

MOORESTOWN YOUTH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION ABUSE PREVENTION- STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Moorestown Youth Football Association (MYFA) seeks to provide a safe environment for the children who participate in the organization's programs. To that end, the MYFA has adopted a zero-tolerance stance against abuse of participants, volunteers, and/or spectators.

Because MYFA volunteers will be working with the children who participate in our activities, all volunteers will be required to fill out a brief application prior to their participation as a volunteer. This application is not intended as an invasion of privacy, rather as a precaution to assist in the protection of our children. While we recognize that no system can protect a child from every possible form of abuse, it is our intention that the brief volunteer application and certification, in conjunction with the implementation and acceptance by all volunteers of this zero-tolerance policy, will provide some measure of safety to our participants.

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY AGAINST ABUSE

The MYFA recognizes that tackle football, is inherently both a physically and mentally challenging sport at every level of play, from the 60 lb. players to professional players. Accordingly, MYFA expects and encourages all members, volunteers, and parents to prepare our youth participants to safely compete with rigorous training and discipline. However, the MYFA is also committed to providing a safe environment for its members and participants, and to preventing abusive conduct in any form. Every member of this organization is responsible for protecting our participants and ensuring their safety and well being while involved in sponsored activities.

To this end, we have established the following guidelines of behavior and procedures for our volunteers and participants. All members of this organization and all volunteers are expected to observe and adhere to the following **GUIDELINES**.

I. GUIDELINES

A. Obligation to Display Appropriate Behavior.

All members of this organization, volunteers, and participants understand that violations of the following codes will jeopardize their privilege to coach or otherwise volunteer in the MYFA program:

1. All members of this organization, volunteers, and participants will treat each player, opposing coach, official, parent or administrator with respect and dignity, and refrain from using profanity, intimidation tactics, and inappropriate language. This includes all emotional and/or verbal abuse including, but not limited to: insulting, threatening, mocking, demeaning behavior, or making abusive statements in regard to a person's race, gender, religion, nationality/ethnicity, sex, age or physical condition.

2. All members of this organization, volunteers, and participants will uphold the authority of officials who are assigned to the contests and will assist them in every way to conduct fair and impartial competitive contests.

VIOLATIONS OF GUIDELINE “A” ABOVE WILL RESULT IN THE FOLLOWING:

- ❖ Any violation of Guideline “A” will result in a sit-down consultation between the MYFA Board and the coach, member, and/or volunteer. Suspension of the coach, member, and/or volunteer’s privilege to manage, coach or otherwise participate as a MYFA volunteer and attend MYFA youth sports programs may also accompany.
- ❖ A second violation under Guideline “A” will result in termination of the coach, member, and/or volunteer’s privilege to participate in and to attend MYFA youth sports programs.

B. Terminal Behavior

1. No member of this organization and/or volunteer will ever coach or otherwise volunteer while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
2. No member of this organization and/or volunteer will ever initiate or participate in any form of physical or sexual assault on any staff, volunteer, parent or child. Physical and sexual assault includes, but is not limited to striking, hitting, kicking, biting, indecent gesturing, lewd remarks, indecent exposure, unwanted physical contact, any form of sexual contact and/or inappropriate touching.

VIOLATIONS OF GUIDELINE “B” ABOVE WILL RESULT IN THE FOLLOWING:

- ❖ Any violation of Guideline “B” will result in termination of the member, or volunteer’s privilege to participate in MYFA events and to attend MYFA youth sports programs.
- ❖ MYFA will report a violation of Guideline “B”(2) to the appropriate law enforcement agency for investigation and charging if appropriate. The MYFA will fully cooperate with law enforcement should any investigation be instituted.
- ❖ 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 or any other position.

II. To further protect our youth participants, as well as our volunteers, MYFA mandates the following:

- A. Every member of our organization shall be responsible for reporting questionable conduct or alleged mistreatment toward our participants by any coach, volunteer, player, parent, sibling, or spectator.

- B. All members and/or volunteers shall be subject to a criminal background check before they are eligible to participate.

III. To further protect our youth participants, as well as our volunteers, MYFA recommends the following:

- A. All members and/or volunteers should avoid situations where they are alone with a youth participant. In this regard they should adhere to the following recommendations:
 - a. Do not drive alone with a youth participant in a car unless you have explicit permission from his/her legal guardian;
 - b. Do not take a youth participant into a locker room, bathroom or any other private room, unless there is another adult present;
 - c. Only provide coaching instruction in the presence of another adult;
 - d. Only participate in private conversations with youth participants in full view of other adults.
- B. All members and/or volunteers should encourage open communications between children and adults in the MYFA organization. This may help early warning signs of abuse to surface.
- C. All members and/or volunteers should encourage parents to become as active as possible in sponsored activities, games, practices, and other events. Parental involvement is likely to curtail the development of abusive situations
- D. All members and/or volunteers should promote good sportsmanship throughout the organization and encourage qualities of mutual respect, courtesy and tolerance in all participants and volunteers. This includes advocating building strong self-images among youth participants. Youth with strong self-images may be less likely targets for abuse; similarly, they may be less likely to abuse or bully others around them.

I understand that as a volunteer working with children and/or youth, I am subject to a thorough background check including a check of my criminal history. I understand that depending on the disclosed behavior, the MYFA Board reserves the right to limit my involvement in MYFA activities. Furthermore, the MYFA Board has the discretion to exclude me from participating as a MYFA volunteer depending on the findings of my criminal background check.

I understand that any action inconsistent with this document or failure to take action mandated by this document may result in my removal as a volunteer in the MYFA.

With my signature, which I voluntarily affix to this document, I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and consent to the terms herein.

Volunteer's name

Volunteer's signature

Date