

**NEW MEXICO YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION  
RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

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## **6.01 RISK MANAGEMENT**

In August 1994, United States Youth Soccer (US Youth Soccer) approved the KidSafe Program and placed it in effect immediately. KidSafe is a risk management program designed to foster safe circumstances for every person, and especially every child, who participates in a US-Youth-Soccer-affiliated activity. It is a program to inform all US Youth Soccer volunteers and employees of the risks associated with youth programs and to recommend actions, and encourage conduct, to reduce those risks. Risk is defined as the likelihood of injury; injury can be physical, financial, or psychological. As part of this program, US Youth Soccer has charged each state organization with the responsibility of developing a written program outlining safety guidelines and procedures. The New Mexico Youth Soccer Association (NMYSA) Risk Management Program is one part of the overall NMYSA mission to develop, promote, teach, and administer the game of soccer for youth in a safe environment in which to play.

On February 14, 2018, the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017 was signed into law and became effective immediately. The law extends the duty to report suspected child abuse, including sexual abuse, within 24 hours to all adults who are authorized to interact with minor or amateur athletes by a national governing body (U.S. Soccer Federation and US Youth Soccer.)

### ***6.01.01 NMYSA Risk Management Policy Statement***

New Mexico Youth Soccer Association has adopted the following revised Risk Management, SafeSport, Caution: Children @ Play and KidSafe Programs, effective on the date of their adoption to (1) comply with United States Soccer Federation and US Youth Soccer rules and (2) conform with the US Youth Soccer SafeSport and KidSafe Risk Management Programs and their missions: To identify all coaches and program administrators, to develop and communicate the SafeSport, Caution: Children @ Play and KidSafe guidelines to all coaches and program administrators, and to monitor the implementation of these objectives. It is the intent of US Youth Soccer and its affiliated organizations to exclude participation in US Youth Soccer activities, at a minimum, all persons who have been convicted of crimes of violence or crimes against persons. In addition, this NMYSA Risk Management Program Manual is consistent with USSF Bylaw 213(1)(a)(2) and Rule 4044.

The United States Youth Soccer Association and each National State Association are responsible for establishing and monitoring a Risk Management Program within assigned territory. At a minimum, this program must include: the use of an employment/volunteer disclosure statement for all volunteers, employees, coaches, and program administrators who are involved with sanctioned or sponsored programs of the affiliated organization; and identification of a Risk Management Coordinator and an alternate for the position.

Further guidelines for implementation of a risk management program are outlined in the document *US Youth Soccer KidSafe: A Risk Management Program and the SafeSport Program* (available from the US Youth Soccer web site and in the appendix of this document).

### **6.01.02 NMYSA Risk Management Committee**

The overall responsibility of the administration of the NMYSA Risk Management Program rests with the Risk Manager, who will Chair the Risk Management Committee. The NMYSA President shall appoint a Risk Manager with Board approval to administer the NMYSA Risk Management Program. If none is appointed, the NMYSA Risk Management duties shall be the responsibility of the NMYSA Vice President. The Risk Management Assistant (alternate) will be appointed by the NMYSA President or shall be the NMYSA Vice President. The Risk Management Committee shall consist of the NMYSA Risk Manager, NMYSA Assistant Risk Manager, NMYSA Registrar, NMYSA President, and a District Commissioner Representative.

### **6.01.03 Program Administration**

The NMYSA Risk Manager and NMYSA Risk Management Committee shall administer this program. All members of the committee shall have criminal history and background checks. The Risk Manager's background check result will be sent directly to the President of NMYSA. Upon clearance, the President will forward the record for proper storage (6.02.06.02).

The NMYSA Risk Manager and Risk Management Committee duties are to monitor compliance with the SafeSport, Caution: Children @ Play and KidSafe Programs, which includes but is not limited to:

**6.01.03.01** Monitoring and documenting NMYSA/league compliance. Leagues may have separate Risk Management guidance and documentation that the NMYSA Risk Management committee shall periodically review for compliance with USSF and US Youth Soccer mandated guidelines. In the event a league does not have separate Risk Management guidelines this document shall serve.

**6.01.03.02** Review of certification forms which includes a criminal background check, CDC concussion course and SafeSport courses.

**6.01.03.03 Manage** and oversee registration procedures for coaches and program administrators as described in 6.02.

**6.01.03.04 Ensure** NMYSA member leagues compliance.

**6.01.03.05 Act** as the first line of contact for member leagues when risk management problems occur.

**6.01.03.06 Immediately** report any incident of noncompliance to the NMYSA Board of Directors.

**6.01.03.07 Coordinate** criminal history and background checks. -

**6.01.03.08 Supply** administrative notification of exclusion to those applicants (whether new applicants or returning members) who fail to meet the standards of this program as defined by the NMYSA Risk Management, SafeSport and KidSafe Programs.

**6.01.03.09 Referee** certification statements and compliance will be through their USSF certification and registration (6.02.04). To ensure compliance only referees assigned by a USSF certified referee assignor may referee NMYSA games and tournaments.

**6.01.03.10** The NMYSA Risk Manager will, at NMYSA Board meetings, report on the progress and implementation of criminal history and background checks and related risk management issues.

**6.01.03.11** The NMYSA Risk Manager will review all NMYSA Official Documents for compliance with USSF- and US-Youth-Soccer-mandated risk management guidance with particular emphasis on financial matters as spelled out in the NMYSA Financial Policies and Procedures (Including Office Administration) document.

#### ***6.01.04 NMYSA Member League Responsibilities***

Each NMYSA member league shall appoint a Risk Manager. If none is appointed, the League Risk Management duties shall be the responsibility of the League Vice President. The League Risk Management duties will include:

**6.01.04.01** Implement a league risk management policy/procedure with reference to the NMYSA Risk Management document to educate and train league and club program administrators, coaches, parents, players, and other volunteers.

**6.01.04.02** Annually verify that no league program administrator or coach is on the National register of convicted sex offenders.

**6.01.04.03** Ensure certification completion procedures are followed by their league and affiliate clubs.

**6.01.04.04** Coordinate with the NMYSA Risk Manager to ensure that all coaches and program administrators have submitted a correctly completed Certification and passed a background check before being allowed to participate in the soccer program.

**6.01.04.05** Have a representative attend risk management training as provided by NMYSA. Providing training and assistance to league and club officials as well as parents and players. This training may be in conjunction with NMYSA assistance.

**6.01.04.06** Act as the first line of contact for Risk Management problems.

**6.01.04.07** Report each incident or non-compliance to the NMYSA Risk Manager, Risk Management Assistants or Risk Management Committee.

## **6.02 NMYSA RISK MANAGEMENT, CONCUSSION POLICY, SAFESPORT, CAUTION; CHILDREN @ PLAY AND KIDSAFE PROGRAMS**

### ***6.02.01 General Rules***

**6.02.01.01** NMYSA has adopted a Risk Management, Concussion Policy, SafeSport, Caution: Children @ Play and KidSafe Programs and all coaches and program administrators must meet the conditions of these programs.

**6.02.01.02** Coaches and program administrators are defined as state, district, league, and club officers and program directors, team managers, athletic trainers, coaches, assistant coaches and substitute coaches and anyone else who has an official capacity in the soccer program.

**6.02.01.03** All coaches and any program administrators that are required to register by leagues and clubs must complete a certification statement and register with the NMYSA.

**6.02.01.04** All coaches and program administrators must agree to be subject to a criminal history and background check.

**6.02.01.05** NMYSA will process criminal history and background checks. All coaches and program administrators as defined above will be subject to these checks.

**6.02.01.06** Any coach or program administrator, who, for any reason, may be thought to present a risk to the welfare of NMYSA, its leagues, clubs, or players, may be subject to a criminal history and background check at the discretion of the NMYSA Board of Directors with input from an NMYSA member league and/or the NMYSA Risk Manager.

**6.02.01.07** NMYSA will establish a procedure for handling a complaint of child or sexual abuse against a currently employed or volunteer coach or program administrator, including identifying a point person and an alternate to receive such complaints and to follow the procedures outline in the US Youth Soccer SafeSport and KidSafe Programs.

#### ***6.02.02 Registration Procedure for Coaches and Program Administrators***

**6.02.02.01** Certification Statements will be good for a 2-year period. Certificates for completing the SafeSport online training courses are good for a 2-year period. The CDC online concussion training course certificate is good for a 4-year period.

**6.02.02.02** Certification Statements will be submitted to NMYSA electronically through their website at [www.nmysa.net](http://www.nmysa.net).

**6.02.02.03** Certification Statements shall not be accessed by any person other than the NMYSA Risk Manager or his/her designated assistants.

**6.02.02.04** After verifying that the Certification Form is complete, the NMYSA registrar will indicate the clearance in the registration software and the coach's and/or program administrator's pass card may be generated.

#### ***6.02.03 Registration Rules for Coaches and Program Administrators***

**6.02.03.01** Coach's and program administrator's pass cards will be laminated and distributed by the respective league registrar. Registration and pass cards are required for:

- All members of the NMYSA state coaching staff.
- Any coach or program administrator whose club or league requires registration.

**6.02.03.02** All coaches and program administrators must submit to a criminal history and background check.

**6.02.03.03** All coaches and program administrators may be required to view or read risk management presentations as determined by NMYSA and the NMYSA Risk Manager.

#### ***6.02.04 Registration Procedure for Referees (All Categories)***

Referees, assistant referees and 4<sup>th</sup> officials are independent contractors who shall be governed by the rulings of the New Mexico Soccer Referee Association, State Youth Referee Administrator, United States Soccer Federation and NMYSA. Referees shall be required to submit Certification Statements through their USSF registration. Referees may obtain registration pass cards indicating a successful criminal history and background check by following the procedures in 6.02.03.

#### ***6.02.05 Denial, Suspension, and Revocation of Coaching and Program Administrator Privileges***

**6.02.05.01** The NMYSA President, with the NMYSA Board of Director's approval, has the authority to deny, suspend, or revoke any employee's, volunteer's, coach's, or program administrator's right to participate in NMYSA, its leagues, its clubs, and its teams, for risk management concerns or concerns for the well-being of any NMYSA league, club, team, or player arising from the Risk Management, SafeSport, Caution: Children @ Play and KidSafe policies, pending a risk management hearing by the NMYSA Board of Directors.

**6.02.05.02** A league may, upon written request, petition NMYSA to deny, suspend or revoke the privileges of a coach or program administrator or applicant for Risk Management concerns. The NMYSA Risk Manager shall investigate the request and reply in writing within thirty (30) days to the league.

**6.02.05.03** NMYSA has adopted the following grounds for automatic exclusion from serving as a NMYSA coach or program administrator:

- Any conviction for a crime of violence, a crime against a person, a crime against property, or a felony.
- Any record of child abuse.
- Any record of sexual offense and/or sexual misconduct.
- Admitted use of/ or conviction for use of illegal drugs.
- Documented history of alcohol abuse such as arrests for driving under the influence.
- Any Conviction that is identified on Appendix A5 “New Mexico Youth Soccer Association Criminal Conviction Matrix for Participation Acceptability.”
- Intentionally falsifying information on the Certification Form (NMYSA Bylaws Rule 2.11.02)
- Refusal to fully complete the Risk Management Certification Form.
- Any conduct which discriminates against any individual on the basis of race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, age, marital status, sex, gender expression, sexual orientation and any request for sexual favors, unwanted

sexual advances or propositions, verbal, physical and visual harassment, stalking and unwanted sexual contact.

- Any other information that casts serious doubt on the applicant's ability to be entrusted with the supervision, guidance and care of minors.
- Any person participating in a sanctioned or sponsored program of NMYSA who 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, shall be suspended by the NMYSA Risk Manager and/or NMYSA President from all soccer-related activities until completion of the litigation. Upon written request of the suspended person, the status of such person shall be reviewed by the NMYSA risk manager at the completion of the litigation. Within sixty (60) days of receipt of the written request of the suspended person, the NMYSA Risk Manager shall make recommendation to the Board of Directors for reinstatement of privileges or continued and/or permanent suspension based on the review of the issue. The NMYSA Risk Manger will issue a letter of reinstatement or denial of reinstatement within fifteen (15) days of the Board of Directors decision. Matters detrimental to the welfare of youth players shall include crimes of moral turpitude and felonies. The person has a right to appeal whether the matter, which is the substance of the accusation, if true, is detrimental to the welfare of youth players. (US Youth Soccer Rule 4043).
- Appendix A.5 is a quantitative mechanism whereby NMYSA decides an individual's eligibility to be issued a risk management clearance. Individuals with a point total of 10 or greater shall be automatically excluded based on information from the mandatory background check.

#### ***6.02.06 Exclusion of Coach and/or Program Administrator***

**6.02.06.01** A coach and/or program administrator who is found, through his or her certification form or by any other means, to meet any reason(s) for possible automatic exclusion will be notified through regular or electronic mail.

**6.02.06.02** Said coach and/or program administrator will have five business days to respond or explain; and/or to request a hearing of consideration from NMYSA.

**6.02.06.03** A hearing will be scheduled within 14 days of receipt of the coach and/or program administrator's request.

**6.02.06.04** If information deemed necessary to conducting the hearing, such as a criminal history, takes longer than 14 days to secure, a hearing may be postponed until such information is available.

**6.02.06.05** If a hearing is not requested, the coach and/or program administrator's right of participation in NMYSA will be automatically denied pending a hearing by the NMYSA Risk Management Committee and denial of participation will be in effect.

**6.02.06.06** It may be necessary for the coach and/or program administrator to undergo a criminal history and background check at the time a request for a hearing is made.



**6.02.06.07** Once a coach and/or program administrator's privilege to participate has been denied, suspended, or revoked by NMYSA, it may not be restored except through the decision of the NMYSA Risk Management Committee or through the appeal process (6.02.07).

### ***6.02.07 Appeal Procedures***

**6.02.07.01** All appeals will be held at the NMYSA Board of Directors level according to NMYSA Bylaws section 2.10.

**6.02.07.02** A coach and/or program administrator whose privileges are denied, revoked, or suspended has the right to appeal on the basis of whether the matter which the substance of the accusation is, if true, is detrimental to the welfare of youth players.

### ***6.02.08 Confidentiality and Ethics***

**6.02.08.01** The certification forms shall be used only for the purpose of registering coaches and program administrators in NMYSA, including denial, suspension, and revocation of coaching and/or program administrator privileges. Information may be used in the hearing process for denial, suspension, or revocation of privileges by the NMYSA Risk Manager, the Risk Management Committee, and any committees or NMYSA Board of Director members deemed necessary for the implementation and monitoring of the NMYSA Risk Management SafeSport and KidSafe Programs.

**6.02.08.02** Record storage will be under lock and key in the NMYSA administrative office and only accessible by the NMYSA Risk Manager, NMYSA President, or duly appointed alternate(s).

**6.02.08.03** Record reproduction will be limited to a single copy of the certification form and/or the results of the criminal history check (along with any supporting documents) to be controlled by the NMYSA Risk Manager when needed. The original will be filed at the NMYSA administrative offices.

**6.02.08.04** Any record may be reproduced for use during a hearing and/or appeal of denial, suspension, or revocation as needed. Any record reproduced for such use will be collected and destroyed at the conclusion of the hearing and/or appeal.

**6.02.08.05** The NMYSA Risk Manager and members of the NMYSA Risk Management Committee will agree to sign and abide by the "Standards of Ethical Conduct Statement" (Appendix A1). The purpose of this statement is to inform the NMYSA Risk Manager and all members of the NMYSA Risk Management Committee of the security and confidentiality requirements of the information that they will be gathering. Misuse of risk management information may result in legal action.

**6.02.08.06** A coach's or program administrator's certification form and associated information shall be retained for three years following the last season of registration.

## **6.03 HEALTH, SAFETY, AND FINANCIAL GUIDELINES**

These health, safety, and financial guidelines are provided for informational purposes only, with the strong recommendation for implementation by NMYSA affiliates. NMYSA is not

responsible for the implementation or administration of the following health, safety, and financial guidelines. All leagues should have a Risk Manager to implement risk management guidelines and procedures at the local level.

### ***6.03.01 Child Abuse Guidelines***

All coaches and program administrators must report any suspected abuse within 24 hours to the NM state child abuse authorities, CYFD at 1-855-333-SAFE (7233) or from a cell phone #SAFE (7233) or law enforcement and to the NMYSA State Risk Manager. The NMYSA Risk Manager, will report the suspicion to the US Center for SafeSport and US Soccer. There are four types of reportable child abuse that include:

**6.03.01.01 Sexual:** This involves improper touching of private parts, penetration, flashing, the use of pornography, or similar acts. This includes any type of improper behavior where there is a difference in power and control (*e.g.*, adult/child, older child/younger child). There may be threats against the victim or members of the victim's family.

**6.03.01.02 Physical:** Anything that leaves a mark is reportable, such as black eyes, swollen lips, finger marks on the face or other areas.

**6.03.01.03 Neglect:** Incapacitation by the caregivers. This could include not providing a home, food, water, clothing, or supervision for long periods of time or while taking illicit drugs.

**6.03.01.04 Emotional:** Verbally abusing a child.

It is not the responsibility of the reporting parties to investigate the allegations. Once the report has been made, the legal authorities will investigate. All information on the reporting parties will be kept in confidence by the legal authorities. It is the responsibility of every Program Administrator to avoid situations with minors that have the potential of being misunderstood or misinterpreted.

### ***6.03.02 First Aid and NMYSA Concussion Policy and Procedures***

Minimizing potential risks before they occur is, of course, preferable to dealing with problems when they arise. Knowing what to do if a player gets overheated on a hot day, learning the signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke could save a life. Learning the signs and symptoms of a concussion/brain injury. Learning when not to move an injured player, when not to send a player back on to the field. What to do if a bystander has a heart attack. All these are areas coaches need to be aware of. Rule of thumb: when in doubt, call 911 and let the professionals deal with it.

**6.03.02.01** In the event of a medical emergency, appropriate action must be taken immediately.

**6.03.02.02** NMYSA has adopted Concussion Policy and Procedures to comply with the state of New Mexico laws and US Youth mandates for injuries due to concussion and traumatic brain injuries (see Appendix A.8).

- Awareness and education

- Removal from play
- Return to play

**6.03.02.03** All medical release forms must be available (hard copy or electronic), during practices, games and NMYSA activities. Assure that the emergency phone numbers are listed.

**6.03.02.04** All coaches should have a first aid kit with them at all games and practices (see Appendix A.11).

### ***6.03.03 Procedures for Injuries Pertaining to Blood***

**6.03.03.01** The first concern is always to make sure the player is not seriously injured. Never move a player that may have internal injuries. If serious injury is suspected, clear the field and summon medical help. It is recommended that standby medical help be present at all tournaments.

**6.03.03.02** If it will not hurt the player more, remove him/her from the field to the sidelines away from spectators.

**6.03.03.03** Carry plastic bags at all times in the coach's bag. These bags should be large enough to carry a uniform and shoes. It is also recommended that rags be carried and a spray bottle containing a 1:10 solution of chlorine bleach and water for wiping up surrounding areas. All tainted grass should be sprayed with the solution. A separate bag should include all contaminated articles including bandages, rags, wipes, etc. This bag should be tied off and placed in a covered container.

**6.03.03.04** Referees are instructed to not allow a player on the field with a uniform that has an unacceptable amount of blood on it. It is recommended that extra clothing be carried as a precaution

**6.03.03.05** US Youth Soccer supplies guidelines for financial management.

### ***6.03.04 Coaching Guidelines***

- It is the responsibility of the coach to set the standard of behavior on the field. It is also incumbent upon the coach to control the actions of the coaching staff, players, and spectators. Some things that are not acceptable are:
  1. Name-calling or harassment of a player, referee, coach, or spectator by anyone.
  2. Name-calling or harassment of a player by a coach or parent of another player, or another player, especially a teammate.
  3. Name-calling or harassment of the referee, assistant referee, or 4th official by anyone.
  4. Hitting or slapping a player, coach, referee, or spectator by anyone.
  5. Failure to control spectators (especially parents).
  6. Failure to treat injuries.

7. Inadequate supervision, *e.g.*, during travel, before practice (late arrival of coach), during practices, after practice (failure to wait for late parents). It is recommended that the coach have a procedure for these events and communicate this plan to the parents at the first team meeting.
  8. Leaving player(s) unattended.
  9. Failure to report signs of abuse.
- Recognizing and dealing with dangerous field and weather conditions, *e.g.*, cold, heat, lightning, high winds, etc.
  - The coach shall always have medical consent to treat (membership form) on the field and should carry a fully stocked first aid kit (see A.11).
  - The coach should have appropriate pre-game warm-ups.
  - The coach should have a standardized travel checklist.
  - Abide by the Codes of Conduct in the Caution: Children @ Play Program (see Appendix A.4).

## **6.04 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LEAGUE, CLUB AND ACADEMY RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS**

### ***6.04.01 General Guidance***

#### **6.04.01.01 Determination of Risk**

- Look for Risks: Consider who and what can be considered at risk.
- People – Board members, coaches, referees, players, volunteers, spectators, and others.
- Property – Fields, equipment, buildings, bank accounts, and others.
- Income – Registration fees, donations, sales, team funds for trips, tournament fees, and other contributions.
- Food – Sale of food and drink at games and tournaments.
- Goodwill – Reputation of League, community standing, future fundraising, future players, future volunteers, future field usage.

**6.04.01.02 Assess Risks:** Leagues, Clubs and Academies need to develop conscious decisions about which risk it can accept, what type of insurance is needed, and how risks can be reduced and controlled. After risks are identified, assess each in relation to the League's overall mission of providing soccer, and do not lose sight of the reason for the League's existence.

**6.04.01.03 Control Risks:** A risk assessment provides a basis for determining sensible controls of the risks. No plan is perfect, but a reasonable plan can be developed so that volunteers, (coaches, board members, team managers, administrators and any person that works with children) providing services to the league/club/academy and players will feel reasonably secure in their assigned tasks.

**6.04.01.04** Implement your Strategy:

- There are five concepts to help your risk containment strategy.
  1. **Avoid** – Do not offer a service that the League considers too risky.
  2. **Modify** – Change the activity so that chance of harm occurring, and the potential damage are acceptable.
  3. **Transfer** – Shift the financial aspect of risk through contracts or insurance. (Make sure the league and owners of fields are properly insured, and wherever possible have field ownership in City, County or State government.)
  4. **Retain** – Accept the risk and prepare for the consequences.
  5. **Develop** – Come up with a list of resources that will help you determine what risks exist and how best to deal with them.
- Review and Revise Periodically: Review and revisions of a League's risk management program will ensure continued application. Every officer, coach, referee, and league member should continue to keep their eyes open for potential hazardous conditions, and if one is reported to the League, the League needs to follow through on such a report.

**6.04.01.02** Methods of Prevention:**6.04.01.02.01** Prevention of injury to players:

- Assure safety of personal equipment and grounds at games and practices.
- Coaches and referees should check personal equipment and disallow participation until standards met.
- Referees and field marshals should check grounds, including proper installation and anchoring of goals, and identify, correct or mark dangerous areas and communicate to participants and spectators.
- Referees should call the game if a dangerous situation cannot be corrected, and coaches should call practice for the same reason.
- Leagues should have certified referee assignors to assign referees to games based upon age level, experience and anticipated difficulty. NMYSA will provide assignor certification training to leagues upon request.

**6.04.01.02.02** Assure the intentions of the adult participants:

- Certification for any adult working with children prior to participation
- Watch for uninvolved spectators
- Whenever possible, have at least two adults present at all team functions or player interactions.

- Have league officials monitor practices and games for inappropriate behavior by adults.
- Communicate with other leagues and associations should problems arise and solutions to problems.

**6.04.01.02.03** Preventing injury to coaches, referees, volunteers and spectators:

- **Clinics** – create safety awareness by requiring clinics for all adult participants that address safety. Communicate to parents the importance of safety awareness.
- **Fields** – Check that grounds are safe. Clearly mark dangerous areas. Communicate to spectators as well as participants.
- **Facilities** – The League needs a secure setting that is safe from both crime and bodily harm. Leagues should work closely with local law enforcement officials to provide adequate security for league events.
- **Food** – Food preparation for events needs to meet New Mexico Environment Department standards, or contracts for food and concession services need to be with an entity which meets those standards and provides proof of adequate insurance.

**6.04.01.02.04** Leagues/Clubs/Academies:

Each league/club/academy should advise coaches and referees that, whenever possible, two adults should be present with youth players during practice, games or other situations. Leagues should impress upon coaches that parents should be encouraged to be involved with the team, to attend parts of the practice and to pick up their children immediately upon practice or games terminating. Never leave a child unattended after practice. If the field cannot be clearly seen from the street or parking area, ask parents to escort their children to the field and make sure that a coach or other team adult is present before leaving. Children who need to leave practice early should be picked up on the field by the parent. The parent should make sure the child is leaving. If car pools are arranged by the parents, make sure the coach is informed. Leagues should advise coaches and discourage coaches from providing transportation to players either to or from practice and games.

**6.04.02 Lawsuit Guidelines**

NMYSA-registered coaches or administrators are covered by liability insurance and professional assistance and guidance is available. Any litigation process requires tremendous cooperation and time commitment for the persons involved. The burden cannot be solely that of the insurance company or a defense attorney.

The following immediate actions are suggested:

**6.04.02.01** Contact the NMYSA administrative office to obtain insurance company information immediately.

**6.04.02.02** Photocopy the suit and any additional information pertaining to the incident.

**6.04.02.03** Send, via registered mail, the original of the summons/complaint and any other pertinent information to the insurance company.

**6.04.02.04** Do not discuss the case with any person other than your lawyer or insurance representative.

**6.04.02.05** Call the insurance representative if no response has been received from the insurance company representative or company-appointed lawyer within three days.

**6.04.02.06** Take the time to provide all the information and details to the company-appointed lawyer.

## APPENDICES

### A.1 Standards of Ethical Conduct for Individuals Assigned Risk Management Responsibilities Within NMYSA and Its Affiliates.

The purpose of this signed statement is to inform the NMYSA Risk Manager, NMYSA Risk Manager Assistant, and Risk Management Coordinators at the League or Club level of the security and confidentiality requirements of the information they will be gathering. It is not meant to reflect negatively on the Risk Manager or Coordinator's performance; nor does it imply that the Risk Manager/Coordinator is suspected of any wrongdoing.

As a Risk Manager/Coordinator you have an obligation to safeguard the records entrusted to you, and this document is to remind you of the security, confidentiality, and ethics required for these positions.

As a Risk Management Coordinator (RMC), I will:

- Represent the interests of all people served by this organization, and not favor special interests inside or outside of this organization.
- Not use my position as RMC for personal advantage or for the advantage of my family, friends, and associates.
- Keep confidential information confidential.
- Do nothing to violate the trust of those who elected or appointed me to the position of RMC or of those we serve.
- Never exercise authority as an RMC except when acting as I am delegated by the organization which elected or appointed me.
- Ensure that any disclosure made is in fact made only to those individuals having a legitimate need to know in the course of their official duties.
- Consult with a higher authority, *i.e.* NMYSA President, NMYSA Risk Manager, League President, prior to taking any action when in doubt whether such action is in conformance with privacy and confidentiality standards.
- Disclose personal information about an individual only with the written consent or at the written request of the individual to whom it pertains.

A copy of this document will be maintained by NMYSA. The signature below acknowledges that you were counseled about the security and confidentiality pertaining to the responsibilities as an RMC and that you were afforded the opportunity to obtain clarification regarding the requirements of the position which you did not fully understand. In addition, if you have access to electronic files or data bases, your signature affirms that you have read and understand Appendix A.6 of the NMYSA Risk Management Manual.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ League \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



## **A.2 Administrator Certification Statement Form**

The Certification Form can be found at the NMYSA registration system.

## **A.3 United States Youth Soccer Code of Conduct, Zero Tolerance for Abuse for Coaches, Program Administrators, Players, and Parents**

### **Zero Tolerance for Abuse**

#### **Abuse Tolerance**

United States Youth Soccer has a zero tolerance for abuse in all youth soccer teams, programs or activities. It is the responsibility of every coach and volunteer to participate in the effort to create a safe environment for all soccer participants.

#### **Definitions**

##### **USYS Activity**

"USYS Activity" includes State Associations and their registered members registered through their State Association. US Youth Soccer activities include but are not limited to, National Championship Series (State, Regional and National), National President Cup Series (State, Regional and National), TOPSoccer, Programs, Soccer Across America Programs as well as regional competitions/leagues, National League, Olympic Development Programs and State Association soccer related activities that qualify any coach, assistant coach, team training, team manager, referee, league president, league delegate, labor employee, or any other individual over the age of 18 seeking affiliation with the State Association who has direct or indirect contact or influence on a youth player whom seeks risk management certification within the State Association shall qualify as an activity.

#### **Reporting Abuse or Suspicions of Abuse**

##### **Reporting Responsibilities**

Given United States Youth Soccer's zero tolerance for abuse, USYS encourages a culture of communication regarding matters that place athletes at risk.

USYS supports and encourages a culture of communication related to abuse or suspected abuse of athletes. If you see or suspect inappropriate interaction with or between athletes, it is your responsibility to report the inappropriate interaction to a coach, supervisor, team official, league official, Risk Management Chair for the state association, or other designated state soccer association representative.

Because sexual abusers 'groom' athletes for abuse, it is possible that a coach or volunteer may witness behavior intended to 'groom' a child for sexual abuse. Coaches and volunteers are asked to report 'grooming' behavior, any policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to a supervisor, team official, league official, Risk Management Chair for the state association, or other designated state soccer association representative.

All reports of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this Code of Conduct and state law, to law enforcement, Child Protective Services, or other appropriate agency.

### **Enforcement of Policies**

Coaches and volunteers who supervise other leaders are charged with the diligent enforcement of all safety policies contained in this Code of Conduct. A violation of these policies can be grounds for immediate dismissal from USYS Activities. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of league officials and the state association's Risk Management Chair or designated state soccer association representative.

### **Reporting Violation of Policy**

In order to maintain a safe environment for athletes, coaches and volunteers must be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission, or situation that is a violation of these policies. All questions or concerns related to abuse should be directed to a league official and the state association's Risk Management Chair or other designated state soccer association representative.

### **Consequences of Violation**

Any person accused of committing a prohibited act or any act considered to be harmful to a child will be immediately suspended from all USYS activities. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement or child protective agencies.

Any person found to have committed a prohibited act may be prohibited from any future USYS activity.

Failure to report a prohibited act as designated in this policy is a violation of this policy and grounds for dismissal or removal. Coaches or volunteers who fail to report a prohibited act may be restricted from participation in any USYS activity.

### **Reporting Suspicions of Abuse to Authorities**

**In New Mexico, report suspicions of abuse or neglect to NM Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) from a cell phone: #SAFE (#7233) or 1-855-333-SAFE (7233) or local law enforcement authorities.**

**USYS, and organizations and individuals related to USYS, do not investigate suspicions or allegations of physical or sexual abuse, or attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of such allegations, as a condition of reporting suspicions or allegations to appropriate law enforcement authorities.**

USYS, and organizations and individuals affiliated with USYS, will comply with all laws requiring a person to make a report to the appropriate law enforcement agency if that person has cause to believe a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect.

If a coach or volunteer has cause to believe a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect, that coach or volunteer can make a report directly to the appropriate reporting authorities or may report to an immediate supervisor, coach, league official, the state association's Risk Management Chair or designated state soccer representative - who in turn will report the abuse or neglect. In the event relevant state law requires the individual with the cause to believe that a child may have been abused or neglected to report rather than delegate the responsibility, the individual will comply with the applicable reporting laws.

When a report is made, the state association Risk Management Chair or designated state soccer association representative will be notified as soon as possible.

In no way does any provision in this policy discourage any coach or volunteer from reporting a suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities.

### **Response to Report of Abuse**

When a report of abuse or neglect occurs, team or league representatives will take the necessary and appropriate action to ensure a safe environment for the person at risk.

## **Prohibited Substances and Activities**

### **Intoxicants**

Coaches and volunteers are prohibited from being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while participating in any USYS activity. Coaches and volunteers are prohibited from providing alcohol or illegal drugs to minor athletes or any program participant.

### **Tobacco**

USYS programs and activities are tobacco-free. USYS requires coaches and volunteers to refrain from the use or possession of tobacco products or e-cigarettes while in the presence of minor athletes or their parents. Coaches and volunteers are prohibited from providing tobacco products or e-cigarette products to minor athletes.

### **Nudity**

Coaches and volunteers that participate in USYS Activities should never be nude in the presence of minor athletes.

### **Sexually Oriented Conversations**

Coaches and volunteers that participate in USYS Activities are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with minor athletes. Coaches and volunteers are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating, or sexual activities with any minor athlete in the program. This provision includes the use of cellular phones, text messages, e-mail, instant messaging, Facebook, and online chat rooms or other social media. See also Electronic Communication and Social Media, below.

### **Possession of Sexually Oriented Materials**

Coaches and volunteers that participate in USYS Activities are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, videos, etc.) while in the presence of minor athletes.

### **Physical Contact with Athletes**

Appropriate physical contact between minor athletes and coaches or volunteers is a productive and inevitable part of sport. Athletes are more likely to acquire advanced physical skills and enjoy their sport participation through appropriate physical contact. However, guidelines for appropriate physical contact reduce the potential for abuse and misconduct in athletics - as well as false allegations of abuse.

### **Appropriate Physical Contact**

USYS, and organizations and individuals affiliated with USYS, acknowledge and adhere to the following principles and guidelines regarding physical contact with minor athletes.

### **Common Criteria for Appropriate Physical contact**

Physical contact with minor athletes - for safety, consolation and celebration - has multiple criteria that make it both safe and appropriate. These include:

1. The physical contact takes place in public;
2. There is no potential for (or actual) physical or sexual intimacies during the physical contact;
3. The physical contact is for the benefit of the athletes, not to meet an emotional or other need of an adult.

### **Safety**

The safety of minor athletes is paramount, and in many instances the athletic activity is made safer through appropriate physical contact. Examples include:

1. Spotting an athlete so that he or she will not be injured by a fall or piece of equipment;

2. Positioning an athlete's body so that he or she more quickly acquires an athletic skill, gets a better sense of where his or her body is in space, or improves balance and coordination;
3. Making athletes aware that he or she may be in harm's way due to other practicing athletes, or equipment use;
4. Releasing muscle cramps.

### **Celebration**

Sports are physical by definition. USYS recognizes that participants often express a joy of participation, competition, achievement and victory through physical acts. USYS encourages these public expressions of celebration which include:

1. Greeting gestures such as high-fives, fist bumps, and brief hugs;
2. Congratulatory gestures such as celebratory hugs, "jump-arounds" and pats on the back for any form of athletic or personal accomplishment.

### **Consolation**

It may be appropriate to console an emotionally distressed athlete (e.g., an athlete who has just been injured or has lost a competition). Appropriate consolation includes, publicly:

1. Embracing a crying athlete - in a public place or circumstance;
2. Putting an arm around an athlete while verbally engaging them in an effort to calm them down ("side hugs");
3. Lifting a fallen athlete off the playing surface and "dusting them off" to encourage them to continue competition.

### **Prohibited Physical Contact**

Prohibited forms of physical contact include, without limitation:

1. Asking or having a minor athlete sit in the lap of a coach or volunteer;
2. Lingering or repeated embrace of a minor athlete that goes beyond the criteria set forth for acceptable physical contact;
3. Slapping, hitting, punching, kicking or any other physical contact meant to discipline, punish or achieve compliance from a minor athlete;
4. "Cuddling" or maintaining prolonged physical contact of a minor athlete during any aspect of training, travel or overnight stay;
5. Playful, yet inappropriate contact that is not part of regular training (e.g., butt-pats, tickling or wrestling-type "horseplay");
6. Continued physical contact that makes a minor athlete obviously uncomfortable, whether expressed or not;
7. Any contact that is contrary to a previously expressed personal desire by the minor athlete for decreased or no physical contact, where such decreased contact is feasible in a competitive training environment.

The above physical contact is prohibited between adult and minor athlete AND between minor athletes. Coaches and volunteers must model the behavior expected from minor athletes. The above forms of Prohibited Physical Contact will be immediately reported to a team official, a

league official, the state association's Risk Management Chair or other designated state soccer representative.

Some forms of physical contact may constitute physical or sexual abuse that **must be reported to appropriate law enforcement authorities**. When appropriate, the Prohibited Physical Contact will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement authority.

## **Misconduct**

### **Bullying**

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at any USYS activity and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to the victim. USYS is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all participants. If bullying does occur, incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Any minor athlete who is aware of bullying behavior is expected to tell a coach, team official, league official, the state association's Risk Management Chair or other designated state soccer association representative.

Objectives of USYS' Bullying Policy Action Plan:

1. To clearly communicate that USYS will not tolerate bullying in any form.
2. To define bullying and give minor athletes, coaches, volunteers and parents a suitable understanding of those behaviors that constitutes 'bullying'.
3. To make it known to minor athletes, coaches and volunteers that a policy and protocol exist should bullying issues arise.
4. To clearly communicate how to report bullying behavior.
5. to communicate to minor athletes, coaches, volunteers and parents that USYS takes bullying seriously, and will immediately investigate and address all reports of bullying.

### **Harassment**

Harassment is the repeated pattern of physical and/or non-physical behaviors that

1. Are intended to cause fear, humiliation or annoyance;
2. Offend or degrade;
3. Create a hostile environment;
4. Reflect discriminatory bias in an attempt to establish dominance, superiority or power over an individual athlete or group based on gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion or mental or physical disability; or
5. Any act or conduct described as harassment under federal or state law.

Examples of harassment prohibited in USYS Activities include, without limitation:

Physical offenses. Behaviors include

1. Hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, choking or slapping a minor athlete or participant;
2. Throwing at or hitting a minor athlete with objects including sporting equipment.

Non-physical offenses. Behaviors that include

1. Making negative or disparaging comments about an athlete's disability, religion, skin color, gender expression, sexuality or ethnic traits;
2. Displaying offensive materials, gestures, or symbols; and
3. Withholding or reducing playing time to an athlete based on his or her disability, religion, skin color, or ethnic traits.

## **Hazing**

Hazing is defined as coercing, requiring, forcing or willfully tolerating any humiliating, unwelcome or dangerous activity that serves as a condition for

1. An athlete joining a group;
2. An athlete being socially accepted by a group's members; or
3. Any act or conduct described as hazing under federal or state law.

Hazing does not include group team activities that are meant to establish normative team behaviors or promote team cohesion.

Examples of hazing prohibited in USYS Activities include, without limitation:

1. Requiring, forcing or otherwise requiring an athlete to consume alcohol or illegal drugs;
2. Tying, taping or otherwise physically restraining an athlete;
3. Sexual simulations or sexual acts of any nature;
4. Sleep deprivation, otherwise unnecessary schedule disruption or the withholding of water and/or food;
5. Social actions (e.g., grossly inappropriate or provocative clothing) or public displays (e.g., public nudity) that are illegal or meant to draw ridicule;
6. Beating, paddling or other forms of physical assault; and
7. Excessive training requirements directed at a particular athlete or group of athletes.

Activities that fit the definition of hazing are considered to be hazing regardless of an athlete's willingness to cooperate or participate.

## **Willfully Tolerating Misconduct**

It is a violation of this Code of Conduct if a coach, volunteer or participant knows of misconduct, but takes no action to intervene on behalf of the minor athlete(s). All forms of misconduct should be reported to a coach, team official, league official, the state association's Risk Management Chair or other designated state soccer association representative.

## **Peer-to-Peer Sexual Abuse**

Approximately 1/3 of all reported sexual abuse occurs at the hands of other children or minors. Coaches and volunteers have an obligation to report peer-to-peer sexual abuse in accord with state mandatory reporting requirements. Whether sexual interaction between athletes constitutes 'sexual abuse' depends on the existence of an aggressor and whether there is an imbalance of power between the parties (e.g., an age difference between the athletes, disparity in size or the

existence of a physical or intellectual disability). **If you have concern that an interaction between minor athletes may constitute sexual abuse, report the interaction to NM CYFD at 1-855-333-SAFE (7233) or from a cell phone #SAFE (#7322), or local law enforcement and a coach, team official, and the state association's Risk Management Chair.**

**Peer-to-peer sexual abuse risk is highest:**

1. Any location that is less easily seen; or
2. Any time minor athletes are unclothed or changing clothes for any reason.

Due to this risk, coaches and volunteers will be aware of locations and facilities that are less easily seen or supervised. These locations and facilities vary per team and activity, and can include practice and competition locations, restrooms, changing areas, locker rooms, dorms and hotels. These areas will be supervised regularly by coaches and volunteers, where possible and appropriate.

### **Local and Team Travel**

For some USYS Activities, travel is a standard aspect of a competitive season, and USYS provides the following policies to reduce the risk of abuse and misconduct. Adherence to these travel guidelines will increase athlete safety and improve the competitive experience while keeping travel a fun and enjoyable experience.

We distinguish between travel to training, practice and local competition ("local travel"), and team travel involving a coordinated overnight stay (team travel).

#### **Local Travel**

Local travel occurs when the team does not sponsor, coordinate, or arrange for travel. For local travel, athletes or their parents/guardians are responsible for making all travel arrangements. In these instances, it is the responsibility of the athlete or their parents/guardians to ensure the person transporting the athlete maintains all safety and legal requirements, including but not limited to, a valid driver's license, proper insurance, well maintained vehicle, and compliance with all state laws. 15 passenger vans are prohibited to use as a mode of transportation.

In an effort to minimize one-on-one interactions, a coach or volunteer, who is not also acting as a parent, should not drive alone with an unrelated athlete and should drive with at least two other athletes or another adult at all times. In any case where a coach or volunteer is involved in the athlete's local travel, a parental release is required in advance. Efforts must be made to ensure that a coach or volunteer is not alone with an athlete or participant by picking up athletes in groups.

A coach or volunteer who is also an athlete's guardian may provide shared transportation for any athlete(s). We encourage guardians to pick up their athlete first and drop off their athlete last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement. We also recommend completing a shared travel declaration form signed by the parent/guardian of any minor athlete who is being transported as part of such a carpool arrangement.



## **Team Travel**

Team travel is overnight travel that occurs when the team sponsors, coordinates or arranges for travel so that the team can compete locally, regionally, nationally or internationally. Because of the greater distances, coaches, volunteers and chaperones will often travel with athletes. However, no coach or volunteer will engage in team travel without the proper safety requirements in place, including a valid driver's license, proper insurance, well-maintained vehicle and compliance with all state laws. 15 passenger vans are prohibited to use as a mode of transportation.

Team travel requires adequate supervision through coaches, volunteers and other adult chaperones.

For team travel, a team representative will book hotel accommodations and air travel in advance; the team representative will prioritize the choice of hotel accommodations that have rooms accessed from within the building, as opposed to street access ('hotel' vs. 'motel' access).

Athletes will share rooms, with 2-4 athletes assigned per room depending on accommodations. A team representative will notify hotel management regarding any special arrangements; for example, a team representative will request the hotel to block pay-per-view channels and will request an additional large room or suite such that athletes may socialize as a group. Team meetings do **not** occur in hotel rooms (of the coach or athlete); a team representative will reserve a separate space for adults and athletes to socialize.

To ensure the propriety of athletes and to protect coaches and volunteers, there will be no male athletes in the rooms of female athletes, and no female athletes in the rooms of male athletes (unless the athletes are siblings accompanied by a parent/guardian). A coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an athlete, unless the coach is the parent, guardian, sibling or spouse of that particular athlete.

When visiting public places such as shopping malls, movie theaters, etc., athletes will stay in groups of no less than three persons. Athletes who are 12 years of age and under will be accompanied by an adult chaperone at all times.

Athletes are expected to remain with the team at all times during the trip. Athletes are not to leave the competition venue, the hotel, a restaurant, or any other place at which the team has gathered, without the knowledge and permission of the coach, volunteer or chaperone.

We encourage family members who wish to stay in the team hotel to do so. If family members do not stay in the same hotel, we encourage all athletes to call parents and guardians regularly. A team representative will allow unscheduled calls to the athlete by a parent/guardian, if requested by either the athlete or the parent/guardian.

## **Travel Notification**

A team representative will provide reasonable advance notice before any team travel. Notice will include the dates, location and duration of competition. Travel notice will also include designated team hotels for overnight stays. A team representative will designate a contact person for team travel to help with travel details and provide information to parents.

A team representative will post specific travel itineraries when they become available. These will include a more detailed, hour-by-hour itinerary as well as contact information for coaches and team travel chaperones.

### **Coach and Volunteer Responsibilities**

During team travel, coaches and volunteers will help athletes, fellow coaches and volunteers adhere to policy guidelines, including the travel policies and reporting policies.

When not practicing, training, competing, or preparing for competition, coaches and volunteers will monitor the activities of athletes, fellow coaches and volunteers during team travel. Coaches and volunteers will:

1. Prepare athletes for team travel and make athletes aware of all expectations. Supplemental information will be given to parents/guardians of athletes who are considered to be inexperienced travelers, new or relatively new to team travel, or who are under the age of 14;
2. Familiarize themselves with all travel itineraries and schedules before initiation of team travel;
3. Conform to, and monitor for others' adherence, the policies of the Code of Conduct and all other team policies during team travel;
4. Encourage minor athletes to participate in regular communication with their parents/guardians;
5. Help athletes be on time for all team commitments (as possible);
6. Assist with team travel logistical needs (as possible);
7. Support team chaperones and/or participate in the monitoring of athletes for adherence to curfew restrictions based on age and competition schedule, as listed in travel itinerary;
8. Ensure athletes are complying with hotel room restrictions based on gender or age requirements;
9. Make certain that athletes are not alone in a hotel room with any adult apart from a family member, including coaches, volunteers and chaperones;
10. Refrain from using drugs or alcohol in the presence of minors or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing any program or coaching duty;
11. Immediately report any concerns about physical or sexual abuse, misconduct, or policy violations;
12. Notify parents before taking any significant disciplinary action against a minor athlete if the athlete is traveling without his or her parents.

### **Chaperone Responsibilities**

Chaperones accompany team travel to ensure that the athletes, coaches and volunteers adhere to schedules and guidelines, including the travel policy and all other relevant policies contained in

the Code of Conduct. Each chaperone must undergo a background check screening with the appropriate State Association and follow all State Association and USYS Bylaws, Rules & Policies (e.g. including Code of Conduct).

### **Electronic Communications & Social Media**

All electronic communications between a coach and minor athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about program activities.

**As with any communication, the content of any electronic communication should be readily available to share with the athlete's family. At the request of a parent or guardian, any email, electronic text, social media or similar communication will copy or include the athlete's parents or guardians.**

#### **Facebook, Instagram, Blogs and Similar Sites**

Coaches or volunteers can communicate with minor athletes through sites like Facebook, but all communication needs to be in group form and public (no private communication). If a Facebook page is used, all coaches and parents must be included. Coaches may not have athletes join a personal media page. All posts, messages, texts, or media of any kind shared among athletes or between coach and athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities or for team-oriented motivational purposes.

#### **Twitter, Instant Messaging and Similar Media**

All communication is to be public in nature. Coaches and minor athletes may not "follow" each other. Coaches cannot "re-tweet" athlete message posts. Coaches and volunteers are not permitted to "direct message" minor athletes through Twitter (or similar media). Coaches and volunteers are not permitted to post inappropriate off-color content or comment on inappropriate off-color posts. If there is doubt, treat the content as inappropriate.

#### **Email and Similar Electronic Communications**

Athletes and coaches may use email to communicate if the athlete is at least 14 years of age. All email content between coach and athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about program activities. Where possible, the minor athlete's parent should be copied on email communications. Email communication between coaches and minor athletes is allowed during the hours of 7 am and 10 pm.

#### **Texting and Similar Electronic Communications**

Texting is allowed between coaches and a minor athlete if the athlete is at least 14 years of age. Where possible, texts between a coach and an athlete must be in a group text - the text should include another athlete, volunteer, a parent, or another coach/assistant. All texts between a coach and an athlete must be professional and for the purpose of communicating information about

team activities. No texting is allowed between a coach and an athlete before 7 am or after 10 pm, unless there is a specific soccer activity that requires a text communication.

The use of Snapchat (and similar apps) with minor athletes is not permitted.

### **Electronic Imagery**

From time to time, digital photos, videos of practice or competition, and other publicly obtainable images of the minor athlete - individually or in groups - may be taken. These photos and/or videos may be used for athletic instruction (i.e. practice and game films), team videos, team websites, or offered to the athlete's families. The use of photos/videos is permissible as long as the athlete or athletes are in public view and such imagery is both appropriate and in the best interest of the athlete and the program. Photo or video imagery must not be contrary to any rules or guidance outlined in this Code of Conduct.

### **Request to Discontinue**

The parent or guardian of a minor athlete may request in writing that their athlete not be contacted by coaches through any electronic communication; that request must be honored. Additionally, a parent or guardian of a minor athlete may request in writing that photographs or videography of their athlete not be posted on program or team websites, understanding that group photography or videography may render this impracticable; to the extent this request is practicable, it should be honored.

### **Misconduct**

Social media and electronic communication can be used inappropriately (e.g., emotional abuse, sexual abuse, bullying, harassment, grooming, and hazing). Such communication by coaches, volunteers, officials, administrators, parents or other athletes will not be tolerated.

Electronic communication should not contain or relate to any of the following:

1. Drugs or alcohol use;
2. Sexually oriented conversation, sexually explicit language or sexual activity;
3. An adult's personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues, or personal problems; and
4. Inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures.

Any communication concerning a minor athlete's personal life, social activities, relationships, family issues or personal problems must be transparent, accessible and professional.

## **Parental Contact and Involvement**

### **Parental contact**

Parents of minor athletes will be contacted if their athlete becomes ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem while participating in a USYS Activity.

#### A.4 Caution: Children @ Play

We all have a responsibility to promote high standards of behavior in the game.

In various national surveys, behavior was the biggest concern in youth soccer today. This included both the abuse of match officials and the unacceptable behavior by over-competitive parents, spectators and coaches on the sidelines.

The NMYSA "**Caution: Children @ Play**" program goals are to:

1. Provide all children a positive sports experience free from all forms of abuse.
2. Promote exercise and sports participation for the development of healthy lifestyles that will promote wellness through a person's lifespan.
3. Provide a safe environment for learning positive life skills and the enjoyment of spare time in a sports experience.
4. Develop awareness of what constitutes maltreatment or abuse.
5. Educate parents and coaches the different types of sideline communication. Those that are supportive, those that are distracting and what constitutes hostile sideline communication.\*
6. Eliminate all types of hostile communication.\*
7. Help parents be aware of and help to eliminate distracting communication from the sidelines.\*

Accomplishing these goals will result in players having more fun, developing sound character, building self esteem, increasing confidence, creating lasting friendships, and improving trust.

Examples of the three types of sideline communication:\*

Supportive:	Distracting:	Hostile:
"Good Try!"	"Shoot it!"	"That's not good enough!"
"Nice pass"	"Pass it to Veronica"	"Come on Ref, that's terrible!"
"Good work!"	"Go to the ball!"	"Bobby, get in the game!"

\*content provided by Soccer Parenting Association

Every parent, coach and player are asked to abide by a Code of Conduct during all NMYSA activities, from State-sanctioned tournaments to regularly scheduled League matches through team practices and activities. These Codes of Conduct are:

### **Parent and Spectator Code of Conduct**

I will:

- Remain outside the field of play and behind the Designated Spectator Area (where provided).
- Never engage in or tolerate hostile sideline communication which includes:
  1. offensive, insulting or abusive language or behavior
  2. yelling or any comment directed toward the referee.
- Always respect the match officials' decisions.
- Applaud effort and good play as well as success (examples of supportive sideline communication).

In addition, when attending youth games, I will:

- Remember that children play for FUN.
- Let the coaches do their job and not confuse the players by telling them what to do (distracting sideline communications).
- Encourage the players to respect the opposition and match officials.
- Never criticize a player for making a mistake (an example of hostile sideline communication). Mistakes are part of learning.

**I understand that breaches of the Code may result in action being taken by my League and/or my State Association.**

### **Coach and Team Official Code of Conduct**

I will:

- Show respect to others involved in the game including match officials, opposition players, coaches, managers and spectators.
- Adhere to the Laws of the Game.
- Display and promote high standards of behavior.
- Always respect the match officials' decisions.
- Never enter the field of play without the referee's permission.
- Never engage in public criticism of the match officials.
- Never engage in or tolerate hostile sideline communication which includes: offensive, insulting or abusive language or behavior.

When working with players, I will:

- Place the well-being, safety and enjoyment of each player above everything, including winning.
- Explain exactly what I expect of players and what they can expect of me.
- Ensure the parents/guardians of all players under the age of 18 understand these expectations.
- Refuse to tolerate any form of bullying.
- Develop mutual trust and respect with every player to build his/her self-esteem.
- Encourage each player to accept responsibility for his/her own behavior and performance.
- Ensure all activities I organize are appropriate for the players' ability level, experience, age and maturity.
- Report all suspected child abuse, including sexual abuse, within 24 hours to the proper authorities, NM CYFD at 1-855-333-SAFE (7233) or from a cell phone #SAFE (#7233) and the NMYSA Risk Management Chair.

**I understand that breaches of the Code may result in action being taken by my League and/or my State Association.**

### **Referee Code of Conduct**

When officiating I will:

- Be honest and completely impartial at all times, irrespective of the teams, players or team officials involved in the match.
- Apply the Laws of the Game and competition rules fairly and consistently.
- Manage the game in a positive, calm and confident manner.
- Deal with all instances of violence, aggression, unsporting behavior, foul play and other misconduct.
- Not tolerate offensive, insulting or abusive language or behavior from players and officials.
- Support my match colleagues at all times.
- Set a positive personal example by promoting good behavior and showing respect to everyone involved in the game.
- Communicate with the players and encourage fair play.
- Respond in a clear, calm and confident manner to any appropriate request for clarification by the team captains.
- Prepare physically and mentally for every match.
- Complete and submit accurate and concise reports within the time limit required for games which I officiate.

**I understand that breaches of the Code may result in action being taken by my League and/or my State Association.**

### A.5 New Mexico Youth Soccer Association Criminal Conviction Matrix for Participation Acceptability

This matrix allows different weights to be assigned to various convictions. If a person has convictions in different categories, a numerical score can weight them. Multiple convictions may accrue from one incident.

#### 10 Points equals Suspension

Type of Conviction	Years Since Last Conviction											TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	>10	

**DWI. If multiple convictions, then all sentencing terms must be completed, or the suspension stays in effect. Numeric score doubles if 1) a minor was in the vehicle for any conviction of a DWI offense, or 2) if any DWI conviction was aggravated. Doubling is no longer applied five years after the date of the conviction for the aggravated DWI or for the conviction where a minor was in the vehicle.**

1 Conviction	4	4	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2 Convictions	10	10	8	8	8	8	8	0	0	0	0	0	
3 Convictions	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	8	8	0	0	0	
4+ Convictions	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	

#### Drug Possession

1 Conviction	5	5	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2 Convictions	10	10	10	10	8	8	8	0	0	0	0	0	
3+ Convictions	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	0	

#### Drug Manufacturing & Distribution/Sales

1 Conviction	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	0	0	
2+ Convictions	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	0	
Sales/Manufacturing Meth Or Hard Drugs	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	

**Grand Total**

--

For all categories in this risk management table, an arrest subsequent to the completion of a suspension based on any category from this table will result in an immediate suspension until the matter is adjudicated.



## **A.6 Data Access, Security, and Privacy**

### **Access Authorization for Registration Software:**

Each authorized user is assigned a unique Username and Password. The Username is created by the user. The initial Password is systematically generated by the software system. The Password should be changed by the user and should meet the criteria for a robust password:

- 1) at least 8 characters
- 2) not a word (or words) from any dictionary
- 3) not a common number associated with you (*e.g.*, birthday, phone number)
- 4) must include characters from three of the following four groups:  
lower-case letters, upper-case letters, numbers, special characters (no spaces allowed)

*Your system password is unique to you, do not SHARE it!*

### **Suggested configuration of the individual machine with which you connect to the registration software:**

- 1) Create an account for yourself separate from other family members' accounts on that machine.
- 2) Password-protect that account's log-in (no automatic log-in)
- 3) Set an automatic screen saver with your account's password
- 4) Have that screensaver automatically activate after 5 or 10 minutes of inactivity
- 5) Recommend strongly that you maintain current anti-virus and anti-spyware software on the machine (including regular subscription updates) and use a firewall

### **Personally Identifiable Information (PII)**

PII is any piece of information which can potentially be used to uniquely identify, contact, or locate a single person. Each authorized user has a unique username and password combination that authorizes their access to the appropriate portion of the registration database(s) required by their role. (*e.g.*, a club registrar is authorized access to their club's information but not to that of other clubs). PII should be protected and treated with care and may only be shared in the process of conducting official NMYSA business, according to the Ethical Code of Conduct (Appendix 1 of this document) that each person with registration or system access is required to sign in advance of their access. Violations of this agreement or any other unauthorized PII use will result in the Risk Management exclusion and loss of access to the system.

## **A.7 NMYSA Golf Cart Policies and Procedures**

If you are purchasing or renting a golf cart for your sports facility, please make sure you are properly insured.

All golf cart operators shall possess a valid driver's license and observe all New Mexico vehicle laws such as lane travel, stop signs, legal passing of other vehicles, etc.

Golf carts should be operated on cart paths or designated cart paths, roadways and/or parking lots.

Pedestrians always have the right-of-way. Operators of golf carts will permit this right-of-way. If the golf cart is being operated on the sidewalk, the operator will pull off of the sidewalk to allow the pedestrians to pass or stop the golf cart when approaching pedestrians until they pass.

Golf carts should not be operated with more passengers than seating is provided for.

All occupants in a golf cart shall keep hands, arms, legs and feet within the confines of the golf cart at all times when the golf cart is in motion.

Never shift gears in reverse or forward while the vehicle is in motion.

Never back up or move forward or turn without making sure there is no person or obstructions behind, in front of or under the cart.

Golf carts should be operated at speeds equivalent to a well-paced walk and no faster than fifteen-mph or the posted speed limit. The maximum speed may be subject to the terrain over which it is being driven, the weather conditions, the total weight of the golf cart and passengers and any equipment being carried.

Avoid operating golf carts on the actual soccer fields and any sprinkler/meter boxes, heads, etc.

Maintain adequate distance between vehicles and pedestrians.

Approach sharp or blind corners with caution and reduced speed.

Use extreme care at building entrances and upon entering/exiting enclosed areas or other golf carts.

Do not park in any area that has posted "no parking" signs or that blocks egress/regress.

Never leave the keys in the golf cart when unattended.

When the golf cart is not in use, the operator must place the golf control lever in the park position, remove and secure the key and set the parking brake.

## **A.8 NMYSA Concussion Policy and Procedures**

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that changes how the cells in the brain normally work. A concussion is caused by a blow to the head or body that causes the brain to move rapidly inside the skull. even a "ding" or "getting your bell rung" or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. Concussions can also result from a fall or from players colliding with each other or with obstacles, such as goal posts.

### **Awareness and Education**

It is NMYSA's intent to promote concussion awareness/education to players, parents, coaches and administrators. As such, NMYSA has developed the following policies for concussion awareness and education.

1. Current Center for Disease Control, (CDC), "Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports" information is posted on the NMYSA website. It includes links to the CDC website and the "Heads Up" Coach, Player and Parent Fact Sheets and the Free online concussion training course.
2. Upon registration, parents are given a copy of the CDC "Heads Up" Parents fact sheet either electronically or in hard copy form.
3. Coaches must acknowledge that they have read the "Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports" fact sheet. This will be part of the NMYSA online certification.
4. Coaches are required to take the CDC's "Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports" training course and provide NMYSA with the certificate indicating such. Certificates will be identified electronically as part of the coach's background check process. Coaches must recertify every 4 years and provide NMYSA with the certificate indicating the coach took the CDC's "Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports" training.

### **Removal from Play**

Coaches, the player or the player's parents shall not allow a youth player to participate in practices/trainings, games or NMYSA events if the player exhibits signs of a concussion/brain injury. If the player's parents or player's coach suspect a concussion as a result of a blow to the head or body, a fall or collision, the player must be removed from the activity immediately and evaluated by a health care professional. The player will not be allowed to participate in training, games or events for at least one day from receiving a blow to the head or body and only after:

1. The player no longer exhibits any sign, symptom or behavior consistent with a concussion or other head injury; and
2. Receives a medical release from a licensed health care professional.

Players diagnosed with a concussion will be required to sit out for 10 days/240 hours and receive a medical release before returning to play. Coaches will be required to track suspected concussions and medical authorizations that permit "return to play". Any suspected concussion or diagnosed concussion, must be reported to NMYSA using the, "Concussion Notice Form", (attached). The coach, using the "Concussion Notice" form will track the player's progress and

submit a final copy of the form along with medical permissions to NMYSA when the player is returned to competition.

"Licensed health care professional" means:

- A practicing physician or physician assistant licensed pursuant to the Medical Practice Act;
- A practicing osteopathic physician licensed pursuant to Chapter 61, Article 10 NMSA 1978;
- A practicing certified nurse practitioner licensed pursuant to the Nursing Practice Act;
- A practicing osteopathic physician's assistant licensed pursuant to the Osteopathic Physicians' Assistant Act;
- A practicing psychologist licensed pursuant to the provisions of the Professional Psychologist Act; or
- A practicing athletic trainer licensed pursuant to the provisions of the Athletic Trainer Practice Act.

### **Return to Play**

A player, previously diagnosed with a concussion, must receive a release by a medical professional to "return to play". The player, coach and parents will follow the CDC' "return to play" process as indicated below.

Below are five gradual steps that the player, coach and parents should follow to help safely return an athlete to play. Remember, this is a gradual process. These steps may not be completed in one day, but should take a minimum of 5 days, could be weeks or months.

Baseline: Athletes should not have any concussion symptoms. Athletes should only progress to the next step if they do not have any symptoms at the current step.

Step 1: Begin with light aerobic exercise only to increase the athlete's heart rate. This means about 5 to 10 minutes on an exercise bike, walking, or light jogging. No weight lifting at this point.

Step 2: Continue with activities to increase an athlete's heart rate with body or head movement. This includes moderate jogging, brief running, moderate-intensity stationary biking, moderate-intensity weightlifting, (reduce time and/or reduced weight from your typical routine).

Step 3: Add heavy non-contact physical activity, such as sprinting/running, high-intensity stationary biking, regular weightlifting routine, non-contact sport-specific drills, (in 3 planes of movement).

Step 4: Athlete may return to practice and full contact (if appropriate for the sport) in controlled practice.

Step 5: Athlete may return to competition.

If an athlete's symptoms come back or she or he gets new symptoms when becoming more active at any step, this is a sign that the athlete is pushing him or herself too hard.

The athlete should stop these activities and the athlete's health care provider should be contacted. After more rest and no return of concussion symptoms, the athlete should begin at the previous step.

### **A.9 Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and SafeSport Authorization Act of 2017**

On February 14, 2018, S534 was signed into law and became effective immediately. The bill amends 2 federal statutes: (1) the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990 and (2) the Amateur Sports Act of 1978.

#### 1. Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1980

##### a. Extended reporting duties

The bill amends the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1980 to the extend the duty to report suspected child abuse, including sexual abuse, within 24 hours to certain adults who are authorized to interact with minor or amateur athletes at a facility under the jurisdiction of a national governing body. A "national governing body" means an amateur sports organization that is recognized by the United States Olympic Committee.

An individual who is required, but fails, to report suspected child sexual abuse is subject to criminal penalties.

##### b. Civil remedies

Additionally, the bill amends the federal civil code to revise civil remedy provisions. Among other things, it changes the civil statute of limitation to 10 years from the date the victim discovers the violation or injury (currently, 10 years from the date the cause of action arose). The bill also extends the statute of limitations for a minor victim of a federal sex offense to file a civil action to 10 years (currently 3 years) from the date such individual reaches age 18.

#### 2. Amateur Sports Act of 1978

##### a. Designation of United States Center for SafeSport

The bill also amends the Amateur Sports Act of 1978 to designate the United States Center for SafeSport to serve as the independent national safe sport organization, with the responsibility for

developing policies and procedures to prevent the emotional, physical, and sexual abuse of amateur athletes. These policies and procedures developed by the Center must include:

- A requirement that (a) all adult members of a national governing body or a facility under the jurisdiction of a national governing body or at any event sanctioned by a national governing body, and (b) all adults authorized by such members to interact with an amateur athlete, immediately report an allegation of child abuse of an amateur athlete who is a minor to: (i) the Center, (ii) to law enforcement, or (iii) NM Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) at **1-855-333-SAFE (7233) or from a cell phone, #SAFE (#7233)**
- A mechanism that allows a complainant to easily report child abuse
- Reasonable procedures to limit one-on-one interactions between a minor and an adult
- Procedures to prohibit retaliation
- Oversight procedures, including:
  1. Audits, to ensure the policies and procedures are followed correctly
  2. Consistent training is offered
- A mechanism for national governing bodies to share reports of suspected child abuse

(b) General requirements for youth-serving amateur athletic organizations

The bill also modifies the obligations of amateur athletic organizations - a not-for-profit corporation, association, or other group organized in the United States that sponsors or arranges an amateur athletic competition.

- Amateur sports organizations seeking a sanction for amateur athletic competitions must implement and abide by the policies and procedures to prevent emotional, physical, and child abuse of amateur athletes
- Amateur sports organizations which participate in an interstate or international amateur athletic competition and whose membership includes any adult who is in regular contact with an amateur athlete who is a minor, must:
  1. Comply with the reporting requirements of the Victims of Child Abuse Act
  2. Establish reasonable procedures to limit one-on-one interactions between an amateur athlete who is a minor and an adult
  3. Offer and provide consistent training to adult members who are in contact with amateur athletes who are minors
  4. Prohibit retaliation

## A.10 NMYSA Insurance

### General Liability Insurance

NMYSA provides General Liability Insurance for our registered members to cover incidents occurring at NMYSA sanctioned events at facilities used by NMYSA members. **This will not cover NMYSA coaches if they are working at non-sanctioned events, such as independent camps or one-on-one instruction. NMYSA advises to investigate getting additional insurance. NMYSA insurance does not cover 15 passenger vans. 15 passenger vans should not be a mode of transportation.**

General Liability Insurance certificates are issued annually for a September 1, effective date and are automatically mailed from the NMYSA office to the Certificate Holder(s) a couple of weeks prior to the policy effective date. Renewal Certificates are issued to all existing insured facilities automatically.

Copies of the Liability Insurance certificates are also mailed to the league office(s), so they can retain copies for their records and have them available for facilities if they request them.

For new facilities, please contact the NMYSA State office via email at [nmsoccer@nmysa.net](mailto:nmsoccer@nmysa.net) with the name of the facility/certificate holder, certificate holder address, contact person email address and contact fax number. We are able to issue the certificates electronically this way and usually on the same day as requested. All practice and game facilities must be insured.

NMYSA Policy Insurance Limits go to the NMYSA website.

### NMYSA Insurance Information

#### Filing a Soccer Related Injury Claim

The NMYSA accident insurance benefit is a secondary insurance policy with a \$500.00 deductible. If the player does not have insurance, this policy will act as a primary insurance.

How to file a claim:

The team coach or league/club official must report the injury of a registered player, participating in a sanctioned event to the league Registrar/Risk Manager, (in accordance with league policies) or directly to the state office, as soon as possible following the incident. Insurance claims must be filed within 90 days of the incident.

The league registrar/official reports the injury in writing to the NMYSA State Office via the "NMYSA injury report" ([www.nmysa.net](http://www.nmysa.net)).

Upon receipt of the injury report, the NMYSA State Office will mail claim instructions to the injured member/member's parents.

The member, parent or guardian completes the insurance "Policyholder's Report" and returns that to the NMYSA Office.

The NMYSA State Office will verify the claim information, sign and mail the form to the insurance company, (done the same day received from member).

Member/member's parents will be contacted by the insurance company and then can communicate directly with the insurance company by phone. If the member has other insurance, submit your itemized bills to the other carrier first. You will receive an Explanation of Benefits (EOB) from your other carrier. This along with any other receipts can be forwarded directly to the insurance company once the State Office has sent them the "Policyholder's Report", (sent the same day received from member).

#### **A. 11 First Aid Kit**

The first aid kit should include:

- Antiseptic wipes
- Tweezers
- Scissors
- Band-aids
- Roll gauze
- Triangular bandage
- Instant cold packs
- Eye pads
- Feminine pad (for heavy bleeding)
- Ace bandages
- Plastic bags (for ice)
- Adhesive tape
- Latex gloves (several pairs)
- Plastic trash bags
- Small bottle of hydrogen peroxide and distilled water
- Tube of antibiotic ointment

*These items can be put into a large storage bag or plastic container and kept in the coach's bag.*



## **A.12 United States Youth Soccer KidSafe Risk Management Program**

### **Introduction**

Our commitment is to provide the safest possible environment through UY Youth Soccer Risk Management **KidSafe Program**. We want to provide each player with a culture of safety - a place where every parent, player, coach, administrator and volunteer works together to ensure the safety of all our players. This guide touches on several important topics and is designed to educate and inform so that you can help us in making sure that every child that is registered with US Youth Soccer is protected in as many ways as possible. The topics included in this guide are:

- US Youth Soccer KidSafe Program (beginning on this page)
- Goal Safety (page)
- Personal Safety (page)
- Travel and Tournament Safety (page)
- If Guidelines for Financial Management are needed, please refer to the US Youth Soccer web site

### **THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!**

### **KidSafe Program**

US youth Soccer and its State Associations consider the safety of youth soccer players and others involved in youth soccer to be of paramount importance. We have implemented stringent risk management policies and practices to promote the safety and security of players, teams, team officials, parents, volunteers and spectators. US Youth Soccer works in close cooperation with its State Associations to protect and improve the safety of youth soccer players nationwide.

US Youth Soccer and its State Associations' programs, activities, policies and bylaws that protect the safety and security of youth soccer players include the following:

1. adopting the Kidsafe Program, including establishing and training Risk Management coordinators, and applying the program broadly to team officials, referees and volunteers;
2. promulgating risk management guidelines for youth websites;
3. encouraging and facilitating compliance with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA);
4. instituting coach and referee training programs;
5. developing materials and presenting programs about running safe activities, such as this guide and well-managed soccer tournaments and games;
6. developing and disseminating programs about proper parenting of youth soccer players;
7. encouraging and conducting educational programs about positive interactions among players, parents, team officials, referees and spectators;

8. providing information and guidance concerning many safety matters, such as lightning and weather, goal anchoring and safety, and coordination with local fire, emergency and law enforcement officials; and
9. ensuring age-appropriate interaction between and among youth soccer players.

## Goal Safety

Every year children are injured or lose their lives in goal post accidents. This risk is very real, and soccer goals are so much a part of our "scenery" that we often don't recognize the danger. Simply, falling goals can seriously injure and kill.

Here are some simple safety guidelines to reduce the risk:

- Never start a practice or game without inspecting the goals; don't rely on someone else to ensure the safety of your players.

Always make sure that goals are properly anchored, including portable goals, before you start play. If goals are not anchored, don't have players in the goal area and notify the proper official immediately.

Be sure to check that the top cross bar is secure. If it is constructed of two pieces, make sure they are bolted together.

- Know how goals should be anchored. For the best instruction, go to Consumer Safety Product at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov); then make sure you give proper instruction to all members of your club, league, academy or association.
- Do not manufacture or design goal posts - buy them from a manufacturer who has product liability.
- Perform periodic surveys on goal condition, including who owns the goals. Could your organization be held responsible for goals that don't belong to you?
- Put warning labels on all goals. For warning information: [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)
- Communicate goal safety information through every channel and opportunity, including your website and registration.
- Goals aren't playground equipment. Make sure that your soccer players - all your children - understand that goals should never be climbed. Don't allow play on soccer goals.
- Be responsible. If you see any children playing on a goal, ask them to stop and inform the proper official.
- Be aware - goals are part of the landscape but can injure or kill. Respect them.
- Make sure that nets are removed, and the goals are stored safely when not in use.

**Never  
under any circumstances  
ask players to help  
you move a goal.**

## **Personal Safety**

The statistics are frightening. Fact: One out of every four girls and one out of every six boys will be sexually abused before the age of 18. Fact: Pedophiles are drawn to places where there are children. All youth sports, including youth soccer, are such places.

Each US Youth Soccer State Association has a KidSafe Program in place. At a minimum, this includes Risk Management disclosures and it may also include background checks of coaches, assistant coaches, administrators, volunteers and even parent helpers who are working with the players. However, background checks can only turn up past offenses; they cannot prevent child abuse on their own.

Education protects our adults and our players. Know the types of predators and the red flags. Be vigilant. Whether you are a coach, administrator, parent, or player, be alert. If you suspect someone is at risk, inform the appropriate person. You can go to club, league or association officials, or to the Risk Manager of your State Association. Your concerns will be treated with importance and respect.

### **Here are the types of predators that prey on youth**

- The pedophile creates and seeks opportunities to access children. This person has a tremendous aptitude for identifying children's needs and vulnerabilities. He or she will take the time to form relationships, not only with the youth, but, possibly, the family. Youth sports can open the door for predators. By offering success, they can take advantage of the needs and desires of both parents and players.
- The seducer, sexual harasser, or exploiter preys on older adolescents and young adults. He or she may make sexual behavior, sexual advances or romantic involvement part of the terms and condition for participation. Players may feel that a coach's actions (from playing time to recommendations) are based on the intimate or sexual relationship.
- The molester is the nightmare in the news. This is the person who seeks, and may snatch, vulnerable and easily manipulated children, often the very young. Because we play in parks and other publicly accessible facilities, our youth are vulnerable to these predators who may become fixated with a child from a distance.

### **Here are some simple safety guidelines to reduce the risk**

- Make sure that every adult who works with youth has complied with the Risk Management policies of your State Association, and club, league or association.
- Check references thoroughly. Don't be afraid to ask a coach, assistant coach, trainer, or administrator about his or her previous experience.
- Help create an open environment that makes sure players know that they will be supported for seeking help with anything that makes them uncomfortable. Assure them that there are multiple avenues of support.
- Set a tone of respect for players. Communicate the level of expected professional conduct to coaches, administrators and volunteers at coaches' meetings, parent meetings and in literature.

- As an adult, never be alone with a player. If you are working with an individual player one-on-one, work in sight of other adults.
- Don't send players to the restroom alone.
- Keep barriers in place. If communication occurs by text or emails, send group messages to the entire team, including parents. Don't use these means to communicate on an individual basis.
- Limit the use of adult-to-player communication through cell phones.
- Adults involved in a team, club, league or association should not become "friends" with players on social websites.
- Coaches coaching players of the opposite sex should make sure to have an assistant coach, parent or manager of the same sex as the players at all practices, training sessions, games, etc.
- Have another adult at all practices. Be sure at least two adults wait for players to be picked up from practices or games or, if there is only one adult available, such as the coach, then make sure the adult stays out in the open and visible.
- Establish boundaries between team and social activities.
- Watch for red flags:

Adults who seek personal intimacy with a player or discloses intimate, personal or emotional feelings for a player.

Adults who "court" a player or responds in kind to flirting or seductive behavior.

Adults who make excessive or disproportionate physical contact with one player.

### **Tournament and Travel Safety**

Tournaments and travel are part of the fun and experience of participating in youth soccer. Help make them safe for everyone involved.

- Plan ahead - make sure you have all the necessary paperwork, forms and passes.
- Make sure that all contact numbers for parents, guardians, administrators, etc. are current.
- If a player is traveling with someone else, other than his or her family, know the player's transportation arrangements. Make sure these arrangements have been approved. Is the player going with another family? Does the player need someone to pick him or her up?
- Plan your first team meeting/game in advance. Make sure everyone knows the meeting place and time along with how to get to the hotel, field, or facility.
- Double check all arrangements. If you have questions, ask.
- Make sure players have all their gear and necessary funds to be prepared to travel and play.
- Hotel safety:

If players are staying together in their own rooms, make sure they have adequate supervision. Rule of thumb: Are there enough adults to remove the players from the hotel safely in an emergency?

Set team rules for behavior.

Use a hotel booking service whenever possible for hotel selection to reduce liability.

If it is "your" tournament, remember that requiring teams to stay in certain hotels increases the liability should there be a problem at a hotel. Again, use a service to reduce liability if specifying hotels.

If parents are traveling with the team, know who is in charge at all times. Don't let your son or daughter leave your supervision unless they are attending a specified team activity.

Do not let players roam the hotels alone.

Instruct team members on basic hotel safety, including the following:

- Instruct players on hotel rules and safety.
- Players should use elevators, not stairs (unless emergency dictates otherwise).
- Players should always have a buddy with them.
- Players should not allow anyone in their rooms other than their family members and/or teammates unless with an adult's approval and knowledge.
- Keep room numbers private.
- Do not prop doors open so that people can come and go without restriction. Keep doors locked at all times.
- Communicate matters of non-compliance and unsafe behavior.
- On the road: Did you know that Federal Law prohibits the use of 15-passenger vans for school-related transport of high school age and younger children unless the van is designed, manufactured and classified as a school bus? Between 1990 and 2002, there were 1,576 fatal crashes involving 15 passenger vans. 87% of those killed were not wearing seat belts. **NMYSA prohibits the use of 15 passenger vans for members' transportation.**
- Remember; the insurance coverage provided by your state association may not include liability insurance for drivers. If you are transporting players in your own vehicle, you may not have additional liability other than your personal coverage.