



Rugby League

Parents Handbook



RL
COMMERCIAL

Introduction

This Rugby League Parents Handbook has been developed to present some key information that we believe all parents should have some knowledge of, to ensure that you are aware of the various support mechanisms and programmes that are in place, but also so you can best support your child in their Rugby League journey.

The information contained within this resource is deliberately short but contains what we believe are the key messages. We have included links which will signpost you to further details.



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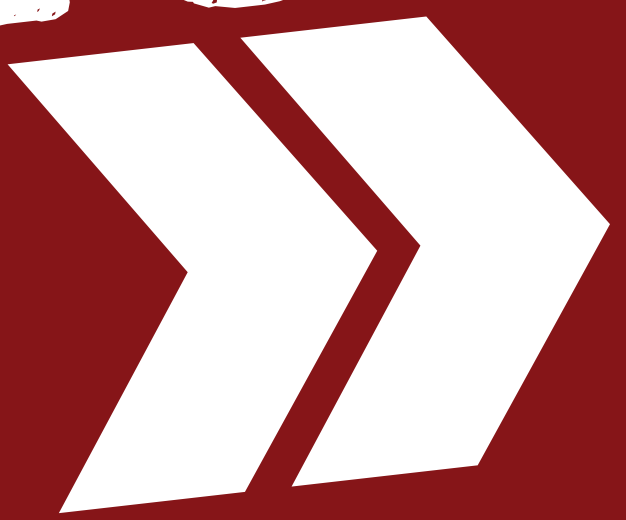
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DOPING



All community and professional participants are subject to Anti-Doping rules, which means any one can be tested – any place, any time, even those under the age of 18.

As minors, if players are selected for testing, they will always be accompanied by a chaperone. There is more information here on rights and responsibilities and the testing process. Testing Process for Minors | UK Anti-Doping (ukad.org.uk)

Adopting a **FOOD FIRST** approach will give players the right nutrients and proteins they need, at the right time. There's some great tips and ideas here Food-First | UK Anti-Doping (ukad.org.uk)

Any positive test for banned substances (recreational, performance or image enhancing drugs) will result in the participant being banned, whether they intended to cheat or not – this is their **STRICT LIABILITY**. There are 11 Rules which players are subject to - by adopting a nutrition-based approach the risk of breaking these rules is reduced significantly as is the risk of damage to your child's health.

Understanding times of transition for your child, will help to support them to avoid the potential temptation of doping. Times such as not getting on scholarship, being released from academies, injuries and life stresses can all be times of risk.

STOP
gambling

GAMBLING 

Although gambling is age restricted, parents should be aware that Rugby League participants are subject to rules relating to not betting on Rugby League matches in both the Professional and Community game.

Whilst in the younger age groups this shouldn't be an issue, please be mindful as they progress through the ages and stages of their Rugby League life that betting on Rugby League as a Rugby League participant is not allowed plus, the potential negative impacts of gambling addictions.

If you are concerned about your child and gambling please **click here** for supporting agencies.

SOCIAL MEDIA



Good Practice Guidelines on the use of social media - The rapid rise and use of social media has been phenomenal, and it can be difficult to keep up with the new sites and/or apps. Parents have concerns around online safety for their children and clubs have both these concerns and concerns around their club image and how they are portrayed by its members.

Guidance for Parents - All people involved in Rugby League should work towards promoting the game, their club, and the sport. Negative postings about your child's club or coach could result in legal proceedings and/or expulsions. Taking to posting on social media will never sort out a problem or concern that you may have with your child's experience of Rugby League. If you have any issues or concerns, then you should address this with the Coach or Club Welfare Officer.

Do not post photos of other players without the child and parents' permission. Check your child's accounts to ensure they are both safe and sensible in their postings and friendship groups. Be aware that children can experience online bullying and this can be a very isolating experience for a child, check that your child is safe online by visiting the thinkuknow website by clicking here <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

SAFE
GUARDING



The RFL is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children in the sport of Rugby League. For over a decade we have worked closely with the Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) and NSPCC to develop robust policy and procedures to safeguard children, achieving the NSPCC & CPSU's National Advanced Standards for safeguarding and protecting children in sport in 2008. We work closely with all our clubs and statutory agencies to ensure that safeguarding children is prioritised. Any allegation, suspicion of harm, or concern is taken very seriously and responded to swiftly, fairly and appropriately.

Everyone shares the responsibility for safeguarding and creating safe environments in Rugby League whether as a parent, coach, spectator, or club official. This means that everyone should operate and demonstrate exemplary behaviour to both safeguard children and protect all personnel from allegations of abuse or poor practice.

The RFL Safeguarding Policy can be found [here](#)

The safeguarding team can be contacted on Safeguarding@rfl.uk.com

For more information on Safeguarding please click [here](#)

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Rugby League is a contact sport and so the risk of concussion is high.

Parents should recognise the signs and symptoms of concussion and follow the SRA guidelines for its management both at matches, training, and whilst resting and recovering at home.

The key messages are:

- **IF IN DOUBT, SIT THEM OUT** (remove from the field and stay off)
- call 111 or see a doctor in the 24 hours following concussion
- don't leave your child unattended and ensure they rest appropriately in the 24 – 48 hours following injury (avoiding screen time and physical activity)
- Return to sport takes a minimum of 3 weeks, even when symptoms resolve quickly

No player should return to any sport (not just Rugby League) until symptoms have subsided and a graduated return to normal (school or work) life, ahead of sport, has been followed. Returning early carries the risk of prolonged recovery, further injury, worsening symptoms or second impact syndrome, which can be fatal. Coaches and First Aiders are aware of signs and symptoms and the need to remove, but you have a role to play here too – you know your child best.

It's important to look after your child's brain health, encourage them to share symptoms, leave the field if they don't feel right and be patient with their return to sport.

If symptoms have not eased or worsened 4 weeks post injury – take your child to see your GP.

Please see below a link to the current guidelines issued by the Sport and Recreation Alliance for all sports to follow:

<https://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/policy/research-publications/concussion-guidelines>

ENJOY

THE
GAME!



While Enjoy the Game continues to stress the importance of behaving with Respect at all levels of the game, there is a fresh emphasis on promoting positive environments throughout all levels of Rugby League.

Whether it's playing a junior or amateur league game or watching on the terraces at a Super League or Challenge Cup fixture, we want to make the whole of Rugby League a positive and enjoyable game, in which we can all enjoy our role and our sport.

In 2018 we carried out a review in the 12-18 Age Group and conducted online surveys for the Open Age game. The feedback highlighted touchline behaviour as an area which requires attention. As a result, we want to sustain positive surroundings to create fun, safe and inclusive environments for all players, spectators, match officials, volunteers and coaches involved in Rugby League. We want you all to Enjoy the Game

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As part of the campaign a series of code of conducts have been produced, please see the parent/spectator code which you should familiarise yourself with:



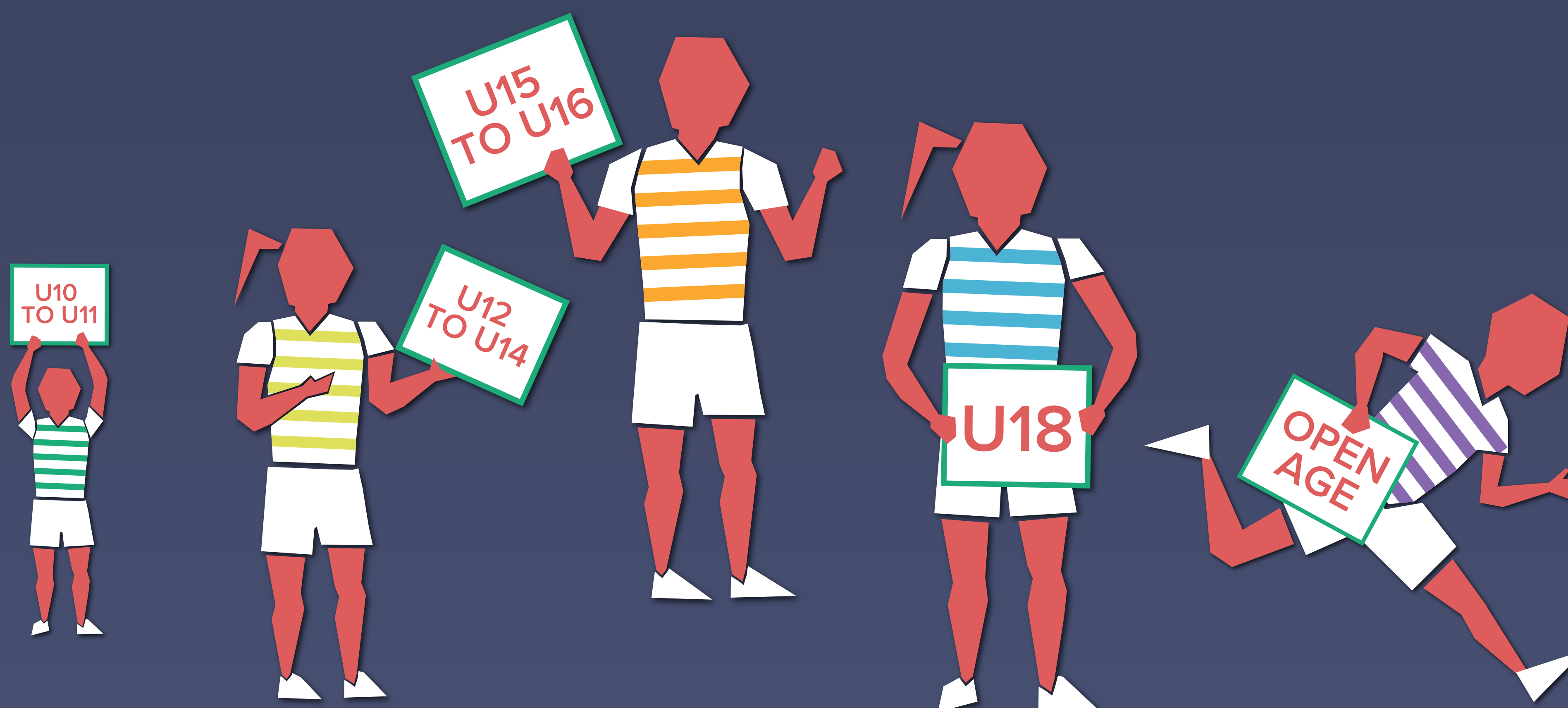
- **Encourage all people involved in the sport to abide by the General Principles and challenge behaviours that do not do this.**
- Do not force an unwilling child to participate in sport.
- **Remember that children participate in Rugby League for their own enjoyment, not yours!**
- Understand that sport is part of a total life experience, and the benefits of involvement go far beyond the final score of a game.
- **Condemn all violent or illegal acts, whether they are by players, coaches, officials, parents, or spectators.**
- Respect the match official's decisions – don't complain or argue about decisions during or after a game.
- **Behave! Unsporting or discriminatory language, harassment or aggressive behaviour will not be tolerated.**
- Encourage players to play by the rules and to respect opposition players and officials.
- **Never ridicule or scorn a player for making a mistake – respect their efforts.**
- Participate in positive cheering that encourages all the players in the team; do not engage in any jeering that taunts or intimidates opponents, their fans, or officials.
- **At all times, follow the directions of the Ground Manager and/or other match day staff.**
- Never arrive at a game under the influence of alcohol, never bring alcohol to a game, and only drink alcohol, if it is available at the ground, in the designated licensed area.

For more information please visit

<https://www.rugby-league.com/governance/campaigns/enjoy-the-game>

AGES AND STAGES

OF RUGBY LEAGUE



AGES AND STAGES MAKES IT EASIER TO UNDERSTAND ALL THE WAYS BOYS, GIRLS, MEN AND WOMEN CAN ENJOY THE SPORT OF RUGBY LEAGUE

For more information visit:

rugby-league.com/ages-and-stages



OURLEAGUE

ACTIVE

SUPPORTING COMMUNITY RUGBY LEAGUE

By registering as a Rugby League player, you will be covered by the RFL Operational Rules and the policies and standards that form part of that, such as the medical standards, safeguarding support as mentioned above, player insurance and support and guidance from experts in the fields listed in this document.

In addition, other benefits of membership include, ticket offers, personal dashboards, prize draws and access to the Rewards4 Rugby League rewards scheme which can earn you money to offset your annual membership fee.

For further information please visit

<https://www.rugby-league.com/support/our-league-active>