

NLD clubs regarding U18s Drinking and Games

We have had a concerning report from the safeguarding team at England rugby complaining of junior teams carrying out drinking games after matches within the NLD. The concern is further exacerbated by the fact that a coach was encouraging these activities, even if soft drinks were used instead of alcoholic beverages.

We would like to remind all clubs that this is not allowed under current RFU guidance and does not meet the core values of the RFU. All in the age grade game must maintain a commitment to fostering a positive and healthy environment for our players. Encouraging any activity that could be associated with a drinking culture, even when non-alcoholic drinks are involved, is contrary to the RFU's core values and both the RFU and NLD state that drinking games should not take place in any age group, this is also covered in the Play It Safe and In Touch Safeguarding courses. If the club safeguarding officer requires any further information regarding this then please ask them to contact the [NLD Safeguarding Manager](#).

We have also had reports of parents and coaches buying alcohol for those under the age of 18 years even in colts teams which is not acceptable and may bring the club into disrepute leading to action being taken against the club and possible issues with your bar licence so please ensure that everyone is made aware of this. If you have any concerns relating to these areas please contact us at [NLD Safeguarding](#).

It is essential that clubs do adhere to this guidance to help to safeguard young players and if any reports are made then a full investigation will take place and clubs may find themselves open to disciplinary, action including docked points for the first team or club fines. There is also the risk to your bar licence. Coaches must also be aware that encouraging drinking games may put them at risk of losing their DBS status and ability to coach due to being deemed unsuitable to being in a position of trust.

I trust that this guidance will be taken very seriously by clubs and passed on to all coaches and managers of junior teams so that we continue to provide a safe environment for all young people whilst adhering to RFU guidelines and prevent any further action being taken which may also harm the reputation of your club.

Kind Regards

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