



## **Michiana Echo Soccer Club | Safe Sport Policy**

### **Last updated November 12, 2018**

Michiana Echo Soccer Club is committed to providing a safe environment for its members and participants and to preventing abusive conduct in any form. Every member of this organization is responsible for protecting our participants and insuring their safety and well-being while involved in sponsored activities.

To this end, we have established the following guidelines of behavior and procedures for our staff, volunteers, and participants. All members of this organization, as well as parents, spectators, and other invitees, are expected to observe and adhere to these guidelines.

1. Abuse of any kind is not permitted within our organization. This means we do not tolerate physical, sexual, emotional, or verbal abuse or misconduct from our players, coaches, officials, volunteers, parents, or spectators.

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

3. Emotional abuse or verbal abuse is also prohibited. This includes but is not limited to such forms of abuse as threatening, mocking, demeaning behavior, or making abusive statements in regard to a person's race, gender, religion, nationality/ethnicity, sex, or age. Hazing (any contact which is intimidating, humiliating, or physically harmful) and bullying (intentional, persistent, or repeated pattern of committing or willfully tolerating physical, nonphysical, or cyber bullying behaviors that are intended to cause fear, humiliation, or physical harm in an attempt to socially exclude, diminish, or isolate another person emotionally, physically, or sexually) are prohibited.

4. We are committed to providing a safe environment for our players, participants, and staff. All coaches, volunteers, and anyone else affiliated with our organization shall serve as protection advocates. Every member of this organization is responsible for reporting to the Club Risk Management Director or Club President any cases of questionable conduct or alleged mistreatment toward our participants by any coach, official, volunteer, player, parent, sibling, or spectator.

5. Any adult who is in regular contact with an amateur athlete who is a minor must comply with the reporting requirements of the Victims of Child Abuse Act and Indiana law if appropriate. We will offer and provide consistent training to adult members who are in contact with amateur athletes who are minors as required by Indiana Soccer and the Safe Sport Act.

6. To protect our youth participants, as well as our coaches and volunteers, we strongly advise that no adult person allow him/herself to be alone with a child (other than their own) or with any group of children during sponsored activities without another adult present (staff or parent). In particular, we recommend that coaches or other adult members of this organization:

- a. Do not drive alone with a child participant in the car.
- b. Do not take a child alone to the locker room, bathrooms, or any other private room.



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- c. Provide one-on-one training or individual coaching with the assistance of another adult or child.
  - d. If you must have a private conversation with a youth participant, do it within view of others on the field instead of in a private location.
  - e. Coaches and other adult members of this organization should not socialize on a one-on-one basis with the participants outside of sponsored activities.
7. Supervision/Chaperone ratio: We recommend that for any sponsored activity, the ratio of adults to youth participants be 1:8 – one (or more) adults for every eight children, with a minimum of two adults for every activity.
8. When traveling overnight with youth participants, adults are discouraged from spending the night in the same room as an unrelated minor without additional adults present. If possible, children should be paired up with other children of the same gender and similar age group, with chaperones in separate, but nearby rooms.
9. Open communication between children and parents, or between children and other adults in the organization, may help early warning signs of abuse to surface. If you see something inappropriate, say something.
10. We encourage parents to become as active as possible in sponsored activities, games, practices, and other events. The more the parents are involved, the less likely it is for potentially abusive situations to develop.
11. All electronic communications including email, texting, and social media between the staff member and a minor participant should be limited strictly to the legitimate activities of the organization.
12. We will respond quickly to any and all allegations of abuse within this organization. This information will be reviewed by the organization’s Risk Management Director and/or President and will be communicated to the authorities for investigation when appropriate. The alleged offender will be notified of such allegations promptly. Indiana Youth Soccer will be informed of such allegations and copied on all non-privileged correspondence.
13. We will not retaliate against or punish complainants who report reasonable suspicions of misconduct in good faith and any such retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action. Likewise, complainants who act in unreasonably or in bad faith in making allegations of misconduct, including malicious or frivolous allegations, may be subject to disciplinary and/or legal action.
14. Any person accused of sexual or physical abuse may be asked to resign voluntarily or may be suspended by the board until the matter is resolved or terminated. Regardless of criminal or civil guilt in the alleged abuse, the continued presence of the person could be detrimental to the reputation of the organization and could be harmful to the participants. A person who is accused but later cleared of charges may apply to be reinstated within the organization. Reinstatement is not a right, and no guarantee is made that he or she will be reinstated to his/her former position.



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15. We promote good sportsmanship throughout the organization and encourage qualities of mutual respect, courtesy, and tolerance in all participants, coaches, officials, volunteers, and spectators. We advocate building strong self-images among the youth participants. Children with a strong self-image may be less likely targets for abuse; similarly, they may be less likely to abuse or bully others around them.

16. Nothing in this policy shall be construed as a waiver or limitation of the organization's discretion to disqualify an applicant for an employment or volunteer position or to terminate or discipline an employee when, in the sole opinion of the board, such disqualification, termination, or discipline is in the best interest of the organization or its program participants.