

# 2021 ABINGTON AREA GIRLS SOFTBALL COACHES' CODE OF CONDUCT

Adopted from the National Youth Sports Coaches Association

***Please sign and return to AAGSL before the first practice.***

AAGSL is dedicated to raising the standard of service to youth in sports through the enforcement of this Code of Conduct among its coaches. This Code of Conduct defines the expectations for adults serving as coaches in youth sports and provides the tools to be used and when necessary, to check behavior and to respond with resolve to protect all children from the psychological, emotional, physical or social abuses that can be perpetrated against them by youth sport coaches. AAGSL firmly believes that the sports experience should be positive, safe and a learning experience for youth. As a result, volunteers are held accountable for their behavior when working with and around children.

## **A. Coaches' Code of Conduct & Code of Ethics Pledge:**

- 1. I will treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for the same age group.***
- 2. I promise to review and practice the basic first aid principles needed to treat injuries of my players and will review and implement the COVID-19 safety measures at all times.***
- 3. I will do my best to organize practices that are safe, fun and age appropriate for all my players.***
- 4. I will provide a sports environment for my team that is free of drugs, tobacco and alcohol.***
- 5. I will be knowledgeable in the rules of the age division/s that are in the AAGSL Coach's Handbook and I will teach these rules to my players.***
- 6. I will use those coaching techniques appropriate for each of the skills that I teach.***
- 7. I will remember that I am a youth sports coach and that the game is for children and not adults. That said, I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players.***
- 8. I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my players ahead of a personal desire to win.***
- 9. I will report observed inappropriate actions or misconduct by another adult including: other coaches, umpires, parents or spectators to a member of the AAGSL Board.***
- 10. I will report inappropriate misconduct of actions or suspected abuse of a minor to the appropriate agency as mandated by SafeSport and I will share this information with a AAGSL Board member.***

## **As a coach, I agree to:**

- Attend events that provide training opportunities including but not limited to coaches training sessions and/or all-division clinics and COVID-19 safety training.
- Complete online concussion and SafeSport training and submit certificates before the first practice.
- Complete required background checks. To be in compliance with the Child Protective Services Law, Pennsylvania requires:
  - 3.1. Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance
  - 3.2. Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Checks
  - 3.3. Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) Criminal History Background Check and signed waiver. *\*Please note: Volunteers are required to obtain certification (fingerprints) through the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) if they have not lived in the state of Pennsylvania for the past ten consecutive years.\**

## **B. Complaint Against a Coach Procedure**

- It is the duty of AAGSL Board to respond to complaints lodged against a volunteer coach that has allegedly violated the Code of Conduct. This is accomplished by initiating the "Complaint Against a Coach Procedure." The purpose of this procedure is to hear the complaints and to determine what, if any, action should be taken towards correcting the coach's behavior. In order to provide the league the flexibility to take appropriate action when a coach is found to have violated the Coaches' Code of Conduct, a range of possible actions has been developed to accompany the Code of Conduct.
- When AAGSL receives a complaint about a coach, the league will:

- a. Gather information and eyewitness accounts of the event(s) that took place from everyone involved to determine if a violation of the letter or intent of the Coaches' Code of Ethics Pledge has occurred. This may include the site supervisor, game officials, and other coaches, parents and children.
  - b. Require the coach to take part in a meeting (in person or over the phone is acceptable) to address the complaint and to offer his/her side of the incident.
  - c. AAGSL Board Members under the supervision of the AAGSL President has the authority to determine the severity of the situation and whether or not the affected coach has violated the expected behaviors outlined under each of the canons of the Code of Conduct Pledge that comprise Code of Conduct.
  - d. AAGSL Board Members, after approval from AAGSL President, has the authority to enforce the appropriate range of disciplinary actions outlined in the Coaches' Code of Conduct. This information will be logged in the coach's file.
  - e. There is no appeals process. The decision is final.
3. Possible actions include:
    - a. Coach receives warning and must issue an apology
    - b. One game suspension
    - c. Season suspension
    - d. Permanent revocation of future coaching/volunteering roles
  4. When reviewing AAGSL Board members must take into consideration various extenuating circumstances when deciding what action is the most appropriate in a given situation. Factors that might suggest a more lenient sanction include:
    - a. First offense
    - b. Remorse
    - c. Apparent desire to reform
    - d. Other good coaching attributes
    - e. Dedication to youth sports
  5. Factors that might suggest a harsher sanction include:
    - a. Child endangerment
    - b. Violation of law
    - c. Prior complaints/review action
    - d. Lack of remorse
    - e. Number of ethics codes violated
    - f. Number of expected behaviors violated
    - g. Breach of duties as a role model
    - h. Extraordinarily poor judgment around children

**C. Coaches ejected from a game by an administrator, official or umpire**

When a coach is ejected from a game, they shall leave the facility immediately and take no further part in that game. Any coach ejected from a game is automatically suspended for their next two physically played games but may be in attendance at the game site from which they are suspended. If any further altercations/arguments are made prior to leaving the premises, a multiple game suspension or expulsion is possible. 911 may be called if necessary. There is no appeal process following an ejection. Any coach who is ejected from two games is banned from coaching in any AAGSL activity for one calendar year from the latest offense.

**The AAGSL Board of Directors would thank you for your commitment to our program and for helping to make our league a success.**

Coach Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Coach Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_