

**Melrose Youth Soccer
Child Protection Policy
Ratified by the Board September 2010
(amended November 22, 2010)**

1. Each person applying to volunteer to coach, assistant coach, or take on any volunteer role with MYS shall authorize MYS to conduct a criminal background check (Criminal Offender Record Information – CORI check).
2. Before beginning work with children, each volunteer will sign a statement (wet signature or email) that they have read, understood, and agree to abide by this Child Protection Policy and that they have received and read the publication referenced in #4, below.
3. Only those persons who have met #1 and #2 will be allowed a position as a coach, assistant coach or any other volunteer role in the organization. Only these screened adult volunteers are allowed on the sidelines or may run practices.
4. In order to assure a minimum amount of knowledge for all Adult Screened Volunteers, MYS will provide to each screened volunteer a copy of “7 Steps to Protecting our Children; a guide for responsible adults.”
5. Where it has been determined that an applicant should not work with children, the MYS Board President or his or her designee should inform the applicant of the reason.
6. The organization shall ensure that training focused on current issues of child protection is available to and received by those working with children. Attendance at this training (in person or online) shall be required of all MYS Board members. Screened adult volunteers will be strongly encouraged to receive this training. Training, approved in advance by the MYS President, should include:
 - A. The definition and recognition of child abuse.
 - B. The organization’s policy and procedures on child abuse and the reasons for having them.
 - C. The appropriate behavior for those charged with the care of children.
 - D. Definition of appropriate interpersonal boundaries.
7. All activities involving children will be supervised by at least one screened adult. Only designated screened adults may provide instruction and act in capacity representing MYS. Any absence of the designated screened adults, resulting in a substitution (another coach covering practice, for example), will be done only with the approval of the appropriate MYS age coordinator. Notification to parents must be given at least 24 hours in advance. The covering coach must be a MYS designated screened adult.
8. The “Two Person Rule” shall be used, which is defined as striving to have at least two people in *any* setting with a child, one of which must be a screened adult volunteer. This would include at initial drop off, pick-up, and any carpool arrangement. While not always possible, the preference would be that the second person is an adult. Reasonable effort should be made to ensure that no registered adult is in a situation where he or she is alone with a player (other than his or her child), nor should he or she facilitate or allow that situation with any other adult/player.
9. MYS maintains an open door policy for all activities. Parents or other volunteers shall be allowed to visit any game or practice at any time announced or unannounced.
10. Adult Screened Volunteers will not:
 - A. Offer one on one training sessions outside of practice.
 - B. Give special treatment to one player over another.
 - C. Engage in rough or physical or sexually provocative games.
 - D. Make sexually suggestive remarks to a child – even in fun.
 - E. Taunt, demean, badger or intimidate players or child referees.
 - F. Physically or verbally abuse or demean a child.

- G. Knowingly foster a relationship with a player outside of games and practices that may not be known to the player's parents. This is to include personal contact, email, phone, texting, and social networking internet sites.
 - H. Disperse the game or practice until he or she has supervised the safe dispersal of the children. A child in a U10 league or below should not be allowed to leave a coach's care alone or with another minor without written/emailed notification.
11. Adult Screened Volunteers will not allow players:
- A. To exhibit inappropriate physical contact between other players or coaches. Contact outside the normal definition of soccer should be deemed inappropriate (for example: wrestling, boxing).
 - B. To use inappropriate language, or let such language go unchallenged.
 - C. To taunt, demean, badger or intimidate other players or child referees.
12. Any older child or teen helping with younger children will be closely monitored by an Adult Screened Volunteer and will be held to the same standards as outlined in this policy.

Reporting Abuse

13. Everyone in the organization has a moral responsibility to report suspected abuse whenever it comes to their attention, regardless of where that abuse takes place. Reporting abuse is a form of assistance to those crying out for help. Therefore, immediately notify the President of Melrose Youth Soccer or the MYS Child Protection Officer (CPO). The President, or CPO, will then notify the proper authorities. The authority may be a parent, a community help organization, the Department of Social Services, or the Melrose Police Department. MYS will leave it to the discretion of the appropriate authority to determine the validity of the allegation.
14. The President or CPO, in conferment with and/or at the direction of the authorities, will take immediate action up to and including removing the accused from further involvement with children in the MYS program, if warranted.
15. All allegations will be taken seriously. MYS will reach out to the victim and the victim's family to show care and support to help prevent further hurt. MYS will extend whatever resources are needed. The care and safety of the victim is our first priority.
16. MYS will keep a written report of the steps taken by the organization in response to the reported abuse. The report will contain only factual information relevant to the situation. It will be kept in a secure place. It will be sent electronically whenever possible, or written in ink or typed to prevent it from being changed.
17. Any contact with the media is handled exclusively by the President. If the President is not available, his duties will fall to the Vice President and then to the CPO.