

Guidance for adult clubs with U18 players



*"Football for Everyone
Everyone for Football"*

Somerset FA are aware that there are many 16 and 17 year old players looking to play in Open Aged Football. This is a fantastic opportunity for these young players to progress and be challenged both technically and physically, however officials, managers and players must also recognise that these young players are still minors.

There are many ways that a club can ensure these young players are enjoying their football in a safe environment:

- Manager/Coach should speak with the U18's player about their expectations of joining the team, including playing time and their role within the team.
- Manager/Coach to discuss with the U18's player and his/her parents about the changing room environment and what can be expected; i.e. swearing, banter and alcohol being consumed.
- Ensure that the U18's player feels comfortable should he/she not wish to change in the changing room, but arrives and departs wearing his/her kit.
- Where U18 players use the showers consideration should be given to allow them to shower separately from the other players. Where separate shower facility do not exist this may mean allowing the U18 player to shower before the other members of the squad.
- Encourage your team captain to mentor the young player throughout the season and ensure the other players on the team are mindful of the player's age.
- Safeguard the U18's player at all times, but particularly during matches to ensure that he/she is not subjected to verbal or physical abuse by opposing players trying to intimidate them.
- Where under 18 players are regularly members of the squad then the team manager and all managerial team members, coaches, physios/1st Aider, etc. must have a DBS Check through the FA Unit; this is a legal requirement.
- Manager/Coach should make the match official aware that you have an U18's player on your team.
- Do not allow demeaning initiation (hazing) rituals.
- Think about the travel arrangements for both home and away matches for U18 players.

For further information or guidance on Safeguarding Children and Young People in football please contact Shirley Needham, Designated Safeguarding Officer:

Shirley.Needham@somersetfa.com | 01458 832 034 | www.somersetfa.com