

## Coaches Code of Ethics

SDSSA has deliberated for several years over adopting a Coaches Code of Ethics/Conduct. Currently, no mandate and no policing or penalties are officially in place. Within the SDSSA bylaws, there is a sort of “catch all” for unethical behavior, and offers a broad definition for what this can be.

The focus is on coaches as they hold a prominent and influential position in youth soccer. It is apparent that a majority of our coaches operate within these ethical guidelines all the time. However, it is also clear that some coaches pick and choose which guidelines to follow and currently, that is possible within the broad scope of the rules we operate by. Associations within SDSSA may wish to further define their club/association Coaches Code of Conduct within the scope of their operating practice. To establish a “jumping off” point, the RM Committee has decided to formally adopt a Coaches Code of Ethics.

While youth soccer and youth sports become more “professionalized” and competitive at all levels, we need to remind ourselves that “youth” is still the constituent. As such, all adults involved need to be prepared, and perhaps required, to observe higher standards of ethical behavior.

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The SDSSA Risk Management committee adopted the following Coaches Code of Ethics March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012 with submission to the SDSSA BOD for approval on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012.

The following is from the National Soccer Coaches Association of America (NSCAA) and we thank them for allowing SDSSA to use their template for a code of ethics. The NSCAA compiled the following coaching requirements after several years of deliberation.

1. Soccer is the player's game. The paramount concern of coaches is the holistic development, welfare, enjoyment and safety of their players.
2. Coaches bear responsibility for teaching players to strive for success while playing fairly, observing the laws of the game and the highest levels of sportsmanship.
3. Coaches shall treat officials with respect and dignity, and shall teach their players to do the same.
4. Our opponents are worthy of being treated with respect. Coaches will model such respect for opponents and expect their players to do likewise.
5. In both victory and defeat, the behavior of the coach shall model grace, dignity and composure.
6. Coaches shall adhere to the highest standards and the regulations of the institutions they represent: clubs, schools, sponsoring organizations and sports governing bodies.
7. Coaches shall model inclusive behavior, actively supporting cultural diversity while opposing all types of discrimination, including but not limited to, racism and sexism, at all levels of the game.

8. Coaches are responsible for taking an active role in education about, and prevention and treatment of drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse; both in their lives and in the lives of their players.
9. Coaches shall refrain from all manner of personal abuse and harassment of others, whether verbal, physical, emotional or sexual, and shall oppose such abuse and harassment at all levels of the game.
10. Coaches shall respect the declared affiliations of all players, and shall adhere to the guidelines and regulations on recruiting by the governing bodies having oversight of their teams and leagues.
11. Coaches shall seek to honor those who uphold the highest standards and principles of soccer and shall use appropriate protocol to oppose and eliminate all behavior that brings disrepute to the sport - violence, abuse, dishonesty, disrespect and violations of the laws of the game and rules governing competition.