

Safeguarding and wellbeing considerations for the return of children and young people to rugby



Reconnecting with each other

1. Focus on creating a fun and enjoyable atmosphere which allows children and young people to reconnect. Coaches should connect with each other prior to the first session back, to agree how sessions will be delivered, ensuring the emphasis is on fun!
2. Explore how children feel about returning to sport, consider the individual experiences that different children will have had during lockdown. Remind participants and parents/carers that coaches and Child Protection Officers (CPOs) are there to listen to any concerns.
3. Be clear about how the sport will be delivered and why.



Managing risk

1. Include safeguarding in the risk assessment process when delivering sport in a revised format.
2. Widely share codes of conduct for coaches, parents/carers and children and young people so that everyone understands the expectations of them.
3. Widely share social media and communication policies to ensure positive behaviours and practice while social distancing measures are in place.
4. Make the *Responding to concerns* procedure widely available so that coaches, parents/carers and children and young people know who to contact with any concerns. Be aware that there could be increased likelihood of disclosures – agree amongst the coaching group and CPO how these will be managed and supported.
5. Ensure that all contact details are up to date for children and young people and accessible by an appropriate person in case of any issues (CPO).

Enthusiasm and interest in rugby

1. Emphasise fun, enjoyment and reconnecting to help to re-engage children and young people.
2. Make sure child wellbeing and protection policies are up to date in anticipation of the return of children and young people into the sport.

Physical fitness

1. Coaches should be mindful that a child's physical fitness may have been impacted by lockdown. Sessions should be fun and enjoyable.
2. Physical conditioning should be age and stage appropriate and undertaken by a qualified coach.

Managing expectations

1. Ensure open and transparent communication with parents/carers to manage expectations of how sport will be delivered and encourage positive relationships.
2. Consider hosting a virtual meeting before the first session back to outline how sessions will run – include information on session objectives, Return to Rugby guidance, how parents/carers can spectate and how you will deal with injuries or illness.
3. Connect, listen, empathise, advise where concerns are raised.



Mental wellbeing

1. Be aware of children and young people's general mental wellbeing.
2. Offer empathy and support to children who are experiencing mental wellbeing or anxiety issues during the transition back to organised sport.
3. Follow *Responding to concerns* procedure where appropriate.

Financial hardship

1. Be mindful of financial hardship as a barrier to participation and explore opportunities where available to support families.

Potential for increased wellbeing concerns

1. Be alert to a potential increase in wellbeing and protection concerns.
2. Make the *Responding to concerns* procedure widely available so that coaches, parents/carers and children and young people know who to contact with any concerns.
3. Involve your CPO in session planning and session debriefs during the first few weeks of return to rugby.



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ParentLine Scotland	Tel : 0800 0282233 www.children1st.org.uk/help-for-families/parentline-scotland
Respect Me : Scotland's anti-bullying service	www.respectme.org.uk
SAMH: Scottish Association for Mental Health	Tel: 0344 800 0550 E-mail: info@samh.org.uk www.samh.org.uk/information-service
Young Minds	www.youngminds.org.uk
Papyrus : prevention of young suicide	www.suicidepapyrus-uk.org
Child Exploitation Online Protection (CEOP)	www.ceop.police.uk
Child Protection Committees Scotland	www.celcis.org/our-work/protecting-children/child-protection-committees-scotland
For information about Covid-19	Scottish Government: www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19 NHS: www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19 sportscotland: www.sportscotland.org.uk/covid-19/