

## MSYSA Zero Tolerance Policy



### Zero Tolerance Policy Against Abuse

The following guidelines and procedures are established for our staff, volunteers and participants. All members of MSYSA are expected to observe and adhere to these guidelines. Coaches, players, managers, club team officials, and volunteers that are registered through MSYSA are expected to adhere to this policy. In addition, spectators that are participating through the registration of their child/children with MSYSA are expected to adhere to this policy as well.

#### *Zero Tolerance Policy Against Abuse*

Abuse of any kind is not permitted within our organization. MSYSA does not tolerate physical, sexual, emotional or verbal abuse or misconduct from our players, coaches, officials, volunteers, parents or spectators.

Physical or sexual abuse, including, but not limited to, striking, hitting, kicking, biting, spitting, indecent or wanton gesturing, lewd remarks, indecent exposure, unwanted physical contact, any form of sexual contact or inappropriate touching, are strictly prohibited within our organization.

Emotional or verbal abuse is also prohibited. These include, but not limited to, use of foul language or making abusive statements in regard to a person's race, gender, religion, nationality/ethnicity, sex or age.

All coaches, officials, and volunteers are appointed through the registration process as protection advocates of this policy. Every member is responsible for reporting any cases of questionable conduct or alleged mistreatment toward participants by any coach, official, volunteer, player, parent, sibling or spectator.

MSYSA recommends that every activity sponsored by its member organizations put a BUDDY SYSTEM in place. Each youth participant should be assigned a buddy during sponsored activities. No child should go anywhere - to the bathroom, locker rooms, or other location, without his or her buddy.

To further protect youth participants, as well as the coaches, volunteers, and officials, we strongly recommend that no adult person allow himself/herself to be alone with a child during sponsored activities.

- Do not drive alone with a child participant (other than your own children) in the car.
- Do not take a child alone to the locker room, bathrooms or any other private room.
- If you must have a private conversation with a youth participant, do it within view of others, in the gym or on the field, instead of in a private setting.

When traveling overnight with youth participants, children should be paired up with other children of same gender and similar age group, with chaperones in separate but nearby rooms.

Children should be empowered to trust their feelings and let them know that their concerns and fears are important by listening to them. Open communication between children and parents, or between children and other adults in the organization may help early warning signs of abuse to surface.

The MSYSA board of directors, the adjudication committee, and the risk management committee will respond quickly to any and all allegations of abuse within this organization. This information will be communicated to the authorities for investigation and will be reviewed by the organization's directors. The alleged offender will be notified of such allegations promptly and may be subject to a disciplinary hearing.

Any person accused of sexual or physical abuse may be asked to resign voluntarily or may be suspended by the board until the matter is resolved. Regardless of criminal or civil guilt in the alleged abuse, the continued presence of the person could be detrimental to the reputation of the organization and could be harmful to the participants. A person who is accused but later cleared of charges, may apply to be reinstated within the organization. Reinstatement is not a right, and no guarantee is made that he or she will be reinstated to his/her former position.

Our mission is to promote good sportsmanship throughout the organization and encourage qualities of mutual respect, courtesy and tolerance in all participants, coaches, officials and volunteers, and spectators. Children with a strong self-image may be less likely targets for abuse; and they may be less likely to abuse or bully others around them.

### **Enforcing MSYSA's Zero Tolerance Policy**

The objective of the MSYSA adjudication process is to ensure that every member of MSYSA will receive a fair, impartial, objective, and timely hearing of any complaint or appeal that has standing before the committee.

The Adjudication will:

- Investigate any allegation of referee abuse or assault,
- Investigate any allegation of referee misconduct,
- Review appeals from decisions of MSYSA members and program managers, and
- Investigate other cases delegated to it by the MSYSA Board of Directors

The Adjudication Committee relies on USSF Bylaws and Policy and the *MSYSA Zero Tolerance Policy Against Abuse* as its guiding principles.

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Incidents of abuse for investigation can be reported to MSYSA at [adjudication@msysa.org](mailto:adjudication@msysa.org).