

Protecting Their Potential

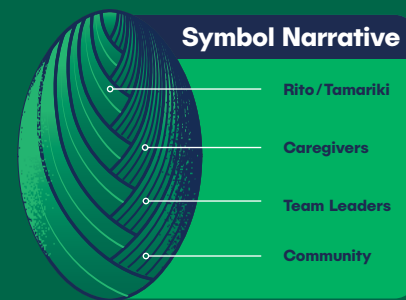
Overnight and Travel Guidelines for Clubs



Be a Kaitiaki for our Tamariki



Going away on a team trip is an exciting time for kids. They get to encounter new people, places and experiences, all of which are great for their development. But it can also mean being away from family or familiar caregivers, which means extra care is needed to keep them safe.



These guidelines are designed to ensure that an overnight trip or travel is a positive and safe experience for everyone, that builds great memories for the future and protects the potential of young players.

What you need to know

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. The following guidelines work alongside the NZR Child Protection Policy and apply to all club staff, including volunteers and part-time or temporary roles and contractors.

Planning ahead

To ensure your trip runs smoothly and is enjoyable and safe, put time into planning how you will run things.

- Have a person or group responsible for planning any trips or overnight stays. They should:
 - Be the contact for caregivers
 - Set adult:child ratios
 - Assess any risks and make a plan to mitigate these
 - Brief and debrief all adults involved on safe practice and expectations. Adults travelling or supervising on trips or overnight stays should be given the code of conduct and these guidelines, so they are clear on club rules and who to contact with concerns.
- Where possible, have both male and female helpers, to help all children and young people feel comfortable.
- Consider police vetting all volunteers.
- Have enough supervising adults to monitor, manage and deal with any emergencies for the specific group. The recommended adult to child ratios are:
 - 1:4 for children aged under 8
 - 1:8 for children aged 8 – 12
 - 1:10 for children over 12.
- If there are any doubts about the safety or suitability of a person who has offered to travel or stay with children, it is ok to decline their offer.
- Give all children and young people a briefing or a code of conduct for expected behaviour. This should include who they can talk to, face to face or by text or phone, if they feel unsafe or uncomfortable while away or travelling.

On the trip

Staying safe while you're away is all about being aware, connected and respectful.

- Monitor and supervise children actively by doing a head count and setting up a buddy system.
- Have adults address any rough, physical bullying or sexually inappropriate games and language immediately.
- Ensure adults model good boundaries:
 - Respect children's privacy in toilets or showers
 - Don't allow children and young people to have access to alcohol or other adult material
 - Have an agreed, positive way of managing children's behaviour.
- Shared bedrooms should have children and young people of similar age and gender, with one person per bed.
- Communal showers and changing rooms should have a roster so only children of a similar age and gender use them together.
- Adults should supervise any personal activities in pairs, including bed checks and taking children into showers, etc.
- Adults should never share a room alone with a child or young person unless they are their parent or guardian.
- Travel and overnight stays should be in relation to the rugby programme; unless parents and caregivers know and agree ahead of time, don't detour to other venues not related to rugby.
- If you become aware of adults behaving in an unsafe way with children while travelling or on overnight stays, talk with them directly. Show them 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 Provincial Union's Safe kids Advisor for advice.

Drivers

Trustworthy drivers are the key to a safe trip. Make sure anyone who is driving on your trip:

- Has a current full licence.
- Is driving a roadworthy vehicle (current WOF and registration).
- Is free of alcohol and nonprescription drugs.
- Carries the right number of passengers and makes sure seatbelts and boosters are used when required.
- Has a mobile phone on them at all times in case of emergencies.

1:1 Contact

When travelling, it's safer to not put adults and children into 1:1 contact situations. Here's some ways to do this:

- Have a central drop off and pick up point for trips so there isn't one child left at the end of a trip.
- Use vans or buses so groups are larger.
- On buses, have adults sit in pairs and space them around the bus to help supervise.

If 1:1 contact can't be avoided, here's some ways to ensure everyone is safe:

- Let 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.
- Encourage caregivers to accompany their own child on trips.
- If you're transporting a child home by themselves, have them sit in the back seat and drop them off without detouring to other places.

Overnight stays

There are extra things to consider on overnight stays, depending on the kind of accommodation you have arranged.

Homestays and billeting with families

- The host club should recommend suitable accommodation with host families from their club.
- Your club should share its code of conduct with the host family and discuss how it might apply in their home during the stay.
- Children should have their own beds.
- Players sharing a bedroom 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 discreetly contact their caregivers or coach.
- Have a process for checking in with children each day, to ensure their health, safety and welfare is being looked after by their hosts.

Dormitory or marae stays

- Check you will not be sharing sleeping spaces with other groups from outside your club.
- Make sure any adults sharing sleeping spaces with children are pre-approved by the organising committee and caregivers prior to the trip.
- Appoint 'safe adults' in the room that children can go to if they need help or reassurance.
- Arrange for children to sleep close to their friends or others they feel safe with.

Hotels, motels, guest houses and hostels

- Check the windows and doors lock properly.
- Consider using accommodation with internal doors only (no ranch sliders or access to outside from the room).
- Try and arrange for all players to be housed on the same floor or wing, or in clusters of rooms near similar age players from the same club, 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.
- If children are staying in a venue which serves alcohol, children should always remain accompanied by two supervising adults, including at bed time.
- Brief children about not opening the door to people who are not on their team when they're alone in their room.

Recognising risk

Most trips will be a great experience for everyone. But all adults should know how to recognise potential risks or abuse to the children in their care.

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.

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 Safe Kids Advisor.
- 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.

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 Advisor.

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.
