



1000 Hills Rugby Safeguarding Policy

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Foreword

Protecting children and young people from harm is a collective responsibility. Sport enriches their lives by promoting health, confidence, teamwork, and community belonging. At 1000 Hills Rugby, our core values—Discipline, Sportsmanship, Mutuality, Integrity, and Mental and Physical Strength—guide us to uphold the highest standard of care across all levels. We collaborate closely with local stakeholders like Rwanda Children 1st and Police Rwanda to act immediately when concerns arise, following clear safeguarding procedures aligned with national laws.

Policy Statement

1000 Hills Rugby is committed to safeguarding every child and young person involved in our sport. All players have the right to a protected, safe, and positive rugby experience, free from abuse and neglect. This policy applies to all participants, volunteers, employees, and referees within our community rugby programs. It is informed by the Rwanda Children's Rights and Protection Law (Law No. 71/2018) and local child wellbeing standards, reflecting both legal obligations and culturally respectful practices.

Core Principles

A child or young person is defined as under 18 years, per Rwanda's child protection framework.

Children's welfare is paramount.

Protection from harm is guaranteed regardless of gender, ability, race, faith, language, or identity.

Partnership with families, clubs, and authorities is essential for protection.

Everyone involved in 1000 Hills Rugby shares responsibility for safeguarding.

1000 HILLS RUGBY

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Roles & Responsibilities

1000 Hills Rugby Organization

Appoint at least one Safeguarding Officer (SO) for safeguarding leadership and liaison.

Ensure the SO and staff complete child protection training within three months of appointment.

Maintain up-to-date volunteer records, including PVG scheme membership or equivalent criminal record checks.

Regularly review and publicize this safeguarding policy.

Facilitate support and advice for safeguarding concerns through the dedicated Safeguarding Team.

Volunteers, Coaches, and Staff

Commit to creating a safe, welcoming rugby space for children.

Read, understand, and adhere to this safeguarding policy.

Complete mandatory child protection training, including online and in-person sessions.

Report safeguarding concerns promptly and appropriately to our SO.

Safeguarding Officer (SO)

Primary contact for all safeguarding issues at the club level.

Promote and ensure best practices in safeguarding, recruitment, and training.

Maintain confidential records of concerns and actions taken.

Liaise with the 1000 Hills Rugby Safeguarding Officer, leadership Team and local authorities.

Facilitate safeguarding awareness among volunteers, players, and parents.

Types of Abuse

Physical Abuse

Includes harming a child via hitting, shaking, or neglecting their physical limits during training, resulting in injury or long-term harm.

Sexual Abuse

Any sexual activity involving a child, including inappropriate touching, exposure to sexual content, or exploitation.

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Neglect

Failing to meet basic needs such as nutrition, supervision, or medical care; also includes emotional neglect affecting development.

Emotional Abuse

Persistent negative treatment such as bullying, humiliation, or unrealistic demands that damage self-esteem or emotional wellbeing.

Note: Children may suffer multiple abuse types simultaneously. Emotional harm often accompanies other abuse.

Recognize, Respond, Report, Record (The 4 R's)

Recognize: Look for signs like unexplained injuries, behavior changes, fearfulness, withdrawal, or inappropriate language.

Respond: Stay calm, listen without judgment, reassure, avoid pressuring for details, and explain the need to inform someone for help.

Report: Immediately notify the SO or the leadership team. In emergencies, contact Rwanda Police at **112**. Use designated forms for documenting incidents.

Record: Document facts clearly and promptly using the child's own words, noting dates, times, and any witnesses.

Best Practices

Recruitment

Conduct criminal background checks prior to engagement.
Require safeguarding certification through approved training.
Ensure ongoing supervision and refresher training.

Adult-to-Child Ratios

Recommended minimum: 1 adult per 15 children for older groups (10+ years).
Prefer mixed gender adult supervision for balance.

Changing Facilities

Separate facilities for adults and children; supervision only when necessary with two adults present.
No pressure on children uncomfortable with changing/showering around others.

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Transportation

Parents take responsibility for travel unless club-organized under strict consent protocols.

Drivers must be licensed, insured, criminal record-checked, and vehicles safe.

Children must not be transported alone unless emergencies arise with parental consent.

Social Media & Photography

Obtain parental consent prior to photos.

Feature children in group contexts, avoid personal info exposure.

Monitor online interactions to prevent bullying or exploitation.

Prohibit photography in changing rooms or inappropriate contexts.

Legislation and Framework Alignment

Adheres to Rwanda Children's Rights and Protection Law (No. 71/2018) and National Child Protection Policies.

Incorporates the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators adapted for local context: Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included.

How 1000 Hills Rugby Will Respond

Safeguarding concerns are treated with highest priority for the child's wellbeing.

The Safeguarding Team acts as an advisory body and escalates serious concerns to 1000 Hills Rugby Leadership Team.

The team reviews cases, hears all parties, and issues action plans.

Failure to report or implement safeguarding measures breaches policy and triggers disciplinary procedures.

Liaison with statutory authorities and community partners is key.

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