

Rugby (Tackle)

SECONDARY - INTERSCHOOL 2023

HIGH RISK ACTIVITY

- Consult [Risk Management](#).
- The safety standards for this activity must be presented to the activity provider prior to the activity taking place. The activity provider must meet the minimum requirements listed in the safety standards. For more information on planning trips using outside providers, consult [Outside Activity Providers](#).
- Consult curricular [Fitness Activities](#) and curricular [Weight Training](#) when involving participants in weight training and/or training and fitness development activities.

Equipment

- Determine that all equipment is safe for use (for example, no sharp corners, cracks, or splinters). Students must be encouraged to report equipment problems to the coach.
- Protective equipment must not be altered (for example, cutting a portion off the back of mouth guards).
- All equipment must comply with [World Rugby](#) Regulation 12.
- Regulation rugby balls must be used.
- A full fit interior mouth guard is required.

Refer to the [First Aid](#) section for first aid equipment requirements.

Clothing/Footwear/Jewellery

- Appropriate clothing (for example, snug-fitting, collarless jersey) and footwear must be worn.
- No eye or sport glasses are permitted.
- The wearing of jewellery during practices and competitions must meet the rules of the governing body of the sport/activity, [OFSAA](#), and local athletic association. Consult the [General Safety Standards for Clothing, Footwear, and Jewellery](#) when jewellery is not addressed by the governing body of the sport/activity, OFSAA or the local athletic association.
- When long hair poses a safety risk it must be secured. Devices (for example, hair pins, elastics and barrettes) used to tie back long hair must not present a safety concern.
- Students must not participate when the length of fingernails poses a safety risk to themselves or others.

Studs/cleats

- Studs/cleats must be worn.
- Studs/cleats must be consistent with World Rugby Regulation 12:
 - Stud/cleat length must be no longer than 21mm.
 - Studs/cleats must not be nylon.
 - Moulded rubber multi-studded soles are acceptable provided they have no sharp edges or ridges.
 - Replaceable studs must be capable of repeated fixing and removal without creating a hazard.
- Soccer cleats or rubber/plastic rugby cleats are permissible.
- Football and baseball cleats are not appropriate.
- Metal cleats are not appropriate on artificial turf surfaces and are only recommended for natural grass in wet conditions.

Facilities

- Determine that all facilities are safe for use. Students must be encouraged to report facility problems to the coach.

- The playing area must be inspected regularly, be free from debris and obstructions, allow for safe footing and traction, and be well removed from traffic areas.
- Use collapsible flags or soft pylons to mark corners, mid-line and 22m (66') line, or flags off the sidelines.
- Goalposts must be padded if in field of play.
- Practices: Holes, hazards (for example, glass, rocks, sprinkler heads, sewer grates), and severely uneven surfaces must be identified. The conditions must be made safe or the activity must be modified or moved to a safe location. Hazards which cannot be removed must be brought to the attention of the students. Coach must notify principal/designate of unsafe field conditions.
- Competitions: Where hazardous conditions that cannot be avoided are identified by the coach and/or officials the conditions must be made safe or the competition must be cancelled or moved to a safe location. Coach must notify principal/designate of unsafe field conditions.
- Walls, stages, equipment, trees, and posts must not be used as turning points, finish lines, end zones, or boundaries. Establish a clearly delineated boundary line away from the hazards, using visual markers (for example, lines, pylons), to prevent contact/collision.
- Consult [General Safety Standards for Facilities](#) for the opening and closing of gymnasium divider doors/curtains.
- When running takes place off school site for a warm up, conditioning run and/or is an integral part of the activity:
 - Coaches must do a safety check 'walk through' in order to identify potential problems prior to initial use of route or course.
 - Coaches must outline to the students the route or course (for example, notice of areas to approach with caution) before the start of the run.
 - Coaches must determine that students are not crossing busy intersections unless directly supervised.

Environmental Considerations

- When environmental conditions may pose a risk to student safety (for example, thunderstorms [lightning] or student(s) with asthma, triggered by air quality), coaches must take into consideration their school board/school's protocols and procedures related to:
 - environmental conditions (consult [Weather](#)); and
 - insects (for example, mosquitoes and ticks [consult the school/school board's protocols and/or regional Public Health Department's website]).
- Students must receive instruction on safety procedures related to environmental conditions and be made aware of ways to protect themselves (for example, sun burn, heat stroke).
- At all times the school board's weather and insect procedures are the minimum standards. In situations where a higher standard of care is presented (for example, outside activity providers, facility/program coordinators), the higher standard of care must be followed.

Special Rules/Instructions

- Be aware of students whose medical condition (for example, asthma, anaphylaxis, casts, previous concussion, orthopaedic device) may affect participation. Consult [Medical Conditions](#).
- Prior to participation students must receive concussion information through the appropriate Ministry of Education's Concussion Awareness Resource or the school board approved concussion resources. Students must also receive information on:
 - the Concussion Code of Conduct;
 - concussion prevention strategies specific to the activity and inherent risks of the activity (that is, outline possible risks and ways to minimize the risks);
 - procedures and rules for safe play; and
 - the importance of reporting symptoms related to a suspected concussion.
- Students must confirm their review of the concussion awareness resource and Concussion Code of Conduct prior to participation.

- Refer to school board policies and procedures (i.e., transportation, excursion/field trip) for communication with parents/guardians, the location of an off-site activity, means of transportation, supervision ratios, and parent/guardian permission.
- Previous training, fitness level, and the length of time and intensity of physical activity must be taken into consideration.
- Activities must be based on skills that are taught.
- Skills must be taught in proper progression.
- A proper warm-up and cool-down must be included.
- Emphasize controlled movement when requiring students to walk or run backwards. Backward-running races are not permitted.
- When involved in practice drills, students must not be required to close their eyes or be blindfolded.
- Fair play and rules of the sport must be taught and strictly enforced.
- Adequate liquid replacement (personal water bottles, water fountains) must be accessible for students before, during, and after physical activity to prevent dehydration.
- Students must be informed that they are not to share water bottles.
- Any exposed orthopaedic apparatus (for example, knee brace) that presents a safety concern to other players must be soft or padded. Such devices must be approved by the official prior to the commencement of the game.
- Prior to the first league game, 8 days of practices that contain contact (for example, scrums, rucks, mauls, line-outs, and tackling) must have occurred.
- Students must be taught that head hits and high tackles are not permitted.
- Tackling, scrum, maul, ruck and line-out skill progressions must be taught and practiced prior to competition.
- Training must include flexibility, strength and cardiovascular-enhancing activities.
- Players must be physically prepared for contact.
- Parents/guardians must be informed of the school board's policy related to initiation/hazing activities.

- The presence and location of spectators must not present a safety concern. A school is responsible for supervising its own spectators. The ratio of supervisor to spectators must address safety concerns.

Supervision

- All activities must be supervised.
- The level of supervision must be commensurate with the inherent risk of the activity. The level of risk is related to the number of participants, the skill level of the participants, the type of equipment used, and environmental conditions.
- Constant visual supervision during initial instruction and practice of contact skills.
- Subsequently, on-site supervision is required.
- Students must be informed that the use of equipment and the gymnasium are prohibited without supervision. In addition to verbal communication, the doors must be locked or signs must be posted indicating that students are not allowed to use the gym unless appropriately supervised.
- As a minimum the designated coach liaison will provide in-the-area supervision for all practices, games, and competitions.
- When a school team is travelling outside of their school district, a coach liaison from the same school/school district must accompany the team, must be accessible and at least one of the following criteria must be in place:
 - coach liaison is visible;
 - coach liaison is circulating on the same site;
 - location of coach liaison is at the same location and whereabouts is known;
 - if a coach is a high school student and under the age of 18, the coach liaison must be visible at all times.
- Consult school board and local athletic association rules and regulations with regard to coach and coach liaison duties and adhere to the higher standard of care.

Qualifications

- Game/match official(s) must be certified and/or experienced in officiating the sport.
- The head coach must demonstrate knowledge of the sport, skills, and strategies to the principal or designate.
- All coaches must be familiar with and implement, where applicable, the criteria outlined in [Coaches Expectations](#).
- One coach must have a minimum certification of NCCP Community Sport Coach – Community Initiation/World Rugby Level 1. This coach must supervise all the contact drills and all the competitions.
- Additional rugby coaches for a team must possess one of the following coaching qualifications:
 - NCCP Community Sport Coach – Community Initiation/World Rugby Level 1 Course
 - NCCP Competition Coach – Competition Introduction/World Rugby Level 2 Course
 - Accreditation as a NCCP Rugby Learning Facilitator
 - Completion of rugby NCCP level 1 and/or level 2 certification in the past
 - Attendance at a clinic or workshop within the last three years provided by an instructor who is knowledgeable of the activity (for example, appropriate skills and progressions), and where safety is addressed as outlined in the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education
 - Past experience within the last 3 years as a coach in rugby, having knowledge of the activity (for example, appropriate skills and progressions) and current safety practices as outlined in the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education.
- For more information on sport-specific NCCP training please visit coach.ca.

First Aid

- A fully stocked first aid kit must be readily accessible. (Consult [Sample First Aid Kit](#))

- A working communication device (for example, cell phone) must be accessible.
- The individual who takes responsibility for providing first aid to injured students must:
 - as a minimum, have a current first aid certification from a recognized first aid provider (for example, St. John Ambulance, Red Cross) that includes CPR B or C and training in head, neck and spinal injury management;
 - be in the area and readily accessible during the entire practice/competition;
 - be aware of the school's first aid emergency action plan and follow their first aid emergency response (consult [First Aid Plan and First Aid Emergency Response](#));
 - follow their school board's concussion protocol for a suspected concussion; and
 - not be a participant in the activity.

Definitions

- **Coach:**

- Any individual approved by the principal or designate (consult [Coaches Expectations](#)). All new coaches must go through an approval process by school administrator/designate to determine the coach's knowledge, experience and, where appropriate, qualifications (for example, higher risk sports) to safely coach the sport.

- **Coach Liaison:**

- A teacher, principal, or vice-principal with a current certification from the Ontario College of Teachers and under contract by the school/school board. Consult [Coaches Expectations](#) for more information.

- **Supervision:**

- The vigilant overseeing of a sport for regulation or direction. All facilities, equipment, and sports have inherent risks, but the more effectively they are supervised, the safer they become.

- The Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education designate three categories of supervision, Constant visual supervision, On-site supervision, and In-the-area supervision. The categories take into consideration the risk level of the activity, the participants' skill level and the participants' maturity. The three levels of supervision described are not hierarchical but represent the type of supervision that an activity requires and the type of supervision that is inherently possible.

- **Types of Supervision:**

- **Constant visual supervision:**

- The coach is physically present, watching the activity in question. Only one activity requiring "Constant visual" supervision may take place while other activities are going on.
- For example, during a track and field practice, some students are involved in high jump, some in relay, and others in distance running. For high Jump, the coach is at the event and is observing the activity.

- **In-the-area Supervision:**

- The coach could be in the gymnasium while another activity is taking place in an area adjacent to the gymnasium. In-the-area supervision requires the coach to be readily accessible.
- For example, In-the-area supervision occurs:
 - in activities in which students may be out of sight for periods of time and the location of the coach is not nearby (for example, alpine skiing, cross-country running). At least one of the following criteria must be in place:
 - The coach is circulating
 - The location of the coach has been communicated to students and volunteers
 - in single activities and those that may be combined (for example, other in- the- area activities such as badminton, table tennis, handball – wall) with the following criteria

in place:

- The coach must be circulating between the activities and readily accessible
- The coach informs the students of the location of the activities

○ **On-site Supervision:**

- Entails coach presence but not necessarily constantly viewing one specific activity. Momentary presence in adjoining rooms (for example, equipment room) to the gym is considered part of “on-site supervision”.
- For example, during a track and field practice, some students are involved in high jump, some in relay, and others in distance running. For the relay, students are participating on the track/field and can be seen by the coach.

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