

KIDSAFE

Oregon Youth Soccer Association KidSafe Program

Section 1. Purpose

- A. The OYSA KidSafe Program is intended to be a part of a club's comprehensive program of risk management. The Kidsafe Program focuses on helping member clubs protect their youth players from the potential for harmful actions by adults.
- B. The policies and procedures stated in this document have been adopted by OYSA as a part of US Youth Soccer's Kidsafe program.

Section 2. OYSA Position

- A. OYSA and its member clubs should strive to have the adults responsible for educating their club's youth players and for managing the teams, clubs, tournaments, and leagues in which those children participate present positive role models.
- B. Clubs will not knowingly allow an adult to be placed in an official position of authority over children when that adult's history of criminal convictions or pending criminal charges involves activities detrimental to youth players.
- C. Activities detrimental to youth players include:
 - 1. Felonies and crimes of moral turpitude;
 - 2. Crimes involving violent conduct towards another person
 - 3. Offenses in which a child is a victim or in which a child is caused to participate in the offense;
 - 4. Offenses in which sexual activity is an element;
 - 5. Sexual activity between an adult and a minor, regardless of whether the activity is consensual and regardless of whether the adult is charged with a crime;
 - 6. Offenses involving illegal possession or distribution of alcohol or controlled substances;
 - 7. Offenses that indicate a pattern of disregard for authority; and
 - 8. Any other offenses which indicate a lack of regard for the property or rights of others.
- D. The conditions under which a person may be disqualified from serving in a club as well as the conditions under which a person may be eligible to serve despite a history of conviction(s) is set out in [OYSA Policy 801-1](#).

Secton 3. Applicability

- A. This program applies to any of the following persons who have regular contact with children:
1. Coaches
 2. Assistant Coaches
 3. Team managers
 4. Other team volunteers who have regular contact with players other than their own children
 5. Club administrators - including club employees, officers, and directors
 6. OYSA administrators - including employees, officers, and directors of the Association
 7. Referees who officiate matches in OYSA sponsored or sanctioned leagues [NOTE: *Referees in OYSA sponsored competition are covered as of 7/1/2010. Referees in OYSA Sanctioned competition are covered as of 7/1/2011*]
- B. Volunteers who provide services such as facility maintenance, or other activities that do not involve working directly with players may be excluded from the requirements of completing background checks. Member clubs should, however, avoid having any adult who has not completed a background check and obtained a risk status of Approved be an official representative of the club.

Secton 4. OYSA Background Checking Procedures

- A. Overview
1. Every adult who works with children in OYSA and its member clubs is required to submit a criminal history disclosure upon registration and to have a background check each year.
 2. Disclosures and background checks are completed as a part of submitting an administrator application for the member club at which they wish to work. Paper forms are not accepted by OYSA and cannot be used to submit disclosures for a background check.
 - a. [Each member club has its own URL](#) to a customized view of the club's information in the Affinity database. Registrations for each club are done through their personalized link.
 - b. Background checks are automatically run when the individual's administrator registration is completed. A new background check is run whenever an adult submits an application in a new seasonal year (September 1 through August 31).

- c. Club registrars who submit registration information for an adult must complete all parts of the application. The minimum required information includes:
 - (1) Full legal first and last name
 - (2) Current residence address
 - (3) At least one current phone number - home, business, or mobile
 - (4) Drivers license number and expiration
 - (5) Date of birth
 - (6) Responses to criminal history questions
 - (7) Establishing a user name and password
 - (8) Acceptance of electronic legal agreements, including granting permission to run a background check using the submitted information.
3. Every adult must have a risk status of Approved before beginning work with children. Each club is responsible for verifying that adults have registered and have the required risk status.
4. Risk status approval is valid for the seasonal year and will expire on August 31 unless a new administrator application is submitted for the following seasonal year.

B. The Background Check Process

1. The initial background check is a fully electronic search which checks the name and date of birth against databases that include information from all 50 states, federal sources, and some international sources.
2. If no potential match is found, the risk status is automatically set to Approved.
3. If a potential match is located, the risk status is automatically set to Under Review. A person with a risk status of Under Review is not eligible to work with children.
4. Potential matches are reviewed by a human researcher and results are reported to the OYSA Risk Management Coordinator.
5. If a background report shows one or more convictions that are detrimental to children, that person's risk status will be set to Failed and that person will be advised that he or she is disqualified from participation in the Association or its member clubs.
6. If the report shows that the individual has been charged with one or more criminal offenses that would, if convicted, cause the person to be disqualified, the person will be suspended until the charges have been resolved.
7. The final decision on what is an acceptable or unacceptable criminal history will be made by the OYSA Risk Management Coordinator.

- C. Full details of the OYSA Risk Management program, including an individual's right to appeal a risk management decision, are contained in [OYSA Policy 801-1](#).

Section 5. Relationships Between Youths and Adults

- A. Generally speaking, official representatives of a club are persons in the role of coach, assistant coach, team manager, board member, game official, or adult volunteer. The adults in these positions typically have authority over youth players. OYSA and its member clubs have a responsibility to make sure that adults in positions of authority do not misuse their authority to the detriment of any players.
- B. While most of us believe the roles of adults and players or children are straight forward, there are situations where a minor is in a position of authority relative to other players. For example, a team could have a 14 year old assistant coach. This assistant coach will be viewed as an authority figure with respect to the young players on the team, but will also be viewed as a child or player in his or her relationship with an older head coach.
- C. People in positions of authority must not abuse their authority to the detriment of others. By establishing formal guidelines for behavior, everyone will know what behavior is acceptable and what behavior is not. Our goal for establishing codes of conduct is to help provide a safe and healthy atmosphere for our members and their families.

Section 6. Guidelines for Adult Conduct with Youth Players

- A. The physical and emotional well being of our youth players and their families must be protected. These guidelines will provide formal standards that are intended to eliminate possible misconceptions about expected behavior of adult participants in the programs of OYSA or its member clubs towards youth players.
 - 1. Physical Contact
 - a. Adults and others in positions of authority must be aware that physical contact can be misinterpreted. Physical contact should be limited to that necessary to teach a skill, treat an injury, or console or congratulate the player.
 - b. Physical intimidation, physical punishment, or threatening a player with physical harm are not appropriate behaviors and will not be tolerated.
 - c. Corporal punishment is prohibited.
 - (1) Requiring players to perform reasonable physical activity, such as push-ups or running, as a consequence for misbehavior would not likely be considered inappropriate.
 - (2) Using physical exercise as a punishment is not, however, recommended, especially for young children. A better consequence for misbehavior would be exclusion from participation in team activities for a reasonable period of time.
 - d. Hazing or any type of initiation to a club or a team is prohibited.

- e. Sexual contact of any kind between adults and players is prohibited whether or not the contact is consensual.
- 2. Social Contact
 - a. Adults will not socialize with nor spend time alone with players.
 - (1) Pulling a player to the side for additional instruction in plain view of the remainder of the team would be an exception to this rule.
 - (2) Team social events that include parents as well as team members in group activities are also exceptions.
 - (3) Club Administrators shall avoid situations in which they will be left alone with a player. A minimum of two adults shall always be present at any practice or other activity involving children.
 - (4) If a child is the last one waiting for a ride home from practice, the coach should not leave the child until the child's parent or ride home has arrived, but should also try to arrange for another adult to wait with the coach and child.
 - b. Adults shall respect the privacy of players. If showering or changing room facilities are available, schedules shall be made so that adults and children have separate use of such facilities.
 - c. Adults should not communicate directly with a player using text messaging or email unless the communication is also sent to the player's parents or is a general broadcast to all players and parents. All communications between adults and players should be professional and open. Private communications about personal matters shall be avoided.

B. Health and Well-Being

- 1. Adults share the responsibility for the player's health while at practices, scrimmages and games.
 - a. Adults should have a player's medical release forms and medical kits with them at all team activities.
 - b. Coaches should have an emergency plan in place so that, if someone is hurt in a practice or a game, the coach knows whom to call, where emergency personnel might take the injured party, and how to contact family members.
- 2. Any player suffering a head injury that results in:
 - a. disorientation should be promptly removed from the game or practice and should not be allowed to return to active participation that day.
 - b. loss of consciousness should be removed from that game or practice and not allowed to return to active participation until cleared by a physician.
- 3. Bleeding must be treated with appropriate care.
 - a. The adult providing treatment for a bleeding injury should use disposable gloves and sterile bandages.
 - b. Gloves should be vinyl to avoid the possibility of allergic reaction to latex.
 - c. All bleeding must be stopped prior to a player reentering the game or practice.

- d. Players should not be allowed to participate while they have blood on any part of their uniform. The player must either wash the blood out of the uniform or change to an uncontaminated uniform before returning to participation.
 - e. Gloves, bandages, or other items that have come in contact with blood must be properly disposed of.
4. Adults transporting players must model safe driving techniques and enforce seat belt use for all vehicle occupants.
 5. An adult should inspect the field and goals before every practice and game to be sure that the playing facility is safe for play. Club and team Administrators, referees, and other game officials shall have authority to postpone or cancel a match or training if the facilities present an undue risk of injury to the participants.
 6. Adults should monitor weather conditions and take reasonable steps to protect players from lightning, extreme temperatures, and other extreme weather conditions.
 7. Adults should be aware of the warning signs of neglect and abuse, whether physical, emotional, or sexual. An adult who observes signs of neglect or abuse should report these signs to the local Child Welfare office of the Oregon Department of Human Services or to a local law enforcement agency.

C. Language

1. Offensive or vulgar language by adults or children is unacceptable. OYSA events, including games and practices, should be family oriented events. Adults should model good communication skills.
2. Language that is denigrating in nature, content, or tone or refers to a person's gender, race, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or religion is not acceptable.
3. A person who uses inappropriate language or who uses threatening language directed toward an official, coach, player, or parent may be removed from a game or the premises or both.

D. Violations

1. Violations of these guidelines are considered misconduct that will be handled by the appropriate authority in accordance with existing OYSA policy. Sanctions may include fines, suspensions or loss of membership in the affected member club or the Association.
2. In cases where violation of these guidelines also includes a violation or suspected violation, of law, appropriate legal authorities will be notified.
3. Any person witnessing a violation of these guidelines should report the incident to their Club President, the OYSA Risk Manager, the OYSA office, or the OYSA President.

Secton 7. Child Abuse

- A. Child Abuse has a specific meaning in Oregon law and is defined in ORS 419B.005(1)(a). While the statutory definition has several categories, they can be viewed as falling into five broad categories—physical abuse, sexual abuse, mental injury, neglect, and threat of harm.
- B. **Physical abuse** is any non-accidental injury to a child. It is often caused by an action or omission of a care giver. Injuries include bruises, welts, cuts, fractures, burns or internal injuries. Physical abuse can be one or two isolated incidents or it can occur over a prolonged period of time.
- C. **Sexual abuse** occurs when a person who is more than 3 years older than a child uses or attempts to use the child for their own sexual gratification. Oregon law considers any unmarried person under the age of 18 to be a child for the purpose of sexual abuse. Sexual abuse also includes exploitation that causes a child to be involved in sexual activity, such as prostitution, pornography, or recording of sexual activity. The essence of the abuse is an older person taking advantage of a younger child. [See ORS 419B.005(1)(a)(C)-(E)]
- D. **Mental Injury** is the result of cruel or unconscionable acts and/or statements made, threatened to be made or permitted to be made by the caregiver(s) which have a direct effect on the child or the caregiver’s failure to provide nurturance, protection or appropriate guidance. The caregiver’s behavior, intentional or unintentional, must be related to the observable and substantial impairment of the child’s psychological, cognitive, emotional and/or social well-being and functioning.
1. ORS 419B.005(1)(a)(B) defines “mental injury” to include, “...only observable and substantial impairment of the child’s mental or psychological ability to function caused by cruelty to the child, with due regard to the culture of the child.”
 2. Actions such as making demeaning remarks, rejecting the child, ignoring or isolating the child, name calling, or telling the child that he is not a good person or athlete may contribute to mental injury. This type of behavior is reprehensible, but whether it legally constitutes abuse under Oregon law depends on its effect on the child.
- E. **Neglect** occurs when a caregiver fails to provide basic needs such as adequate food, clothing, shelter, supervision, or medical care that is likely to endanger the health or welfare of the child. Neglect also includes subjecting a child to a substantial risk of harm to the child’s health or welfare, by exposing a child to illegal activities.
- F. **Threat of harm** is subjecting a child to a substantial risk of harm to his/her health or welfare. Substantial harm is defined as immobilizing impairment, life-threatening damage, or significant or acute injury to a child’s physical, sexual, psychological or mental development and/or functioning. Threat of harm includes exposing a child to violence against another family member, exposing a child to the manufacture or abuse of illegal

drugs, and exposing a child to the sexual abuse or exploitation of another person in the child's home.

G. Signs of Abuse - The easiest abuse to recognize is something that leaves physical marks like bruises or burns. Realistically, it is difficult for someone who is not directly involved with a child and his family to see most forms of sexual abuse or mental injury. The following signs of abuse may give some indication of when to be concerned about a child.

1. In cases of **physical abuse** a child may exhibit the following signs:
 - a. *Behavioral* indicators:
 - (1) Wary of adults
 - (2) Cannot recall or consistently explain how injuries occurred
 - (3) May cringe if touched accidentally
 - (4) Extremely aggressive or extremely withdrawn
 - b. *Physical* indicators:
 - (1) Injuries inconsistent with the explanation
 - (2) Presence of several injuries in various stages of healing
 - (3) Facial injuries

2. In cases of **mental injury**, a child may exhibit the following signs:
 - a. *Behavioral* indicators:
 - (1) Severe depression
 - (2) Extreme withdrawal or aggressiveness
 - (3) Overly compliant, too mannered, too neat and clean
 - (4) Extreme attention seeking
 - (5) Displays extreme inhibition in play
 - b. *Physical* indicators:
 - (1) Frequent psychosomatic complaints such as headaches, nausea, abdominal pains

3. In cases of **sexual abuse**, a child may exhibit the following signs:
 - a. *Behavioral* indicators:
 - (1) Age inappropriate sexual play or displaying sexual acts
 - (2) Sexually explicit drawings or descriptions
 - (3) Bizarre, sophisticated, or unusual sexual knowledge
 - (4) Seductive behaviors
 - b. *Physical* indicators:
 - (1) Unusual or excessive itching in the genital area
 - (2) Torn, stained or bloody underwear
 - (3) Injuries to the vaginal or anal areas

4. In cases of **neglect**, a child may exhibit the following signs:
 - a. *Behavioral* indicators:
 - (1) Frequent absence from school or practice
 - (2) Inappropriate or dirty clothing
 - (3) Engaged in delinquent acts such as alcohol or drug abuse
 - (4) Pale, listless, unkempt
 - (5) Frequently forgets proper equipment, water, *etc.*
 - b. *Physical* indicators:
 - (1) Poor hygiene
 - (2) Unattended physical problems or medical needs
 - (3) Consistent lack of supervision

Section 8. Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

- A. While soccer coaches and other club personnel are not required to report suspicions of child abuse by ORS 419.005(3) and 419B.010, it is the policy of the State of Oregon to encourage voluntary reporting. ORS 419B.007. Because of the serious effects of child abuse, OYSA strongly encourages that members report child abuse if it is suspected. Oregon's Department of Human Services (DHS) has published a guidebook on reporting suspected child abuse. The guide may be downloaded at <http://dhsforms.hr.state.or.us/Forms/Served/DE9061.pdf>.
- B. Suspected instances of child abuse are extremely sensitive for everyone involved. A great deal of care should be exercised in reporting suspected cases of child abuse. Since child abuse can be difficult to spot without proper training, suspicions of abuse should not be discussed with anyone except proper authorities. If you have questions about whether or not to report, please call your local DHS office to consult with trained workers. They can tell you if the situation is one that should be formally reported.
- C. If a child confides in you that he or she has been the victim of abuse, do not panic or overreact. Do not criticize the child for confiding in you. Finally, respect the child's privacy. It is not your job to investigate allegations of abuse, that is a job for the trained professionals at the DHS and local law enforcement. A child's report of being abused should be treated seriously and passed on to the appropriate authorities.
- D. If the child is in imminent danger, and you feel that you need to offer immediate assistance, you should call 911. The dispatcher will connect you with the appropriate local law enforcement agency that can provide assistance. Law enforcement departments have the expertise to handle an emergency or crisis situation involving children.
- E. If the child does not appear to be in any immediate danger, you should call the DHS office for your county. The Child Welfare Office in the county where the child lives is the

appropriate agency designated by the DHS to receive reports of child abuse or neglect. They will be able to assist you in providing necessary information and will provide appropriate staff to review the case and determine what course of action is in the best interests of the child.

1. Current Oregon law requires law enforcement agencies and Child Welfare offices to share information to make sure that a proper investigation of reported abuse takes place.
 2. A complete list of contact phone numbers for the Child Welfare offices of each county is available on the DHS website at http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/children/abuse/cps/cw_branches.shtml
- F. Your identity as the person making a report will be protected except as required to pursue any legal action that comes out of the report. (ORS 419B.025) You may be called as a witness in later court proceedings.
- G. As long as you make your report in good faith based on reasonable grounds to believe that abuse has taken place, you are immune from any liability. That immunity does not apply to discussions of the situation outside of official actions taken on the situation. You should maintain confidentiality of the information you have about a possible abuse situation except for your required involvement in official proceedings.