

# OVERNIGHT & TRAVEL GUIDELINES

## INTRODUCTION

Rugby has a legal responsibility under the Vulnerable Children's Act 2014 and a duty of care to provide safe environments for children and young people who are under 18 years old.

Research shows that overnight stays and travel are areas of risk for abuse when children are involved in sport.

The aim of these guidelines is to promote practices which safeguard the wellbeing of children and protect them from harm. We also want adults, no matter their role, to be clear about rugby's expectations and how to be safe from allegations of abuse.

These guidelines apply to all club staff, including volunteers and part-time or temporary roles and contractors.

These guidelines are intended to compliment the New Zealand Rugby Child Protection Policy.

## PREVENTION PRINCIPLES FOR ALL TRAVEL AND OVERNIGHT STAYS:

- Have a person or group responsible for planning any trips or overnight stays. They should be the contact for caregivers, decide on adult:child ratios, assess any risks, and make a plan to mitigate these. They must also brief and debrief all adults involved on safe practice and expectations.
- Consider police vetting all relevant volunteer roles.
- Monitor and supervise children actively - do head counts, set up a buddy system, and get supervising adults do bed checks in pairs.
- Where possible, have both male and female helpers. For some children and young people this makes them feel more comfortable.
- Have enough supervising adults to monitor, manage and deal with any emergencies for the specific group. As general guidance:
  - children under 8 should have an adult to child ratio of at least 1:4;
  - children 8-12 should have a ratio of 1:8;
  - children over 12 a ratio of 1:10 is recommended.
- Adults travelling or supervising on trips or overnight stays should be briefed and given the code of conduct and these guidelines, so they are clear on club rules and who to contact with concerns.
- Rough, physical bullying or sexually inappropriate games and language should be addressed immediately by adults.
- Adults can model good boundaries by respecting children privacy in toilets or showers, not allowing children and young people to have access to alcohol or other adult material and having an agreed way of managing children's behaviour positively.
- All children and young people should be given a briefing or code of conduct of expected behaviour. This should include who they can talk with if they feel unsafe or uncomfortable while away or travelling and how they can get hold of these people (e.g. number to text, face-to-face contact).
- Children and young people sharing bedrooms should be of a similar age and gender. There should be one person per bed.
- Adults should supervise in pairs for activities of a personal nature e.g. doing bed checks, taking children into showers etc.
- Adults should never share a room alone with a child or young person other than their own.
- Where children and young people are showering or changing in communal showers etc, use a roster so children of a similar age and gender do so together.
- Travel and overnight stays should be in relation to the rugby programme, e.g. don't detour to other venues not stated to caregivers and which are not related to rugby.
- If there are any doubts about the safety or suitability of a person offering to travel or stay with children, it is ok to ask them not to attend.
- If you become aware of adults behaving in an unsafe way with children while travelling or on overnight stays please talk with them directly, referring them to these guidelines and let your trip coordinator know.

**If you have child protection concerns (e.g. if a child discloses or has signs of abuse), contact your Unions' Child Protection Advisor (CPA) for advice.**



# TRAVEL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

## DRIVERS ARE AN IMPORTANT PART OF TRAVEL SAFETY, THEY SHOULD:

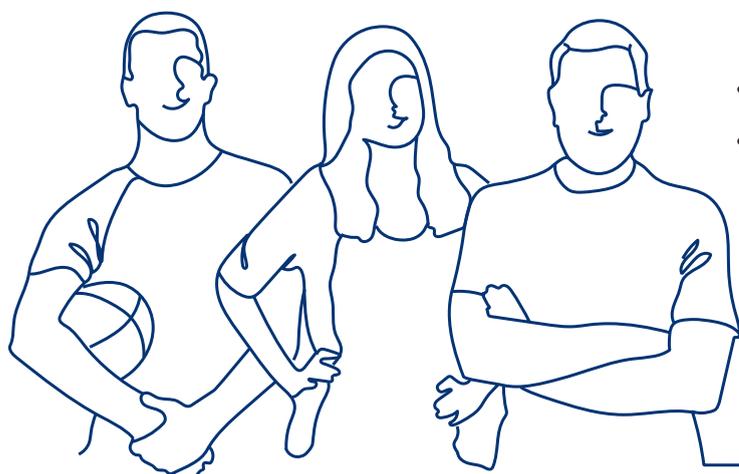
- have a current full license and their vehicle should be roadworthy (WOF and registered), and be free from alcohol or non-prescription drugs.
- ensure maximum passenger is not exceeded and that safety belts and boosters where needed are used.
- have a mobile phone on them at all times in case of emergencies.

## AVOIDING 1:1 TIME IS THE BEST WAY TO KEEP EVERYONE SAFE. YOU CAN DO THIS WHEN ARRANGING TRAVEL BY:

- having a central drop off and pick up point for trips so there isn't one child left at the end of a trip.
- using vans and transporting big groups at once.
- having adults sitting together in pairs, if travelling by bus. Ensure adults are spread throughout the bus for supervision purposes.

## WHERE 1:1 CONTACT IS UNAVOIDABLE, YOU CAN KEEP YOURSELF SAFE BY:

- letting the child's caregiver know what's happening, where you are going, and what time you will be back. If you can't get hold of them let your team manager know.
- encouraging caregivers to accompany their own child to events.
- If you must transport a child home by themselves, have them sit in the back seat and drop them off without detouring to other places.



# OVERNIGHT STAY SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

## HOMESTAY/BILLETING

- The host club should recommend suitable accommodation with host families (who should only be members of the host club).
- Share your club's code of conduct with the host family and discuss how these might apply in their home during the stay.
- Children should have their own beds. Where players are sharing a bedroom, children should be of a similar age and gender.
- Have a plan for emergency situations including situations where a child feels unsafe or uncomfortable. Ensure children can easily and discretely contact their caregivers or coach.
- Implement a process for checking in with children each day to ensure the health, safety and welfare of children being hosted in other's homes.

## DORMITORY/MARAE

- Check you will not be sharing sleeping spaces with other groups (outside your club).
- Adults sharing sleeping spaces with children must be preapproved by the organising committee and caregivers prior to the trip.
- Appoint 'safe adults' in the room and arrange for children to sleep close to their friends or others they feel safe with.

## HOTEL/MOTEL/GUEST HOUSE/HOSTEL

- Do the windows and doors lock properly? Consider using accommodation with internal doors only (no ranch sliders or access to outside from the room).
- If possible, negotiate that all players are housed on the same floor/wing. If not possible, groups of similar age players from the same club should be clustered in rooms near each other with at least two supervising adults for each cluster.
- Pornographic, violent and adult movies should be disabled on televisions and all people should be clear that showing children age-restricted material is prohibited.
- Minibars should be unavailable in rooms where children are.
- Where children are staying in a venue which serves alcohol (like a pub), children should always remain accompanied by two supervising adults. For instance, when children are put to bed two adults should remain in their room near the children. Children should be briefed about not opening the door to people who are not on their team while alone in their room.

# HOW TO RECOGNISE RISK TO A CHILD

Sadly, sometimes children experience abuse. We have processes to deal with this. Below are signs to be aware of.

There are three main ways we might become aware of child abuse:

## 1. We might see signs in the child

- Some of the things you might see are: bruising in the shape of objects, unexplained injuries, burns or cuts where the story about them seems fishy.
- Sometimes children tell us that something is wrong by their behaviour – they may be withdrawn, anxious, particularly aggressive, self-destructive, have sexual knowledge and play that seems beyond their years or there may be big changes in their behaviour that worry you.

## 2. Disclosure

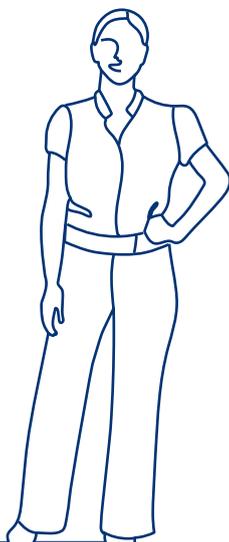
- Sometimes children will tell us directly they are being hurt. If this happens:
  - Stay calm and listen to what you are being told.
  - It is important you don't investigate and only ask 'who, where, when' questions if you need clarification.
- Write down word for word what has been said and pass this information on to your CPA.
- Assure the child that they have done the right thing by telling you, but don't make any promises e.g. 'I will make this stop'.

## 3. You may also see behaviour in adults that are unsafe. For example:

- making children do things that is significantly beyond their skill.
- being threatening or degrading treatment of a child.
- being overly familiar with a child e.g. making them sit on their lap or seeking alone time with a particular child or children.
- giving gifts or money for no reason.
- not respecting children's privacy in toilets or showers or letting children have access to alcohol or other adult material.

We can keep children safe by interrupting any unsafe practice at the time from adults and reporting any concerns to our CPA.

If you believe a child is in imminent danger you can phone the police on **111** or Oranga Tamariki **0508 FAMILY 24/7**



**CHILD  
PROTECTION**

**SAFE CLUBS  
SAFE KIDS**

