

The Good Coaches Guide

Young people come into Rugby Union for a variety of reasons; it is the duty of the coach to recognise this and stimulate continued participation. Coaches have a responsibility to ensure that all youngsters are given the opportunity to fulfil their aspirations in a caring environment where the emphasis is on fun, enjoyment, and skill development.

In Rugby Union coaches, should:

- Recognise the importance of fun and enjoyment when coaching young players.
- Understand that most learning is achieved through doing.
- Appreciate the needs of the players before the needs of the sport.
- Be a positive role model – think what this implies.
- Keep winning and losing in perspective – encourage young players to behave with dignity in all circumstances.
- Respect all referees and the decisions they make (remember it could be you refereeing next week) and ensure that the players recognise that they must do the same.
- Provide positive verbal feedback in a constructive and encouraging manner, to all young players both during coaching sessions and games.

In Rugby Union coaches of young players must:

- Provide experiences that are matched to the young players' age and ability, as well as their physical and mental development.
- Ensure all youngsters are coached in a safe environment, with adequate first aid readily to hand.
- Avoid the overplaying of the best players by using a squad system, which gives everybody a satisfactory amount of playing time.
- Never allow a player to train or play when injured.
- Ensure good supervision of young players, both on and off the field
- Recognise that young players should never be exposed to extremes of heat, cold, or unacceptable risk of injury.
- Develop an awareness of nutrition as part of an overall education in lifestyle management.
- Recognise that it is illegal for young players under 18 to drink alcohol.
- Ensure that their knowledge and coaching strategies are up to date and in line with RFU philosophy.
- Be aware of, and abide by, the RFU recommended procedures for taking young people on residential tours at home and abroad.
- Be aware of, and abide by, the policies and procedures outlined in the RFU child protection guidance booklet.

The Good Parents Guide

In Rugby Union, we acknowledge that parents are an integral part of the partnership, which ensures that young players enjoy their involvement in the sport and experience an environment in which they can flourish.

In Rugby Union parents are encouraged to:

- Be familiar with the coaching and training programme in order that they can ensure that their child is fully involved and the coaches are aware of their availability.
- Be familiar with the teaching and coaching methods used by observing the sessions in which your child participates.
- Be aware that the club has a duty of care and therefore, where appropriate, assist coaches with the supervision of the young players, particularly where numbers are large and there is a need to transport youngsters to away games.
- Be involved with club activities and share your expertise.
- Share concerns, if you have them, with club officials.

In Rugby Union parents, should:

- Remember that young people play rugby for their own enjoyment not that of their parents.
- Encourage young people to play – do not force them.
- Focus on the young players' efforts rather than winning or losing.
- Be realistic about the young players' ability; do not push them towards a level that they are not capable of achieving.
- Provide positive verbal feedback both in training and during the game. Remember that persistent, negative messages will adversely affect the players' and referee's performance and attitude.
- Always support the rugby club in their efforts to eradicate loud, coarse, and abusive behaviour from the game.
- Remember young people learn much by example.
- Always show appreciation of good play by all young players both from your own club and the opposition.
- Respect decisions made by the match officials and encourage the young players to do likewise

The Good Players Guide

Young players should recognise that we are working to provide a safe and enjoyable game in which they can develop both as a player and as an individual.

In Rugby Union, young players are encouraged to:

- Recognise and appreciate the efforts made by coaches, parents, match officials and administrators in providing them with the opportunity to play the game and enjoy the rugby environment.
- Understand the values of loyalty and commitment to adults and team mates.
- Recognise that every young player has a right to expect their involvement in rugby to be safe and free from all types of abuse.
- Understand that if an individual or group of young players feel that they are not being treated in a manner that is acceptable, then they have a right to tell an adult either at the rugby club or outside of the game.

In Rugby Union, as a young player, you should:

- Play because you want to do so, not to please coaches or parents.
- Remember skill development, fun and enjoyment are the most important parts of the game.
- Be attentive at all training/coaching sessions.
- Work equally hard for yourself and your team and both will then benefit.
- Recognise good play by ALL players on your team and by your opponents.
- Be a good sportsman – win or lose.
- Play to the laws of the game and accept, without question, all the referee's decisions.
- Control your emotions. Verbal or physical abuse of team-mates, opponents, or match officials is not acceptable.
- Treat all players, as you would like to be treated. Do not interfere with, bully or take unfair advantage of any player.

The Good Spectators Guide

Young rugby players are impressionable and their behaviour will often reflect that of adults around them. In Rugby Union, we welcome spectators on our touchlines who embrace the ethos of the game as one of fun, enjoyment, and skill development.

In Rugby Union spectators are encouraged to:

- Act as positive role models to all young players.
- Be familiar with, and abide by, the RFU child protection guidance in relation to verbal and emotional abuse.
- Respect their rugby club's policy regarding spectator behaviour

In Rugby Union spectators, should:

- Remember children play sport for their enjoyment not yours.
- Acknowledge good individual and team performance from all youngsters irrespective of which team they play for.
- Respect match official's decisions. Remember that they are volunteers providing an opportunity for youngsters to play rugby.
- Never verbally abuse young players, match officials, fellow spectators, or coaches. Such behaviour can create a negative environment for young players and their behaviour will often reflect this.
- Acknowledge effort and good performance rather than the "win at all costs" ethic.
- Verbally encourage all youngsters in a positive way. If you do want to shout make sure it is 'for', not 'at', the players.
- Condemn bad language, rude behaviour, and violence.
- Encourage all youngsters irrespective of their ability – never ridicule any individual player, regardless of the team they play for.