

IRISH RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

CODE OF ETHICS 2002

**IRISH RUGBY
FOOTBALL UNION**

INDEX:

1. Preface
 2. Introduction
 3. Coaching Practices:
 - 3.1 Coaching and Instructing
 - 3.2 Co-operation
 - 3.3 Advertising
 - 3.4 Integrity
 - 3.5 Issues of Responsibility
 - 3.6 Humanity
 - 3.7 Relationships
 - 3.8 Confidentiality
 - 3.9 Abuse of Privilege
 - 3.10 Personal Standards
 - 3.11 Safety
 - 3.12 Issues of Competence
 - 3.13 Good Practice
 4. Child Abuse:
 - 4.1 Categories of Abuse
 - 4.2 Reporting Procedures for Child Abuse
 - 4.3 Response to a Child Reporting
 5. Summary & Key Points
 6. Appendix 1
 - Administration:**
 - 6.1 Structures Rules and Regulations
 - 6.2 Recruitment and Selection
 - 6.3 Children's Officers
 - 6.4 Poor v Unlawful Practice
- Appendix 2**
7. Designated Officer Contact List
- Appendix 3**
8. Reference and Source Material
 9. Emergency Contact List for Coaches

1. PREFACE

As with other sports, rugby football contributes positively to the development of the individual. It is a vehicle for the mental, physical and emotional development, a development which is further enhanced if the Age Grade player is guided by an informed, enlightened and caring Coach working within an acceptable ethical framework.

It is most important to establish and maintain standards of ethical behaviour especially in the coaching practices of young players. Key principles of responsibility and competence provide the core values of Age-Grade coaching and the fundamental framework of this document.

This code has been developed from the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport as set out by the Irish Sports Council and the Sports Council of Northern Ireland and from references to the relevant publications by other bodies listed at the back of this document.

It is the policy of the Irish Rugby Football Union to safeguard the welfare of our Age-Grade players by protecting them from physical, emotional and sexual harm. Our Age Grade coaches play an important role in carrying out this policy.

The Irish Rugby Football Union recognises and accepts that in all matters concerning Child Protection, the welfare and protection of our Age-Grade Players is a priority. This Code of Ethics form part of the I.R.F.U.'s Regulations and should be used in conjunction with our published Codes of Behaviour.

***Irish Rugby Football Union
September 2002.***



**IRISH RUGBY
FOOTBALL UNION**

2. INTRODUCTION

- (a) This Code of Ethics was written with specific reference to Age Grade Coaches. However, most aspects of this code are also applicable to other people involved in the game. Therefore, all Officials should be aware that this Code also applies to them.
- (b) For the purposes of clarification the term “official” will be used in this document, to mean all adults with either supervisory, coaching or management responsibility for players. The purpose in this document is to provide guidelines for the behaviour of adults who are responsible either in a club or representative team capacity.
- (c) This Code is part of the I.R.F.U.’s policy on Child Protection. It is to be read in conjunction with the Irish Sports Council and The Sports Council of Northern Ireland’s “Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children’s Sport”. Adherence to these guidelines is intended to protect officials, coaches, under-age players and the game of Rugby.
- (d) On receiving and reading this document Officials must sign the Appendix 1- “Declaration of Intent” and hand the declaration to the club Youth Co-ordinator to be kept on record.
- (e) More information on the Code of Ethics is available on the Irish Sports Council web-site at: www.irishsportsCouncil.ie. See also “Our Duty to Care” - The Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children & Young People. (Dept of Health and Children)

Disclaimer:

This Code of Ethics is issued by the IRFU to assist, guide and encourage its Members, Clubs and Branches in achieving best practices for the benefit of all involved in the Game of Rugby.

Members, Clubs and Branches should however take their own advice as may be appropriate.

The IRFU cannot accept responsibility for supervising Members, Clubs or Branches and in particular disclaim liability for damage, loss or injury to person or property arising from any neglect, default or omission by any Member, Club or Branch or person acting on behalf of any Member, Club or Branch.

IRISH RUGBY
FOOTBALL UNION

3 COACHING PRACTICES

3.1 Coaching and Instructing

- (a) Even though the Coaching Manuals standards focus on and describe work functions, they are based on a number of accepted assumptions and values which underpin good practice in coaching and instructing.

Throughout the following Code the expression “Coach” whether used in the singular or the plural shall include all teachers/coaches, assistants and other helpers whose activities are connected with the disciplines regulated by the Irish Rugby Football Union (I.R.F.U.). Where the context of the Code admits the expression Coach this may also include Officials.

- (b) The purpose of the Code of Ethics, referred to as the Code, is to establish and maintain standards for Officials and to inform and protect members of the public using their services.

Ethical standards comprise such values as integrity, responsibility, competence and confidentiality. Individuals who are members of the I.R.F.U. are deemed to have assented to the Code and as such, recognise and adhere to the principles and responsibilities embodied in it.

- (c) The Code creates a framework within which Age Grade Coaches, when engaged in coaching - in the fullest sense of the expression - should always work. The Code has been written as a series of guidelines rather than a set of instructions.

However, violations of the Code may result in complaints being made to the I.R.F.U. and, in which case, the relevant committee in determining whether a conduct complained of has brought the sport into disrepute or amounts to a violation of the I.R.F.U. Laws. This committee will then consider the Code’s provisions when assessing the guilt of individuals against whom complaints have been made and/or the appropriate sanctions to apply.

3.2 Co-operation

- (a) Coaches should communicate and co-operate with other sports and allied professions in the best interest of their players. An example of such contact would be the seeking of educational and career advice/counseling for young players whose training impinges upon the performance of their studies.
- (b) Coaches must communicate and co-operate with medical and ancillary practitioners in the diagnosis, treatment and management of their player’s medical and psychological problems.

3.3 Advertising

- (a) Advertising by Coaches in respect of qualifications and/or services shall be accurate and professionally restrained.
- (b) Coaches shall not display any affiliation with an organisation in a manner that falsely implies sponsorship or accreditation by that organisation.

3.4. Integrity

Coaches should refrain from publicly criticising fellow Coaches. Differences of opinion should be dealt with on a personal basis and more-serious disputes should be referred to the Branch or to the I.R.F.U. of individuals against whom complaints have been made and/or the appropriate sanctions to apply.

3.5. Issues of Responsibility

- (a) Coaching is a deliberately undertaken responsibility, and Coaches are responsible for the observation of the principle embodied in the Code of Ethics.

3.6. Humanity

- (a) Coaches must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every human being and their ultimate right to self-determination. Specifically, teachers/coaches must treat everyone equally within the context of their activity, regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or political persuasion.

3.7. Relationships

- (a) The good Coach will be concerned primarily with the well being, health and future of the individual Player and only secondarily with the optimising of performance.
- (b) A key element in a Coach Player relationship is the development of independence of the Player.
- (c) Players must be encouraged to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance in training, in competition, and in their social life.
- (d) The relationship between Coach and Player relies heavily on mutual trust and respect.
- (e) In detail this means that the Player should be aware of the Coaches' qualifications and experience and must be given the opportunity to consent to or decline proposals for training and performance.
- (f) Coaches must not encourage Players to violate the Laws of Rugby and should actively seek to discourage such action. Furthermore, Coaches should encourage Players to obey the spirit of such Laws.
- (g) Coaches must not compromise their Players by advocating measures which could be deemed to constitute seeking to gain an unfair advantage.
- (h) Above all, coaches must never advocate the use of proscribed drugs or other banned performance enhancing substances.
- (i) Coaches must treat opponents and officials with due respect both in victory and defeat and should encourage their Players to act in a similar manner.
- (j) Coaches must accept responsibility for the conduct of their Players insofar as they will undertake to discourage inappropriate behaviour.

3.8. Confidentiality

- (a) Coaches inevitably gather a great deal of personal information about Players in the course of a working relationship. Coach and Players must reach agreement as to what is regarded as confidential information i.e. not divulged to a third party without the express approval of the Player.
- (b) Confidentiality does not preclude the disclosure of information, to persons who can be judged to have a right to know, relating to Players when relevant to the following:
 - evaluation of the Player for competitive selection purposes;
 - pursuit of disciplinary action involving Players;
 - pursuit of disciplinary action by the I.R.F.U. or statutory bodies involving fellow coaches in alleged breaches of this Code of Ethics.

3.9. Abuse of Privilege

- (a) A Coach must not attempt to exert undue influence over the players' performance in order to obtain personal benefit or reward.

3.10. Personal Standards

- (a) The Coach must consistently display high personal standards and project a favourable image of the game and of Coaching - to other Players, Coaches, officials, spectators, the media and the general public.
- (b) Personal appearance is a matter of individual taste but the Coach has an obligation to project an image of health, cleanliness and functional efficiency.
- (c) Coaches should not drink alcohol so soon before coaching that their judgement may be impaired and the smell of alcohol will still be on their breath when working with Players.
- (d) Whilst players are present, consumption of alcohol should be avoided. When the event is a social one, with players present, consumption should be moderate.
- (e) As persons responsible for the well-being of young people, it is inappropriate to smoke in their presence or to behave in any fashion inconsistent with your position of responsibility.
- (f) Coaches are given a position of trust by parents and players, and are therefore expected to show the highest standards of behaviour whilst in the company of age-grade players.

3.11. Safety

- (a) Coaches have a responsibility to ensure the safety of the players with whom they work as far as possible within the limits of their control.
- (b) All reasonable steps should be taken to establish a safe working environment.
- (c) The work done and the manner in which it is done should be in keeping with regular and approved practice within the game.

- (d) The activity being undertaken should be suitable for the age, experience and ability of the Players.
- (e) Players should have been systematically prepared for the activity being undertaken and made aware of their personal responsibilities in terms of safety.

3.12. Issues of Competence

- (a) Coaches shall confine themselves to practice in those fields of Coaching in which they have been trained/educated, and which are recognised by the I.R.F.U. as being valid.

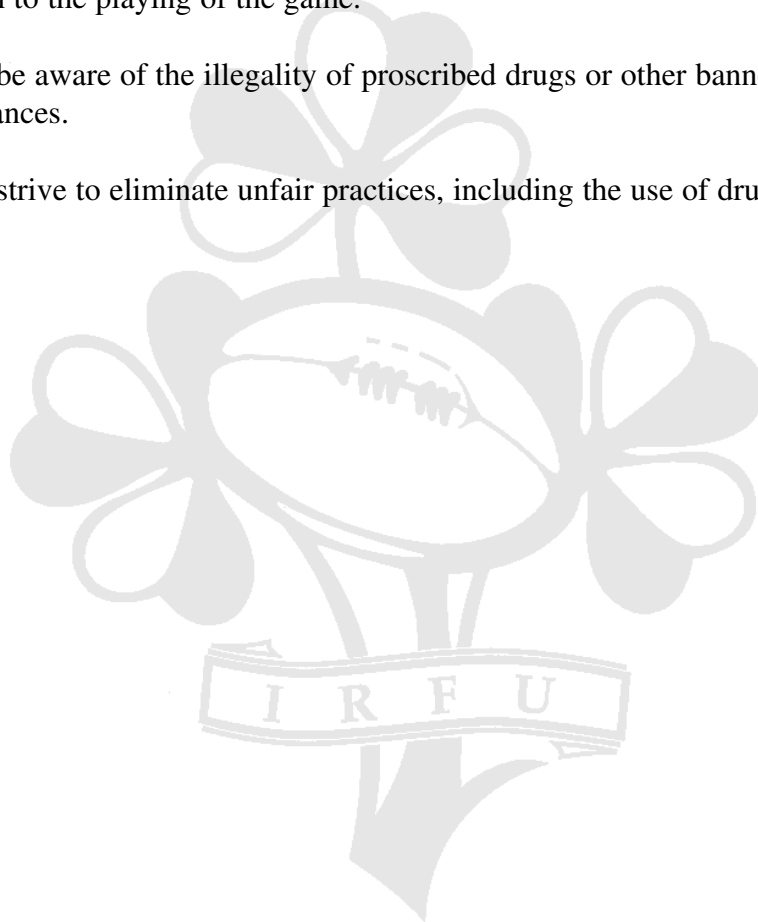
Valid areas of expertise are those directly concerned with Rugby coaching. Training includes the accumulation of knowledge and skills through both formal Coach Education courses and by experience at a level of competence acceptable for coaching practice.

- (b) Coaches should regularly seek ways of increasing their professional development and self awareness.
- (c) Coaches should welcome evaluation of their work by colleagues and be able to account to Players, Clubs, Branches and the I.R.F.U. and colleagues for their actions.
- (d) Coaches have a responsibility to themselves and their Players to maintain their own effectiveness, resilience and abilities, and to know when their personal resources are so depleted as to make it necessary for them to seek help and/or withdraw from coaching whether temporarily or permanently.

3.13. Good Practice

- (a) Coaches are responsible for setting and monitoring the boundaries between a working relationship and friendship with their players. This is particularly important when the coach and players are of opposite sex and/or when the player is a young person.
- (b) The coach must realise that certain situations or friendly actions could be misinterpreted, not only by the player, but by outsiders motivated by jealousy, dislike or mistrust and could lead to allegations of sexual misconduct or impropriety.
- (c) The Coach of age-grade players acts in 'loco parentis', and to that extent, his/her duty of care is more onerous than that of a coach to an adult team.
- (d) The coach will on occasion be required to travel and reside with players in the course of coaching and competitive matches. On such occasions, ensure separate sleeping accommodation for Officials and Players.
- (e) Where the team is composed of both genders, there should be a male and female Official present.
- (f) The Coach should never be alone in a room or similar with a Player. Where this is unavoidable, leave the door open and be within earshot of others.

- (g) Inappropriate physical contact is not advisable except for necessary manipulation of limbs when the teaching technique takes place.
- (h) Physical contact for testing or para-medical purposes must only be done in public and should be appropriate in nature. Any doubts of a medical nature should be passed on to a suitably qualified medical person.
- (i) Physical relationships with under-age players are illegal.
- (j) Officials should avoid situations where they are alone with young players in changing rooms. Wherever practicable, there should always be two or more adults in changing rooms.
- (k) The use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco should be actively discouraged as being incompatible with a healthy approach to the playing of the game.
- (l) Coaches should be aware of the illegality of proscribed drugs or other banned performance-enhancing substances.
- (m) Coaches should strive to eliminate unfair practices, including the use of drugs which effect performance.



**IRISH RUGBY
FOOTBALL UNION**

4. CHILD ABUSE

- (a) The protection of age-grade players from any form of abuse must be a priority for all those involved in Rugby.
- (b) If age-grade players are at risk of harm, it is the duty of those in a position of responsibility to take immediate steps to remove the risk and to ensure that all necessary procedures are undergone in accordance with statutory guidelines.

The detection and prevention of child abuse depends on the cooperation of all concerned. The following points are central to the success of this effort:

- Knowledge of the behavioural and physical indicators of various forms of abuse;
- Knowledge of the appropriate action and response to be taken when abuse is revealed or detected;
- Vigilance and avoidance of all situations conducive to risk;
- Open, trusting and cooperative relationships within the Club and with parents/guardians and others concerned with children's progress or welfare.

4.1 Categories of Abuse

1. Physical Abuse.

Is any form of non-accidental injury that causes significant harm to a child. It also occurs when an adult gives children alcohol or inappropriate drugs or fails to supervise their access to these substances.

2. Child Neglect.

Neglect is normally defined in terms of omission, where a child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to affection from adults or medical care. It may also include neglect of a child's basic emotional needs.

Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific point. For instance, a child who suffers a series of minor injuries is not having his or her needs for supervision and safety met. The threshold of significant harm is reached when the child's needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well being and or development are severely affected.

3. Emotional Abuse.

Is normally to be found in the relationship between an adult and a child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child's need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. It is rarely manifested in terms of physical symptoms.

4. Sexual Abuse.

Occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others.

It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexual inappropriate ways.

Officials involved with age-grade Rugby should be aware of the signs and types of child abuse as set out in the Irish Sports Council and The Sports Council of Northern Ireland's "Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport".

See also Sections 5.8 to 5.10 of **Sports Council's Code of Ethics**.

4.2. Reporting Procedures for Child Abuse.

- (a) It is important to remember that reporting suspected child abuse in good faith is not the same as making an accusation of abuse i.e. reporting does not mean accusing.
- (b) Responsibility for the investigation of child abuse cases suspected or otherwise, lies with the Health Boards and the Statutory Authorities. Responsibility for monitoring and co-coordinating the management of such cases also rests with the Health Boards.
- (c) It is not appropriate for individuals, Clubs or Branches to carry out internal investigations into cases where child abuse is suspected.
- (d) Any person who knows or suspects that a child is being harmed or is at risk of being harmed has a duty to convey his/her concern to the Local Health Authority.
- (e) It may be appropriate for a person to discuss concerns they have with another person in the club (e.g. Youth officer or the Youth Co-coordinator), or should the concern relate to this person, then a senior official of the Club or Branch should be notified of the concerns. It is advisable that all inquiries are made directly to the local Health Board.
- (f) The type of discussions referred to in (e) above would most likely happen in cases where no specific allegation of child abuse has been made, but the concern is based on emotional behaviour and/or physical indications of a particular child.
- (g) Within a school, concerns relating to child abuse must be reported immediately to the Headmaster/Principal.
- (h) In cases where an allegation has been made, then the matter should be reported immediately to the relevant Statutory Authorities.
- (I) When matters regarding the safety of children arise (except in the event of abuse) in the Club scenario, it will also be necessary for a Senior Club official to be informed of the allegations made, so that suspension of the person against whom the allegations have been made, from activities which involve age-grade players, may be carried out until the conclusion of an investigation by the Statutory Authorities.
- (j) All concerns and allegations made should be carefully recorded. Confidentiality should be maintained at all stages.
- (k) In the case of a suspension, the official being suspended should be formally notified by senior personnel within the Club or Branch.

- (l) An Official against whom an allegation of abuse has been made should be informed that this is not an accusation and that the procedures being undertaken are in accordance with statutory guidelines. He or she should be assured that all information will be dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner within the Club or Branch.
- (m) The Official should be made aware of the general nature of any allegations made against him/her (except in the case of child sexual abuse allegations) and of any allegation being made known to the Statutory Authorities.
- (n) The Official concerned should be afforded the opportunity to present a formal response to the allegation to senior personnel in the Club or Branch. From this point onwards the matter should only be dealt with by the Statutory Authorities.
- (o) In the case of an allegation of child sexual abuse, it will be necessary to withhold the name of the child and the precise details of the allegation, in the interest of confidentiality and child protection. Where possible inform the parents/guardians of the child unless in doing so the child will be further endangered.

4.3. Response to a Child Reporting.

- (a) Deal with any allegation of abuse in a sensitive and competent manner through listening to and facilitating the child to tell about the problem.
- (b) Stay calm and do not show any extreme reaction to what the child is saying and take it seriously.
- (c) Permit the child to speak without interruption, accepting what is said.
- (d) Reassure the child that he/she was right to tell, and that he/she will be helped.
- (e) Alleviate feeling of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement on the person against whom the allegation is made.
- (f) False promises should not be made such as saying no-one else will be told.
- (g) Indicate what should happen next, such as informing parents, club children's liaison officer reporting to statutory authority etc.
- (h) Any and all consultations with others should be entirely confidential and should not involve investigative procedures.
- (i) Write a detailed account of any discussion regarding alleged or suspected abuse, as soon as possible after the discussion has taken place. Send the details to the local Health Board and the Branch Designated Officer.
- (j) Do not trivialise child abuse issues or trivialise or exaggerate what the child has told you.

5. *Summary - Key Points.*

- (a) Should you witness or receive information that leads you to believe that a serious breach of this Code has occurred, in addition to observing the Reporting Procedures defined in paragraph 16, you are required to bring the matter to the attention of the relevant management body, be it Club, Branch or Union. No further action is to be taken on your part, and no information is to be provided to others, save as provided below.
- (b) If you have evidence of an illegal activity that directly relates to the Game, you are obliged to inform the Gardai or Police Service of Northern Ireland as appropriate and you should notify the Branch and the I.R.F.U. of that fact.
- (c) You are not to discuss the matter with persons not already involved except with the express permission of the investigating authorities.
- (d) You are required to give every assistance possible to the Gardai, or Police Service of Northern Ireland or to the appropriate Committee of the Irish Rugby Football Union in the investigation of the matter, and to assist with any necessary steps being taken by them in relation to the matter.
- (e) Should a member of the I.R.F.U. make or repeat false allegations against a fellow member, then the former should be held liable under Law 17 (e) v. (which allows for the imposition of penalties) sub-section (v) which states “.....or any alleged conduct by any of the fore-going detrimental to the best interest of the Union or of the Game....”

Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 (IRL)
See section 5.7 (page 38) of **Sports Council’s Code of Ethics.**

All Clubs affiliated to the I.R.F.U. are required to furnish all of their members and officials with copies of this Code. Clubs and/or Officials found to be in breach of this Code will be required to provide an explanation to the I.R.F.U. who, where appropriate will impose disciplinary action under Law 17 (e) v.

IRISH RUGBY
FOOTBALL UNION

IRISH RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

Code of Ethics

Declaration of intent:

I _____ (Coach/Manager/Assistant)

of _____ RFC, Under _____ (age group),

hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the new Code of Ethics.

I also acknowledge that I have read the document and hereby declare my intention to adhere to the IRFU's Code of Ethics and other policies and or documents regarding

Age Grade Rugby.

I will also support initiatives by the IRFU; Irish Sports Council and

the Sports Council of Northern Ireland on matters relating to

Children's Sport in Ireland.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Coach/Manager/Assistant)

Received on: _____ by _____
(Club Youth Co-ordinator)

All age grade coaches/managers and/or assistants to receive a copy of the Code of Ethics and after reading the document sign this page and hand it to the club Youth Co-ordinator. Clubs to keep all declarations on record in the club.

Age grade coaches/managers and or assistants working in Northern Ireland or in clubs affiliated to the IRFU Ulster Branch must complete the Pre-employment Consultancy Service (PECS) form, as required by the Sports Council of Northern Ireland.

It is important to note that clubs are responsible for the recruiting and screening of volunteers and therefore must have suitable policies in place.

6. Appendix 1

6. Administration

6.1 Structure, Rules and Regulations.

Once a commitment to the code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport has been enshrined within the organisation's constitution then all rules and regulations will arise from this. The way we work with children, how we behave around them and our attitudes towards them will contribute to the way young people feel about themselves. An examination of existing structures, rules and regulations should help provide a framework for creating and maintaining a child-centred approach within the organisation.

The structures and the committee:

- Age Grade Committee members should ideally sit for a **fixed period** of time - 3 years to encourage a regular turnover of the committee members.
- The committee should have a **mix of experienced** and new members.
- Ensure committee members have **clear defined roles** and responsibilities and that members operate only within these roles. Avoid situations where one or more member(s) operate in isolation from the committee or agenda.
- A database of **record keeping** should be established that allows confidentiality, but continuity between changing committee members - where files are kept, who sees them and how long are files kept for?
- List a **calendar of meetings** and circulate to clubs and all members in advance of season.
- Members should **sign an annual membership** form that includes signing up to the Code of Ethics (appendix 1) and related regulations.
- Include in the rules and regulations a copy of the complaints, disciplinary and appeals procedures that members should also sign up to.
- Members should be aware that failure to comply with rules and regulations could result in exclusion from the committee.

Rules and regulations:

- Always have appropriate **adult: child ratios** (review this with insurance company)
- List all **procedures** for away trips for junior members.
- Members under 18 years of age must be allowed to wear **protective gear** - IRFU should list all necessary gear.
- Members under 16 years of age should not play on more than **one team** in any one season without parental or guardian consent.
- List any criteria for selection to squads - regional; provincial and national.

Rules relating to Sport Leaders:

- Always try to **work with other adults** present and avoid situations where you're left alone with individual children.
- Set out **rules for** any necessary **contact** (physical) e.g. scrum and tackle. Let parents know of these conditions so that behaviours can't be misinterpreted.
- Try to **encourage parents** to take responsibility for their children in changing rooms and where parents are not available ensure that leaders supervise in pairs.
- Ensure that **travel arrangements** are set out in advance and known by all and where possible leaders should not travel alone with children.
- Where mixed teams compete away from home ensure the group is accompanied by at least **one male and one female** adult (preferably parent).
- Always ensure the **well being** and **safety** of the players at all times.

Avoid:

- Spending excessive amounts of time with a participant away from others.
- Taking young people on journeys alone in the car.
- Taking young people to your home.
- Taking sessions alone.

Never:

- Engage in rough **physical or sexually provocative games** including horseplay.
- **Share a room** with a young person alone on away trips.
- Permit or engage in any form of **inappropriate touching**.
- Permit children to use **inappropriate language** unchallenged.
- Make **sexually suggestive comments** to a child, even in fun.
- Allow allegations made by a child to go **unchallenged, unrecorded** or not acted upon.
- Do **things of a personal nature** that a child can do for themselves.
- Agree to **meet a player on your own**.
- **Undertake any form of therapy** (Hypnosis etc.) in the training of young people.
- **Exert due influence** over a participant in order to obtain personal benefit or reward.

Procedure for clubs:

- Each club should have **clear procedures** for responding to reports or concerns relating to the welfare and safety of children.
- Clubs must ensure that all procedures regarding safety in sport for children must be **available and visible** to all members in the club.
- All sports leaders, children, parents/guardians should be **aware of how to report** and to whom concerns should be reported within the club.
- Copies of the Code of Ethics and its accompanying leaflets for Parents, Coaches and Club Committees should be **widely distributed** within clubs and organisations.
- Copies of the Statutory Authority guidelines should be **available** in all sports clubs/organisations.
- Everyone involved in child protection matters should be aware of their responsibility to work in **co-operation** with the statutory child protection authorities.

6.2 Recruitment and Selection

Research has shown that most leaders who work with young people are motivated by their desire to put something back into their sport. Yet it is important that we acknowledge that some adults have the potential to take advantage of the position they hold. Therefore it is important that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the appropriate people are involved with younger members of your club.

Tips for recruiting:

- **Clubs will be responsible** for the recruitment of volunteers and therefore must ensure that they have policies and procedures in place to ensure that candidates will be suitable for working with under age participants.
- Whenever possible try to **recruit male and female** volunteers/ leaders in equal numbers.
- Select leaders with **appropriate skills** and experience or provide necessary training.
- Ensure that there are **clear roles and responsibilities** for volunteers.
- **Training** should be provided for all newly recruited personnel e.g. coaching courses (Mini Rugby; Foundation; Level 1; Level 2 and Referees) and training to work with young People
- Keep all application forms on file and **ratify all appointments** with the Club Management

Committee.

- Be sure that volunteers are aware of any **special needs participants** within your club and that they are confident to deal with additional demands.
- Ensure that new members are aware that failure to comply with rules and regulations of the club could result from **exclusion** from the club.
- Give **feedback** as often as possible.
- Ensure that **recruitment procedures and policies** are available and accessible to all interested e.g. potential candidates and parents.
- The Club Management Committee is **responsible** for the under age section and therefore must ensure policies are in place and adhered to.

All of these steps are necessary to ensure good practice and a thorough selection procedure is one of the few methods a club has of assessing the suitability of applicants to work with young people. Clubs and Branches should use the same recruitment procedure and the more routine these procedures become, the less intimidated applicants become.

When it becomes an established procedure for all members, including volunteers, it can be considered another step in the creation and maintenance of good practice for the protection of all members.

See appendix 2 and 3 of Sports Council's Code of Ethics for sample application form.

6.3 Children's Officers

Aim:

To create a quality atmosphere and prioritise children's needs within sporting organisations.

Functions:

- To act as a resource to all members in the province with regards to children's issues.
- To ensure that children have a voice in the running of their club and can talk freely about their experiences in their sporting activities.
- To promote the values, attitudes and structures which make sport enjoyable for all participants.
- Monitoring of drop out rates and transfers ensuring that unusual developments or trends can be addressed.
- Communication with Branch and Club Officers to ensure widespread dissemination of materials, educational programmes and events relating to Children in Sport.

Children's Officers in Clubs:

- Familiarisation with "Children First and our Duty to Care" ensuring they can act as an information source to club members.
- Commitment to attendance at training sessions in order to act as a resource to members in relation to children's needs for club members.
- Encourage the involvement of parents/guardians in club activities to ensure each child enjoys their involvement in rugby.
- Report regularly to Club Youth, Mini and Senior Committees.
- To influence policy and practice within the club in order to prioritise children's needs. Liaise with other Children's Officers at Club/Branch or National level.

Children's Officers in the Branch:

- To act as liaison between the National Children's Officer and Children's Officers in Clubs.
- Ensure circulation of all relevant information and resource materials on Children's Sport to the relevant clubs and affiliates in the province.
- Commitment to attendance at training sessions in order to act as a resource to members in relation to children's needs.
- To influence Branch policies and practices in order to prioritise children's needs.
- Attend Branch Youth a meeting ensuring sufficient time is allocated to Children's Sport or child protection policies.

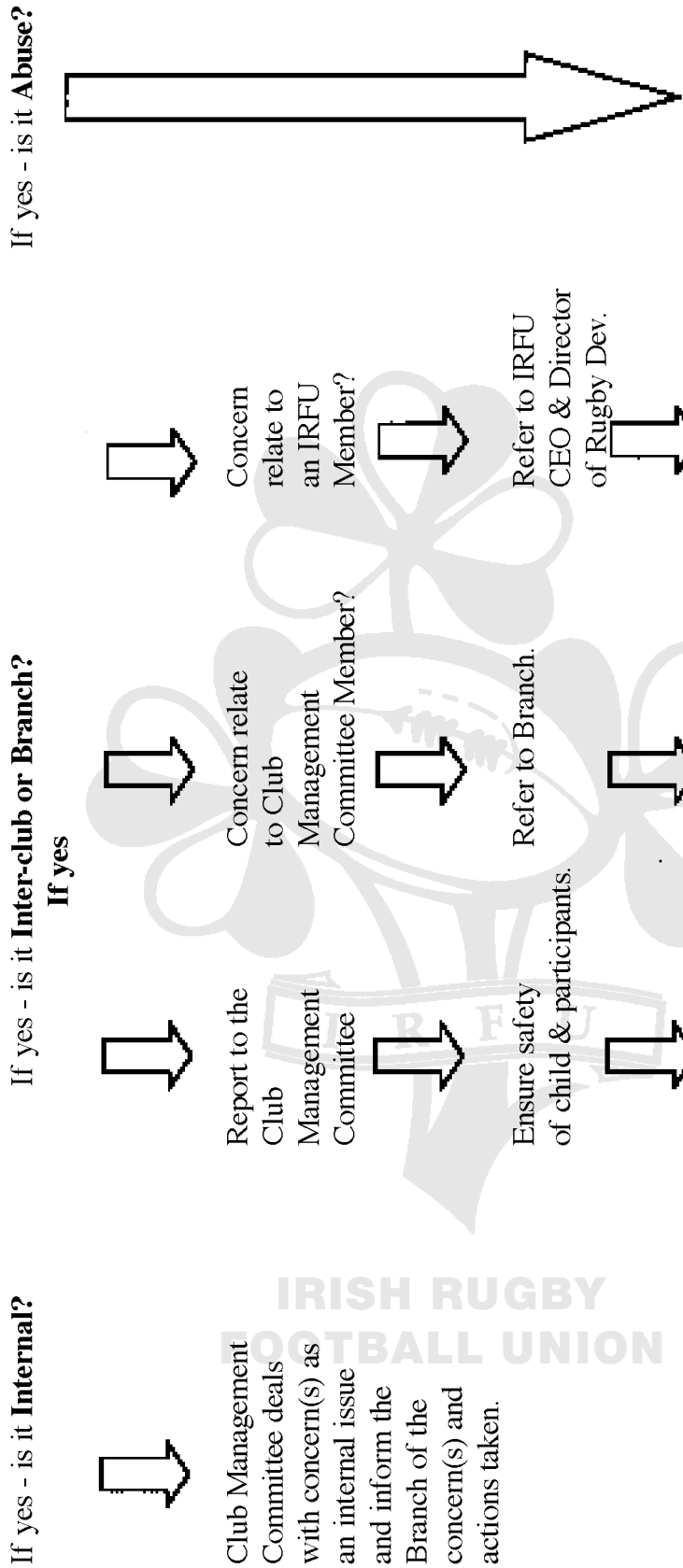
National Children's Officer:

- To act as liaison between the Sports Council and the IRFU.
- Ensure liaison between the IRFU, IRFU Youth Committee and Provincial Children's Officers regarding Children in Sport matters.
- Commitment to attendance at training sessions in order to act as a resource to members in relation to children's needs for club members.

Children's Officers do not have the responsibility of investigating or validating child protection concerns within the club and have no counselling or therapeutic role. These roles are filled by the Statutory Authorities as outlined in Children First and Our Duty to Care. It is, however, possible that child protection concerns will be brought to the attention of the Children's Officer. In this event, it is essential that the correct procedures are followed, i.e. that reports are passed on immediately to the designated person with responsibility within the club for reporting to the Statutory Authorities.

6.4 *Actions when a concern is because of Poor Practice or Unlawful Practice*

Is there a concern over a member?



Refer concern(s) to local health Board for investigation.
 Arrange contact with parents/guardians after advice from Health Board.
 Inform Branch and IRFU CEO's and IRFU Director of Rugby Development.
 IRFU to decide on actions relating to suspension, depending on the inquiry.
 IRFU to decide on procedures regarding media and general enquiries.
 IRFU to arrange for disciplinary proceedings.

9 Emergency Contact list for Coaches

**Irish Rugby Football Union
Code of Ethics**

Names and Contact numbers:

Club doctor: _____
&
Contact numbers: _____

Hospital on call: _____
&
Phone numbers: _____

Club Physiotherapist: _____
&
Contact numbers: _____

Local Garda/Police Station: _____
&
Phone numbers: _____

Local Health Board: _____
&

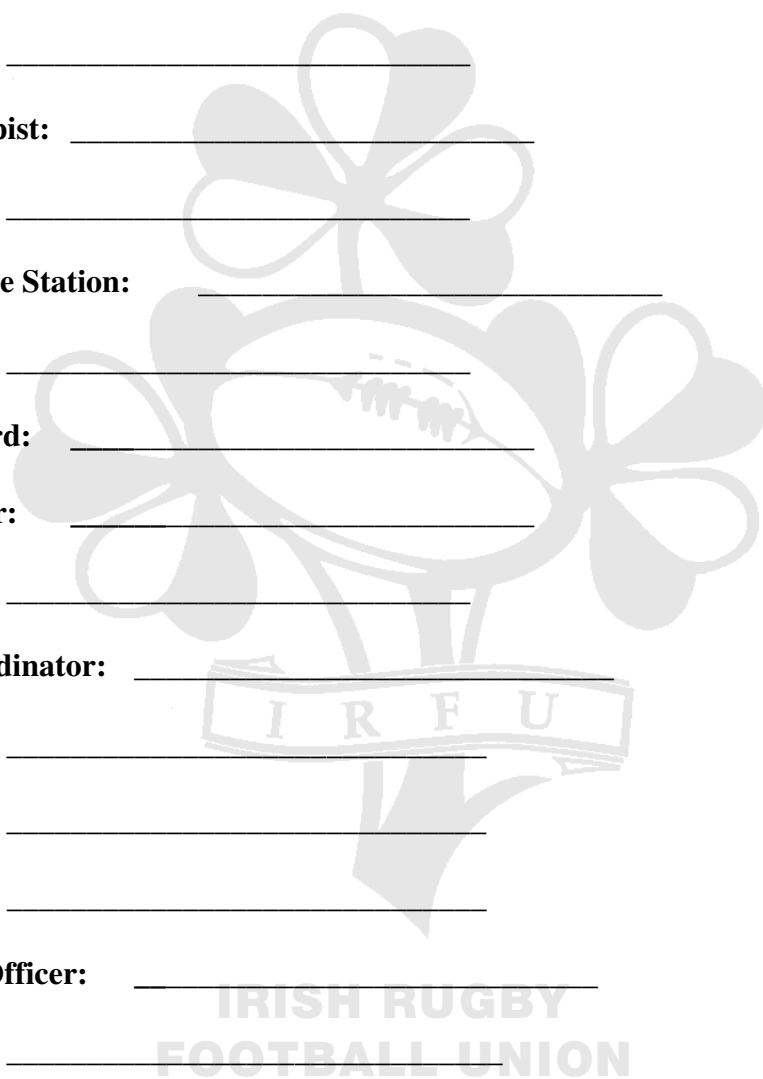
Designated Officer: _____
&
Phone numbers: _____

Youth/Mini Co-ordinator: _____
&
Contact numbers: _____

Club Secretary: _____
&
Contact Numbers: _____

Club Children's Officer: _____
&
Contact numbers: _____

- Checklist:**
- Have a call card/ change or mobile phone.
 - Know where the nearest phone is and the accessibility.
 - Ensure you have a first aid bag.
 - Stop the activity.
 - Send for help/ notify the doctor.
 - Stay with the injured participant.
 - Keep the participant warm.
 - Notify the parent(s) or guardian(s).



Appendix 2

7. Contact details of Health Board Child Care Managers.

Eastern Regional Health Authority

Area child care managers

Community Care Area	Address	Phone No.	Fax No.
Area 1	Theall Rd., Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin.	01 - 284 3579	01 - 280 8785
Area 2	Vernemount Hill, Dublin 8.	01 - 289 8222	01 - 283 0302
Area 3	The Maiting Business Park, 54/55 Marrowbone Lane, Dublin 8	01 - 454 4733	01 - 454 4827
Area 4	Old County Rd., Crumlin, Dublin 12.	01 - 415 4700	01 - 416 4701
Area 5	The Lodge, Cherry Orchard, Ballynamock, Dublin 10.	01 - 828 8101	01 - 828 8281
Area 6	Rathdown Road, Dublin 7.	01 - 838 5034	01 - 854 1387/7
Area 7	Rose Cottage, Fairview, Dublin 15.	01 - 857 5431	01 - 857 6449
Area 8	Cromwell Road, Coolock, Dublin 5.	01 - 847 6122	01 - 847 8944
Area 9	Poplar House, Poplar Square, Nass, Co. Kildere.	045 - 878 001	045 - 870 225
Area 10	Glennabla Road, Wicklow.	0404 - 884 00	0404 - 890 44

Midland Health Board

Area child care managers

Community Care Area	Address	Phone No.	Fax No.
Longford / Westmeath	Health Centre, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath.	044 - 402 21	044 - 391 70
Lackan/Offaly	Health Centre, Tullamore, Co. Offaly.	0506 - 413 01	0506 - 211 36

**Mid-Western Health Board
Area child care managers**

Community Care Area	Address	Phone No.	Fax No.
Limerick	Vocational Training Services, Doonadryke, Limerick	081 - 482 792	081 - 482 471
Clare	Toberliscawn, Ennis, Co. Clare.	085 - 231 55 085 - 438 82	085 - 231 58
Nth. Tipperary	General Hospital, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary.	067 - 314 91	067 - 413 57

**North Eastern Health Board
Area child care managers**

Community Care Area	Address	Phone No.	Fax No.
Caran / Monaghan	Health Care Unit, Monaghan.	047 - 304 00	047 - 845 87
Louth	Community Care Office, Dublin Rd., Dundalk.	042 - 933 2267	042 - 933 3914
Meath	Family Resource Centre, Commons Rd., Navan, Co. Meath	046 - 731 78	046 - 731 83

**North- Western Health Board
Area child care managers**

Community Care Area	Address	Phone No.	Fax No.
Donegal	Ballybofey, Co. Donegal.	074 - 313 81	074 - 319 83
Sligo/Lairn	Maritime House, Sligo.	071 - 651 77	071 - 651 31

**Southern Health Board
Area child care managers**

Community Care Area	Address	Phone No.	Fax No.
South Lee	Abbey Court House, George's Quay, Cork.	021 - 823 814	021 - 983 822
North Lee	Abbey Court House, George's Quay, Cork.	021 - 985 511	021 - 983 822
North Cork	Hibernian way, bank Place, Malinow.	021 - 302 00	021 - 426 04
West Cork	Hibernian Buildings, Main St., Skibbereen, Cont.	028 - 231 41	028 - 231 72
Kerry	18 Denny Street, Tralee, Co. Kerry	068 - 203 00	068 - 614 80

**South Eastern Health Board
Area child care managers**

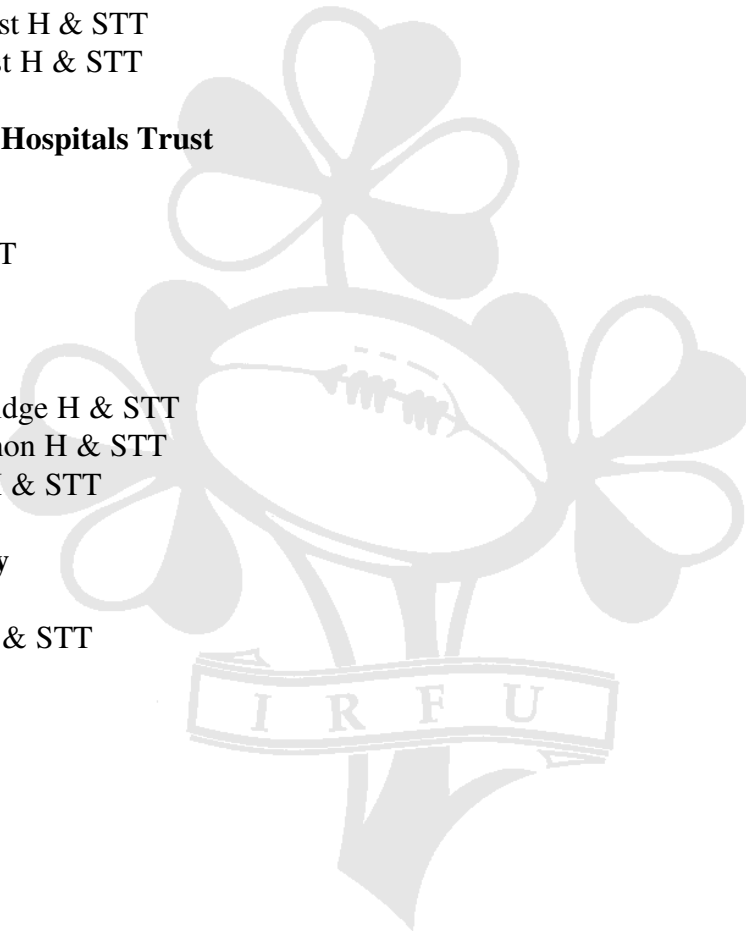
Community Care Area	Address	Phone No.	Fax No.
Carlow/Kilkenny	Community Care Centre, James Green, Kilkenny.	056 - 822 08	056 - 641 72
Waterford	Community Care Centre, Cork Rd., Waterford.	051 - 842 800	051 - 843 888
Wexford	Community Care Centre, Grogan's Rd., ACC Building, George's St., Waterford.	053 - 881 12	053 - 661 13
South Tipperary	Community Care Centre, Western Rd., Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.	052 - 770 00	052 - 253 37

**Western Health Board
Area child care managers**

Community Care Area	Address	Phone No.	Fax No.
Galway	Community Care Offices, 25 Newcastle Rd., Galway.	091 - 823 122	091 - 524 231
Mayo	County clinic, Castlebar, Co. Mayo.	094 - 223 33	094 - 271 08
Roscommon	Health Board Offices, Lansboro St., Roscommon.	0903 - 267 32	0903 - 267 32

**Contact details of Health Board Child Care Managers.
Northern Ireland**

Office	Numbers
Contractor Bureau (Out of Hours)	028 - 9066 - 8447
NSPCC 24 Hours Protection Helpline	0808 - 800 - 5000
EHSSB Belfast	028 - 9032 - 1313
Down / Lisburn	028 - 9266 - 5181
North & West Belfast H & STT	028 - 9032 - 7156
South & East Belfast H & STT	028 - 9079 - 0673
Ulster Community & Hospitals Trust	028 - 9181 - 6666
NHSSB Ballymena	028 - 2565 - 3333
Home First H & STT	028 - 2563 - 3700
Causeway H & STT	028 - 7066 - 6000
SHSSB Portadown	028 - 3833 - 6611
Craigavon & Banbridge H & STT	028 - 2833 - 1983
Armagh & Dungannon H & STT	028 - 3752 - 2262
Newry & Mourne H & STT	028 - 3026 - 0505
WHSSB Londonderry	028 - 7186 - 0086
Foyle H & STT	028 - 7126 - 6111
Sperrin Lakeland H & STT	028 - 8224 - 4127



**IRISH RUGBY
FOOTBALL UNION**

Appendix 3

8. Reference and Source Material

- Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children in Sport - 2000
- Interim Report of the Joint Committee on Tourism and Sport and Recreation Protection of Children in Sport - June 1998
- Irish Society for the Prevention of cruelty to Children
- International Council for Sport and Physical education.
Declaration of fair Play.
Olympic Review - 1995
- Institute of Swimming Teachers and Coaches ñ 1995
- IRFU Code of Ethics - August 1998
- Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children - September 1999
- RFU/RFUW Policy on Child Protection
- Our Duty to Care - Department of Health & Children 2002



IRISH RUGBY
FOOTBALL UNION