



# CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY



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Rugby India commits to respecting and valuing each child, adolescent and young person in our programme irrespective of the person's age, gender, dis/ability, religion, caste, ethnic background, or any other vulnerability. I promise that we will always stand for the rights of children.

As President of the Indian Rugby Football Union (IRFU), I commit to a safe, engaging learning space that builds an enabling environment for growth and development.

Numazar Mehta  
President, Rugby India

1st April 2018

## Part 1- Policy

### **Section 1- Rugby India's commitment to children**

Rugby India is committed to working with children. Rugby India fully acknowledges the organisation's responsibilities and duty of care for child protection through our day to day contact with children. Rugby India further commits that all Rugby India staff are able to prevent and respond to risk of injury and harm.

Rugby India recognises the important role that parents and guardians play and seeks their consent to children's participation in programmes and activities. The Child Friendly Child Protection Policy is provided for children and parents and guardians of children participating in Rugby India programmes.

Rugby India uses a sport-based curriculum to engage children and ensure that they make the right choices for a constructive journey from childhood towards better and dignified livelihoods as adults.

As a result, children emerge from the programme with more control and choice in their lives and who contribute confidently and constructively to a better society.

Rugby India vision - A world where children and youth have the choice and control to be socially and economically empowered.

### **Section 2- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy- principles and approach**

*Rugby India aims to uphold the right of children to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child, in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Articles 1 and 191.*

Rugby India includes corporal punishment within its definition of abuse in line with article 19, protection of children from all forms of violence and aims to prevent and protect children from corporal punishment. Rugby India recognises that the effects of abuse on a child may be long lasting and will refer children to appropriate support services.

*Rugby India recognises its responsibility to protect all children, regardless of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 22).*

Rugby India works to prevent the harm and abuse of children whilst they are taking part in sessions and in the care of Rugby India.

1 <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx> 2

<http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx> 3 International Safeguards for Children in Sport Working Group, International Safeguards for Children in Sport, UNICEF, 2014

Furthermore, Rugby India recognises its responsibility to respond if staff, volunteers, visitors or associates become aware of a child who is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse whether within, or outside, the Rugby India programmes. At all times, Rugby India seeks to promote the best interests of children and maintain the trust of children, communities and other professionals. Rugby India recognises that children have a right to be listened to and to know who to tell if they have any concerns about their participation in Rugby India sessions.

Rugby India recognises that some children are more vulnerable and require extra protective measures such as children with disabilities, girl children etc. The rights of children to privacy is respected.

The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy should be understood in the context of the wider organisational values and vision.

### **General framework of safety for Rugby India in sport and outdoor sessions**

Rugby India ensures the safety of children participating in Rugby India's Programmes and protects children from abuse, as well as protecting children from injury and harm. Rugby India recognises that there is an increased risk of harm and injury for children participating in sport and outdoor sessions.

All staff and volunteers running programmes must ensure that all children are safe when participating in sport and outdoor sessions.

For more information, see Part 3- Procedures Safety for outdoor sessions Safety for outdoor sessions.

### **Section 4- Scope and accountability**

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, visitors and associates of Rugby India who are all responsible to read, understand and adhere to the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Code of Conduct. The Child Protection Officer has overall responsibility for the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Rugby India commits to ensuring the full participation of children by providing them with safe and joyful learning spaces. It also commits to developing strong and positive relationships between mentors and children. Anyone who exploits this relationship will be investigated.

All child protection concerns are reported according to the reporting guidelines in part 3 of this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Reporting. The Child Protection and Gender Inclusion Committee leads all child protection investigations. Any breach of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Code of Conduct may result in dismissal and reports to formal authorities.

Section 5- Implementation strategy Rugby India implements the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Code of Conduct through:

4 Including partners 5 Comprises of the Child Protection Officer of Rugby India , Director HR and Head, Legal

### a) Proactive prevention

i. Child protection capacity building All staff, volunteers, visitors, and associates receive an induction to the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and on-going child protection capacity building.

Children, adolescents and families also receive an orientation to the Child Friendly Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Code of Conduct to ensure that they understand Rugby India is responsible to keep children safe within the Rugby India programmes and how to raise concerns if Rugby India fails in this duty. Rugby India will provide children, adolescents and families with details of support services when their right to protection is violated.

ii. Child protection code of conduct A Child Protection Code of Conduct outlines the expected behaviours of all staff, volunteers, visitors and associates. They are required to sign to confirm that they have understood the policy prior to accessing information about children within Rugby India programmes, or visiting Rugby India programmes. Part 2- Child protection code of conduct.

iii. Recruitment Child-safe recruitment processes are followed for all staff and volunteer positions. Specific responsibilities for child protection are defined in Job Descriptions and interviews determine suitability to work with children. Background checks, carried out as required by the norms of the country, are conducted for all staff and volunteer positions. Candidates are only confirmed in post where an interview and background check shows no risks to children.

Visitors and associates who have not undergone these checks do not have unsupervised access to children.

iv. Risk identification and management Risk assessments and safety checks are conducted as the programmes for children are developed. Risk assessments and safety checks are routinely conducted prior to each session at the venues and on transportation. Corrective action is taken to address any identified risks. Where risks cannot be prevented, sessions may be postponed to ensure the safety of children participating in the session.

Risk management includes ensuring that all information on children is stored confidentially and names and identifying features of children are not disclosed to anyone who is not part of Rugby India programmes.

Where programmes are implemented in partnership with other organisations, for example with schools, the partnership agreement determines which organisation is responsible for risk assessments and management.

### v. *Raising children's awareness*

Children participating in Rugby India programmes are given the Child Friendly Child Protection Policy to help them understand that they have the right to be safe when participating in Rugby India sessions and how to report concerns.

The Rugby India curriculum provides opportunities for children to develop skills to recognise risks and stay safe from harm. Parent sessions also provide opportunities for parents and guardians to learn about children's right to be safe from harm.

## b) Response to child protection concerns

i. Reporting Any child, adult, staff, volunteer, visitor and associate can report child abuse, knowing that this report will be taken seriously. There does not need to be certainty that a child is at risk or has been harmed, it is enough to raise a concern.

The report must be made to the Youth Mentor or Training and Monitoring Officer responsible for the session as soon as possible and no later than 24 hours after becoming concerned. This will be actively investigated. If the investigation finds that it is likely that a violation of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy has taken place, the case may be reported to the police and the person concerned dismissed. Where the investigation finds that it is unlikely that any child abuse has taken place staff will be reinstated.

Rugby India takes its responsibilities seriously and will respond to complaints in a fair and transparent way, this includes an appeals process.

Any deliberately false child protection reports may result in the person providing false reports being dismissed in line with the Whistle blowing policy.

See the reporting process in Part 3 for more information on how to report Reporting. The reporting form can be found in Part 5 Annexes Child protection report form.

### ii. Child Protection and Gender Inclusion Committees

Rugby India has established a system of Child Protection and Gender Inclusion Committees. There are Child Protection and Gender Inclusion Committees at international, national and regional and sub-regional levels. They are responsible to respond to reports of child abuse at their relevant level. The reporting structure goes from regional or state level, national to international level. Concerns can be elevated to the next level in cases of significant risk to a child or the organisation.

Where there are large geographical distances between programmes and regional or state level Child Protection and Gender Inclusion Committees, district level Child Protection and Gender Inclusion Committees will be established.

The Rugby India Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy including the Code of Conduct, system for reporting concerns, risks management, provision of advice and support, training, recruitment and work with partners is reviewed as a minimum every three years. The review includes the participation of children. Once in each three-year cycle, Rugby India conducts an audit of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy implementation. Information from the audit will inform the future Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy implementation.

## d) Child Protection & working with partners

Rugby India works in partnership with a number of different organisations. Partnerships can be of any kind of contracted joint work, including with the media, celebrities, funders, government organisations, civil society organisations etc.

Rugby India ensures that partners share a joint commitment to child protection and this is outlined in partnership agreements. All partnership agreements must specify which organisation holds overall responsibility for child protection, including investigations and final decisions. Partners must agree to implement this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, or have their own policy in place before the

partnership with Rugby India established. Monitoring of Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy implementation also takes place with partners.

#### e) Child Protection , Media & Communications

Before photographing or filming a child for work related purposes, Rugby India assesses and complies with local traditions or restrictions on reproducing personal images. At a minimum Rugby India obtains consent from the child/ parent or guardian and explains how the images will be used. All Rugby India photographs, films, videos and DVDs present children in a dignified and respectful manner. Children must be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be perceived as sexually suggestive.

Identities and identifying features of children remain confidential.

All unpublished images of children are securely stored: hard copies are kept in locked storage and electronic copies are password protected.

See also the Rugby India Social Media policy for how to share stories of children engaged with Rugby India.

#### f) Support Services

Children's safety and well-being is a priority and children who have experienced injury, harm or abuse will be provided with necessary support services. Rugby India has effective links with organisations which provide support to children who have experienced injury, harm and abuse.

#### g) Visitors & Associates

Visitors and associates are required to read and understand the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct prior to visiting Rugby India programmes. They are bound by the same responsibilities to protect and safeguard children as Rugby India staff. They are not allowed to be alone with children or have access to identifying details or confidential information about children. Visitors and associates include anyone who visits, Rugby India venues, or is associated in any way with Rugby India , including but not limited to, board members, consultants, researchers, partners, media and donors.



**Part 2-** Child protection code of conduct Rugby India recognises the important role that staff, volunteers, visitors and associates play in the lives of children. It therefore requires each person to recognise his/ her responsibility to:

- Ensure the safety and welfare of children is paramount.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every child and treat all children equally regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
- Act as a good role model and maintain high standards of personal conduct whilst engaged in Rugby India activities.
- Comply with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct and avoid actions and behaviours which may be considered unsafe, poor practice or abusive behaviour.

I \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name) agree that during my association with Rugby India I will comply with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the following Code of Conduct.

I will:

- Be warm, friendly and caring towards the children and treat all children with dignity and respect.
- Be sensitive to children who may be vulnerable and provide the additional support they may require to enable their equal participation in sessions.
- Recognise the development needs and capacities of the children and avoid excessive training or competition.
- Be aware of situations which may have risks of harm, injury or abuse.
- Plan and organise the work and workplace to prevent and manage risks.
- As far as possible be visible in working with children and work with children in the presence of other people.
- Work in an open way, willing to listen and act so that any issues or concerns can be raised.
- Challenge and respond to any poor or unsafe work practices.
- Talk to children and encourage them to raise any concerns.
- Empower children, discuss with them their rights, what is acceptable, unacceptable and what they can do if there is a problem.
- Be aware that children are watching and learning from me- I am role model and children may copy what I do.

**I WILL NOT:**

- Hit or otherwise physically assault or physical abuse children, including use of corporal punishment.
- Engage in sexual activities with children or behave in a way that is sexually provocative, including use of sexually suggestive comments.
- Engage children in exploitative activities, including child labour.
- Use language to degrade or humiliate a child.
- Act in ways intended to bully, shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children or otherwise emotionally abuse children.
- Sleep in the same bed or room with a child with whom I am working without the approval of my manager.
- Have a child/ children with whom I work stay overnight at my house.
- Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves (e.g. changing clothes, taking a shower or using the toilet).
- Condone, or participate in behaviour with children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- Discriminate against, or show differential treatment, or favour particular children.
- Drink alcohol, smoke or use illegal substances when working with children.
- Take photographs of children involved in Rugby India programmes without the child's parent or guardian's written consent.
- Give my personal contact details (address, phone number, social media contacts) to children or families or use personal contact details of children for private communication. The contact point for all communication is Rugby India .
- Access pornography whilst working for Rugby India , or use any Rugby India internet devices or connections to access pornography or sites whilst contradict the organisation's vision.

Date:

Position:

Signature: