

**AYSO Region 112 La Verne/San Dimas
Youth Volunteer Abuse Policy**

Section I - Purpose of the Policy

1. Youth development is the central focus of the AYSO program. This includes development of all youth volunteers whether they are players, coaches or referees. All the AYSO guidelines and policies on providing a "Safe, Fair and Fun" environment for players also applies to youth volunteer coaches and referees. Only positive and encouraging comments are allowed to be directed at youth volunteers. The purpose of this policy is to make clear that verbal abuse or negative criticism of youth volunteers is unacceptable and to adopt basic standard sanctions for improper conduct.
2. This policy is not intended to imply that youth volunteers are always "right" and the adult spectator or coach is always "wrong". Just as youth players will make mistakes during play, youth coaches and referees will make mistakes in coaching and officiating, particularly in the younger divisions where they are learning their role. In addition, sometimes youth coaches and referees are "in over their head" because of a particularly challenging game, an assignment beyond their experience or comfort level, etc.
3. This policy is not meant to imply that criticism/abuse of adult volunteers is permitted. However, in each case the adult volunteer is expected to handle such behavior at the field and report such incidents to the appropriate Regional Board Member – referees to Regional Referee Administrator, coaches to Regional Coach Administrator.

Section II - Policy on Youth Volunteer Abuse

1. It is never acceptable to abuse or criticize youth volunteers, verbally or otherwise, in any situation.
2. A coach or spectator should only communicate in a positive way and should not express any disagreement or dissatisfaction with the performance of a youth referee or coach. A coach or spectator should not, before, during or after a game, discuss with a youth referee or coach their critique of the youth's performance, other than to thank and compliment them.
3. Any criticism or critique of a youth volunteer's performance may only be communicated to the youth via a designated Referee or Coach Mentor or Regional Board Member. Adult referee(s) present at the game shall, if necessary, intervene if any coach, player, spectator, or other adult is criticizing or abusing a youth volunteer, verbally or otherwise and may take immediate appropriate action. This may include directing the offender to leave the site, and/or suspending or terminating the game.
4. Any AYSO-certified volunteer (Coach or Referee) observing behavior not following these guidelines shall report the incident to a Regional Board member within 24 hours of the incident so that an appropriate review can take place.
5. There are appropriate avenues for coaches or spectators to share concerns about the quality of youth volunteers. The regional staff welcomes constructive feedback. The Region 112 web site (<http://www.ayso112.org>) provides the necessary contact information.

Disciplinary Sanctions for Youth Abuse

Section III – Possible Sanction

The following sanctions may be applied:

<u>Type of Abuse</u>	<u>Recommended Sanction</u>
a) First offense: criticism or minor verbal abuse of a youth volunteer (not including offensive, insulting, or foul language)	One game suspension. Further or more serious discipline may be added based on a review of each case.
b) Subsequent offense: criticism or minor verbal abuse of a youth volunteer (not including offensive, insulting, or foul language)	Suspension for remainder of the season. Further or more serious discipline may be added based on a review of each case.
c) Serious verbal abuse of a youth volunteer (e.g. using offensive, insulting, or foul language), or repeated offence of less serious abuse)	Suspension for remainder of the season. Further or more serious discipline may be added based on a review of each case.
d) Coming onto the field to confront the youth volunteer, or threatening the youth volunteer (by word or action)	Permanent expulsion from further participation in AYSO Region 112 Soccer.

Section IV – Supplementary Conditions

1. A suspended person may not, during their suspension, attend any AYSO Region 112 La Verne/San Dimas soccer game. The suspended person may attend practices unless notified of additional restrictions by the Regional Executive Board. Note: The term “may not attend” means the person may not be in view of the game.
2. These sanctions apply only to the discipline of spectators, parents and coaches. Sanctions necessary for any players on one of the teams involved that exhibit inappropriate behavior will be dealt with using the Cautions or Ejection procedures for that particular age group.
3. These sanctions do not limit, prevent, or replace any voluntary or required report or referral of improper conduct, by any adult toward any child, to any law enforcement or child protection agency.
4. These sanctions may be reported to one or more levels of the AYSO organization - Area, Section and/or National – based the review of each case.

AYSO Parent Code of Conduct

As a parent, you play a special role in contributing to the needs and development of youngsters.

Through your encouragement and good example, you can help all the boys and girls learn good sportsmanship and self-discipline. In AYSO, young people learn to work together, to sacrifice for the good of the team, to enjoy winning and deal appropriately with defeat - all while becoming physically fit and healthy. Best of all, they have fun.

Support Your Child

Supporting your child by giving encouragement and showing interest in their team is very important.

Help your child work toward skill improvement and good sportsmanship in every game. Teach your child that hard work and an honest effort are often more important than victory - that way your child will always be a winner despite the outcome of the game!

Always Be Positive

Parents serve as role models for their children. Be aware of this fact and work to be a positive role model. Applaud good plays by your child's team as well as good plays by the opposing team.

Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from youth sports.

Remember: Your Child Wants To Have Fun

Remember that your child is the one playing soccer, not you. It's very important to let children establish their own goals - to play the game for themselves. Take care not to impose your own standards and goals on them.

Don't put too heavy a burden on your child to win games. Surveys reveal that 72% of children would rather play for a losing team than ride the bench for a winning team.

Children play for the fun of playing.

Reinforce Positive Behavior

Positive reinforcement is the best way to help your child achieve their goals and overcome their natural fear of failure. Nobody likes to make mistakes. If your child does make one, remember it's all part of learning, so encourage your child's efforts and point out the good things your child accomplished.

Don't Be A Sideline Coach Or Referee

AYSO coaches and referees are usually parents just like you. They volunteer their time to help make your child's soccer experience a positive one. They need your support, too.

That means refrain from coaching or refereeing from the sidelines. In a volunteer organization like AYSO there's always an opportunity to take your interest in coaching or refereeing to the next level and become one yourself!