



IRFU Safeguarding – Codes of Conduct



Age-Grade Players

- Play for enjoyment and become part of the rugby family
- Respect the “Game of Rugby” and play within the Laws of the Game
- Accept the referee’s decision and let your captain or coach ask any relevant questions
- Play with control. Do not lose your temper
- Always do your best and be committed to the game, your team and your club
- Be a “good sport”. Applaud all good play whether by your team or the opposition
- Respect your opponent. Treat all players as you would like to be treated. Do not “bully” or take advantage of any player
- Rugby is a team sport. Make sure you co-operate with your coach; team-mates and members of your club
- Remember that the goals of the game are to have fun, improve your skills and feel good
- At the end of the match thank your opponents and the referee for the match
- Always remember that you owe a duty of care to your opponents. Tackle hard but fairly, do not intend to hurt your opponent
- Winning and losing is part of sport: Win with humility – lose with dignity
- As part of the team it is important that you attend training regularly and listen to your coach and help your team
- As a team sport it is important to understand that all members are important to the team!
- Remember you are representing your team, club, family and the Game of Rugby

Parents

- Remember, Age-Grade Players play rugby for their enjoyment, not only yours
- Encourage your child always to play by the Laws of the Game
- Teach Age-Grade Players that honest endeavour is as important as winning, so that the result of each game is accepted without disappointment
- Help Age-Grade Players to work towards skill improvement and good sportsmanship
- Set a good example by applauding good play on both sides
- Never ridicule, humiliate or shout at Age-Grade Players for making a mistake or losing a match
- Do not place emphasis on winning at all costs
- Do not force an unwilling child to participate in the playing of rugby. If the child is to play, he/she will do so in good time through encouragement
- Support all efforts to remove verbal & physical abuse from rugby
- As a spectator do not use profane language or harass referees, coaches or Age-Grade Players
- Do not publicly question the referee’s judgment and never their honesty
- Recognise the value and importance of volunteer referees and coaches

- Identify and acknowledge the good qualities of the Game of Rugby and uphold these values
- Remember you and your child's contribution to the Game of Rugby is very important to the IRFU and be proud of your contribution
- Understand the value of team sport and its importance

Spectators

- Remember that although Age-Grade Players play organised rugby they are not "miniature internationals"
- Be on your best behavior and lead by example. Do not use profane language or harass referees, players or coaches
- Applaud good play by the visiting team as well as your own
- Show respect for your team's opponents. Without them there would not be a match
- Condemn the use of violence in all forms at every opportunity
- Verbal abuse of Age-Grade Players or Sports Leaders cannot be accepted in any shape or form
- Age-Grade Players or Sports Leaders are not fair targets for ignorant behavior
- Encourage Age-Grade Players to play by the Laws of the Game
- Spectators can contribute to the enjoyment of the event and all involved
- Be proud of your club and the Game of Rugby

Sports Leaders

- Be positive during sessions and competitions, praise and encourage effort as well as results
- Put welfare of Age-Grade Player first, strike a balance between this and winning/results
- Encourage fair play and treat Age-Grade Players equally
- Recognise developmental needs, ensuring activities are appropriate for the individual
- Plan and prepare appropriately
- Have experience relevant to working with young people or hold up-to-date qualifications and be committed to the guidelines in the IRFU Safeguarding policy
- Involve parents where possible and inform parents when problems arise
- Keep a record of attendance at training and competitions
- Keep a brief record of injury(s) and action taken
- Keep a brief record of problem/action/outcomes, if behavioural problems arise
- Report any concerns in accordance with the IRFU's Safeguarding procedures
- Avoid:
 - Spending excessive amounts of time with Age-Grade Players away from others
 - Taking sessions alone
 - Constant communication with individual Age-Grade Players by mobile phone or email or social media forums
 - Taking Age-Grade Players to your home
 - Taking Age-Grade Players on journeys alone in your car
- Sports Leaders should not:
 - Use any form of physical punishment or physical force on an Age-Grade Player, or ridicule or intimidate Age-Grade Players in any way
 - Exert undue influence over any Age-Grade Players in order to obtain personal benefit or reward

- Engage in rough physical games, sexually provocative games or allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind, and/or make sexually suggestive comments about, or to an Age-Grade Player. This includes innuendo, flirting or inappropriate gestures and terms
- Take measurements or engage in certain types of fitness testing without the presence of another adult
- Undertake any form of therapy (hypnosis, massage etc) in the training of Age-Grade Players
- Remember that as a Sports Leader of an Age-Grade team” you are acting “in loco parentis” and that you have a duty of care to all your Age-Grade Players
- Always follow professional medical advice in determining when an injured Age-Grade Player is ready to play again
- Adhere to policies for your club/team to agree procedures regarding discipline, injury prevention & treatment, team selection etc
- Be reasonable in your demands on the Age-Grade Players’ time, energy and enthusiasm

Referees

- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every Age-Grade Player and treat everyone equally, regardless of gender, disability, ethnic origin, religion etc
- Put welfare of Age-Grade Player first
- Encourage fair play and ensure safety is paramount in all games
- Facilitate the playing of the game through the correct application of the laws of the game
- Plan and prepare appropriately, be punctual
- Hold up-to-date referee qualifications and be committed to the guidelines in the IRFU’s Safeguarding Policy
- Act as a role model and promote the positive aspects of rugby and maintain highest standards of personal conduct
- Be responsible for monitoring boundaries between a working relationship and friendship with Age-Grade Players
- Remain positive when dealing with Age-Grade players and/or coaches, parents and spectators
- Manage disciplinary matters appropriately, report to the Branch when necessary
- Follow agreed protocols regarding changing rooms
- Report any concerns in accordance with Section 4 of IRFU Safeguarding Policy
- Avoid
 - Spending excessive amounts of time with Age-Grade Players away from others
 - Constant communication with individual Age-Grade Players by mobile phone or email or social media forums
 - Taking Age-Grade Players to your home
 - Taking Age-Grade Players on journeys alone in your car
- Referees should not
 - Use any form of physical punishment or physical force on a child
 - Exert undue influence over a participant
 - Engage in rough physical games, sexually provocative games or allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind, and/or make sexually suggestive comments about, or to an Age-Grade Player. This includes innuendo, flirting or inappropriate gestures and terms