



MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY

The U.S. Center for SafeSport has created a series of template policies for use by U.S. Soccer and its Organization Members.

One-on-One Interactions

The majority of 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.

Components

Covered Organizations (NYSWYSA and all member organizations) must comply with a through g.

a. Application

This policy shall apply to:

- 1) Adults at a facility under the jurisdiction of a Covered Organization
- 2) Adult members who have regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors
- 3) An adult authorized by a Covered Organization to have regular contact with or authority over an amateur athlete who is a minor
- 4) Staff and board members of a Covered Organization

(collectively, Adults).

b. Observable and interruptible

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

c. Meetings

- Meetings between Adults and minors at any facility may only occur if another adult is present, except under emergency circumstances. Such meetings must occur where interactions can be easily observed and at an interruptible distance from another adult.
- If a one-on-one meeting takes place in an office, the door to the office must remain unlocked and 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. Meetings with mental health care professionals

If a mental health care professional meets with minors at any facility, a closed-door meeting may be permitted to protect patient privacy – provided that (1) the door remains unlocked, (2) another adult is present at the facility, (3) the other adult is advised that a closed-door meeting is occurring, and (4) written legal guardian consent is obtained by the mental health care professional, with a copy provided to our organization.



e. Individual training sessions

Individual training sessions between Adults and minors are permitted at any facility if the training session is observable and interruptible by another adult. The Adult must obtain the written 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. Permission for individual training sessions must be obtained at least every six months.

f. Monitoring

When one-on-one interactions between Adults and minors occur at any facility, adults will monitor these interactions. Monitoring includes: knowing that the one-on-one interaction is occurring, the approximate planned duration of the interaction, and randomly dropping in on the one-on-one.

g. Out-of-program contacts

Adults are prohibited from interacting one-on-one with unrelated minor athletes in settings outside of the program (including, but not limited to, one's home, restaurants, and individual transportation), unless parent/legal guardian consent is provided for each out-of-program contact. Such arrangements are nonetheless strongly discouraged.

Social Media & Electronic Communications

Covered Organizations (NYSWYSA and all member organizations) must comply with a through g.

a. Application

This policy shall apply to:

- 1) Adult members who have regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors
- 2) An adult authorized by a Covered Organization to have regular contact with or authority over an amateur athlete who is a minor
- 3) Staff and board members at a Covered Organization

(collectively, Participating 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

- 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.
- 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.
- A Participating Adult communicating electronically to the entire team will copy another Participating Adult.
- Amateur athletes who are minors may "friend" the organization's official page.



d. Prohibited electronic communications

- Participating Adults are not permitted to communicate privately via electronic communications with amateur athletes who are minors, except under emergency circumstances.
- Participating Adults are not permitted to “private message,” “instant message,” “direct message”, or send photos via Snapchat or Instagram to a minor athlete privately.
- 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

e. Requests to discontinue

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

Recommended components

f. Hours

Electronic communications will only be sent between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.

g. Monitoring

- The organization monitors its social media pages and removes any posts that violate the organization’s policies and practices for appropriate behavior.
- The organization will inform the legal guardian of a minor athlete of any prohibited posts, as well as the organization’s administrator.

Local Travel

Covered Organizations (NYSWYSA and all member organizations) must comply with a through d. Local travel consists of travel to training, practice, and competition that occurs locally and does not include coordinated overnight stay(s).

a. Application

This policy shall apply to:

- 1) Adult members who have regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors
- 2) An adult authorized by a Covered Organization to have regular contact with or authority over an amateur athlete who is a minor
- 3) Staff and board members at a Covered Organization

(collectively, Participating Adults).

b. Transportation

- The organization does not arrange for local travel.
- 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, and may only drive with at least two other minor athletes or another adult at all times, unless



otherwise agreed to in writing by the minor athlete's parent/legal guardian in advance of each local travel.

c. Shared or Carpool Travel Arrangement

We encourage parents/legal guardians to pick up their minor athlete first and drop off their minor athlete last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement.

- d. Parents/legal guardians receive education concerning child abuse prevention before providing consent for their minor to travel alone with a Participating Adult.

Team Travel

Covered Organizations (NYSWYSA and all member organizations) must comply with a through h. Team travel is travel to a competition or other team activity that the organization plans and supervises.

a. Application

This policy shall apply to:

- 1) Adult members who have regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors
- 2) An adult authorized by a Covered Organization to have regular contact with or authority over an amateur athlete who is a minor
- 3) Staff and board members at a Covered Organization

(collectively, Participating Adults).

b. Team/competition travel

- When only one Participating Adult and one minor athlete travel to a competition, the minor athlete must have his/her legal guardian's written permission in advance and for each competition to travel alone with the Participating Adult.

c. 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 is otherwise related to the minor athlete).

d. Meetings

- Meetings shall be conducted consistent with the organization's policy for one-on-one interactions – i.e., any such meeting shall be observable and interruptible.
- Meetings shall not be conducted in a hotel room.

- e. Team travel policies must be signed and agreed to by all minor athletes, parents, and Participating Adults traveling with the organization.

- f. Participating Adults who travel with the organization must successfully pass a criminal background check and other screening requirements consistent with the organization's policies.

- g. During team travel, when doing room checks, attending team meetings and/or other activities, two-deep leadership and observable and interruptible environments should be maintained.



- h. Parents/legal guardians receive education concerning child abuse prevention before providing consent for their minor to travel alone with a Participating Adult.

Massages and Rubdowns

Covered Organizations (NYSWYSA and all member organizations) must comply with a through c.

- a. Application

This policy shall apply to (collectively, Adults):

- 1) Adults at a facility under the jurisdiction of a Covered Organization
- 2) Adult members who have regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors
- 3) An adult authorized by a Covered Organization to have regular contact with or authority over an amateur athlete who is a minor
- 4) Staff and board members of a Covered Organization

- b. Licensed, certified professional

- Any massage or rubdown performed by an Adult on a minor athlete at any facility or a training or competition venue is prohibited unless such Adult is a licensed massage therapist.
- Any massage or rubdown performed at any facility or a training or competition venue by a licensed professional must be conducted in open and interruptible locations. Any massage of a minor athlete must be done with at least one other adult present and must never be done with only the minor athlete and licensed massage therapist in the room.
- Even if a coach is a licensed massage therapist, the coach shall not perform a rubdown or massage of an athlete under any circumstances.

- c. Written consent

Written consent by a legal guardian shall be provided before providing each massage or rubdown on a minor athlete. Parents must be permitted to be in the room as an observer.

Locker Rooms, Rest Rooms and Changing Areas

Covered Organizations (NYSWYSA and all member organizations) must comply with a through i.

- a. Application

This policy shall apply to (collectively, Adults):

- 1) Adults at a facility under the jurisdiction of a Covered Organization
- 2) Adult members who have regular contact with amateur athletes who are minors
- 3) An adult authorized by a Covered Organization to have regular contact with or authority over an amateur athlete who is a minor
- 4) Staff and board members of a Covered Organization

- 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 locker rooms, rest rooms, changing areas, or similar spaces at any facility is prohibited. Exceptions may be made for media and championship celebrations, provided that such exceptions are approved by the Covered Organization and two or more adults are present.



c. Undress

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

d. Isolated one-on-one interactions

- At no time are unrelated Adults permitted to be alone with a minor in a locker room, rest room, or changing area when at any facility, except under emergency circumstances.
- If our organization is using a facility that has access to a single set of such facilities, we will designate times for use by Adults, if any.

e. Monitoring

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

f. Non-exclusive facility

If our organization uses a facility not under its jurisdiction (for, e.g., training or competition or similar events) and the facility is used by multiple constituents, Adults in categories 2 through 4 are nonetheless required to adhere to the rules set forth here.

g. To minimize the risk of bullying and hazing, our organization uses locker room monitors to ensure that minors are not left unattended in locker rooms, rest rooms, and changing areas.

h. Adults make every effort to recognize when an athlete goes to the locker room or changing area during practice and competition and, if they do not return in a timely fashion, we will check on the athlete's whereabouts.

i. We discourage parents from entering locker rooms and changing areas unless it is truly necessary. In those instances, it should only be a same-sex parent. If this is necessary, parents should let a coach or administrator know about this in advance.