

CHILD SPORTS ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY FOR AMSTERDAM YOUTH BASEBALL

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to protect our children participants from verbal, emotional, physical and sexual abuse. We believe that the likelihood of child sports abuse can be reduced by creating a culture of awareness through education, screening programs, and policy and program implementation.

We believe that providing our children, parents, coaches, volunteers, and administrators with guidelines that will prevent inappropriate communication and compromising situations. Establishing guidelines for safe interactions between coaches and players is necessary, both on and off the field. Parents must be aware of these guidelines to understand expectations.

Age appropriate education with players will also be helpful to foster healthy relationship with coaches. The purpose of this policy is to reduce the liability, risk, and related negative publicity, expense, and trauma to the League and its participants during the course of implementing its mission and goals. The intent of this policy is not to be all encompassing, but instead, to provide the framework of basic workable program that is more likely to be implemented by a group of volunteers with limited resources and time. This policy shall apply to volunteers and independent contractors who perform the various functions entailed in the running of a league without pay including league officers and directors, coaches, coordinators, referees, scorekeepers, concession workers, etc.

Sports abuse may take many forms and may be the result of actions of other participants, and on-league personnel during games or league functions. League volunteers should be alert and immediately report such actions to their league board of directors and/or local police where applicable.

League Policies on Child Abuse/Molestation

We hope that coaches and players have healthy relationships and do not intend for this policy to take away from the development of healthy relationships.

Coaches, volunteers and parents should keep communication (includes texting, email, instant messaging, Twitter, Facebook, SnapChat, and all other forms of social media/communication) with players professional and team oriented. A parent/guardian or other responsible adult must be copied on all coach or player initiated messaging. All social media posts must be public and related to team activities.

Touch Policy:

- Touch is acceptable only if it is respectful and welcomed. Forms of appropriate contact include” high fives, a shoulder pat, back pat, fist pump.

Child Abuse Prohibition:

- All forms of sports abuse contained in this program such as sexual, physical, verbal and emotional abuse are prohibited.
- Furthermore, no league volunteer will be allowed to participate if they have been convicted of an assault, molestation, indecency with a minor, athlete abuse, etc. Policy requires implementation to be effective.

Expectations to assist with implementing this policy include:

Coaches:

- Must undergo league conducted criminal background checks through appropriate background search entities/companies prior to being approved as a volunteer.
- Written acknowledgement of this policy yearly.
- All coaches will abide by the duty of the mandatory reporting. This includes a duty to disclose and report any or all abuse or neglect to your club board of administrators.

Parents:

- Written acknowledgement of this policy yearly.

Players:

- Age appropriate education and acknowledgement of this policy to be attached to every registration confirmation.

Administrators:

- The Association and its clubs will ensure all policy regarding abuse prevention is posted and accessible via their websites.
- All Administrators are expected to report any abuse or neglect.

Allegations of Abuse/Molestation and other Policy Violations

Under New York State Social Services Law Section 412, an abused child is a person less than 18 years of age and as further defined by Section 130 of the Penal Code Law such offenses are defined as sexual misconduct, criminal sexual assault, forcible touching, sexual abuse, genital mutilation or facilitating a sexual offense with a controlled substance. We believe that we need to be individually responsible in the safety of all children in our community. This includes concerns, complaints, allegations, and disclosures from athletes. All coaches and administrators are considered mandatory reporters regardless of the level of seriousness of the situation. When sports abuse occurs, or you are made aware of an incident that may be an incident of sports abuse - LISTEN to what the PARTICIPANT is saying.

Despite increased sensitivity to abuse, there is still a tendency to not listen to or blame the victim (participant) instead of holding the person(s) accountable who may have committed an act of Sports Abuse.

Assess the Seriousness of the Situation:

Differentiate between:

- Concern: When the person just needs to be heard and have some information clarified.
- Complaint: When the person needs you to listen and may or may not want action taken if they feel you listened.
- Allegation: Clarify if the allegation is
 - o Appropriate, but unsolicited act;
 - o Inappropriate act, but not illegal act;
 - o Illegal act that needs to be reported to law enforcement.
- o Disclosure: When the person tells you that abuse occurred or based on their actions give you reason to believe abuse has occurred.

STEPS

1. Mandatory Reporting by a coach or volunteer:

- Coaches or coordinators will immediately report an incident, allegation, concern, complaint or disclosure to their head coach, coordinator, or board member who will advise the President.

2. Information Gathering by Association:

- By league board,
- Independent third party, and/or
- Law enforcement.

3. Suspension/Termination:

- Suspension: Incidents, allegations, concerns, complaints, or disclosures may result in a suspension. Charges filed in a criminal court relating to violent, abusive, or drug crimes will result in suspension.
- Termination: All volunteers who have been adjudicated guilty of a serious crime against person(s) such as, but not limited to, child/sexual abuse will be immediately terminated.

4. Duty to Disclose:

- Anyone who supervises an employee, volunteer, or contractor who has regular, unsupervised access to children as part of their employment, contract, or voluntary service is required to report abuse or neglect.
 - o 1-800-342-3720 (to contact Montgomery County Child Protective Services and/or New York State Office of Children and Family Services online at <https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cps/>)

I have read the above policy and agree, under penalty of law to abide and adhere and uphold to the written policy of the Amsterdam Youth Baseball League in order to ensure the safety of the players involved in this league.

Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian of: _____