



Tackling Bullying Behaviour - Clubs

Age grade rugby should be where children first learn to live the values of [Irish Rugby – Respect, Integrity, Inclusivity, Fun & Excellence](#).

Rugby clubs should provide a positive, safe and fun environment. The behaviour of players, coaches, parents and others can impact positively or negatively on a player's rugby experience.

It is the responsibility of the club to deal with bullying behaviour that may take place. Please refer to the [Safeguarding Policy](#) for a definition of bullying.

The impact of bullying behaviour

If a child experiences bullying and is not adequately supported, this can be a traumatic life event for a child, and the effects can last beyond childhood and into adulthood.

To find out more about types of bullying behaviour go to our fact sheets [Banter or Bullying?](#) and [Cyberbullying](#).

Recognising the impact of bullying behaviour

Many young people who are being bullied suffer in silence as they can find it difficult to come forward with what they are experiencing. They are often embarrassed to share their concerns. It is therefore important that the trusted adults around young people are vigilant to it.

A proactive approach

Bullying will continue in an environment that accepts bullying behaviour as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. It is vital that clubs demonstrate clearly that this type of behaviour will not be tolerated.

Some ways to do this include:

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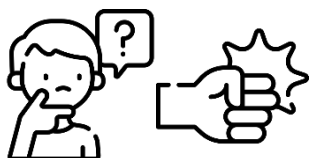
Displaying the anti-bullying statement clearly in the club and across social media platforms



Ensuring everyone has signed up to their Code of Conduct – coaches, players & parents



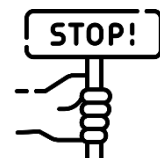
Providing good supervision, this makes it hard for bullying behaviour to go unnoticed



Encouraging an awareness of what bullying behaviour is & how to tackle it



Creating a 'permission to share' culture that enables players to raise their concerns



Tackling bullying behaviour early, giving an opportunity for behaviour to change

Responding to bullying behaviour

Bullying behaviour should always be considered in conjunction with the [Codes of Conduct](#), tackling poor practice early, giving warnings and giving opportunities for behaviour to change.

The young person should be encouraged to apologise to their victim, taking responsibility for their actions. Parents should be kept up to date.

It is important that the victim is supported throughout the process to feel safe and to understand that this is not their fault. Their parents will need to be informed and if necessary, the coaches working with the young people should be informed so that they can keep an eye on things.

For more information on Tackling Bullying Behaviour in Clubs take our online module. Further information available on <https://www.irishrugby.ie/playing-the-game/spirit-of-rugby/safeguarding/training/>

Go to the fact sheet [Is Rugby Fun For You?](#) for further information on people your players can talk to.

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