

PLAYER/ADULT PROTECTION GUIDELINES

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this document, we will define **ADULT** as those persons in their roles as coach, assistant coach, board member, team manager or volunteer who works with, for or around **PLAYERS**. This would include anyone older than the age group they are interacting with; for example, a 15-year old assistant coach of a U-11 team would be considered an **ADULT** for the purposes of these Guidelines.

PLAYER defines all persons who are members of or play on a soccer team. This definition does include those players who participate at the U-19 level, even though they may be of legal age.

In the example of the 15-year old assistant coach: if s/he is also a rostered participant on a U-16 or higher team, that person is also subject to the guidelines applicable to a **PLAYER**.

GUIDELINES

These guidelines recognize that the lines of authority and separation between adults and players must be recognized and respected. Generally, players are children and as such, deserve special protection. These guidelines provide that protection while setting levels of acceptable conduct for adults.

I. Physical Contact

- a. **ADULTS** must be aware that any physical contact with **PLAYERS** can be misinterpreted. Physical contact should be limited to that necessary and appropriate to teach a skill, treat an injury, or console or congratulate a player. In the instance of teaching a skill, minimal contact should be involved and none which places the **ADULT** in a position of power and/or intimidation; for example, taking a **PLAYER** by the shoulders and physically moving them to another field or body position.
- b. Sexual contact of any kind or type is prohibited between **ADULTS** and **PLAYERS**, whether or not contact is consensual. [The exemption to this guideline would be in the event of player/coach spouses or legally-declared domestic partners.]

II. Social Contact

A. **ADULTS** should not socialize or spend time alone with **PLAYERS** except at games, practices, or team functions. An **ADULT** in a one-on-one situation with a **PLAYER** is generally inappropriate.

1. **ADULTS** should avoid instances such as driving alone with a non-family **PLAYER**. However, in the event that a **PLAYER** remains on a field waiting for transportation, the **ADULT** should wait with the **PLAYER** on the field to guarantee the **PLAYER'S** safety

and well-being. (**ADULTS** should stress with their **PLAYERS'** parents the responsibility for safe and timely transportation to and from the field.)

2. During out-of-town tournaments, a non-parent/custodian **ADULT** shall not share any sleeping arrangements with a **PLAYER** or **PLAYERS**.
3. **ADULTS** should respect the privacy of **PLAYERS**. If shower or changing room facilities are available, schedules should be arranged so that **ADULTS** and **PLAYERS** have separate use. If using a changing room, **ADULTS** should provide privacy for **PLAYERS** to make necessary preparations before entering for pre/post-game discussions. In addition, **ADULTS** should not allow others to enter except by the expressed wish of the **PLAYERS** still present.

III. Health and Well-being

- a. **ADULTS** share the responsibility for the **PLAYERS'** health while at practices, scrimmages, and games. **ADULTS** should have **PLAYERS'** release forms and medical kits with them at all times. **ADULTS** are also responsible for seeing that the field conditions are safe for the **PLAYERS** and that the field equipment is in good, safe condition prior to the start of any activity.
- b. Head injuries resulting in disorientation should result in a **PLAYER** remaining out of the game.
- c. **ADULTS** transporting players must model safe driving techniques and enforce seat belt use with **PLAYERS** and other vehicle occupants.
- d. **ADULTS** need to be aware of signs of neglect and abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) of the **PLAYERS**. Observations should be reported to the local law enforcement agency.

IV. Language

- a. Offensive and insulting language by **ADULTS** or **PLAYERS** is unacceptable. **ADULTS** should model good communication skills.
- b. Language that is denigrating in nature, content or tone or refers to one's gender, race, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or religion is unacceptable.
- c. Inappropriate language targeting officials, opponents, or spectators may be grounds for **PLAYER** penalties or **ADULTS'** removal from the game and/or the premises.

V. Violations

- a. A. Violations of these guidelines by **ADULTS** or **PLAYERS** will subject them to disciplinary actions, including but not limited to, warnings, sanctions, suspensions or release by the Affiliate Member and/or MYSA.
- b. B. Appropriate legal authorities may be called upon based on the nature of the violation.
- c. C. Anyone witnessing a violation of these guidelines should report the violation to the office of the State Risk Manager/Vice President of Administration, MYSA.