

## **Putting the child before the player**

*Children before athletes*

### **Jasper, Edith, Keir:**

**JASPER:** Human rights belong to everyone because they are human, but children have extra rights because they're developing and growing as people.

**EDITH:** These rights are written into a treaty called the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was adopted by the United Nations in 1989.

**KEIR:** The treaty recognises 42 rights that belong to all people under the age of 18. These rights enable children and young people to be protected for, to be provided for, and to participate in all aspects of life.

**EDITH:** Four of the articles are called general principles because they are necessary for the fulfilment of all other rights. They are the right not to be discriminated against, that a child's best interests is foremost in any decision which affects them, that children have the right to survive and develop to the fullest extent possible, and that every child has the right to give their opinion on all matters affecting them. And according to their age and maturity, these opinions are listened to and acted upon.

**KEIR** While sport is not specifically mentioned in the UNCRC, many of the articles are directly relevant. However, children's rights are not well understood within sport, and this means they may be violated.

**EDITH:** Children's views and opinions are too often ignored. Their best interests are not always considered, and they can be subjected by adults who should know better to inappropriate competition and training programs.

**KEIR:** We also know that talented young athletes are increasingly exploited for their economic value, and the seriousness of sport denies many children their right to proper rest and play as well as compromising their right to education.

**EDITH:** Denying children their rights whilst participating in sport is unacceptable.

**JASPER:** Every adult supporting children in sport has a duty to respect, protect, and fulfil children's rights.

**KEIR:** And to integrate these rights into the everyday reality of children's lives.

**EDITH:** Doing so maintains the integrity of sport as a safe and positive experience for every child everywhere.