

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S WELFARE IN SOCCER

SPONSORED BY



MINI SOCCER GOALS,
TEAMKITS & TRAINING ACCESSORIES



INTRODUCTION

Our organization is committed to creating and preserving the safest possible environment for children to play soccer.

It is the duty of all League Management, Referees, Club Officials, Team Managers and any other individuals directly or indirectly involved with member clubs or teams playing in leagues to be aware of and help prevent the abuse which children can suffer; neglect, physical, sexual and emotional.

The children's welfare is paramount and all children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender or religious belief, have the right to protection from abuse. All suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

FORMS OF ABUSE

Sexual

Boys and girls can be sexually abused. Abuse can include: full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, fondling showing children pornographic books or videos or taking pornographic photographs or videos.

Physical

Physical injuries to children by hitting, shaking, squeezing, biting or burning. In soccer, as with all sports, physical abuse may occur when the nature and intensity or training exceeds the capacity of the child's body.

Neglect

Where adults fail to meet a child's basic physical needs. e.g. food, warmth and clothing.
Constantly leave children alone and unsupervised.
Fail to refuse to give children love, affection or attention.

Neglect in soccer might occur if a coach fails to ensure children are safe or exposes them to extreme weather conditions or potential injury.

Emotional

Persistent lack of love or affection.
Children frequently being shouted at or being taunted.
Over protection leading to poor social skills.
Emotional abuse in soccer may include situations where parents or coaches subject children to constant criticism, bullying or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Pain, itching, bruising, or bleeding in the genital area
Stomach pains.
Discomfort when walking
Unexplained sources of money
Inappropriate sexual drawings / language / behavior
Aggressive, withdrawn or fear of one person

Unexplained or untreated Injuries

Injuries on unlikely or unusual parts of the body

Cigarette burns, bite, belt marks, or scalds

Poor personal hygiene

Constantly hungry & tired

Inappropriate clothing or dress
Disheveled appearance

Lonely, no friends

Underweight

No parental support or interest

Fear of parents being contacted,

going home or receiving medical advice

Flinching when touched

Refusal to discuss injury

Covering arms and legs

Over reaction to mistakes

Sudden speech disorders

Extremes of emotions

Self mutilation

There may not be any signs; you may just feel that something is wrong. If you are worried, it is not your responsibility if it is abuse, but:

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ACT ON YOUR CONCERNS AND DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

WHAT TO DO IF A CHILD DISCLOSE ABUSE

Understand that this may be the only time the child has built up courage to tell someone what has happened. Stop what you are doing and respect the child's privacy stay calm and reassuring listen to what they tell you, tell them that whatever the circumstances they are not to blame. Do not react in a way which may add to the child's distress. e.g. anger or shock. Explain that you cannot promise to keep what the child tells you a secret, you may have to tell someone else.

Do not question the child in depth, do not ask leading questions. i.e. Questions that need a "yes" or "no" answer. Only ask questions to establish exactly what was done and who did it.

Tell the child that you are pleased they decided to tell someone and that they are absolutely right to do so.
Let the child know that you understand how difficult it is to talk about such experiences.

Inform the Team Manager (unless implicated).

Contact your Local Authority Child Protection Officer without delay.

Do not contact parents until you have received advice Make an accurate record of the time and date and exactly what was said.

YOU SHOULD ALWAYS

Treat all players and children with respect and dignity befitting of their age, watch your language, tone of voice and where you put your body.

YOU SHOULD NEVER

Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games including horseplay.

Allow or engage in inappropriate or intrusive touching of and kind. Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.

Make sexually suggestive comments to a child even in fun. Let allegations a child make go unchallenged or unrecorded, always act.

Invade the privacy of children when they are changing, showering or going to the toilet.

YOU SHOULD AVOID

Doing things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves. e.g. Help with changing.

Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.

Taking children alone on car journeys, however short.

Taking children to your home.

Where any of these situations are unavoidable, first seek parental consent where possible. If unable to speak to the parents, always inform them of the circumstances as soon as practicable.

It is a good idea for your league or team to have laminated copy of these guidelines and ensure every adult member is aware of their responsibilities.

ITSA GOAL-LINE : 01142 42 42 44 Fax:01142 44 86 83

for further copies of this leaflet contact:
www.minisoccer.com