



MYSA 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. 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. Appropriate legal authorities may be called upon based on the nature of the violation.
- 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.