

# NTSSA Risk Mitigation Policy

North Texas State Soccer Association (NTSSA) has adopted the following Risk Mitigation Policy.

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- Social Media - coming soon
- Financials - coming soon
- Coach/Player - coming soon

# **NTSSA Risk Mitigation Policy**

## **Medical Emergencies**

Coaches and parents share the responsibility for the player's health while at practices, scrimmages and games. Coaches or Team Managers should have players' medical release forms and a medical kit with them at all times. Coaches should have an emergency plan in place so if someone is hurt in a practice or a game, the coach knows who to call, where emergency personnel might take the injured party and how to contact family members.

Any bleeding that occurs should be administered to with protective gloves, and properly sterilized bandages. All bleeding must be stopped prior to re-entering the game/practice. Any bandages, uniforms or other items which have come in contact with the blood must be properly taken care of.

It is not only important for coaches to be prepared in emergency situations, but for parents and friends to be prepared as well. The National Center for Sports Safety recommends spectators carry a first aid kit of their own to games and practices. This kit should include the items listed below:

- Sport Safety Training Injury Prevention and Care Handbook
- Non-powdered Barrier Gloves
- Resuscitation mask/face shield
- Cold Pack
- Bandage Strips
- Patch Bandage
- Elastic Fabric Flexible Bandage
- Kling Roller Gauze
- Eye Dressing Kit (Eye Patch and Clear Medical Tape)
- Eyewash
- Adhesive Tape
- Antibiotic Ointment
- Anti-septic wipes
- Alcohol Wipes
- Triangular Bandage for sling
- Insect Sting Ointment
- Hydrocortisone Cream
- Sun Block (30) SPF
- Insect Repellent
- Scissors
- Tweezers

For additional information on sports injury and stretching/training visit USYSA under the Coaches Resource Center/ Health and Safety or use the following link <http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/HealthandSafetyResourceCenter/>

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## Head Injuries

If you think your athlete has sustained a concussion...

- ✓ Don't assess it yourself
- ✓ Take him/her out of play
- ✓ Seek the advice of a health care professional
- ✓ No participation after confirmation until medical release is received from physician.





### Concussion / Head Injury

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury, or TBI, caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head which can change the way your brain normally works. Concussions can also occur from a fall or a blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. Health care professionals may describe a concussion as a “mild” brain injury because concussions are usually not life-threatening. Even so, their effects can be serious.

### What are the Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion?

Most people with a concussion recover quickly and fully. But for some people, symptoms can last for days, weeks, or longer. In general, recovery may be slower among older adults, young children, and teens. Those who have had a concussion in the past are also at risk of having another one and may find it takes longer to recover if they have another concussion.

**Symptoms of concussion usually fall into four categories:**

 <b>Thinking/ Remembering</b>	 <b>Physical</b>	 <b>Emotional/ Mood</b>	 <b>Sleep</b>
Difficulty thinking clearly	Headache  Fuzzy or blurry vision	Irritability	Sleeping more than usual
Feeling slowed down	Nausea or vomiting (early on)  Dizziness	Sadness	Sleep less than usual
Difficulty concentrating	Sensitivity to noise or light  Balance problems	More emotional	Trouble falling asleep
Difficulty remembering new information	Feeling tired, having no energy	Nervousness or anxiety	

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Some of these symptoms may appear right away, while others may not be noticed for days or months after the injury, or until the person starts resuming their everyday life and more demands are placed upon them. Sometimes, people do not recognize or admit they are having problems. Others may not understand why they are having problems and what their problems really are, which can make them nervous and upset.

The signs and symptoms of a concussion can be difficult to sort out. Early on, problems may be missed by the person with the concussion, family members, or doctors. People may look fine even though they are acting or feeling differently.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has created two free online courses – one for health care professionals and another for youth and high school sports coaches, parents, and athletes which provide important information on preventing, recognizing, and responding to a concussion.

“Heads Up” on Concussion <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/>



**NTSSA strongly encourages all Coaches, Managers, Trainers, and Athletes to take the free on-line education program provided by the CDC.**

For additional information on head/concussion information visit [usyouthsoccer.org](http://www.usyouthsoccer.org) under the Coaches Resource Center/ Health and Safety or use the following link <http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/HealthandSafetyResourceCenter/>

It is highly recommended that each player obtain a baseline concussion assessment.

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## **Field and Goal Safety**

The conditions of the field and goals must be conducive to safe play by taking the following actions:

- Securely anchor or counterweight movable soccer goals at ALL times. Games shall not be played if goals are not properly anchored.
- Anchor or chain one goal to another, to itself in a folded down position, or to nearby fence posts, dugouts, or any other similar sturdy fixture when not in use. If this is not practical, store movable soccer goals in a place where children cannot have access to them.
- If possible remove nets when goals are not in use.
- Check for structural integrity and proper connecting hardware before every use. Replace damaged or missing parts or fasteners immediately.
- NEVER allow anyone to climb on the net or goal framework.
- Ensure safety/warning labels are clearly visible (placed under the crossbar and on the sides of the down-posts at eye level).
- If possible, fully disassemble goals for seasonal storage.
- Always exercise extreme caution when moving goals and allow adequate manpower to move goals of varied sizes and weights. Movable soccer goals should only be moved by authorized and trained personnel.
- Always instruct players on the safe handling of and potential dangers associated with movable soccer goals.
- Movable soccer goals should only be used on LEVEL (flat) fields.

For additional information on field/outdoor safety visit [usyouthsoccer.org](http://www.usyouthsoccer.org) under the Coaches Resource Center/ Health and Safety or use the following link <http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/HealthandSafetyResourceCenter/>

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## **Weather**

Weather conditions must be reasonably safe from lightning, or extreme temperatures.

## **Heat**

Heat-induced illness is one of the most preventable sports injuries. Parents, athletes and coaches need to understand the factors which put children and adolescents at risk for heat related illness and take steps to prevent it.

Children face unique stresses when they exercise in the heat. Like adults, players may have trouble adapting to the demands of soccer practice and game situations played in high temperatures. Problems can be made worse when the player is dehydrated.

Here are physiological/psychological reasons placing children at risk:

- Children absorb more heat from a hot environment because they have a greater surface area to body-mass ratio than adults. The smaller the child, the faster they absorb heat.
- Children and adolescents may have a reduced ability to lose heat through sweating.
- During prolonged exercise, children and adolescents frequently do not have the physiological drive to drink enough fluids to replenish sweat losses.
- Youth athletes may be more easily distracted when they should be resting and rehydrating.
- Some youth athletes may be under intense pressure to make a competitive squad and may not want to report feelings of heat distress or take the appropriate amount of time to rehydrate.

Parents and Coaches may assist in prevention of heat related illness by:

- Choosing clothing which is light-colored and lightweight facilitating evaporation of sweat.
- Encourage breaks in a shaded area whenever possible, especially during tournaments, multi-game, and multi-practice days.
- Be aware of high temperatures and humidity and, if possible, move practice and game times to cooler portions in the day, such as morning and dusk. Association may consider relaxing playing rules during hot weather, such as allowing a 5-minute break in the middle of each half, or shortening each half and adding that time to halftime for a longer break.
- Practices must be modified based on conditions. Use frequent rest breaks to lower core temperature and provide ample time to rehydrate.

## **Fluid Guidelines**

NTSSA provides these guidelines to help parents, players and coaches prevent dehydration and heat illness in athletes who are active in the heat:

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- Encourage each player to weigh before and after activity to determine how much fluid was lost during activity. If a player is lighter after activity then encourage a little more fluid consumption during the next practice/game. If the player is heavier after activity then encourage a little less fluid during the next practice/game. Players should try to limit fluid losses to 1-2% of body weight or less.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics:

- Before prolonged physical activity, the child should be well hydrated.
- During the activity, periodic drinking should be enforced even if the child does not feel thirsty.
- Each 15-20 minutes the child or adolescent should consume:
  - 5 ounces of fluid for a player weighing 90 lbs or less
  - 9 ounces of fluid for a player weighing more than 90 lbs.

The medical research further suggests:

- To ensure the child is not dehydrated before the start of the practice session or game, the child should drink 12-16 ounces of fluid approximately 30 minutes before getting to the field.
- Once the activity is over, players should drink water or a sports drink every 15-20 minutes for the first hour after activity. The rate of fluid ingestion is generally 1.5 pints of fluids for each pound of weight lost. Volume overload can make it difficult for some athletes to fully rehydrate between multiple sessions within a single day. The goal is to begin training each day at the same weight.
- Teach the youth soccer player to monitor their own hydration status with the following tip:
  - If their urine (during flow, not once the urine is diluted in the bowl) is a pale yellow like lemonade then they are likely pretty well hydrated.
  - If their urine is dark yellow like apple juice, then they are likely dehydrated.This is an easy and accurate way to assess hydration status and it gets the kids involved on a personal level.

Kids need to drink enough of the right fluids to minimize fluid losses during activity.

- Flavored beverages that contain sodium (sports drinks) are preferable because the child may drink more.
- Research shows lightly sweetened and flavored non-carbonated beverages, like sports drinks, are preferred during exercise and are consumed in greater volumes than water, diluted fruit juice or carbonated beverages.
- Research shows fluids containing sodium chloride (sports drinks) increase voluntary drinking by 90%, compared to drinking plain water
- In addition to replacing fluid, children also need to replace the electrolytes, such as sodium, which are lost through sweat. Electrolyte replacement is important to stimulate an adequate thirst mechanism, help the body hold on to fluid, help prevent muscle cramps and to maintain sodium levels in the blood.
- Immediately before and during activity, children should avoid fruit juices, carbonated beverages, caffeinated beverages and energy drinks.

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- Fruit juices have a high sugar content which can slow fluid absorption, cause an upset stomach, and may also lack sodium.
- Carbonated beverages, such as soft drinks, can reduce voluntary drinking due to stomach fullness, throat burn when gulping and lack sodium.
- Energy drinks should be avoided because many contain caffeine and have high carbohydrate concentrations which slows the emptying of fluids from the stomach.
- Be sure each child uses their own beverage container they can keep cool during the practice. An individual container allows monitoring fluid consumption more accurately, can be filled with beverage of personal preference, will help avoid the spread of germs and viruses, and the cool fluid will be replenished at a better rate than a container which sits out in the sun.
  
- Additionally, dehydration also hinders exercise performance. The dehydrated player will have to work harder to maintain the same level of intensity than their hydrated teammate.

## **Signs of Dehydration and Heat Illness**

Unchecked dehydration increases the risk of heat illness. Heat illnesses are three separate degrees of severity: heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke; the most serious and deadly heat illness. The symptoms outlined below are not always additive and do not necessarily occur in an orderly, predictable progression. A young athlete could experience heat stroke in absence of other indicators.

## **Dehydration**

Dehydration during exercise is a common problem. Some young athletes can begin to suffer the consequences of dehydration if they become dehydrated by just 2 percent of their body weight during exercise in the heat. That's why it's important to recognize the warning signs:

- Noticeable Thirst
- Irritability
- Decreased performance
- Fatigue
- Weakness
- Nausea
- Headache
- Muscle cramping
- Dark yellow urine (or no desire to urinate)
- Lightheaded feeling or dizziness
- Difficulty paying attention

Treating the symptoms of dehydration is crucial in preventing more serious conditions such as heat exhaustion.

- Rest the player in a cool place
- Provide a sports drink containing electrolytes



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- Prevent dehydration in the future by insuring the player consumes fluids before, during and after exercise (educate everyone and allow ample time to rehydrate)

## **Muscle Cramping**

Muscle cramping can be associated with exposure to excessive heat. Painful involuntary whole-body muscle cramps are often associated with loss of fluids and sodium. Some of the signs and symptoms of muscle cramps include:

- Muscle spasms
- “Knotting” of muscles and muscle pain
- Excessive sweat loss
- Excessive saltiness of sweat over the skin or visible dried salt on the skin
- Excessive dehydration

To treat a young athlete suffering from muscle cramps:

- Have them drink fluids with electrolytes, like a sports drink
- Gently stretch and massage cramped muscles
- Have them rest in a cool, shaded area
- Apply ice to the cramped area
- Consider additional sodium in palatable food source, like pretzels, etc.

## **Heat Exhaustion**

As a child becomes dehydrated, the likelihood of heat exhaustion may increase if left untreated. Eventually, fatigue and exhaustion occur because the cardiovascular system can no longer support both exercise and control the core body temperature. Common symptoms of heat exhaustion are:

- Dizziness & fatigue
- Feeling chilly
- Rapid pulse

Treatment of heat exhaustion is similar to that of dehydration and should take place immediately. This treatment includes:

- Rest the child in a cool, shaded and place ice cold towels on them
- Drink a sports drink which contains electrolytes
- Have the child lie down with legs elevated to promote circulation
- Athlete should begin to feel better relatively soon, if not, assume heat stroke

## **Heat Stroke**

Heat stroke is a medical emergency. It can result in death when not recognized promptly and treated properly. Exertional heat stroke occurs when the thermoregulatory system is overwhelmed, fails to act in an appropriate manner, or both. Damage to critical organs can occur if the organs remain overheated for an extended period of time, hence the need for rapid cooling. If rapid cooling does not occur, the cellular damage to the organs could be extreme and have fatal consequences. Symptoms and results of heat stroke include:

- Very high core body temperature (measured rectally because other sites are not valid immediately following intense exercise in the heat.)

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- Altered CNS function (i.e. confusion, unconsciousness, altered mental status, feeling out of- sorts, extreme lethargy)
- An otherwise healthy athlete collapses during intense exercise in the heat

If an accurate temperature cannot be obtained, rely on CNS function. Relying on an inaccurate temperature device or site could delay treatment. Remember, athletes get better relatively quickly with heat exhaustion, but they get worse with heat stroke. It is important to remember heat stroke must be treated immediately by doing the following:

- **SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION IMMEDIATELY. Heat stroke is a medical emergency.** Always transport a suspected exertional heat stroke to the hospital! It is probably safe to say you are not qualified to treat exertional heat stroke.
- Immediately begin to cool the victim down by whatever means possible
  - An ice bath is preferable due to the superior cooling rates (holding head out of bath)
  - Ice packs over as much as body as possible
  - A cool shower
  - Cool, wet towels
  - Water spray
- Do not provide fluids since nausea and vomiting are extremely common. Remove the player from cooling source(s) when core temperature is lowered to 102 degrees F.

For additional information on Heat related injury visit [usyouthsoccer.org](http://www.usyouthsoccer.org) under the Coaches Resource Center/ Health and Safety or use the following link <http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/HealthandSafetyResourceCenter/>

## **Thunderstorms**

Listen to NOAA Weather Radio or local media for the latest severe thunderstorm WATCHES and WARNINGS. Severe thunderstorms are those storms with winds in excess of 58 mph or hail larger than 3/4 inches in diameter. When conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop, a severe thunderstorm WATCH is issued.

Weather Service personnel use information from weather radar, satellite, lightning detection, spotters, and other sources to issue severe thunderstorm WARNINGS for areas where severe weather is imminent. Remember, however, ALL thunderstorms produce deadly lightning.

- Postpone activities promptly. Don't wait for rain. Many people take shelter from the rain, but most people struck by lightning are not in the rain! Go quickly inside a completely enclosed building, not a carport, open garage or covered patio. If no enclosed building is convenient, get inside a hard-topped all-metal vehicle.
- Be the lowest point. Lightning usually hits the tallest object. Crouch down if you are in an exposed area.
- Keep an eye on the sky. Look for darkening skies, flashes of lightning, or increasing wind, which may be signs of an approaching thunderstorm.

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- Listen for the sound of thunder. If you can hear thunder, go to a safe shelter immediately.
- If you see or hear a thunderstorm coming or your hair stands on end, immediately suspend your game or practice and instruct everyone to go inside a sturdy building or car. Sturdy buildings are the safest place to be. Avoid sheds, picnic shelters, baseball dugouts, and bleachers. If no sturdy building is nearby, a hard-top vehicle with windows closed will offer some protection. The steel frame of the vehicle provides some protection if you are not touching metal.
- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio. Coaches and other leaders should listen for a tone-alert feature during practice sessions and games.
- If you can't get to a shelter, stay away from trees. If there is no shelter, crouch in the open, keeping twice as far away from a tree as it is tall.
- Avoid leaning against vehicles. Get off bicycles and motorcycles.
- Avoid metal! Drop metal backpacks, stay away from clothes lines, fences, exposed sheds and electrically conductive elevated objects. Large metal objects can conduct lightning. Small metal objects can cause burns.
- Move away from a group of people. Stay several yards away from other people. Don't share a bleacher bench or huddle in a group.

For additional information on weather safety visit [usyouthsoccer.org](http://www.usyouthsoccer.org) under the Coaches Resource Center/ Health and Safety or use the following link <http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/HealthandSafetyResourceCenter/>

# **NTSSA Risk Mitigation Policy**

## **Travel Policy**

In addition to the travel policies published by USYSA, North Texas State Soccer Association (NTSSA) has established policies to guide travel, minimize one-on-one interactions with players, and reduce the risk of abuse or misconduct. Adherence to these travel guidelines will increase player safety and improve the player's experience while keeping travel a fun and enjoyable experience.

### **Non-Sponsored Travel**

Non-Sponsored travel occurs when NTSSA or one of its teams does not sponsor, coordinate, or arrange for travel.

- Players and/or their parents/guardians are responsible for making all arrangements for local travel. The team and its coaches, managers or administrators should avoid responsibility for arranging or coordinating local travel. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure the person transporting the minor player maintains the proper safety and legal requirements, including, but not limited to, a valid driver's license, automobile liability insurance, a vehicle in safe working order, and compliance with applicable state, federal, and international laws.
- The employees, coaches, and/or volunteers of NTSSA or one of its teams, who are not also acting as a parent, should not drive alone with an unrelated minor player and should drive with no less than two players or another adult at all times.
- Where an employee, coach and/or volunteer is involved in an unrelated minor player's non-sponsored travel, efforts should be made to ensure the adult personnel are not alone with the unrelated player.
- Employees, coaches, and volunteers who are also a player's parent or guardian may provide shared transportation for any player(s) if they pick up their player first and drop off their player last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement.

### **Sponsored Travel**

Sponsored travel is travel which occurs when NTSSA or one of its teams (hereinafter "sponsoring organization") sponsors, coordinates or arranges for travel so the team can compete locally, regionally, nationally or internationally. Because of the greater distances, coaches, staff, volunteers and chaperones will often travel with the players.

- All chaperones shall have been screened in compliance with the NTSSA Risk Management Screening Policy. A parent/guardian which has not been screened may participate in team activities but may not assist with supervision/monitoring of players, and will not be permitted to have any one-on-one interactions with players and/or driving responsibilities. Furthermore, this participation is subject to coach/chaperone approval as it relates to responsible adult behavior.
- All team drivers shall have been screened per the NTSSA Risk Management Screening requirements. The screen shall include a check of appropriate Department of Motor Vehicle records for any traffic violations such as reckless behavior involving a moving vehicle.

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- Safe driving practices must be followed at all times, as such, electronic device use must be done carefully and only to the extent necessary to further the purpose of the trip. Texting and other electronic device activities are prohibited while driving unless the electronic device is being used as a telephone or GPS, and extreme care should be taken during these activities. Drivers should avoid lengthy cell phone conversations to avoid unnecessary distractions, if a phone conversation becomes necessary it is recommended driver's use a hands free method to have the conversation.
- When possible, the sponsoring organization will provide reasonable advance notice before team travel. Travel notice will also include designated team hotels for overnight stays as well as a contact person within NTSSA or the team. This/these individual(s) will be the point of contact to confirm your intention to travel and to help with travel details.
- The sponsoring organization will post specific travel itineraries when they become available. These will include a more detailed schedule as well as contact information for team travel chaperones. The sponsoring organization will make efforts to provide adequate supervision through coaches and other adult chaperones. The sponsoring organization will make efforts to ensure there is at least one coach or adult chaperone for each four to six players. If a team is composed of both male and female players, an attempt will be made to arrange chaperones of both genders. However, parents may be relied upon to serve as chaperones and may be limited in providing this match.
- Regardless of gender, a coach/chaperone/adult (who is not a player) shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement alone with a minor player unless the coach/chaperone/adult is the parent, guardian or sibling of the player.
- Because of the greater distances, coaches, staff, volunteers, and chaperones will often travel with the players. No employee, coach, or volunteer will engage in team travel without the proper safety requirements in place and on record, including valid drivers' licenses, automobile liability insurance as required by applicable state, federal, and international law, a vehicle in safe working order, and compliance with all state/federal/international laws.
- Players should only share rooms with other players of the same gender, with the appropriate number of players assigned per room depending on accommodations. It is recommended a minimum of three players be assigned per room.
- The coach will establish a curfew by when all players must be in their hotel rooms or in a supervised location. Regular monitoring and curfew checks will be made of each room by at least two properly screened adults.
- The team personnel shall ask hotels to block adult pay per view channels.
- Individual meetings between a player and coach may not occur in hotel sleeping rooms and must be held in public settings or with additional adults present.
- All players will be permitted to make regular check-in phone calls to parents. Team personnel shall allow for any unscheduled check in phone calls initiated by either the player or parents.
- Family members who wish to stay in the team hotel are permitted and encouraged to do so.

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- The team will make every effort to accommodate reasonable parental requests when a child is away from home without a parent. Parents are responsible for notification of sponsoring team of any special needs for their child
- Meetings will not occur in hotel rooms, but the team may reserve a separate space for adults and athletes to socialize.
- If disciplinary action against a player is required while the player is traveling without his/her parents, then except where immediate action is necessary, parents will be notified before any action is taken or immediately after the action. A disciplinary action should never include touching or physically handling a player.
- No coach or chaperone shall at any time be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing their coaching and/or chaperoning duties. Alcohol use by adults is prohibited in the presence of minor players.
- Tobacco (includes chewing tobacco, cigars, cigarettes, E-cigarettes or any other type of device which emulates smoking) used by coaches/chaperones/adults is prohibited in the presence of minor players.
- During team travel, coaches, team personnel and chaperones will help players, fellow coaches and team personnel adhere to policy guidelines, including, without limitation, the Travel Policy, and any other NTSSA policies applicable to travel.
- Prior to any travel, coaches will make players and parents aware of all expectations and rules. Coaches will also support chaperones and/or participate in the monitoring of the players for adherence to curfew restrictions and other travel rules.

### **Prohibited Conduct and Reporting**

NTSSA prohibits all types of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing, all as described in the USYSA KidSafe program. Participants, employees or volunteers in NTSSA may be subject to disciplinary and/or legal action for violation of the Travel Policies or for engaging in any misconduct or abuse or which violates NTSSA Travel or USYSA KidSafe Policies. Reports of any actual or suspected violations should be sent immediately to the NTSSA Executive Director.

For additional information on travel safety visit [usyouthsoccer.org](http://www.usyouthsoccer.org) under the Coaches Resource Center/ Health and Safety or use the following link <http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/HealthandSafetyResourceCenter/>

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## **Youth Safety**

Organizations involved with America's youth must work diligently to provide them with a safe environment.

In order to fulfill its responsibilities to its members, North Texas State Soccer Association (NTSSA) has adopted the US Youth Soccer KidSafe program as the foundation for NTSSA's Risk Management Program. The intent is to make every reasonable effort to deny from participation any person who has been convicted of a crime of violence or a crime against another person that would bring unnecessary risk to the health or safety of program participants.

The NTSSA policy requires every coach, assistant coach, manager, and/or trainer age 18 or older, to have a background check performed prior to each new soccer year. Furthermore, NTSSA requires that at the member association level, all volunteer administrators, board members, staff/employees, concession stand workers (if contracted by the local association), and other adults who are age 18 or older, if they may be alone with registered youth players, must also have a background check performed prior to each new soccer year. Member Associations may perform additional background checks and have more strict criteria before they allow a person to serve in any volunteer or staff position.

Results of the NTSSA processing of criminal background checks will fall under one of the following three categories.

1. Eligible
2. To Be Reviewed
3. Ineligible

### **Eligible:**

An applicant is deemed 'eligible' if the following conditions are present on the criminal background check.

- No record found
- No more than three misdemeanor traffic and/or vehicle code infractions within the past year.

### **To Be Reviewed:**

A review by the NTSSA Risk Management Committee will be performed to determine eligibility for any item not specifically listed in the "Eligible" or "Ineligible" criteria, including but not limited to:

- Misdemeanor convictions or misdemeanors with pending dispositions, except for crimes involving violence, weapons or deviant sexual activity - see Ineligible Criteria
- DUI/DWI – see Ineligible Criteria

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- More than three misdemeanor traffic and/or vehicle code infractions within the past year.
- Misdemeanor marijuana possession conviction if it has not been negotiated down from a felony charge
- Worthless checks
- Theft

## **Ineligible:**

If any of the following convictions are present on the criminal background check, the applicant will be deemed 'ineligible'. The applicant has the right to appeal to the Risk Management Committee.

1. Any Felony charges with dispositions including but not limited to the following:
  - Guilty
  - Convicted
  - No Contest
  - Responsible
  - Adjudicated
  - Three or more DUI/DWI or related convictions occurring within the last 10 years
  - Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor if convicted within the last 10 years
  - Records with a pending disposition
  - Domestic Violence within the past 10 years
  - Any conviction (including misdemeanors) involving violence, weapons when used in the commission of a crime, deviant sexual activity, drugs (except misdemeanor marijuana possession – see To Be Reviewed section)
  - Sale and delivery of marijuana for amounts greater than two (2) grams, if the conviction was within the past 10 years
  - Mob Action, if the conviction was within the past 10 years (a protest march does not fall under this category)
  - Gang Activity, if the conviction for gang related activity occurred within the past 10 years
2. Any applicant who has an outstanding warrant will be automatically disqualified until the warrant is cleared.



# **NTSSA Risk Mitigation Policy**

## **Guidelines for Appropriate Behavior**

### **Relationships Between Youth Players and Adults**

Generally speaking, adults are those persons in the role of coach, assistant coach, administrator, board member, game official, or adult volunteer. Typically, there is a relationship where the adult has authority over the player. As such, there is a need to offer special protection to the players to make sure that adults in positions of authority do not misuse their authority to the detriment of the player.

People in positions of authority must make sure not to abuse their authority to the detriment of others. By establishing formal guidelines for behavior, everyone will know what behavior is acceptable and what behavior is not. Our goal is to establish codes of conduct to help provide a safe and healthy atmosphere for our members and their families.

### **Guidelines**

The physical and emotional well-being of our members and their families must be protected. These guidelines will provide a formal standard that will eliminate any possible misconception about the expected behavior as established by the North Texas State Soccer Association.

#### **1. Physical Contact**

- Adults and others in positions of authority must be aware that physical contact can be misinterpreted. Physical contact should be limited to that necessary to teach a skill, treat an injury, or console or congratulate the player. Physical intimidation, physical punishment, or threatening a player with physical harm are not appropriate behaviors and will not be tolerated. However, reasonably requiring players to do push-ups or running for misbehavior would not likely be considered inappropriate.
- Sexual contact of any kind between adults and players is prohibited whether or not the contact is consensual. There is a time and place for expressive actions such as pats on the back or any other form of touching. Volunteers must act in a defensive mode so that there is not perception of impropriety.
- Hazing or any type of initiation to a club or a team is prohibited.
- Corporal punishment is prohibited.

#### **2. Social Contact**

- Adults should not spend time or socialize alone with players. Pulling a player to the side for additional instruction in plain view of the remainder of the team would be an exception to this rule. However, an adult in a one-on-one situation with a child is generally considered inappropriate and should be avoided. Another exception would be if a child was the last one waiting for a ride home from practice, the coach should not leave the child until the child's parent or ride home has arrived.
- Adults should respect the privacy of players. If showering or changing room facilities are available, schedules should be made such that adults and children

# **NTSSA Risk Mitigation Policy**

have separate use. Adults should not allow others to use these types of facilities without the expressed wishes of the player involved.

- Adults should avoid using social websites, texting and/or emails to communicate one on one with players. Coaches should use extreme caution when 'friending' a player. Texting opens the door to improper relationships. Group texts or emails should include the parents.

### **3. Precautionary Measures**

- Don't print children's names on their jerseys or bags. This provides an open invitation to a person attempting to lure a child away.
- Team events other than games and practices should always involve the parents or at least have adults as chaperones.

### **4. Language**

- Offensive or vulgar language by adults or children is unacceptable. North Texas State Soccer Association events including games and practices should be family oriented events. Adults should model good communication skills.
- Language that is demeaning in nature, content, or tone or refers to one's gender, race, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or religion is not acceptable.
- Inappropriate language or threatening language used toward an official, coach, player, or parent may be grounds for removal from a game or the premises or both.

### **5. Violations**

- Violations will be handled in accordance with existing North Texas State Soccer Association policy. Sanctions may include fines, suspensions or release by the affiliated club, Member Association, or North Texas State Soccer Association.
- The appropriate legal authorities will be based upon the nature of the violation.
- Any person witnessing a violation of these guidelines should report the incident to the North Texas State Soccer Association office or their Member Association.