



Kidsafe

a program to promote the health, safety and protection of soccer players.



Program Mission

To promote the health, safety and protection of players in the game of soccer.

US Youth Soccer has adopted the KIDSAFE PROGRAM in order to exclude from participation in its activities all persons who have been convicted of felonies, crimes of violence or crimes against persons.

US YOUTH SOCCER KIDSAFE PROGRAM...

- Intends to foster safe circumstances for every player who participates in any activity affiliated with US YOUTH SOCCER.
- Intends to inform all coaches, administrators, volunteers and employees of the risks connected with youth programs.

The KIDSAFE PROGRAM of US YOUTH SOCCER and its affiliates should include...

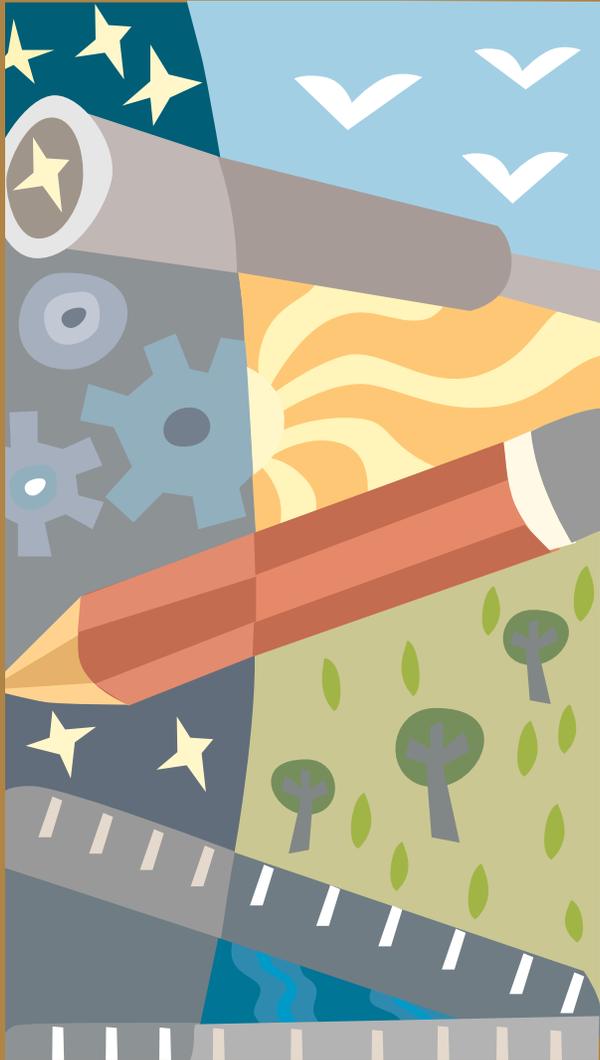
- Written policies and procedures governing, hiring, training, supervision, investigation and firing/dismissing.
- A Risk Management Coordinator (RMC) and alternate.
- A means of identifying all coaches and program administrators.
- The development and communication of the Kidsafe guidelines to all coaches, administrators, volunteers and employees.
- Monitoring the implementation of the above objectives.

Contents

Program Mission -----	3
Program Elements -----	4
Message to the Membership -----	5
Program Implementation Guide -----	11
Form -----	13

Program Elements

1. Risk Management Registration with the state associations of all coaches and administrators of state and local programs, and Risk Management Registration with U S YOUTH SOCCER of all coaches and administrators of regional and national programs.
2. Questioning all coaches, administrators and employees concerning convictions of felonies, for crimes of violence, or crimes against persons.
3. To develop and communicate the Kidsafe guidelines to all coaches, administrators, volunteers and employees.
4. Development of health and safety guidelines, as needed.
5. Publication of a booklet ("The Kidsafe Program: Making Soccer Safer for Youth") containing the suggested health and safety guidelines, and distribution of the booklet to all US YOUTH SOCCER teams, clubs, associations and programs.
6. Promotion of ongoing educational activities to support the Kidsafe program at the national, state and local levels.



Message to the Membership

From the US Youth Soccer Risk Management Committee

The Kidsafe program was prepared by an ad hoc US YOUTH SOCCER Risk Management Committee in May 1994. A motion to accept the report of the committee was approved by the National Youth Council at the USSF Annual General Meeting in August 1994 and, by a separate action, the Council voted to establish a standing Risk Management Committee. In November 1994, the Board of Directors confirmed the action of the Council by approving a motion to put the US YOUTH SOCCER Kidsafe program into place immediately. In the Official Administrative Rule Book (1995-1996), the US Soccer Federation adopted Rule 4044 which mandated the establishment and monitoring of risk management programs within each National State Association (NSA). At a minimum, these programs had to include:

1. use of an employment/volunteer disclosure statement for all volunteers, employees, coaches and program administrators who are involved with any sanctioned or sponsored programs of the affiliated organization;
2. identification of a Risk Management Coordinator (RMC) and an alternate for the organization.

Thereafter, Bylaw 501 Section 1 (13) of US YOUTH SOCCER established the Risk Management Committee at the youth level.



Risk Management is an evolving concept.

Throughout US YOUTH SOCCER, the consensus exist that implementation of the program should be tailored to the particular needs of each NSA.

Every State should have a Kidsafe program both at state and local levels.

The Risk Management Committee has the following responsibilities:

1. developing and implementing a risk management plan for US YOUTH SOCCER, as provided by Bylaw 214;
2. providing leadership and instruction to NSAs regarding risk management; and
3. developing and distributing guidelines and related materials that will foster safe circumstances for all persons, especially every youth, who participates in a US YOUTH SOCCER activity or an activity of any of the membership of US YOUTH SOCCER.

The overall character and intent of the Kidsafe program are set forth in the mission statement and in the Program Elements.

Important elements to note:

- Specific steps which can be taken by NSAs and by local clubs to fulfill the mission of the Kidsafe program are identified in paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Program Elements and in the Implementation Guide.
- The format of the Employment/Volunteer Disclosure Statement is provided as a guide. It is stressed in the Implementation Guide that NSAs may choose to create forms of their own.

In addition to implementing a Kidsafe program at national and regional levels, the Risk Management Committee has developed and published health and safety guidelines which are appropriate to the game of soccer. In doing so, it has relied on a wide variety of resources (particularly written resources) which already

existed both inside and outside the soccer community. The committee welcomes input and support from the NSA. Information can be sent directly to any member of the committee.

The committee extends an invitation to all NSAs to call upon members of the committee for advice and direction as Kidsafe programs are developed. Additionally, the committee asks that the NSA:

- Inform the committee of their progress in developing Kidsafe programs.
- Provide the committee with the names of persons charged with the responsibility of developing and overseeing their Kidsafe programs.
- Furnish the committee with information about their programs and with copies of forms and materials which they use in conjunction with the

Such policies should:

- Create and adopt a position statement that reasonable efforts will be taken within the Kidsafe program to exclude from program responsibilities any person with a legally documented history of child molestation or other record that would bring an unnecessary risk to the health and safety of the program's participants.
- Create and adopt a program which requires all coaches, administrators and employees to agree to be subject to a legally sensitive background check before or during the program's operations. Board of Directors should also adopt procedures which assure discretion and confidentiality associated

- with disclosures or the results of background checks, or both.
- d. NSAs must appoint a State Risk Management Coordinator and alternate with the assigned responsibility of implementing and managing a Kidsafe program for the organization.
 - e. It is mandatory that a Risk Management appeal process be instituted at the State level to hear challenges to adverse Risk Management decisions.
3. Every person wishing to apply for a position as a coach or program administrator with US YOUTH SOCCER or an affiliate must complete an Employment/Volunteer Disclosure Statement.
 - a. Coaches include head coaches, assistant coaches and team/player trainers.
 - b. Program administrators include state, district, league and club officers and program directors, team managers, and athletic/medical trainers.
 - c. Referees and assistant referees where the NSA has jurisdiction over their referees.

In addition, every coach, administrator, volunteer and employee of US YOUTH SOCCER or of any of its affiliates who at any time could be expected, in the performance of his/her duties, to be entrusted with the supervision, guidance and care of players must have on file a completed Disclosure statement.

Any person who applies for a position with a national or regional US YOUTH SOCCER team or program is required to complete the U S YOUTH SOCCER employment /Volunteer Disclosure Statement. If a NSA Disclosure Statement has been completed and submit-

- ted, a copy of this form may be submitted in lieu of the national form.
- Any person who applies for a position with a state or local US YOUTH SOCCER team or program is required to complete the Disclosure Statement which is specified by the individual's NSA.
4. NSAs may use the U S YOUTH SOCCER Employment/ Volunteer Disclosure Statement form or may choose to create forms of their own.
 - a. A form which is accredited by a State Association must include the NSA's name and, **at a minimum**, space for the following information about the applicant:
 - First name, last name, middle initial
 - Date of birth
 - Social security number or driver's license or state issued identification or passport number
 - Residence address and phone
 - Answers to questions whether the individual has been convicted of a felony, crime of violence or of a crime against a person
 - Certification by signature and date, the individual understands US YOUTH SOCCER may deny certification to any person convicted of a felony, crime of violence or a crime against a person, and understands the information furnished on the disclosure statement is subject to verification, which may include a criminal history check
 - b. NSAs may include space for additional information such as the individual's occupation, business phone and employment history.

5. Guidelines for NSA Kidsafe programs:

- a. The Disclosure Statement is an important document which contains sensitive information. Questions are included on the form which can assist in determining problem areas and which provide individuals an opportunity to explain charges made against them. Honest answers on the form help with the decision that must be made concerning a problem report.
- b. It is essential that Disclosure Statements be stored securely and the information on them and the cases arising from them be handled with the highest possible level of confidentiality.
- c. Disclosure Statements should be stored by the Risk Management Coordinator in a place that is accessible only to authorized personnel. Disclosure Statements should be kept in a secure confidential file and a records retention policy established by each NSA.
- d. The initial distribution of Disclosure Statements to individuals and to current employees and volunteers may be handled at either the NSA or club level. A tracking procedure to verify that Disclosure Statements are returned should be developed. Distribution and tracking procedures are likely to vary among NSAs and local clubs.
- e. When Disclosure Statements or background checks yield problem areas for the individual, the Risk Management Coordinator should contact the individual for additional information.
- f. If an individual is suspended, the State Risk Management Coordinator must inform the individual and the president of the local club, league or affiliate that

suspension has been imposed. The State Risk Management Coordinator shall notify US YOUTH SOCCER of the suspension for inclusion on the US YOUTH SOCCER Disciplinary and Risk Management Action Report.

- g. Upon suspension, the individual must be given information about the appeal process.
 - h. The NSA should develop a policy authorizing the Risk Management Coordinator to act only after receipt of a written report signed by the complainant.
 - i. Each NSA should develop criteria to evaluate positive information “hits” on the Employment/Volunteer Disclosure Statement or background check. Factors to be considered for denial of certification include:
 - The number and nature of the offense(s), age of the offense, sentence, age of the offender at the time of the offense(s), rehabilitative achievements of the offender which indicate that the behavior is unlikely to reoccur and any other factor that the NSA deem appropriate.
6. Every Risk Management program, at the national, state or local level, must establish a procedure for responding to written reports of activities that could be deemed detrimental to the welfare of the players.

In the event a person participating in a US YOUTH SOCCER program or in any State or local association program, becomes involved as a defendant in litigation detrimental to the welfare of youth players or litigation based on activities detrimental to the welfare of youth players, the Risk Management Coordinator shall advise the alleged offender, in writing, that he/she is suspended



from all activity within the soccer organization until the case is resolved per USSF/US YOUTH SOCCER Rule 4043. The alleged offender should also be advised of his/her appeal rights.



POSITION CODE _____	
Coach	Volunteer
Referee	Manager/Coordinator
Administration	

Employment/Volunteer Disclosure Statement

FIRST NAME AND INITIAL _____ LAST NAME _____ SOCIAL SECURITY NO _____

ADDRESS _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

HOME PHONE _____ BUSINESS PHONE _____ DATE OF BIRTH _____

COACHING LICENSE _____ REFEREE GRADE _____ GENDER GRADE _____

DRIVERS LICENSE NO/ PASSPORT _____ STATE _____ LICENSE EXPIRATION _____

1. Background in work with youth Position _____ Year(s) _____
2. Experience in soccer Position _____ Year(s) _____
3. Experience youth soccer Position _____ Year(s) _____
4. Previous residence(s) (for last 5 years) City _____ State _____
5. Have you ever been convicted of a crime of violence, crime against a person, or a felony?
If yes, please explain: (Use the back of the form if necessary) YES NO

I understand that:

- a. US YOUTH SOCCER may deny certification to any person who has been convicted of a felony, crime of violence or a crime against a person.
- b. In applying for a US YOUTH SOCCER [position], the information which I have furnished on this form is subject to verification, which may include a criminal history check.
- c. This disclosure statement must be updated at least every two (2) years.

Signature _____ Printed Name _____ Date _____

Program Implementation Guide

1. The U S YOUTH SOCCER Kidsafe program is designed to promote the welfare of youth players and to protect coaches, program administrators and the organization.
2. The national U S YOUTH SOCCER Kidsafe program contains some features which **must** be included in Kidsafe programs at state and local levels. In creating the national program, however, it is recognized that significant differences exist among state laws and that it is difficult to structure a detailed program which can be applied successfully in every state. NSA are encouraged to develop their programs beyond the minimum levels which are provided by the national guidelines.
 - a. NSA are encouraged to seek the advice of legal counsel in developing and implementing their programs. In particular, they are encouraged to seek advice concerning state laws which relate to Kidsafe and to the responsibilities of volunteers and staff persons in youth programs. State laws should be checked for permissible levels of inquiry designed to identify past offenders.
 - b. The effect on state laws and local ordinances brought about by the passage of the National Child Protection Act of 1993 (HR 1237) should also be determined.
 - c. Policies should be established which enable the pre-screening of all volunteers and employees applicants.



US Youth Soccer
1717 Firman Dr. Suite 900
Richardson, Texas 75081

For more information on this or other US Youth Soccer programs,
please call I-800-4-Soccer or log onto our website:

usyouthsoccer.org