

SJCYSC- Policy of Zero Tolerance for Abusive Conduct

Policy Statement

The underlying function of the Sir John Colborne Youth Soccer Club (the “SJCYSC”) is to provide the most supportive climate possible for its registered children so that they can enjoy the game of soccer and learn about competition, teamwork, sportsmanship and fair play.

In order to permit its registered children with opportunities to participate in sport in a safe and positive environment, the SJCYSC unconditionally supports **zero tolerance of all forms of abuse**, whether it is verbal, physical, emotional, and sexual.

All relationships within the SJCYSC context, whether it involves coaches/managers, players, parents, volunteers, spectators, referees or members of the Board of Directors, must be based on mutual trust and respect. Any act of abuse is a breach of that trust. The SJCYSC will investigate and act firmly upon all complaints or reports of inappropriate behavior. It is critical for the SJCYSC to do all things necessary to guarantee that deterrents are in place so that incidents of abuse do not occur at any time throughout its soccer season.

The SJCYSC is managed and operated entirely by volunteers. These community-minded citizens contribute in many ways to the success of minor soccer in the City of Port Colborne. Further, the registered children and their supporters are entitled to participate and enjoy the game of soccer without being put in an uncomfortable situation. It is the responsibility of all persons involved to support these individuals in having the ability to function in a safe and positive environment.

Goals of the Policy

- To reduce or eliminate all forms of abuse within the purview of the SJCYSC
- To offer players a safe and positive environment to learn the game of soccer
- To protect coaches and referees from being subjected to abusive conduct
- To promote positive cheering behaviours among spectators and fans
- To increase the level of understanding among spectators and fans of the importance of creating a positive and supportive environment for children's sport

What constitutes Abusive Conduct?

Verbal Abuse includes remarks that are rude or threatening in nature and that tend to demoralize, degrade or demean another person. Verbal abuse includes racial or ethnic insults.

Physical Abuse refers to inappropriate behavior such as punching, pushing, slapping, kicking, spitting or pinching another individual.

Emotional Abuse signifies the lack of sensitivity on the part of anyone associated with the SJCYSC towards another individual. In particular, SJCYSC officials (board members, coaches, and managers) should be aware of the power that is inherent in such positions and strive for sensitivity in dealing with individuals in positions of authority (coaches, players, volunteers) and with parents.

Sexual Abuse shall be defined as any form of physical sexual contact between any individual associated with the SJCYSC and another person where the activity is not consensual; touching of a sexual nature; and behavior or remarks of a sexual nature.

Each form of abusive conduct mentioned above constitutes “abuse” for the purposes of this policy.

Enforcement of the SJCYSC Zero Tolerance Policy

Consistent with an “open door policy”, violations of the zero tolerance policy should be reported immediately to the Board of Directors for the SJCYSC by victims or those close to them (i.e., a parent, a teammate, a coach, etc.). This can be done in writing or orally. Depending on the circumstances, a formal complaint should be communicated in writing to the Board of Directors for the SJCYSC.

All complaints of verbal abuse and physical abuse will be investigated by the SJCYSC and may be reported to police with the consent of the victim or, in the case of a minor, a parent. All complaints of emotional abuse will be investigated by the club. Individuals accused of any of these forms of abuse will be given an opportunity to present their position.

The SJCYSC will immediately report all complaints of sexual abuse or any other criminal activity to the Niagara Regional Police.

With respect to the first offence, any coach, player, family/guardian or spectator determined by the Board of Directors for the SJCYSC to be guilty of abusive conduct during a SJCYSC event will be reprimanded in writing.

A second offence during the same season will, depending on the circumstances, result in one, or both, of the following sanctions:

- 1) any or all registered children of the immediate family in question will be de-registered from the SJCYSC;
- 2) in co-operation with the City of Port Colborne, the guilty party will be banned from all soccer fields and practice facilities used by the SJCYSC.

In extreme cases, as determined by the Board of Directors for the SJCYSC, either sanction may be evoked after the first offence. Further, the SJCYSC reserves the right to continue with any of the above mentioned sanctions in future soccer seasons.

This policy applies to all relationships within the SJCYSC context, whether it involves coaches/managers, players, parents, spectators, volunteers, referees or members of the Board of Directors. The SJCYSC anticipates that the soccer season will be the source of much enjoyment and particularly rewarding for the players registered with the SJCYSC. This policy intends to support this philosophy.

Let's have a great soccer season!!!