

MAY 1, 2021



TYSA SAFE SOCCER POLICY



STATEMENT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

TYSA is committed to providing a healthy and positive environment free from abuse for all its members. At TYSA, a positive team culture and athlete protection is fundamental and required. Every coach on the TYSA team believes and is committed to athlete protection. Safeguarding our athletes with clear protection policies and a safe environment is a process and responsibility that requires commitment from every parent, athlete, coach, official, board member and volunteer.

Having clear policies and procedures are more than just documents on our website. We believe in and practice this core value daily...that healthy relationships and boundaries are life skills. Please join our team in this commitment. Read through these policies, as they are essential for a TYSA positive team culture. Please come and talk to us if you have questions.

Yours in Sport,
Gareth O'Sullivan
Executive Director TYSA



TYSA SAFE SOCCER POLICY STATEMENT

Tucker Youth Soccer Association (TYSA) is committed to keeping our kids safe and establishing and enforcing federal, state, and local laws enacted to protect our players. TYSA has a zero-tolerance policy for abuse and misconduct, and this policy was created to comply with Federal Law *115-126 Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017ⁱ* as well as *US Soccer Policy 212-3ⁱⁱ*.

The purpose of TYSA's Safe Soccer Policy is to:

- To promote and prioritize the safety of minor athletes.
- To provide our Adult Participants and Family Members the appropriate training to recognize, identify and respond to safety concerns relating to minor athletes.
- Should a breach in policy or a safety concern arise, that those reporting know the proper actions to take.

TYSA's Safe Soccer Policy is reviewed each year to make sure it is compliant with federal, state, and local laws. As a member of Georgia Soccer and US Youth Soccer, TYSA will administer these policies for all of our programs. TYSA has appointed a SafeSport Officer to assist in the application of, and to provide oversight for these policies.

Contact email address: SafeSport@TYSA.com



DEFINITIONS

- (a) Family Members: parents, domestic partners, step-parents, grandparents, guardians, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles and first cousins.
- (b) Member Organization: Includes all clubs and leagues affiliated with TYSA.
- (c) Minor Athlete: any minor is less than 18 years of age who is a registered player of TYSA or minor referee in Sanctioned Activities.
- (d) Adult Participant: any coach, assistant coach, executive director, team manager, referee, director, employee, officer, independent contractor, or other individual (other than a “Minor Athlete”) affiliated with (i) TYSA, or (ii) a referee organization/in-house referee, and (iii) who has direct or indirect contact with a Minor Athlete through Sanctioned Activities.
- (e) Sanctioned Activities: matches, games, tournaments, practices, training sessions, tryouts, camps, team meetings, and other similar activities conducted by TYSA, communication in connection with the foregoing activities (other than communications exclusively with Family Members); travel to and from the foregoing activities other than with Family Members; and overnight lodging in connection with the foregoing activities other than exclusively with Family Members.
- (f) Board Members – elected members of the TYSA Board of Directors. The Board is volunteer based, and reviews Policy violations as outlined in this policy.
- (g) SafeSport Officer - the participant appointed by the TYSA Board of Directors to oversee the actions outlined within. Current SafeSport Officer is Joel Seskin.

Many aspects of this policy are issued to protect Minor Athletes who participate in TYSA sanctioned activities. Although this policy focuses in many areas on concerns unique to Minor Athletes, these may be applicable and are designed to protect participants of all ages.



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Section 1 – PROHIBITED CONDUCT POLICY

All Adult Participants and Minor Athletes at TYSA are prohibited from engaging in prohibited conduct, as outlined below. Should an investigation of a complaint be filed, all Adult Participants are required to cooperate, and failure to do so may be in direct violation of this policy.

Harassment

Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical or visual.

Among the types of conduct prohibited by this policy are epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping or intimidating acts based on an individual's protected status and the circulation or posting of written or graphic materials that show hostility toward an individual. Prohibited conduct can also include jokes, kidding, or teasing about another person's protected status. This policy forbids harassing conduct even when it does not rise to the level of a violation of law.

Sexual Harassment

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment may involve individuals of the same or different gender.

Examples of conduct which may constitute sexual harassment and are prohibited by this Policy include, but are not limited to:

- unnecessary touching, patting, hugging, pinching, or brushing against a person's body, staring, ogling, leering, or whistling at a person
- continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- sexually explicit statements, sexual flirtations, advances, propositions, subtle pressure for sexual activity, comments, questions, jokes, or anecdotes
- graphic or degrading comments about a person's clothing, body or sexual activity sexually suggestive objects, cartoons, posters, calendars, or pictures
- suggestive or obscene letters, notes or invitations
- harassing use of electronic mail, electronic or instant messaging or telephone communication other physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature

Racial, Religious, or National Origin Harassment

Racial, religious, or national origin harassment is expressly prohibited. Racial, religious, or national origin harassment includes any verbal, written, or physical act in which race, religion, or national origin is used or implied in a manner which would make a reasonable person uncomfortable or which would interfere with the person's ability to participate.

Examples of race, religious or national origin harassment may include, but are not limited to:

- jokes, which include reference to race, religion, or national origin
- the display or use of objects or pictures which adversely reflect a person's race, religion, or national origin
- use of pejorative or demeaning language regarding a person's race, religion, or national origin



Child Sexual Abuse

Any sexual activity with a child is prohibited. This includes sexual contact with a child that is accomplished by deception, manipulation, force or threat of force, regardless of the age of the participants, and all sexual interactions between an adult and a child, regardless of whether there is deception, or the child understands the sexual nature of the activity.

Sexual Misconduct

Any sexual interaction between an athlete and an individual with evaluative, direct or indirect authority is prohibited. Such relationships involve an imbalance of power and are likely to impair judgment or be exploitative. This section does not apply to a pre-existing relationship between two spouses or life partners.

Emotional Misconduct

Emotional misconduct in all forms is prohibited. Emotional misconduct is a pattern of deliberate, non-contact behavior that has the potential to cause emotional or psychological harm to another person. Non-contact behaviors include verbal acts, physical acts, or acts that deny attention or support; or any act or conduct described as emotional abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. child abuse, child neglect). Emotional misconduct does not include professionally-accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline or improving athletic performance.

Physical Misconduct

Physical misconduct in all forms is prohibited. Physical misconduct is defined as contact or non-contact conduct that results in, or reasonably threatens to, cause physical harm to another person; or any act or conduct described as physical abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. child abuse, child neglect, assault). Physical misconduct does not include professionally-accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline or improving athletic performance. For example, hitting and punching are well-regulated forms of contact in combat sports, but have no place in soccer.

Bullying

Intentional, persistent and repeated pattern of committing or willfully tolerating physical and non-physical behaviors that are intended, or have the reasonable potential, to cause fear, humiliation or physical harm in an attempt to socially exclude, diminish or isolate the targeted athlete(s), as a condition of membership are prohibited. Bullying does not include group or team behaviors that (a) are meant to establish normative team behaviors, or (b) promote team cohesion.

Bullying can be a “one off” occurrence or repeated over a period of time and can take many forms including being bullied by adults, their peers, and in some cases by members of their families. Bullying can be difficult to identify because it often happens away from others and those who are bullied often do not tell anyone. Bullying is not always deliberate.

Hazing

Coercing, requiring, forcing or willfully tolerating any humiliating, unwelcome or dangerous activity that serves as a condition for (a) joining a group or (b) being socially accepted by a group's members are prohibited. Hazing does not include group or team activities that (a) are meant to establish normative team behaviors or (b) promote team cohesion.



Section 2 – APPROPRIATE BACKGROUND SCREENING

Pursuant to U.S. Soccer Policy 212-3, TYSA's performs a comprehensive background check on all Adult Participants. Additionally, Georgia Soccer requires all coaches, volunteers, trainers, administrators, and staff must have a background check every two years.

TYSA requires each Adult Participant to complete a Participant Disclosure Statement (PDS) through Georgia Soccer's digital compliance platform for the background screening process. TYSA has the primary responsibility for managing the PDS screening process for its applicants, however Georgia Soccer has set state-wide requirements that all applicants must meet.

A comprehensive background check, including a national search, national sex offender search (50 states plus U.S. territories) and 7-year county of residence criminal record search will be conducted on every applicant submitted every two years. The primary intent of the background check is to deny:

- a) any applicant with a criminal conviction against the person or property or both of a minor
- b) participation to persons whose past conduct was particularly egregious or who are otherwise disqualified for their position based upon past conduct. Convictions involving crimes against minors will be automatic grounds for denial.

During registration of TYSA programs, parents/guardians must sign and acknowledge the Background Screening Policy and the SafeSport Policy. By signing these, parents/guardians accept that they are subjected to a background screening should they decide to be involved at TYSA as a volunteer or coach of minor athletes.

The entire *Georgia Soccer Policy for Background Screening, Standards to Participate and Appeals* is included with the TYSA Safe Soccer Policy.



Section 3 – EDUCATION & TRAINING

Initial Training for Adults:

Any individual affiliated with a TYSA must complete the Sexual Abuse Training through SAFE SPORT SYSTEMS. This includes board members, coaches, assistant coaches, managers, or staff must complete sexual abuse training.

The “Core SafeSport Training” consists of three modules:

- Sexual Misconduct Awareness Education
- Mandatory Reporting, and
- Emotional & Physical Misconduct

Refresher Course(s) for Adults

After becoming “SafeSport Trained”, participants will only need to take the SafeSport Refresher Course annually.

Minor Athlete Training

While not required, TYSA encourages all Minor Athletes, subject to parental consent, to take the U.S. Center for SafeSport Youth Athlete Training. A parent/guardian must first create an account at www.athletesafety.org in order to give consent for their child to access the free training and select the appropriate module for their child’s age.

Parent Training

While not required, TYSA encourages all parents/guardians of Minor Athletes to take the U.S. Center for SafeSport Parent’s Guide to Misconduct in Sport Training. The free training is available at www.athletesafety.org. An online Parent Toolkit is also available. Instructions for accessing this training will be included below in the ADDITIONAL TYSA SAFE SOCCER RESOURCES AND TOOLS below.



Section 4 – LIMITING ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS

One-on-One Interactions

Most child sexual abuse is perpetrated in isolated, one-on-one situations. By reducing such interactions between children and adults, you reduce the risk of child sexual abuse. However, one-on-one time with trusted adults is also healthy and valuable for a child. Policies concerning one-on-one interactions protect children while allowing for these beneficial relationships.

A - This policy shall apply to:

1. Adults at TYSA locations (Granite, Henderson Park, Livesy).
2. Adult members who have regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors
3. An adult authorized by a TYSA to have regular contact with or authority over an amateur athlete who is a minor
4. Staff and board members of TYSA (collectively, Adults).

B - *Observable and interruptible*

1. One-on-one interactions between minors and an Adult (who is not the minor's legal guardian) are permitted, if they occur at an observable and interruptible distance by another adult.
2. Isolated, one-on-one interactions between minors and an Adult (who is not the minor's legal guardian) are prohibited, except under emergency circumstances.

C - *Meetings*

1. Meetings between Adults and minors at our locations may only occur if another adult is present, except under emergency circumstances.
2. Such meetings must occur where interactions can be easily observed and at an interruptible distance from another adult.
3. If a one-on-one meeting takes place in an office, the door to the office must remain open. If available, it will occur in an office that (if available) has windows, with the windows, blinds, and/or curtains remaining open during the meeting.

D - *Individual training sessions*

Individual training sessions between Adults and minors are permitted if the training session is observable and interruptible by another adult. The Adult must obtain the permission of the minor's legal guardian in advance of the individual training session. Parents, guardians, and other caretakers must be allowed to observe the training session.

E - *Athletic Trainers*

In-Program athletic training modalities of a Minor Athlete must:

1. Be observable and interruptible.
2. Have another Adult Participant physically present for the athletic training modality.
3. Be performed with the Minor Athlete fully or partially clothed, ensuring that the breasts, buttocks, groin, or genitals are always covered.
4. Allow parents/guardians in the room as an observer, except for competition or training venues that limit credentialing.



Rest Rooms, Changing Areas, Locker Rooms and Similar Spaces

A - This policy shall apply to:

1. Adults at a TYSA Location.
2. Adult members who have regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors.
3. An adult authorized by TYSA to have regular contact with or authority over an amateur athlete who is a minor.
4. Staff and board members of TYSA (collectively, Adults).

B - Use of recording devices

Use of any device's (including a cell phone's) recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras, and video cameras in rest rooms, changing areas, locker rooms and similar spaces is prohibited. Exceptions may be made for media, provided two or more adults are present.

C - Undress

Under no circumstances shall an unrelated Adult be undressed (disrobed or partial or full nudity where private body parts are exposed) in front of minor athletes.

D - Monitoring

Our organization regularly and randomly monitors the use of rest rooms and changing areas at our locations facilities under our jurisdiction to ensure compliance with these policies.

Social Media & Electronic Communications

A - This policy shall apply to:

1. Adult members who have regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors.
2. An adult authorized by TYSA to have regular contact with or authority over an amateur athlete who is a minor.
3. Staff and board members of TYSA (collectively, Adults).

B - Content: All electronic communication originating from Participating Adults to amateur athletes who are minors must be professional in nature.

C - Open and transparent

1. If a Participating Adult needs to communicate directly with an amateur athlete who is a minor via electronic communications, another Participating Adult or the minor's legal guardian will be copied.
2. If a minor athlete communicates to the Participating Adult privately first, the Participating Adult should respond to the minor athlete with a copy to another Participating Adult or the minor's legal guardian.
3. A Participating Adult communicating electronically to the entire team will copy another Participating Adult.
4. Amateur athletes who are minors may "friend" the organization's official page.

D - Prohibited electronic communications

1. Participating Adults are not permitted to communicate privately via electronic communications with amateur athletes who are minors, except under emergency circumstances.
2. Participating Adults are not permitted to "private message," "instant message," "direct message", or send photos through any messenger service to a minor athlete privately.



3. Participating Adults are not permitted to maintain social media connections with minors; such adults are not permitted to accept new personal page requests on social media platforms from amateur athletes who are minors and existing social media connections with amateur athletes who are minors shall be discontinued, unless the minor's social media account is managed by the minor's legal guardian.

E-Social Media Usage

Upon registration, all parents/guardians have agreed too and accepted the Participation Waiver that states they "give permission for the association to use my child's photographic likeness in local news publications and/or TYSA publications for the purposes of publicity or other benefit to TYSA."

F - Requests to discontinue

Legal guardians may request in writing that their minor athlete not be contacted through any form of electronic communication by TYSA or by TYSA's Participating Adults. TYSA will abide by any such request that their child not be contacted via electronic communication, absent emergency circumstances.

Travel – Local and Overnight

Local travel consists of travel to training, practice, and competition that occurs locally. Teams may travel to a competition that requires overnight stay(s). TYSA does not include coordinated overnight accommodations.

A - This policy shall apply to:

1. Adult members who have regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors.
2. An adult authorized by TYSA to have regular contact with or authority over an amateur athlete who is a minor.
3. Staff and board members of TYSA (collectively, Adults).

B - Transportation

1. TYSA does not arrange for local travel.
2. Participating Adults who are not also acting as a legal guardian, shall not ride in a vehicle alone with an unrelated athlete who is a minor, absent emergency circumstances, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the minor athlete's parent/legal guardian in advance of each local travel.

B - Hotel rooms

Participating Adults shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with a minor athlete (unless the Participating Adult is the legal guardian, sibling, or related to the minor athlete).

C - Meetings

Meetings shall be conducted consistent with TYSA's policy on one-on-one interactions - i.e., any such meeting shall be observable and interruptible.

D - Participating Adults who travel with TYSA in an official capacity (i.e., chaperone) must successfully pass a criminal background check and be Safe Sport Trained.



Section 5 – REPORTING ABUSE AND POLICY VIOLATIONS

Reports of Abuse

TYSA has zero tolerance for abuse of Minor Athletes by Participants. “Abuse” means sexual or physical abuse of a Minor Athlete including all instances of Sexual Misconduct.

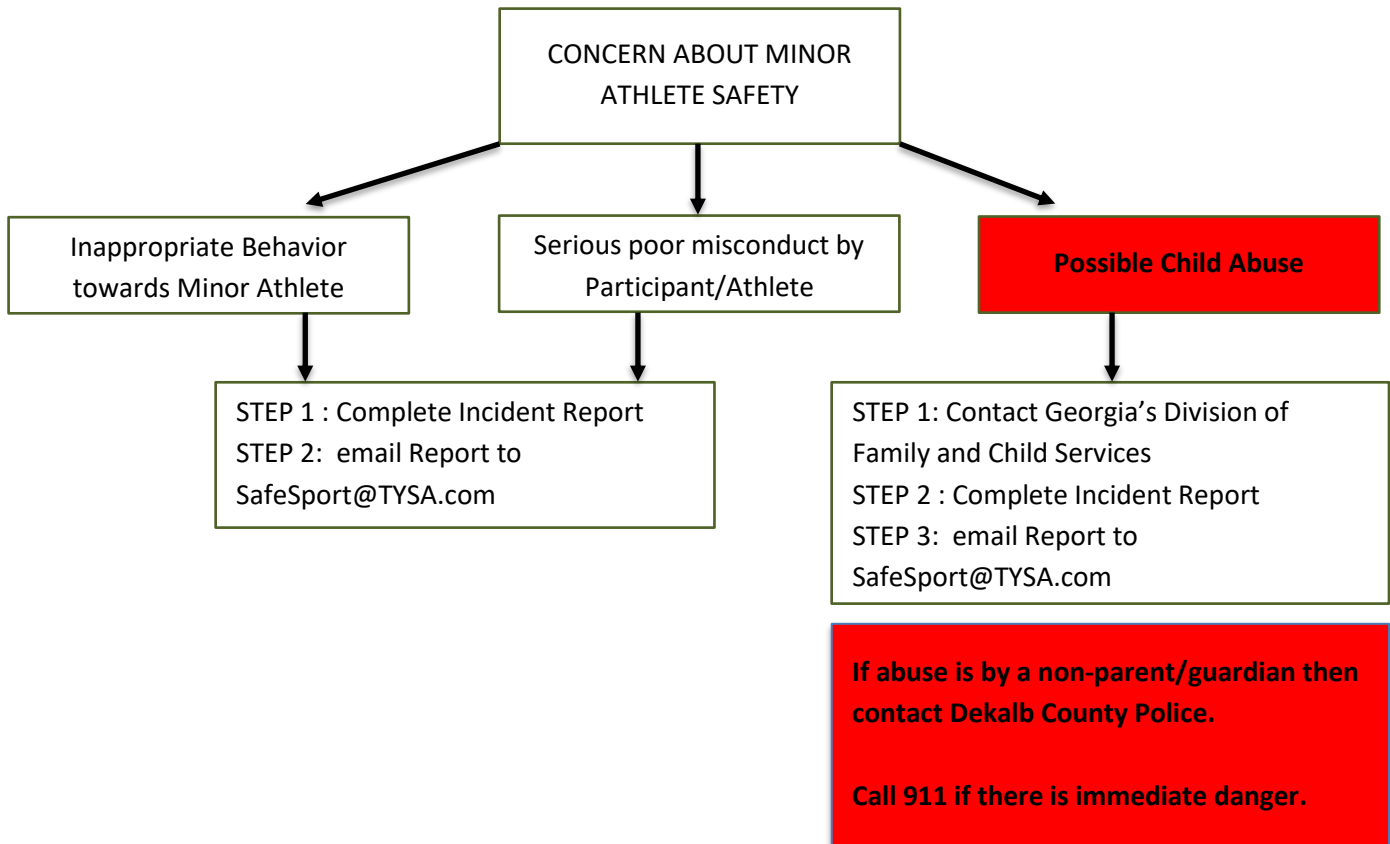
1. Under the Georgia Child Abuse Reporting Law, O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5ⁱⁱⁱ, each Participant who witnesses an event of abuse or reasonably suspects an event of abuse, in connection with a Sanctioned Activity, is required to report suspected cases of child abuse. Failure to make such an Abuse Report is a violation of this policy and violation of US Soccer Policy 212. Additionally, failure to make such a report could result in a violation of federal, state or local laws.
2. The Participant making the Abuse Report, must inform TYSA’s Executive Director and the TYSA SafeSport Officer.
3. TYSA is not obligated and will not attempt to investigate allegations or suspicions of Abuse or to evaluate the credibility or validity of such allegations or suspicions as a condition of making reports to applicable federal, state or local authorities.

Reports of Policy Violations (ie Improper Behavior or Misconduct)

1. Witness to, or reasonably suspicion of a Safe Soccer Policy violation (other than child abuse or sexual misconduct) should be reported to the Safe Soccer Officer. Failure to make a Violation Report is a violation of this Policy and US Soccer Bylaws and Policy 212.
2. In the event Safe Soccer Officer reasonably concludes that the Incident Report describes an instance of criminal misconduct, the Safe Soccer Officer should assist the reporting witness in notifying law enforcement authorities.
3. If the Safe Soccer Officer concludes the Incident Report is a violation of Safe Soccer Policy, but not criminal conduct, then the Safe Soccer Office will work with the Executive Director (or Club President if the Executive Director is the one being reported in violation) to determine the appropriate disciplinary action.



Flowchart for Reporting Concerns



*Please see the [Mandatory Reporting Instructions](#) in the attachments section below.



Section 6 – ENFORCEMENT OF SAFE SOCCER POLICY VIOLATIONS

Enforcement

TYSA's Policy on Enforcement is set forth to establish procedures for monitoring and enforcing compliance with TYSA's SafeSport Policy, as well as to establish an appropriate grievance process to address allegations of misconduct following the report or complaint of misconduct.

TYSA takes all reports of potential violations of this SafeSport Policy seriously and is committed to confidentiality and investigation of allegations.

TYSA reserves the right to, either directly or through a contracted third-party service provider, survey, audit, require certifications of compliance with, or otherwise review compliance with TYSA's Safe Soccer Policy.

Pending Investigations

Regarding Any Participant who is

- (a) the subject of an Abuse Report or Sexual Misconduct, or
- (b) is otherwise alleged to have engaged in another policy violation

In each case that becomes known to TYSA, shall be promptly suspended TYSA from participation in any programming or TYSA events. Such suspension shall continue during any pending investigation by applicable legal authorities.

Policy Violations

For potential or reported violations to this policy that are not criminal in nature, an Incident Report Form must be sent to the TYSA Safe Soccer Officer at SafeSport@TYSA.com within 5 days of being notified or becoming aware of the possible violation.

Working with the Executive Director (or Club President), the Safe Soccer Officer will review the violation, determine the appropriate action and notify the Participant in violation within 10 days of receiving the report. The decision shall be final and binding on all parties.

Pursuant to U.S. Soccer Bylaw 704, the individual has the right to appeal a final decision rendered by TYSA's process for violations of the TYSA Safe Soccer Policy, excluding those decisions rendered pertaining to the background check Policy of the TYSA Safe Soccer Policy.



Section 7 - SAFE SOCCER CODE OF CONDUCT POLICIES

During the registration process, all parents registering their players in any TYSA program must accept the TYSA Code of Conduct (Academy/Select parents must acknowledge the [Parent Guide](#)). TYSA's Code of Conduct (listed below), should be followed at all times. The Code of Conduct helps TYSA ensure its mission of providing a high-quality soccer program for youth in our community that cultivates player development and a passion for the game through exceptional instruction in a family-focused atmosphere.

TYSA works to develop youth soccer players in a fun, safe and competitive environment. TYSA is dedicated to inspiring a passion for the game, promoting individual ball mastery skills, and teaching a possession-based style of play. Beyond the field, we believe in the power of soccer to educate and cultivate self-responsibility, self-motivation, teamwork, and problem solving. At its core, TYSA is a family-oriented community that is firmly grounded in its service to Tucker and the greater-Atlanta area.

The TYSA Code of Conduct helps promote a high standard so that we can meet and exceed the expectations of our players, families, and our greater soccer community.



Section 8 - PLAYER CODE OF CONDUCT

TYSA has a responsibility to promote a high standard of behavior during a game and at practice. At all times, we expect players to:

- Show up early to every practice and game
- Have a positive attitude
- Listen to coaches
- Give maximum effort
- Practice skills at home as directed by the coach
- Promote Fair Play
- Always respect the match officials' decisions
- Win or lose with dignity. Shake hands with the opposing team and the referee at the end of every game

Players should understand that if they do not follow this code of conduct, then their coach could discipline disruptive player with extra physical activity, loss of playing time, or being sent home. Parents/Guardians may also be notified if a player is not following this code of conduct. Additionally, depending on the severity, a player may be given a written warning via the TYSA Player/Parent Disciplinary Action Form.



Section 9 - PARENT/GUARDIAN CODE OF CONDUCT

TYSA would like parents to remember that soccer is a game. We are here to have fun in a competitive environment where we are thankful for every opponent that challenges our children to be their best. We want every player to learn to play the game and not just be told what to do on the field. To that end, please do not coach from the sidelines. You hinder your player from individual thinking and making decisions on the field, which can only be learned by trial and error. Instead, we encourage parents to coach at home where you can have a positive interaction with your child.

- Cheer for all of the players.
- Applaud good efforts.
- Resist the urge to critique during or after a game and try to emphasize enjoyment of the sport.
- Do not criticize the referee.
- Model good sideline behavior and be a parent, not a coach.
- Parents, family members, and friends may not cross to the coaches/players side during games unless there is an emergency.

We need to keep our coaches and players focused on the game. If you are upset by something during the game, we recommend you wait 24 hours before contacting the coach. Time often focuses a situation so interaction may be more positive.

Remember, your players are watching and they take their cue's from you! Parents/Guardians and spectators should understand that if they do not follow this code of conduct then actions may be taken. These may include:

- A warning from the Team's coach.
- Official written warning via the TYSA Player/Parent Disciplinary Action Form.
- Required to meet with a TYSA representative.
- Required to leave the match or practice.
- Suspension from TYSA for future matches or practices.
- A dismissal from TYSA, including any Minor Athletes the family has at the club.



Section 10 - COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

TYSA has a responsibility to promote high standards of behavior in the game. Coaches play an important role in helping minor athletes develop their skills and love of the game. You set the example we want our players and their families to live by while at TYSA.

We expect coaches to play your part and observe TYSA Code of Conduct in everything you do.

- That I will always maintain the utmost respect for the game of soccer.
- That I will conduct myself honorably at all times on and off the field and maintain the dignity of my position.
- That I will honor my obligations to TYSA and GA Soccer.
- That I will endeavor to attend all meetings, know the rules and policies of TYSA and GA Soccer and abide by them.
- That I will always strive to achieve teamwork with my assistant coaches and the referee crew.
- That I will be loyal to my players and never knowingly promote criticism of them or their parents.
- That I will conduct myself as an example to emulate for both my players and their parents.
- That I will, to the best of my ability, control both my players and their parents in their conduct toward others.
- That I will not be derisive to referees before, during or after the game.
- That I will uphold the honor and integrity of TYSA and its mission statement at all times.

Remember, your players and their families are watching, and they take their cue's from you! So be mindful of how you act in front of your team. Coaches should understand that if they do not follow the TYSA Code of Conduct then the Executive Director can take disciplinary action.



Section 11 – US CENTER FOR SAFE SPORT

US Center for Safe Sport

The U.S. Center for SafeSport provides a “Parent’s Guide to Misconduct in Sport” online course and a variety of toolkits, which address misconduct issues in sport and help parents ensure their children have the most positive and safest experience possible.

TYSA encourages all parents to take this free course as it is a comprehensive resource for parents of youth athletes of all ages. The course takes less than an hour to complete. The units focus on the following points:

- The basic philosophy and policies of the U.S. Center for SafeSport.
- What makes for a healthy coach-athlete relationship.
- Best practices and policies you should look for in your child’s sport organization.
- What you should know about sexual abuse and sexual misconduct in sport.
- What you should know about other forms of misconduct in sport, including: bullying, harassment, hazing and emotional and physical misconduct.
- Tips for making sports situations safer for your child.
- How to talk to your child about misconduct, and ways to encourage your child to speak to you about misconduct if it occurs.
- How your child’s sport organization must report abuse and misconduct, in accordance with laws and policies.

Instructions to take the course:

1. Visit www.athletesafety.org and click “SIGN IN” in the top right corner to create an account.
2. Complete the registration process. When prompted to enter a membership organization, enter “Not affiliated.”
3. Select “Shop for activities” and then locate “Parent’s Guide to Misconduct in Sport.”
4. Select “Add To Bag” and then finish checking out for the module, although it is completely free.
5. Select the play symbol and you may begin the training module, which does not need to be completed in one session.



ATTACHED RESOURCES

Included with this TYSA Safe Soccer Policy are:
Instructions for Reporting violations of the policy
Incident Report Form
Mandatory Registration Forms
Player/Parent Disciplinary Action Form
Georgia Soccer Background Check policy.



TYSA MANDATORY REPORTING INSTRUCTIONS

TYSA has zero tolerance for abuse of Minor Athletes, as well as any Adult Participant. “Abuse” means sexual or physical abuse as all instances of Sexual Misconduct.

A report of abuse should be made when a person has “reasonable cause to” believe that a child has been abused by a parent, caretaker, or another adult. “Reasonable cause” means a suspicion founded upon circumstances sufficiently strong to warrant a reasonable person to believe that something is true.

Reasonable suspicions of sexual or physical abuse/neglect should be reported within a 24-hour period of awareness.

STEP 1:

If the abuse is being caused by the minor athlete’s parent/caregiver, then notify the State of Georgia’s Division of Family and Child Services (DFCS) at **404-370-5066** or **1-855-422-4453**. If you feel that the child is in immediate danger, then call 911.

If the abuse is being caused by a coach, player or participant, then please call the Dekalb County Police, Tucker Precinct at **678-937-5301**. If you feel that there is an immediate danger then call 911.

STEP 2: Contact TYSA

Please fill out the Incident Reporting Form and send to SafeSport@tysa.com. You may also contact TYSA at 404-984-7665.

The SafeSport Officer will contact Georgia Soccer with all the relevant information that you provide.

Individuals who wish to bypass TYSA (given the nature of the event being reported) can direct their concerns to Georgia Soccer’s [Risk Management’s](#) office. You can reach Cornelius Samuel at kinimam@comcast.net.

You may also contact National Governing Bodies:

US Soccer Integrity Hotline: by [electronic form](#) or by phone at 312-528-7004

US Center for SafeSport: submit via [Sexual Misconduct Incident Reporting Form](#)

Reports of other Policy Violations:

Each Participant who witnesses or reasonably suspects violations of TYSA’s Safe Soccer Policy, other than abuse to minor Athletes as listed above, should promptly report such witnessed or suspected violations to the TYSA SafeSport Officer.



TYSA SAFE SPORT INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

Please fill out the fields below to the best of your knowledge. Out of respect for the importance of this issue, and to encourage honest reporting, knowingly making false or vindictive claims will not be tolerated and may be in violation of TYSA's Safe Sport Policy.

Once completed, please email this form to the TYSA Safe Sport Official at SafeSport@TYSA.com

DATE OF REPORT

/ /

PERSON SUBMITTING THIS REPORT

NAME (First)		(LAST)
TEAM/PROGRAM -	PHONE:	EMAIL:
DID YOU WITNESS THE ALLEGED OFFENSE?: <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		
RELATIONSHIP TO VICTIM: <input type="checkbox"/> COACH <input type="checkbox"/> ATHLETE <input type="checkbox"/> TRAINER <input type="checkbox"/> VOLUNTEER <input type="checkbox"/> PARENT/GUARDIAN <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER FRIEND/FAMILY MEMBER <input type="checkbox"/> SELF <input type="checkbox"/> PREFER TO NOT SAY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:		

PERSON WHO IS BEING REPORTED

NAME (First)		(LAST)
TEAM/PROGRAM -	GENDER -	AGE (approx) -
POSITION HELD - <input type="checkbox"/> COACH <input type="checkbox"/> ATHLETE <input type="checkbox"/> TRAINER <input type="checkbox"/> VOLUNTEER <input type="checkbox"/> PARENT <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:		

ALLEGED OFFENSIVE INFORMATION

TYPE OF VIOLATION (<i>check all that apply</i>): <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Harassment <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Misconduct <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Misconduct <input type="checkbox"/> Child Abuse (emotional and/or physical) <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Misconduct <input type="checkbox"/> Aiding and Abetting <input type="checkbox"/> Misconduct Related to Reporting <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
Incident Location Occurred:
Date Offense was observed:
Description of observed offense:

VICTIM OR VICTIMS INFORMATION

NAME (First)		
TEAM/PROGRAM -	GENDER -	AGE (approx) -
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:		

WITNESS INFORMATION

NAME (First)

TEAM/PROGRAM -

GENDER -

AGE (approx) -

PHONE:

EMAIL:

RELATIONSHIP TO THE PARTIES INVOLVED:

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please include any other information you feel would be helpful to an investigation of the alleged offense that you are reporting:



MANDATORY REGISTRATION FORMS FOR ALL TYSA PROGRAMS

The two statements presented below must be signed and accepted the Minor Athletes Parents/Guardians during the registration process. These two forms require parents/guardians to accept that they will be subjected to a mandatory background check if they decide to participate in youth programming.

Background Screening

Risk Management is the collection of actions taken by Georgia Soccer and its affiliates to minimize risk associated with the playing and administration of the game of soccer. Georgia Soccer's Risk Management Committees role is to study the areas where risk may exist and to propose policy and education to mitigate that risk. Risk Management addresses a number of issues which include, but are not limited to, background checks for those involved with youth players, field and game safety and the protection of the state association and of each member organization and their assets. Please use these resources to familiarize yourself with our polices and to see what Georgia Soccer is doing to protect our players. [Background Screening](#)

Georgia Soccer requires all coaches, volunteers, trainers, administrators, and staff over 18 years of age to have a background check every 2 years.

SafeSport – Harassment and Child Abuse Policy

Risk Management is the collection of actions taken by Georgia Soccer and its affiliates to minimize risk associated with the playing and administration of the game of soccer. Georgia Soccer's Risk Management Committees role is to study the areas where risk may exist and to propose policy and education to mitigate that risk. Risk Management addresses a number of issues which include, but are not limited to, background checks for those involved with youth players, field and game safety and the protection of the state association and of each member organization and their assets. Please use these resources to familiarize yourself with our polices and to see what Georgia Soccer is doing to protect our players. [Georgia Soccer Risk Management](#)

Participation Waiver – The following must be accepted during the registration process.

I hereby give approval for the participation of my child in any and all GA Soccer and affiliated associations' or leagues' activities and I assume all risk and hazards incident to such participation, including transportation to and from said activities, waive, release, absolve, indemnify and agree to hold harmless Georgia Soccer and affiliated associations, league, the organizers, supervisors, officers, directors, participants and persons or parents supervising or transporting participants to or from such activities from any claims arising out of injury to my child. I hereby give permission for the association to use my child's photographic likeness in local news publications and/or TYSA publications for the purposes of publicity or other benefit to TYSA. I understand that a player who registers with an affiliated league is bound to that league for the entire season unless a transfer is requested for extenuating circumstances. I further understand that the registration fee, once paid, is refundable only if the registered player moves in excess of 35 miles from the area before teams are formed or is unable to participate due to injury prior to the start of the season (see tysa.com for full policy). There are no refunds provided due to temporary interruption of the soccer season due to acts of war, acts of God or pandemics.



TYSA PLAYER / PARENT DISCIPLINARY ACTION FORM

Depending on the severity, the Player or Parent may receive a written warning. The coach can discipline disruptive player with extra physical activity, loss of playing time, or being sent home. Parents/guardians may receive suspensions or even bans from TYSA activities, depending on the severity of the conduct.

COACH: _____

TEAM: _____

PLAYER: _____

YEAR: _____

FIRST WARNING

INCIDENT DATE: _____

Description of Incident

Coaches Signature: _____

DATE: _____

Parent Signature: _____

DATE: _____

Executive Director: _____

DATE: _____



GEORGIA SOCCER POLICY FOR BACKGROUND SCREENING, STANDARDS TO PARTICIPATE AND APPEALS

Georgia Soccer

SAFESOCER MISSION STATEMENT

Revised May 20, 2013

- Georgia Soccer intends to use its reasonable efforts to foster safe and healthful environment for every participant in any activity affiliated with Georgia Soccer
- Georgia Soccer intends to use its reasonable efforts to inform and educate all players, coaches, administrators, volunteers, fans and employees of the risks connected with our game and to provide information about methods, procedures and practices for increasing safety and reducing unnecessary risk in involvement.
- Georgia Soccer intends to use its reasonable efforts to work with member affiliates for the adoption of programs to inform and educate all their members of the risks connected with the game and to provide information about methods, procedures and practices for increasing safety and reducing unnecessary risk in involvement.
- Georgia Soccer intends to use its reasonable efforts to develop standards of operation that reduce risk in administration and promote the welfare of its volunteers and staff.

GEORGIA SOCCER POLICY FOR BACKGROUND SCREENING,
STANDARDS TO PARTICIPATE AND APPEALS

I. GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT AND HISTORY

It shall be the policy of Georgia Soccer (hereafter referred to as “Georgia Soccer” or “the Association”) to protect and provide a safe and healthy environment for all members participating in Georgia Soccer sanctioned clubs, leagues, programs and tournaments. This policy shall be in keeping with, and shall not contradict, United States Soccer Federation (USSF), United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA), USASA (United States Adult Soccer Association), Georgia Soccer policies and bylaws, as well as all applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations.

In 1994, USYSA approved and implemented the “Kidsafe” program. The Kidsafe program encourages each State Youth Association to develop safety guidelines and procedures. Central to the Kidsafe program is the utilization of the Participant Disclosure Statement (PDS), hereafter referred to as PDS, which is to be completed by each adult applicant, as a primary condition of acceptance for a position within Georgia Soccer. In 1999, GYSA (now Georgia Soccer – Youth) adopted preliminary risk management policies that were instituted as voluntary guidelines. This document is to update and revise the original GYSA risk management policy position.

The Risk Management Committee (RMC) shall be responsible for reviewing risk management issues that may come before the Association and shall make recommendations, as necessary, to the Board of Directors for implementation of policies and procedures that protect the Association and the affiliated membership.

This policy is applicable to all Georgia Soccer board members and committee members, local affiliate officers, directors, coaches (including assistants), trainers, referee assignors, referees, and any other volunteers, paid employees, or contractors that have regular contact with any youth players, as identified by the President of Georgia Soccer or of each local affiliate, and/or stipulated by the Georgia Soccer Board of Directors. For the purpose of this policy an “adult” is considered to be anyone 18 years or older. The Georgia Soccer Board will have final decision on whether a position within Georgia Soccer, either at the state level or with a local affiliate, should fall under this policy.

II. STATE AND AFFILIATE BACKGROUND SCREENING RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary responsibility for managing the Participant Disclosure Statement (PDS) background screening process lies with the local affiliate association. Georgia Soccer will establish the state-wide requirement that all such applicants being considered for a position within Georgia Soccer must meet.

Each local affiliate is responsible for insuring that all such designated adults meet this requirement as established by Georgia Soccer. Each local affiliate may require a more stringent requirement for hiring or appointing an adult to any position within their club but cannot adopt a less strict policy than that as defined by Georgia Soccer.

The Association will coordinate and offer, when available, an electronically managed PDS process and will be responsible for selecting and coordinating the electronic program that each affiliate will utilize for conducting the PDS process. The board will determine the manner in which this electronic PDS program will be funded.

The Association and each local affiliate should maintain strict confidentiality in the handling and storage of all background information collected. Additionally, each local affiliate is required to appoint a Risk Management Coordinator who will be responsible for conducting and managing the local risk management PDS program within their local organization. The local Risk Management Coordinator will understand the importance of maintaining a highly confidential process for acquiring, handling, and storing candidate information associated with this PDS screening program.

It should be underscored that while an effective PDS and criminal background screening process is critical to a sound Kidsafe program, this process in and of itself cannot insure a fail-safe environment for our youth.

III. BACKGROUND SCREENING PROCEDURE

1. State Level Georgia Soccer Positions: All directors, officers, commissioners, committee members, state coaching staff, and people holding other state positions, whether volunteers, employees, or contractors, so identified by the Association President will be required to submit a PDS to the Georgia Soccer Executive Director. The PDS of each state level applicant, 18 years or older, will be submitted for criminal background screening. The Executive Director will serve as the Risk Management Coordinator for all state positions. The PDS of the Executive Director will be submitted to the president of the association.

2. Referee Program: All USSF certified referees, instructors, and assignors 18 years and older who desire to participate in Georgia Soccer sanctioned games must submit a PDS every two years. The referee program PDS will be processed through the Executive Director or an appointed Referee Program risk management representative.

3. Local Affiliate Risk Management Coordinator: Each local affiliate will appoint a local Risk Management Coordinator. Each local affiliate will require each employee/volunteer/contractor to complete a PDS. The local affiliate will conduct a criminal background check on each applicant 18 years of age or older at least every two years.

4. PDS Process for determining acceptance of any applicant: New Employee/Volunteers will submit a signed and completed PDS as part of their application process. Returning participant applicants, unless otherwise stipulated in this policy, will resubmit a PDS no longer than once every two years, but can be asked to submit a PDS at any time shorter than this period at the total discretion of the local Affiliate or State Association.

a. It is the policy of Georgia Soccer to deny participation to any applicant with a criminal conviction against the person or property or both of a minor. All other record of convictions by the applicant will be determined by the Local Affiliate as outlined elsewhere in this policy.

b. It is the primary intent of this policy to deny Georgia Soccer participation to persons whose past conduct was particularly egregious or who are otherwise disqualified for their position based upon past conduct. Convictions involving crimes against minors will be automatic grounds for denial. In making all other determinations regarding exceptions granted for other convictions by the applicant not involving crimes against minors the local Affiliate will review the criminal record of the applicant and consider the following three factors: (1) the nature and gravity of the offense(s); (2) the time that has passed since the conviction and/or completion of the sentence; and (3) the nature of the job held or sought. There will not be blanket exclusions. Instead, these factors must be applied to each circumstance. Arrest records will be treated slightly differently from conviction records, since an arrest without a conviction does not establish that a person actually engaged in misconduct. Thus, the local Affiliate must also evaluate whether the applicant actually engaged in the misconduct. It can do this by giving the person the opportunity to explain and by making follow-up inquiries necessary to evaluate his/her credibility.

c. During the application process, should an applicant have a criminal history not involving any minor, the hiring authority will use other determinations including, but not limited to, the following guidelines to determine acceptance to the Affiliate/Association.

- The facts as represented in the cited report are in error; or
- The length of time that has passed since the act that resulted in conviction (the act)

- The conduct of the convicted person during the interval since the act;
- The seriousness of the act;
- The age and circumstances of the person when the act was committed;
- The nature and degree of risk posed to other participants in those Georgia Soccer activities in which the person may participate.

d. Any Affiliate who decides to accept any applicant with a felony conviction will promptly advise the Georgia Soccer Executive Director of their decision and reasons for their decision. The Affiliate shall also immediately notify the Executive Director of Georgia Soccer of any decision to deny an applicant based on their conviction record. The Executive Director will report the findings to the pertinent national bodies per the requirement of those national bodies.

The Executive Director shall inform the Board and the State RMC chair in a quarterly report, to include, by Affiliate, how many felons have been accepted, excluded and, of the excluded, those appealing the decision.

e. This process may be entirely an electronic process. Failure to comply with a request to submit a PDS may be grounds for immediate suspension or termination from Georgia Soccer. This program will be conducted with the following understanding:

- i. Willfully falsifying or omitting information on the signed PDS may subject the applicant to denial, suspension or termination from activities within the Association.
- ii. All completed PDS forms, criminal background reports, and other communication specific to the PDS and criminal background screening process are to be kept confidential and under reasonably secure storage.

5. Process for Rejecting and Notifying an Applicant Failing to Meet Standard: Any person, new or currently enrolled, denied participation based on the results of the PDS and criminal background screening process will be informed, in writing, by the local Affiliate with copy to the Georgia Soccer Executive Director, by a notification method that provides for delivery verification. All information used in reaching the decision to deny participation should be provided to the applicant. The denied applicant will be advised of the source of the information and given the opportunity to dispute the findings with that source and appeals procedure.

6. Process for Disputing/Correcting Background Screening Results: Any applicant denied participation based on the results of the background screening can choose to dispute the results with the source of that disputed background information. It will be incumbent upon the applicant to contact the source of the disputed information, request a correction, and subsequently have the source of the disputed information provide the corrected information to the Association. The local Affiliate and Georgia Soccer assume no responsibility for correcting information provided from a background screening process.

7. Suspension and/or Termination: Any participant currently working within Georgia Soccer in any capacity who is formally indicted on any exclusion crime(s) covered by this policy will be immediately suspended from any further participation pending the final resolution of the appeal proceeding.

IV. APPEAL PROCEDURE

The applicant for whom exclusion to participate has been rendered by the local Affiliate or Association may appeal the decision to the Appeals Committee in accordance with current Georgia Soccer policy and practice.

- The Committee may hear an appeal and render a decision based on, but not limited to, the following:
 - The facts as represented in the cited report are in error; or
 - The length of time that has passed since the act that resulted in conviction (the act);
 - The conduct of the convicted person during the interval since the act;

- The seriousness of the act;
- The age and circumstances of the person when the act was committed;
- The nature and degree of risk posed to other participants in those Georgia Soccer activities in which the person may participate.
- Once the decision is rendered,

Georgia Soccer’s appropriate staff will report the findings to the pertinent national bodies per the requirement of those national bodies. The state association, through the Executive Director or other Board of Directors designee, shall generate those documents necessary to implement the actions of the Appeals Committee and the RMC.

For further information or clarification on this policy, please contact the Georgia Soccer Risk Management Committee.

ⁱ “Protecting Young Victims From Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017, 115th Congress, <https://www.congress.gov/115/plaws/publ126/PLAW-115publ126.pdf>

ⁱⁱ “US Soccer Athlete and Participant Safety Policy”, US Soccer, https://cdn.ussoccer.com/-/media/project/ussf/governance/2020/bylaws/202021-policy-manual_final.ashx?la=en-us&rev=ce791f97f1f34638bca5c5c2afdd317e&hash=AC0B6091561FCB10FA2C875D98871B94

ⁱⁱⁱ “Reporting of Child Abuse...” 2010 Georgia Code, <https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/2010/title-19/chapter-7/article-1/19-7-5/>