

RYAN'S NEW ROLE WITH UNICEF



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Ryan Giggs has joined Sir Alex Ferguson and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer as an ambassador for United's charities partner UNICEF.

The Welshman, who has spent the past six years working with the charity through the club *United for UNICEF* partnership, has been appointed to the role in recognition of his support for the organisation's work with children.

On last year's club trip to China, Giggs met young girls from Sichuan Province who are part of a trafficking prevention programme funded by the club. In 2003, he was among the players who met UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. And he has also helped UNICEF raise money by fronting several TV appeals during emergencies such as the Asian Tsunami disaster.

Giggs admitted that he was extremely proud of his new role. He said:

"As a father, the future of my child is always on my mind, and so to be asked to become a UNICEF Ambassador, and to have the opportunity to help other children, who so desperately need it, is a great honour, and one that I am proud to accept."

Ryan recently visited the Tygerberg Children Hospital in Cape Town, during United's pre-season tour of South Africa. There he learned about the plight of children within the Western Cape region, and South Africa in general.

Later, Giggs joined team-mate Kieran Richardson on a visit to Soweto where they met young people affected by HIV / AIDS and the Men As Partners programme. The players chatted with young men about

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their experiences of HIV/AIDS, the effects on their families and their role in preventing the spread of the virus.

Ryan was told how South Africa currently suffers from one of the highest HIV infection rates in the world, with 11.4% of the total population thought to be living with HIV/AIDS.

"I realised how HIV and AIDS has touched the lives of so many people in South Africa. Whether it's a friend, their child or a family member, everyone seemed to know someone affected by HIV or AIDS, said Giggs.

"What came across clearly is that education is essential to preventing the spread and men talking to other men is key in getting the message out there."

For more information on UNICEF's *Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS* campaign please visit www.unicef.org.uk/aids.