

Responding to Disclosure, Suspicions and Allegations – Outside Rounders



People within Rounders are ideally placed to recognise or receive concerns relating to the welfare of young people. Everyone has a responsibility to respond to these concerns whether they relate to a child's home or family situation; a community situation or involves incidents within the club or sport. Children rely on adults being alert to indicators that a child might be being abused

How to Respond to a Disclosure from a Young Person

Actions to Take

If a young person informs you directly that he/she, or another young person, is concerned about someone's behaviour towards them (this is termed disclosure), the person receiving information should:

- React calmly so as not to frighten or deter the young person;
- Tell the young person that he/she is not to blame and that he/she was right to tell;
- Take what the person says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what it is said by a young person
- Keep any questions to an absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said;
- Reassure the young person but DO NOT make promises of confidentiality, which might not be feasible in light of subsequent developments;
- Record in writing exactly what has been said using the young persons words as soon as possible. Use Rounders England Incident Report Form¹ and forward to the Rounders England Safeguarding Officer who will make a decision about whether or not the form should be forwarded to Children's Social Care Services and Police (as directed) and to Rounders England Lead Safeguarding Officer;
- Seek advice immediately from Rounders England Lead Safeguarding Officer – Alison Steel

Office Hours: 0114 2480357 or Outside Office Hours: 07411 477849 or contact the Rounders England Deputy Lead Safeguarding Officer

Alison Howard

Office Hours: 0114 2480357 or Outside Office Hours: 07931 741345

If both are unavailable the local Children's Social Care Services or Police should be contacted immediately, they will advise on the action to be taken, including advice on contacting the parents. Expert advice can also be provided by the NSPCC Helpline on 0800 800 500 for adults or Childline on 0800 1111 for children.

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Actions to Avoid

The person receiving the disclosure should not:

- Panic;
- Allow their shock or distaste to show;
- Ask questions other than to clarify that you have enough information to act;
- Speculate or make assumptions;
- Make negative comments about the alleged abuser;
- Approach the alleged abuser;
- Make promises or agree to keep secrets.

N.B. It may not be that all young people are able to express themselves verbally. Communication difficulties may mean that it is hard for them to complain or to be understood. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish the signs of abuse from the symptoms of some disabilities or conditions, in relation to the nature of the individual's impairment. However, where there are concerns about the safety of a young person, record exactly what has been observed in detail and follow the procedures to report these concerns as detailed below.

Responding to Concerns about Possible Abuse from OUTSIDE Rounders

If a young person informs you directly that he/she is being abused outside the sport environment (i.e. at home, school or some other setting outside the sport) OR through your own observations or through a third party you become aware of possible abuse outside the sport environment you must **REACT IMMEDIATELY**. See Flowchart below.

- Ensure the safety of the young person – if the young person needs immediate medical treatment, take the young person to hospital or call an ambulance, inform doctors of your concerns and ensure they are aware it is a child protection issue;
- If available contact the Club Welfare Officer immediately who will follow the reporting procedures detailed below. If the Club Welfare Officer cannot be contacted, then the person that has the concerns about the young person's welfare should follow the reporting procedures.

Reporting Procedures

- Seek advice immediately from Rounders England Lead Safeguarding Officer. If he/she is unavailable the local Children's Social Care Services or Police should be contacted immediately, they will advise on the action to be taken, including advice on contacting the parents. Expert advice can also be provided by the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000 or Childline on 0800 1111;
- Make a full and factual record of events utilising the Incident Report Form and forward a copy of the recorded information, as directed to the Children's Social Care Services and/or Police and to Rounders England Lead Safeguarding Officer who will take the appropriate action. Contact the Club Welfare Officer as soon as possible;
- If the individual being accused is from within the Rounders environment, Rounders England Lead Safeguarding Officer will consider suspension of the individual concerned following contact with Children's Social Care Services or the Police. The case will be referred to Rounders England Child Protection Case Management

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Group following the Children's Social Care Services and /or Police investigation.

It is never easy to respond to a young person who tells you that they are being abused and you may feel upset and worried yourself. Rounders England will endeavour to offer you support from the Rounders England Lead/Deputy Lead Safeguarding Officer.

All meetings and correspondence will be recorded using the standardised reporting proformas (a copy of this can be found in the *Recognising and Responding to Concerns and Reporting* section on the website).

Flowchart

The Reporting Process for concerns about the welfare of children **outside** Rounders:

