

# SMARTER, SAFER, STRONGER: INJURY PREVENTION EDUCATION FOR YOUTH RUGBY ATHLETES

Madisyn Pluhowy BKin, Human Kinetics



## WHY INJURY PREVENTION?

- The **warm-up and cool-down** are **essential** parts to athlete performance and injury prevention strategies
- Warmups should include **technical, tactical, physical, and mental** aspects to fully prime the athletes **body and nervous system for performance**
- Young athletes **did not have the proper education** on injury prevention
- **40%** of athletes have never received education regarding injury prevention strategies
- Many young athletes are getting injured, yet few are consistently using proven injury-prevention habits.



## ATHLETE SURVEY

- A survey was conducted on **50 U16/U18 Boys and Girls** during our provincial camps and found that...
- Only **75%** of athletes complete a **warm-up** before practice/competition
  - **<5%** of athletes complete a **cool-down** after practice/competition
  - Only **20%** athletes take part in **independent injury prevention strategies (outside of team efforts)**
  - **70%** of athletes had an **injury within the last year**
  - **70%** of athletes were **unable to participate** in practice/competition due to injury

**Stay Educated.  
Stay Safe.  
Stay Strong.  
Stay in the Game.**



## EDUCATION MATTERS

- **Dynamic Warm-up**
  - Muscle specific dynamic stretching
  - Rugby specific movements
- **Acceleration Warm-up**
  - Running Mechanics
  - Jump and Land Mechanics
- **Mental Warm-up**
  - Guided Breathing
  - Mental Game Prep
- **Contact Prep**
  - Neck Contractions
  - Safe Body Position
- **Cool Down Routines**
  - Static Movements
  - Downregulate Nervous System
- **SMSCS Education Sessions**
  - Concussion Education
  - Mental Performance
  - Injury Prevention



## RESOURCES

- **Activate**
  - A structured warm-up routine designed to help players prepare for rugby and prevent soft tissue and head injuries
- **Rugby Ready**
  - Raise awareness of good practice and help manage the risks of a contact sport by putting appropriate safeguards in place
- **Tackle Smart**
  - Safety program designed to reduce injuries and improve technique in contact

**All resources can be found on World Rugby Passport!**



By combining education, proper preparation, and injury prevention strategies, athletes can reduce risk of injury while maximizing performance and participation.