

Protecting Their Potential

A Child Safety Guide for Clubs

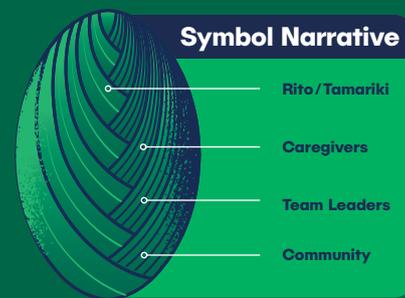


Be a Kaitiaki for our Tamariki

CHILD PROTECTION
SAFE CLUBS
SAFE KIDS

NEW ZEALAND
RUGBY

All kids can thrive in rugby when we know how to create a positive and safe environment.



Introduction

Be a kaitiaki for our tamariki

Every child has unlimited potential. Rugby is an awesome way to help them realise it. They learn to work as a team, to win and lose well, and to have pride in their own efforts and in their team. Rugby teaches them to stand tall and stand strong, building their mana.

Rugby should also be safe for kids. Everyone around them – parents, coaches, teachers, volunteers, supporters, teammates and administrators – can help protect the potential of every player. We need you to be kaitiaki for our tamariki.

Things that chip away at a child's potential can include:

- Unsporting behaviour.
- Anger and abuse from the sidelines.
- Emotional abuse or bullying.
- Unfair or inappropriate teasing.
- Unwanted physical contact.

Together, we can make rugby a positive and healthy environment for everyone.

Every person can:

1. Encourage the right behaviour
2. Be a good role model
3. Step in when lines are crossed
4. Be there to care

Encourage the right behaviour



Protect like a coach

Haumarutia anō he kaiwhakaako

Like a good coach, who helps everyone do their best, you can demonstrate the right way to do things and encourage children and adults when they get it right.

To encourage the right behaviour you can:

- **Increase awareness** so everyone in the club knows about child protection.
- **Set clear rules** about acceptable interactions between adults and young people.
- **Respect privacy** in bathrooms and showers and at weigh-ins.
- **Be aware** if someone is overstepping boundaries or repeatedly singling a child out for attention.
- **Empower parents** to be responsible for their family members.
- **Set boundaries** around overnight trips, taking photos and videos, alcohol use by adults in charge of young people. Use NZR Travel Guide for this.

Be a good role model



Protect like a captain Haumarutia anō he kāpene

Like the captain of a rugby team, a good role model leads by example. You can help each person know what is expected of them and speak on behalf of others to ensure things are safe and fair.

To be a good role model, you can:

- **Encourage talking** so everyone feels they can speak up.
- **Lead by example** and demonstrate good behaviour.
- **Build trust** so that the team and their supporters are there for each other.
- **Call it out** when someone sets a bad example.
- **Take it to the ref** if you think action is needed.

Be there to care



Protect like a medic Haumarutia anō he kaiāwhina

Anyone, from the team medic to a mum or dad, can look after people when they have been hurt or harmed, to make sure they are safe and well. Like a good medic, you can apply the correct first response, provide comfort, and record the details of what's happened so there can be follow-up if required.

To fulfil this role, you can:

- **Provide care** when a child is physically or emotionally hurt.
- **Give reassurance** to a child when they need it.
- **Ensure safety** by moving a child away from risks.
- **Get more help** from the right people such as your Safe Kids Advisor.

Step in when lines are crossed



Protect like a ref Haumarutia anō he kaiwawao

Think about how a good ref works: they communicate the rules, helping everyone understand what is acceptable and what isn't. They step in and take control if someone breaks the rules, to ensure the matter is resolved safely and fairly.

To keep everyone safe, you can:

- **Stop** any form of emotional, physical or sexual abuse, bullying or harassment in your team or club environment.
- **Step in** when children are at risk.
- **Explain the rules** to anyone breaking them.
- **Communicate consequences** to everyone involved.
- **Escalate the issue** and report all concerns of abuse to your Union's Safe Kids Advisor, or in an emergency contact the Police on **111** or Oranga Tamariki on **0508 FAMILY**.

Recognising and responding to risk



Being able to recognise and respond to the signs of risk or abuse are important. The following information details the types of abuse that can occur, what can be done to prevent abuse and what actions should be taken if abuse happens.

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

1. You might see signs in the child

- Things you might see could include 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.

Preventing harm to children

You can keep children safe by stepping in and interrupting anything unsafe that an adult is doing, then reporting any concerns to your club or Union's Safe Kids Adviser. If you believe a child is in imminent danger you can call the police on **111** or Oranga Tamariki on **0508 FAMILY** at any time, 24/7.

2. A child may disclose abuse

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. Instead, ask them 'who, where, when' questions if you need clarification.
- Write down word for word what has been said and pass this information on to your club or Union's Safe Kids Adviser, they will advise you of the process from here, including monitoring the outcome.
- 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.

There are a number of things that can count as abuse:

- Making children do things that are significantly beyond their skill.
- Threatening a child or treating them in a degrading way.
- Being overly familiar with a particular child or children e.g. making them sit on their lap or seeking alone time with them.
- Giving a child 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.
- Concerns about an adults behaviour should also be reported to your Safe Kids Adviser. If your concerns are ongoing it is important to keep escalating issues.

If you feel worried about reporting something, it's important to know you don't need to have proof that harm is happening. It's the job of the Police and Oranga Tamariki to ascertain the facts. Under the law, when you make a report in good faith, you are protected from any legal proceedings against you.