

Mustang Soccer's Player Protection Policies

More Information for Parents and Coaches

How can parents help protect their children? Parents participate in the protection of their children in a variety of ways. Mustang Soccer recognizes the need for open lines of communication so that children are encouraged to bring any troubles to their parents for advice and counsel. In addition, parents need to be involved in their child's Mustang Soccer activities. All parents receive important information concerning the Mustang Soccer program as part of their child's registration. This information is provided so that parents can detect any deviations from Mustang Soccer's approved program. If any deviations are noted, parents should call these to the attention of the appropriate Mustang Board member. If the problems persist, parents should contact the League President.

Why do most child victims of sexual abuse keep the abuse secret? A victim of child sexual abuse is under a great deal of pressure to keep the abuse secret. In many cases of child molestation, the molester has threatened to harm the child or a member of the child's family. The molester might have told the child that he would not be believed even if the child did tell. Another common situation is that the molester will tell the child that if the child tells about the abuse, he will get into trouble. The clear message is given to the child that if another person finds out, something bad will happen to the child. This pressure to maintain silence can often be successfully overcome by establishing open communication between children and adults through a proper educational program for children.

What should I do if a child tells me that he has been sexually abused? How an adult responds to a child when he tries to disclose abuse can influence the outcome of the child's victimization. By maintaining an apparent calm, the adult can help reassure the child that everything is going to be okay. By not criticizing the child, we counteract any statements the molester made to the victim about the child getting into trouble. Reassure the child that you are concerned about what happened to him and that you would like to get him some help. Allegations by a child concerning abuse in the program must be reported to a League executive. Since these reports are required, the child should be told that you have to tell the proper authorities but that you will not tell anyone else. It is important that you not tell anyone other than the League executive or the child protective services agency about allegations of abuse—if the allegations cannot be substantiated, you could be sued for defamation of character.

How do I know what my reporting responsibilities are? People are often concerned about being sued for reporting child abuse. You are not required to know for certain that a child has been abused. All that the law

requires is that you have a reasonable suspicion and are reporting in "good faith." When these requirements are met, all states provide immunity from liability for child abuse reporters.

Mustang Soccer Requires the Report of Child Abuse All persons involved in Mustang Soccer shall report to the Club and/or Police any good faith suspicion or belief that any child

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is or has been physically or sexually abused, physically or emotionally neglected, exposed to any form of violence or threat, exposed to any form of sexual exploitation including the possession, manufacture, or distribution of child pornography, online solicitation, enticement, or showing of obscene material. No person may abdicate this reporting responsibility to any other person.

In the event of any violation of Mustang's Youth Protection policies, notify Mustang's Child Protection Officer (Scott MacDougall, 925-837-0488), so that he or she may take appropriate action for the safety of our players, make appropriate notifications, and follow-up with investigating agencies.

What youth protection educational materials does Mustang Soccer have for youth members? Mustang recommends valuable materials developed by Boy Scouts of America (BSA), including: "How to Protect Your Children from Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide" - designed for parents or guardians and young people to use together for youth protection training. BSA has bilingual, age-appropriate videos for all youth age groups to address the problems of sexual abuse. It Happened to Me/A Mí Me Pasó (No. AV-09DVD11) The video for Boy Scouts, A Time to Tell/Hora de Contarlo (No. AV-09DVD04), introduces the "three R's" of Youth Protection, These materials can be found at their website:
<http://www.scouting.org/training/youthprotection.aspx>

What are the "three R's" of Youth Protection? The "three R's" of Youth Protection convey a simple message that parents may want youth members to learn:

Recognize situations that place him at risk of being molested, how child molesters operate, and that anyone could be a molester.

Resist unwanted and inappropriate attention. Resistance will stop most attempts at molestation.

Report attempted or actual molestation to a parent or other trusted adult. This prevents your own further abuse and helps to protect other children. Let the child know he/she will not be blamed for what occurred.

Youth Member Behavior Guidelines

Mustang Soccer is a values-based youth development organization that helps young people learn positive attributes of character, citizenship, and personal fitness.

One of the developmental tasks of childhood is to learn appropriate behavior. Children are not born with an innate sense of propriety and they need guidance and direction. The example set by positive adult role models is a powerful tool for shaping behavior and a tool that is stressed in Mustang Soccer.

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Misbehavior by a single youth member in a Mustang Soccer unit may constitute a threat to the safety of the individual who misbehaves as well as to the safety of other members. Such misbehavior constitutes an unreasonable burden on a team and cannot be ignored.

Member Responsibilities

All members of Mustang Soccer are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the principles set forth in Mustang's Codes of Conduct. Physical violence, hazing, bullying, theft, verbal insults, and drugs and alcohol have no place in the Mustang Soccer program and may result in the revocation of membership.

If confronted by threats of violence or other forms of bullying from other youth members, children should seek help from their coaches or parents. Team Responsibilities Adult leaders of Mustang Soccer teams are responsible for monitoring the behavior of youth members and interceding when necessary. Parents of youth members who misbehave should be informed and asked for assistance in dealing with it.

Mustang Soccer does not permit the use of corporal punishment when disciplining youth members.

The coach and division director should review repetitive or serious incidents of misbehavior in consultation with the parents of the child to determine a course of corrective action including possible revocation of the youth's membership.

The team should inform the League executive about all incidents that result in a physical injury or involve allegations of sexual misconduct by a youth member with another youth member.