

Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League Risk Management

Purpose

As our society increases its awareness of the problems associated with child abuse, Organizations involved with America's youth must work diligently to provide them with a safe environment and to help deal with the issue of child abuse. Each Organization has the responsibility of developing a formal, written program to help prevent child abuse and molestation and to help all of us to become more aware of the warning signs of child abuse.

Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League Position

The Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League and its members will not knowingly allow any person convicted of a crime of violence, physical abuse, sale of illegal substances, or has any other convictions that would indicate a pattern of behavior that would have a detrimental effect on children to be placed in a position that would involve direct contact with children.

Applicability

This policy shall apply to any of the following who have regular contact with children:

1. All Coaches (Football, Cheer, Dance, Etc.)
2. Administrators - including employees of the Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League and its affiliates
3. Other Volunteers

The Program

The program will consist of the following parts:

1. Establishing Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League Guidelines for Appropriate Behavior.
2. Providing a means to gather information about those people who come in contact with our children.
3. Establishing written guidelines for the handling of this information.
4. Helping our members to identify and deal with child abuse.

Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League Guidelines for Appropriate Behavior

Relationships Between Youths 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.

While most of us think that the roles of adults and players or children are straight forward, there are situations where a team could have a 17 year old or under assistant coach. This assistant coach may be viewed as an adult as an authority figure or as a child or player with regard to his relationship with an older head coach. 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 for establishing codes of conduct to help to provide a safe and healthy atmosphere for our members and their families.

Guidelines

The physical and emotional well being of our players 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 Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League.

I. Physical Contact

1. 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.
2. Sexual contact of any kind between adults and players is prohibited whether or not the contact is consensual.
3. Hazing or any type of initiation to a Organization or a team is prohibited.
4. Corporal punishment is prohibited.

II. Social Contact

1. 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.
2. Adults should respect the privacy of players. If showering or changing room facilities are available, schedules should be made such that adults and children have separate use. Adults should not allow others to use these types of facilities without the expressed wishes of the player involved.

III. Health and Well-Being

1. Adults share the responsibility for the player's health while at practices, scrimmages and games. Adults should have a player's medical release forms and medical kits with them at all times. Coaches should have an emergency plan in place so that, 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.
2. Any head injuries resulting in disorientation should result in a player remaining out of the game.
3. Any bleeding that occurs must be administered to with latex gloves, and properly sterilized bandages. All bleeding must be stopped prior to re-entering the game. Any bandages, uniforms or other items that have come in contact with the blood must be properly disposed of.
4. Adults transporting players must model safe driving techniques and enforce seat belt use for all vehicle occupants.
5. The conditions of the field and goals must be conducive to safe play. Weather conditions must also be reasonably safe from lightning, or extreme conditions.
6. Adults should be aware of the signs of neglect and abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) of the players. Signs of this should be reported to the local law enforcement agency.

IV. Language

1. Offensive or vulgar language by adults or children is unacceptable. Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League events including games and practices should be family oriented events. Adults should model good communication skills.
2. Language that is denigrating in nature, content, or tone or refers to one's gender, race, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or religion is not acceptable.

3. 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.

V. Violations

1. Violations will be handled in accordance with existing Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League policy. Sanctions can include fines, suspensions or release by the affiliated Organization or the Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League.
2. The appropriate legal authorities will be notified based upon the nature of the violation.
3. Any person witnessing a violation of these guidelines should report the incident to the Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League office, the Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League Commissioner, or their Organization President.

Gathering Information Concerning Volunteers

Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League Disclosure Form Procedures

Each Organization will be responsible for obtaining a completed Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League Disclosure Form for all Organization members that have regular contact with children including, but not necessarily limited to the following:

1. Coaches
2. Administrators – including employees of the Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League and its affiliates
3. Other Volunteers

Once obtained, a copy of the Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League Disclosure Form will be forwarded to the League Office and a copy will be kept on file with the local Organization. The Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League will randomly select a percentage of the completed Disclosure Forms for criminal background checks. If any of the criminal background checks shows a conviction or convictions that displays a pattern of behavior that may have a detrimental effect on children, that person will be advised that he or she is not eligible to begin their role or continue in their role with the Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League or its affiliate member.

Since criminal histories are a matter of public record, and the fact that the person involved may be asked to step down from their role with the Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League or its affiliate member, the Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League will not guarantee that this type of information, once discovered, will be kept confidential.

The information gathered will be reviewed by the League Commissioner, Organization President, or the Risk Manager.

The final decision on what is an acceptable or unacceptable criminal history will be made by the Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League Executive Board.

Disclosure Form

Risk Management Disclosure Form is included in this packet of information.

Child Abuse

Definition

Child abuse can generally be divided into four different types. The four types are physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect.

Physical abuse is any non-accidental injury to a child. It is often caused by an action or omission of a care giver. Injuries include bruises, welts, cuts, fractures, burns or internal injuries. Physical abuse can be one or two isolated incidents or it can occur over a prolonged period of time.

Emotional abuse includes all acts that result in the child's sense of "self" being seriously impaired. This type of behavior can include demeaning remarks, rejecting the child, ignoring or isolating the child, name calling, or telling the child that he is not a good person or athlete.

Sexual abuse is any sexual activity between a child and an adult, or between children when there exists an unequal distribution of power, such as when one is significantly older or physically larger than the other.

Neglect occurs when a caregiver fails to provide basic needs such as adequate food, sleep, safety, supervision, clothing, or medical treatment.

Signs of Abuse

Each type of abuse has its own distinct signs. People dealing with children should be aware of the signs of physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. Below is a description of the signs of abuse for each of the four categories of abuse. Each category has its own behavioral indicators as well as physical indicators.

In the case of physical abuse, you should look for the following behavioral indicators:

- * Wary of adults
- * Cannot recall or consistently explain how injuries occurred
- * May cringe if touched accidentally
- * Extremely aggressive or extremely withdrawn

In the case of physical abuse, you should look for the following physical indicators:

- * Injuries inconsistent with the explanation
- * Presence of several injuries in various stages of healing
- * Facial injuries

In the case of emotional abuse, you should look for the following behavioral indicators:

- * Severe depression
- * Extreme withdrawal or aggressiveness
- * Overly compliant, too mannered, too neat and clean
- * Extreme attention seeking
- * Displays extreme inhibition in play

In the case of emotional abuse, you should look for the following physical indicators:

- * Frequent psychosomatic complaints such as headaches, nausea, abdominal pains

In the case of sexual abuse, you should look for the following behavioral indicators:

- * Age inappropriate sexual play or displaying sexual acts
- * Sexually explicit drawing or descriptions
- * Bizarre, sophisticated, or unusual sexual knowledge
- * Seductive behaviors

In the case of sexual abuse, you should look for the following physical indicators:

- * Unusual or excessive itching in the genital area
- * Torn, stained or bloody underwear
- * Injuries to the vaginal or anal areas

In the case of neglect, you should look for the following behavioral indicators:

- * Frequent absence from school or practice
- * Inappropriate or dirty clothing
- * Engaged in delinquent acts such as alcohol or drug abuse
- * Pale, listless, unkempt
- * Frequently forgets proper equipment, water, etc.

In the case of neglect, you should look for the following physical indicators:

- * Poor hygiene
- * Unattended physical problems or medical needs
- * Consistent lack of supervision

Reporting Instances of Child Abuse

Suspected instances of child abuse are extremely sensitive in nature. A great deal of care should be exercised in reporting suspected cases of child abuse. Because of the serious consequences of child abuse it is the Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League policy to report child abuse if it is suspected. Since child abuse can be difficult to spot without the proper training, please do not discuss a case of abuse or suspected abuse with anyone except the proper authorities. If you are uncertain about whether to report abuse, please contact the Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League office.

If a child confides in you that he or she has been the victim of abuse, do not panic or overreact. Do not criticize the child for confiding in you. Finally, respect the child's privacy.

If the child is in imminent danger, and you feel that you need to offer immediate assistance, you should contact the local police department. The police departments have the expertise to handle an emergency or crisis situation involving children.

If the child does not appear to be in any immediate danger, you should call the Department of Social Services for your county. The Department of Social Services can assign a social worker to review the case and determine what course of action is in the best interests of the child.

Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League Risk Management Disclosure and Registration Form

PLEASE PRINT YOUR INFORMATION LEGIBLY

COACH REGISTRATION FEE = \$5.00

Last Name _____ First Name _____ Middle Initial _____

Driver's License Number _____ State _____

AAYFL Member (Team) _____ SSN _____

Home Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

DOB _____ M / F _____ Email Address _____
month/day/year

It is the intent of the Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League to promote and nurture the advancement of the sport of football in the State of Wisconsin. In order to accomplish this mission, we must work to provide a safe environment that fosters mutual respect and offers our children the opportunity to develop athletically and socially. As such, we require that coaches, volunteers, and administrators do not have a history of criminal or violent behavior. **The information provided on this form is for the use of the Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League and its affiliated organization members only and used for the purposes described within the risk management policy.**

PLEASE RESPOND TO EACH QUESTION

1. Have you had any prior experience working with young people? _____ Briefly describe where and when:

2. Have you had prior experience with youth football? _____ List club affiliation, state, and year(s):

3. Have you had other residences during the past five years? _____ Please list former addresses below:

a. _____

b. _____

4. Have you ever been arrested for or convicted of consumption, sale, or delivery of illegal substances? Yes _____ No _____

5. Have you ever been arrested for or convicted of a crime of violence Yes _____ No _____

6. Have you ever been arrested for or convicted of Sexual Abuse, Child Abuse, Child Neglect? Yes _____ No _____

7. Do you have any pending charges for any criminal violation? Yes _____ No _____

I agree to abide by the rules of Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League (WIAAYFL) and its affiliated organization members. I agree to all conditions and policies of the WIAAYFL and its affiliated organization members relating to the conduct and behavior of all coaches. I understand the information given in this form is subject to verification. This may include a criminal history record check, verification of your motor vehicle record or other publicly available background information. The answers provided above are truthful and correct. I understand that any false or misleading information I provide on this form may result in denied membership in the Wisconsin All-American Youth Football League and being barred from any and all sanctioned activities.

Signature _____ Date _____

Team Manager/President: Coach Registration Fee: \$5.00 per coach. Please collect all forms required and submit with one check made payable to "AAYFL" mail to the AAYFL Office, **prior to the first day of practice. Please do not send these forms in piece by piece.**

- All new coaches in the WIAAYFL are required to be registered in their first year.
- Coaches in their 2nd year and beyond must register biennially. Coaches born in odd number years must register in odd number years. Coaches born in even number years must register in even number years.