**Safeguarding**

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| **Physical Contact Guidance** |

Any necessary physical contact during rugby sessions should respect and be sensitive to the needs and wishes of the child and should take place in a culture of dignity and respect. Children should be encouraged to speak out if they feel uncomfortable.

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| **Demonstrating a Technique** |

In the first instance, techniques or activities should be delivered by demonstration (either by the coach or a player who can display the technique safely).

If physical contact is necessary, for example to provide support during a 1v1 scrum activity, this should be clearly explained to the child in advance and he/she should be given the chance to opt out. Physical support should be provided openly and must always be proportionate to the circumstances.

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| **Supporting Children with Personal Care** |

If it is necessary to help a child with personal care e.g. toileting or changing, this should be agreed in advance with the child and parents/carers and guidance taken. Volunteers/staff should work with parents/carers and children to develop practised routines for personal care, such as help with getting changed for younger children, so that parents/carers and children know what to expect.

Helpers should not take on the responsibility for tasks for which they are not appropriately trained e.g. manual assistance for a child with a physical disability.

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| **Physical contact between coaches and athletes in other contexts** |

There are a range of situations where coaches may come into physical contact with their participants e.g. a child who is upset reaching out for comfort, congratulating an athlete who has done well etc. The general guidance to follow is:

* All forms of physical contact should respect and be sensitive to the needs and wishes of the child
* Should take place in a culture of dignity and respect
* Children should be encouraged to express their views on physical contact
* Coaches should not initiate unnecessary physical contact with their participants
* Physical contact should be in a reasonable, appropriate manner in an open environment
* Be mindful that to comfort a young person who is upset, it is not always necessary or appropriate to place an arm around them. Sitting down and listening to them can show concern for their situation
* Sometimes children will initiate a hug or other forms of excited/happy contact with coaches and other adults, this is a normal form of human expression. It is important that adults respond to this in an appropriate manner, where they engage with the child in a positive way while not prolonging the contact or imitating it. Respond and then re-direct them into a more suitable coach/athlete form of positive expression such as a high 5 or dropping to one knee to speak to them at eye level.

**Please contact safeguarding@sru.org.uk with any queries or concerns**