

Head Injury Assessment

We hope that start of the season has gone well for you. Player safety is an important area for all of us and we are grateful for all the work that is going on to manage any unfortunate incidents of concussion that may occur.

We would like to take this opportunity to remind you that while the effective use of the Head Injury Assessment (HIA) process is being seen at the elite adult level of the game, it should be noted that HIAs must **not** be carried out during games other than those in competitions and matches, as approved by World Rugby:

- Aviva Premiership
- England Senior team internationals (men and women)
- England U20 home internationals (men and women)
- A-League
- Greene King IPA Championship
- Anglo-Welsh Cup
- British and Irish Cup
- European Champions Cup
- European Challenge Cup

All other matches and training involving adult male and female players (including the new women's Tyrrells Premier 15s League) and all age grade activities must adhere to regulation 9, which states *"any individual who exhibits any of the signs or symptoms of concussion should be immediately and permanently removed safely from the field of play, should not return to play that day, and it is recommended that they are referred to a medical or healthcare professional for assessment and advice."*

To see Regulation 9 in full, click [here](#).

This must be adhered to irrespective of the qualification/profession of the individual providing the pitch-side first aid and/or immediate care provision.

Following a suspected concussion players should follow the appropriate Return to Play protocols, whereby **if they remain symptom free for 14 days**, the player can gradually increase physical activity **and** can return to playing 19 days after the original incident if an adult, or after 23 days if in the U19 age group or younger.

More information regarding suspected concussion management and the return to play protocols can be found on the HEADCASE pages of the ER website [here](#). There is a free 30 minute online concussion education module which everyone involved in the game is urged to complete, there are bespoke modules for players, coaches, match officials, parents/guardians and teachers.

Age Grade Codes of Practice

Following the recommendations of the Age Grade Good Practice Group we are pleased to introduce the [Age Grade Codes of Practice](#).

The delivery of these Codes ensures a focus on the wants and needs of the Age Grade player. They ensure that every player, regardless of ability, maturity or size, develops not only their rugby skills, but wider personal and social skills, increasing their enjoyment and supporting their transition to the adult game.

The Codes provide support and guidance coaches and teachers in:

- Developing the whole player – to ensure holistic player development
- Playing and training frequency – to address over and under playing and ensure a balanced rugby programme
- Grouping of players – to ensure inclusivity and support individual player development
- Playing out of age group – to enhance player development and confirm what is permitted in regulation
- Out of season activity, camps and tours - clarifying regulation and requirements for camps and tours
- Minimum standards for coaches and referees – detailing how coaches and referees can achieve best practice

The Codes of Practice are designed to help and support those working hard across Age Grade Rugby. They support the application of regulation and replace previous guidance documents and it is our intention that everyone who delivers the Age Grade game feels compelled to commit to them.

Over the coming weeks we will be releasing a series of videos to help promote these Codes and encourage coaches and teachers to buy into them by stating that they are “in”. Once released publicly, your support in promoting these Codes within your CB and encouraging commitment would be much appreciated in ensuring they become adapted and commonplace in the game – benefiting players as a result.

Should you have any further questions on these Codes please contact us on Agegraderugby@rfu.com

FOR INFORMATION

National Rugby Survey

Over 28,000 people completed the National Rugby Survey and Age Grade Player Survey earlier this year, making it the biggest community rugby survey of its kind.

The next wave of the National Rugby Survey, which is now combined with the Age Grade Player Survey, is set to open next week and we will be sending emails to players, volunteers, coaches, match officials and fans, across the game, encouraging them to tell us their views.

We will inform you as soon as the National Rugby Survey is live and would appreciate your time in completing the survey, telling us about your experiences across the game so we can continue to provide the best offering for all involved in rugby.