

## **Bentonville Parks and Recreation Youth Soccer Conduct Policy**

(1) Abuse of any kind is not permitted. Physical, sexual, emotional or verbal abuse or misconduct from our players, coaches, officials, volunteers, parents or spectators shall not be tolerated.

(2) Physical and sexual abuse, including, but not limited to, striking, hitting, kicking, biting, indecent or wanton gesturing, lewd remarks, indecent exposure, and any form of sexual contact or inappropriate touching, are strictly prohibited.

(3) Emotional abuse or verbal abuse is also prohibited. These include, but are not limited to such forms of abuse as: insulting, threatening, mocking, demeaning behavior, or making abusive statements in regard to a person's race, gender, religion, nationality/ethnicity, sex or age.

(4) We are committed to providing a safe environment for players, participants and staff. Everyone is responsible for reporting any cases of questionable conduct or alleged mistreatment toward participants by any coach, official, volunteer, player, parent, sibling or spectator.

(5) Bentonville Parks and Recreation promotes good sportsmanship throughout the organization and encourages qualities of mutual respect, courtesy and tolerance in all participants, coaches, officials and volunteers. It advocates building strong self-images among the youth participants. Children with a strong self-image may be less likely, but nevertheless targets for abuse; similarly, they may be less likely to abuse or bully others around them.

(6) Buddy System: It is recommended that every team uses a "Buddy System". Each youth participant should be assigned a buddy during activities. No child should go anywhere--to the bathrooms, locker rooms, or other location without his or her buddy.

(7) To further protect youth participants, as well as coaches, officials and volunteers, it is strongly recommended that no adult person allow him/herself to be alone with a child (unless their own child) or with any group of children during games, practices, or other sponsored activities.

In particular, it is recommended that coaches or other adults:

- Do not drive alone with a child participant in the car.
- Do not take a child alone to the locker room, bathrooms or any other private room.
- Private conversations with youth participants should occur within the view of others.
- Coaches and other adult members of the organization should not socialize individually with participants outside of sponsored activities.

(8) No child should be left alone at a training session or at any other time until they are picked up by their parent, older sibling, or other designated adult.. It is recommended that the last adult in addition to the coach or trainer wait at the site as well until the child is picked up.

(9) We want to empower our children to trust their feelings and let them know that their concerns, fears and hopes are important by listening to them. Open communication between children and parents, or between children and other adults in the organization, may help early warning signs of abuse to surface.