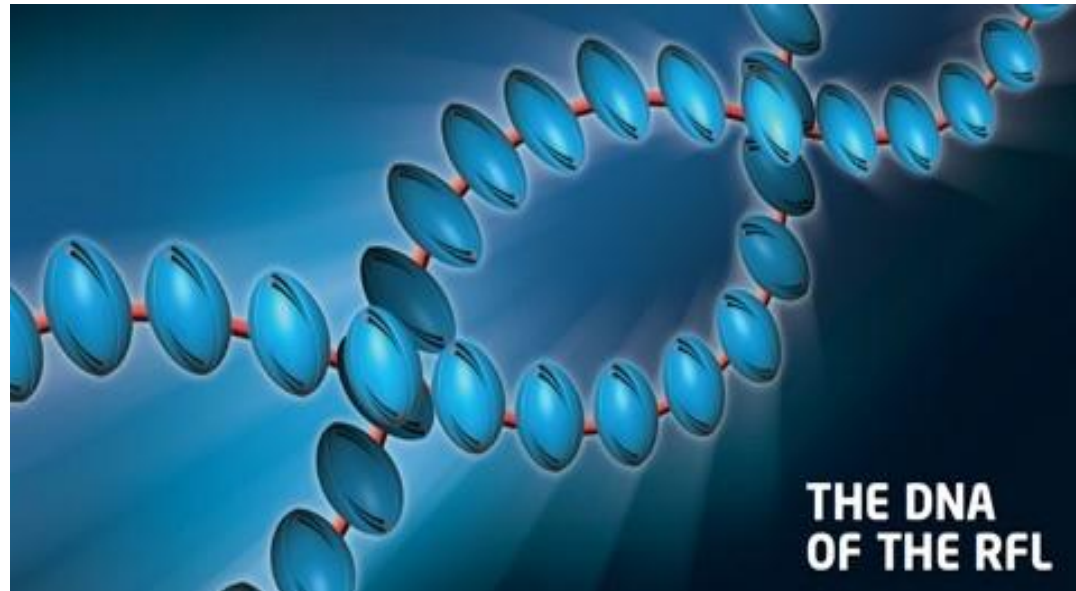
Colette Eden
Safeguarding Manager
Rugby Football League

The DNA of a Governing Body

The Rugby Football League

Our Values are

- Fair
- Care
- Share
- Dare



RESPECT

Rugby League prides itself on being a family game which is inclusive, uncompromising and passionate. The principles of RESPECT, set out the obligations on all participants to maintain the game's high standards. Rugby League is passionate about, and prides itself, on its reputation as

“The Family Game”

The welfare of the child is paramount

Its Safeguarding, not just child protection

Making a safe and enjoyable environment for young people

An environment where young people can be themselves and develop, at their own pace, to be the best they can and WANT to be



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Duties of an NGB

- We have a legal duty to care for our young players
- We have a moral duty too
- We want more children to take part in our sport, to stay playing and feel safe = enjoyment
- We want our coaches to recognise the importance of their role and how this can affect a young person's mental health and wellbeing

Role of the Safeguarding Manager

- Named person and first point of contact for concerns
- A link between all areas of the game – overview of what is happening in our sport
- Serious Case Team Lead
- Safeguarding Education Lead
- Inter Agency Representative for the RFL
- Link for advice, guidance and referral

What we provide

Communicated through directed downloadable publications

- A range of resources that assist children, parents, coaches and clubs
- A range of courses/education to protect children taking part in rugby league and to protect coaches by educating them to protect themselves and their teams
- Courses that enable coaches to identify inappropriate behaviour and concerns

What we do – Policy

- The policy tells everyone in rugby league what we do, what we expect and what they can expect
- To run a club or team you must adhere to the policy
- If things go wrong, we can ‘charge’ clubs for failing to protect children and young people

How does this help young athletes?

- Gives protection to children and young people
- Identifies their rights within the sport
- Gives responsibility – Code of Conduct for players
- Shows parents what their child can expect within the game and who to go to if things go wrong or they have concerns

What we do – Trained CWO's

- Our policy states that all clubs with youth and junior players must have at least one Club Welfare Officer (CWO) in place
- We train CWOs
- Provide an annual conference to share good practice and give training updates
- Newsletters that focus on issues raised by CWOs and clubs
- Telephone support 'out of hours'

How does a CWO promote well-being?

- Someone to go to, to talk to, to report to
- Can offer support on a range of issues and concerns from young people
- Not the coach or parent – independent
- Can observe athletes behaviour and changes
- Key person for all within a club to refer to
- Safer Recruitment



Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Lite is exactly what you might think-a first aid approach to mental health. We encourage our Club Welfare Officers to attend this course to give them knowledge and confidence to recognise the signs of mental health problems, encourage someone to seek the right help and to reduce the stigma around mental illness. MHFA is a skills intervention course. This course is useful before the club receives the State of Mind presentation



The State of Mind programme was established in 2011 with the aim of improving the mental health, wellbeing and working life of rugby league players and communities. Mental health and sport professionals deliver education sessions to professional and amateur clubs to get them talking about mental health issues within sport – reducing the stigma

TACKLE IT!

Tackle IT is a game wide programme with three key messages

- Celebrate the diversity within Rugby League
- Zero tolerance to discrimination, prejudice and abuse relating to gender, gender identity, race, disability, age, religion or faith and sexual orientation
- Importance of reporting any unacceptable language and behaviour.
- Tackle IT! comprises of a DVD, suite of 7 posters and an education pack aimed at high schools and our clubs to support the Tackle IT! programme

Sport respects your rights

The RFL in conjunction with Edge Hill University and The Lawn Tennis Association are part of this project, that aims to help protect young people from sexual abuse and violence.



The RFL group devised the #STOP 1 in 5 hand signal campaign.

@RLYouthPanel

@Sportrespect

RL Youth Panel



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Youth Plans

- We have a group of young people to give presentations to young people in our clubs
- They will recruit other young people to be part of the SRYR project
- They will recruit young people to be part of our youth panel to work with us to represent young peoples views

What will the youth panel do?

- The group will inform the RFL on their participation in the game
- We will ask “what do you want us to do to make your experience better?”
- How should we communicate with you?
What is the best medium?
- Consultation on policy, procedure and change
- Basically, listening to young people

Summary

- The RFL are committed to young people and their experiences in our sport
- We safeguard young people by having a policy that promotes this
- CWOs support young people and the RFL
- We work with partners to enhance our provision (State of Mind and MHFA)
- RL Youth Panel will further promote our work

Future Developments

- Rolling out the Sport respects programme beyond the project requirements
- Reflecting and implementing recommendations from the research carried out by Edge Hill University. The research demonstrated the value of CWO and Coach commitment to safeguarding

Safeguarding and Child Protection in Rugby League: A Research Evaluation. Dr Mike Hartill, Dr Melanie Lang & Nicholas Ashley

A Research Project funded by: Edge Hill University and The Child Protection in Sport Unit