Sporting issues are increasingly the subject of legal intervention and parliamentary scrutiny. The need for scrutiny and regulation of commercial pressures is acknowledged, but the effect of commercial pressures on young football players remains largely unaddressed.

On the basis of an empirical assessment of the football industry’s self-regulation on youth development matters, an interdisciplinary team of Law and Sports Science researchers has examined the shortfalls of the regulatory framework with regard to young football players.

In this presentation, some preliminary results of this project will be presented, with a focus on the data gathered through around 80 semi-structured interviews across England with young players, parents, football academies’ staff, and other stakeholders.