

GRASSLAND ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

SAFETY POLICY

IMPLEMENTED: FEBRUARY 2014

REVISED: DECEMBER 2017

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GRASSLAND ATHLETICS ASSOCIATION'S PURPOSE:

Grassland Athletic Association (GAA), provides the opportunity for children to participate in athletics, including Baseball, Basketball, Cheerleading, Football, & Softball, while teaching children teamwork, respect, and the fundamentals of each game and strives to expose children to instruction and coaching in a positive, pro-active mentoring environment.

GENERAL PURPOSE STATEMENT of this POLICY

GAA is overseen by volunteer community members who make up our Board of Directors (the "Board"). The Board seek to provide a safe and secure environment for the children who participate in our programs and activities. The general purpose of this policy is to implement youth protection guidelines, concussion guidelines, and park/facility guidelines for our participants to provide this safe and secure environment.

By implementing the below practices, our goal is (i) to protect children registered to participate in our programs from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate or abusive behavior, (ii) to comply with Tennessee requirements regarding concussions, head injuries, and sudden cardiac arrest in youth sports, and (iii) to implement safe practices for GAA sanctioned events.

DEFINITIONS

Service Providers(SR): Those who provide services on behalf of GAA via a signed and approved service agreement.

Participant: Either a child under the age of eighteen (18) years old who is officially registered in a program offered by GAA or an adult who volunteers on behalf of their child.

Coach: An adult volunteer that registers in one of GAA's offered programs and who has completed any GAA required certifications and coaches forms. **GAA Programs:** All sports league activities set up and offered by GAA.

Safety Committee or Committee: A committee comprised of a minimum of three adult GAA Members, with at least two being GAA Board Members, who are appointed by the Board and who conduct regular meetings, at least quarterly, to review compliance with this Policy and consider what actions should be implemented to further the goals of this policy.

PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN & ASSOCIATION RELATIONSHIP

GAA depends on the parents and legal guardians of all participants in order to provide its programs. It is always the responsibility of each participant's parents and/or legal guardian to provide oversight and guidance of their child at each of GAA's games, practices, and events. Coaches and other GAA volunteers only provide coaching or sports team specific guidance.

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SERVICE PROVIDERS & VOLUNTEERS

All GAA volunteers and those providing services to our programs, such as service providers (SR's) will submit required information and grant permission for criminal background checks. Criminal background checks will comply with applicable regulations governing programs, such as those available via National Alliance for Youth Sports and will be conducted in a manner consistent with the Background Check provision set out below in this Policy. No volunteer or SR will be allowed within GAA when checks show evidence of convictions for an offense involving children and/or for offenses involving violence, dishonesty, illegal substances, indecency and any conduct contrary to the mission of GAA. Failure to disclose a criminal conviction on the application form may also terminate an individual's application. The background check authorization form and results will be maintained in electronic file within GAA's electronic file service for 12 months, see layout of back ground checks elsewhere in this document.

All GAA volunteers and SR's will portray a positive role model and act in a caring, honest, respectful and responsible manner, maintaining a attitude of patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity. Each shall not use profanity, abusive language, and never come to a GAA event under the influence of alcohol, intoxicants or drugs.

All coaches and assistant coaches shall receive access and complete online certifications as deemed necessary by the Board.

All adult volunteers and SR's shall receive access to and be required to complete online certifications as deemed necessary by the Board.

All parents will receive notice at sign ups or as necessary of online information available to them as it relates to participation in GAA programs.

YOUTH PROTECTION GUIDELINES

It is our goal that a minimum of two adults will attend at all times when participants are present. A head coach and his/her assistant coach and/or a acknowledged team parent must all be present at each and every game, practice or other GAA or GAA team activity. GAA does not approve any one-on-one contact between any GAA volunteer or SR with any participant.

Once a scheduled activity is completed, no participant shall remain by himself or herself waiting on a parent or other to pick up. GAA has no responsibility concerning who picks up a child. GAA does require a minimum of two adults to remain until this child is picked up. Coaches or GAA volunteers are not permitted to provide transportation of a participant without the consent of the child's parent or guardian.

In regards to when a GAA team is traveling to an out of town event, all participants are required to stay only with their parents and/or legal guardians unless the parent and/or legal guardian provides written verification otherwise.

All GAA volunteers and SR's shall follow Tennessee state laws in regards to reporting any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to law enforcement agencies or other proper

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authority, including DCS. GAA requests notification from this volunteer or SR as allowed by law. In the event, this reporting involves a GAA volunteer or SR, the reporting person shall notify the GAA sport commissioner/board member, the Board's president, and the GAA's general email address, all via email for record purposes.

GAA is not responsible for any activity outside of a GAA scheduled event. The Grassland Park and other Williamson County facilities are available to the general public and at various times where GAA does not and cannot have any direct control.

SAFE PLAY

Concussions

Any participant in a GAA scheduled event, or player in general, who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems, shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional. This is intended to be in accordance with Tennessee General Assembly Public Chapter 148 Act, effective January 1, 2014.

No participant, or player in general, who has been removed from play due to suspected concussion shall return to practice or competition until he or she has been evaluated by their parent's or legal guardian's appointed health care provider and receives written clearance from the health care provider for a full or graduated return to play. This written form shall be the TDH's approved form and is available at TDH's website in a downloadable form.

All documentation of the completion of a concussion recognition and head injury safety education course program and signed concussion and head injury information sheets shall be maintained by GAA for a period of three years or as further required by state law. It is the participant's parent's or legal guardian's responsibility to provide this written release to their child's coach, GAA, and the governing body of any program GAA is affiliated with when this determination was made.

More information on the nature, and symptoms of concussion and head injury is available online at <http://health.stae/tn/us/TBI/concussion.htm> and for a checklist, see [www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/TBI schools checklist 508-a.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/TBI%20schools%20checklist%20508-a.pdf).

In the event that a participant is injured during a GAA scheduled event, the following steps should be followed:

1. For any injuries, GAA expects parents will provide First Aid as appropriate, however, should a GAA volunteer or SR need to provide First Aid, such as ice packs or something for the child to place over the wound. If injury dictates more serious assistance and only GAA volunteers or SR's are available, then an ambulance will be called and parents will be contacted.

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2. Once the child has received appropriate medical attention, an incident report will be required to be completed by either the child's coach, assistant coach, or other GAA volunteer who was at the scene of the injury.

Sudden Cardiac Arrest

Any participant in a GAA scheduled event, or player in general, who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with sudden cardiac arrest such as fainting or seizures during exercise, unexplained shortness of breath, dizziness, extreme fatigue, chest pains, or racing heart, shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional. This is intended to be in accordance with Tennessee Public Chapter 325 – the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act, effective January 1, 2016.

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) is when the heart stops beating, suddenly and unexpectedly. When this happens, blood stops flowing to the brain and other vital organs. SCA doesn't just happen to adults; it takes the lives of students, too. However, the causes of sudden cardiac arrest in students and adults can be different. A youth athlete's SCA will likely result from an inherited condition, while an adult's SCA may be caused by either inherited or lifestyle issues.

SCA is NOT a heart attack. A heart attack may cause SCA, but they are not the same. A heart attack is caused by a blockage that stops the flow of blood to the heart. SCA is a malfunction in the heart's electrical system, causing the heart to suddenly stop beating.

All youth athletes and their parents or guardians must read and agree to a waiver when registering for a GAA-sponsored program. A new waiver must be agreed to for each program registration. Additionally, all GAA volunteers must read and agree to a waiver when volunteering for a GAA-sponsored program. A new waiver must be agreed to for each program for which the individual wishes to volunteer.

GAA will immediately remove any youth athlete who passes out or faints while participating in an athletic activity, or who exhibits any of the following symptoms:

1. Unexplained shortness of breath;
2. Chest pains;
3. Dizziness
4. Racing heart rate; or
5. Extreme fatigue; and

Before returning to practice or play in an athletic activity, the athlete must be evaluated by a Tennessee licensed medical doctor or an osteopathic physician. Clearance to full or graduated return to practice or play must be in writing and submitted to GAA.

More information on the nature, and symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest is available online at <https://www.tn.gov/health/topic/sudden-cardiac-arrest-prevention-act>.

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Severe Weather

Weather forecasts will be monitored by GAA daily and weekly. On days of threatening weather, hourly monitoring will take place and mass communication to volunteers and parents will take place via email, text messaging, Twitter and Facebook to alert teams of severe weather threats.

Protocol for Evacuation when Grassland Park is Occupied

1. One long sound of the air horn signifies all practice and games are to be suspended and all participants, coaches, parents, players will take shelter.
2. GAA will utilize publically-available weather apps and a weather radio on nights of severe weather. Fields will be closed if lightning is detected within a 10-mile radius of Grassland Park.
3. If lightning is detected within 10 miles, a “warning blast” (one long blast) is sounded by the air horn located in the concession area. GAA leaders and volunteers will monitor evacuation making certain all fields are cleared. All participants will be directed to cars.
4. If fields are closed due to lighting, the “site coordinator” (the Program Director ranking GAA Board Member) will wait 30 minutes. If no lightning strikes are detected for a period of 30 minutes a second blast of the air horn will signify fields are reopened. The “all clear” signal will be one short blast.
5. If the site coordinator determines that the facility is to be closed for the day, two long blasts will be sounded by the air horn located in the concession area.
6. If fields are closed due to threat of tornado or high winds the site coordinator team will assess the time frame for evacuation, including traffic in other areas of the facility. If there is reasonable time to get all vehicles out of the facility an evacuation of the facility will be carried out.
7. If it is determined there is not time to evacuate the facility due to tornado or high winds threat, then participants will be directed to safe areas. All participants will be directed to these “safe areas” during imminent threat of high winds or tornado.

Anaphylaxis and Allergy Emergency Plan

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction to venom, food, or medication. These severe reactions are most typically caused by an insect sting or ingesting foods the athlete may be allergic to. Common food allergies include milk, peanuts, or tree nuts. Anaphylaxis can be deadly. Therefore, IMMEDIATE treatment is a must. If an athlete has a known severe allergy to any substance, he or she must carry an EpiPen (or similar treatment) with them to all events and venues.

Signs and Symptoms of Anaphylaxis

- Pale skin
- Rash
- Facial, throat, or mouth swelling
- Weak rapid pulse
- Rapid shallow breathing or difficulty breathing

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Treatment for Unknown Allergy

- Remove athlete from play.
- Allow athlete to sit down.
- Inspect bite or sting.
- Remove stinger if able and apply ice.
- Monitor athlete for 15 minutes.
- If symptoms resolve allow athlete to return to play.
- If symptoms have not resolved Call 9-1-1.

Treatment for Known Allergy

- Remove athlete from play.
- Call 9-1-1.
- Lay athlete on their back and keep calm.
- Elevate legs and cover with blanket.
- Remove stinger if able.

Note: A stinger can be removed by pinching the skin slightly below the sting and scraping upward with a credit card.

GAA SCHEDULED EVENT, PARK, & FACILITY SAFETY

All parking of vehicles at GAA events shall be within established parking areas as marked. Access to emergency vehicles must be maintained at all times. Should this access be blocked and after attempts to get vehicle moved does not provide this access, GAA reserves the right to have the vehicle towed.

Should a participant or non-participant be ejected from a GAA scheduled event by game officials, a report should be filed electronically with GAA via the GAA email address or thru the web site as set by the Board. This report should be filed by a coach, game official, team parent, or other GAA volunteer who witness it. The report should include what happened, when it happened, and who witnessed it.

VOLUNTEER SCREENING

Purpose

It is the intent of this policy to establish certain guidelines wherein GAA can seek to protect children registered in the GAA's leagues and teams by investigating the background of volunteers who will be coaching or providing any established volunteer role in sanctioned athletic programs. This will include GAA board members, GAA service providers, and coaches with regular and sustained contact with their team. GAA reserves the right to add others as needed.

I. Statement

Criminal background screening is conducted by an outside third party which specializes in such work, and overseen (in specific instances) by GAA Safety Committee. This is executed in an effort to protect the children who participate in GAA scheduled events and related activities associated with GAA.

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III. Procedure

All candidates for the above mentioned positions must sign a Release Form for Criminal History which gives GAA the right to check criminal history records and verify social security numbers. This work is executed directly, through a third party vendor. No other personal information (e.g. work history, financial, credit, etc.) is checked or researched. The company executing background checks has agreed to such terms contractually, and confirms such direction annually.

The company never forwards any individual's information to the league where no issues are discovered.

In the event information surfaces via the background check, the Safety Committee will review such background check information to determine coaching eligibility. Only members of the Safety Committee will review data obtained, which will then be processed discreetly. All information is strictly confidential and will not be made public under any circumstances. The Safety Committee will inform the GAA Executive Committee of a decision to take adverse action with respect to a coach's application based on background information.

Some examples of reasons for being declined the opportunity to coach are noted below as part of this policy. In some instances, factors of time may be taken into account when considering coaching eligibility (i.e. length of time since disposition of certain offenses). The decision of the screening committee may be appealed, for the purpose of clarifying facts or explaining extenuating circumstances, to the Board.

All criminal history record information will be kept for a period of 12 months and promptly destroyed at the end of this 12 month period.

All coaches are required to notify the committee immediately following an arrest or conviction on any of the listed offenses. Any coach, who while coaching for GAA is arrested for committing an offense as listed, will immediately forfeit his/her coaching eligibility until disposition by the courts. A conviction of an offense as listed will result in termination of coaching eligibility as stated in the policy.

The following is a list of example offenses prohibiting an applicant from participation as a coach under GAA -- offenses including but not limited to the following:

- Arson
- Assault (including aggravated and sexual)
- Aggravated Kidnapping
- Aggravated Robbery
- Crimes against Children (including abandonment, abuse, endangerment, pornography, possession or promotion of pornography, enticement, solicitation, sale or purchase of, injury to, or indecency) - Criminally Negligent Homicide
- Deadly Conduct
- Delivery of Marijuana

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- Manufacture of or Delivery of a controlled substance or dangerous drug
- Any violation of a law intended to control the possession or distribution of any controlled substance or illegal drug - Indecent Exposure
- Injury to Elderly or Disabled
- Intoxication Manslaughter
- Kidnapping
- Manslaughter (voluntary or involuntary)
- Murder
- Prohibited Sexual Conduct
- Prostitution (including promotion of, aggravated promotion of)
- Public Lewdness
- Rape
- Sexual Abuse
- Marijuana Possession*
- Driving While Intoxicated/Impaired (DWI) / Driving Under the Influence (DUI) if a second or greater offense
- Theft*

**Eligibility dependent upon the severity and length of time since offense occurred.