

The Capital Area Soccer League Implements Code of Conduct

With all of the horrific stories in the news across the nation about poor sportsmanship at youth athletic events, the Capital Area Soccer League (CASL) has decided to make a stand in favor of great sportsmanship at their youth soccer games.

In June, the CASL Board of Directors working with the CASL staff approved a Code of Conduct that applies to all members, players, volunteers, staff, coaches, and contractors doing business with their league. No longer will poor sporting behavior be tolerated at any CASL event either on or off the field. Charlie Slagle, CEO of CASL, has been heard for years saying "have fun, it is just a game." Now, with the newly approved and implemented Code of Conduct, he hopes everyone realizes just how seriously he and the CASL staff take those words. "With apologies to the Osmonds and the Jackson 5, "One bad apple" can spoil the enjoyment of a youth athletic event for others that are involved. Whether this person is a player, coach, referee or spectator, they must learn that their behavior is unacceptable and will not be tolerated," says Charlie. "Although we don't have a lot of incidents each season, our goal is zero incidents, and therefore our policy is a zero tolerance policy." Rusty Scarborough, CASL's Director of Coaching stated: "Our hope is that other soccer clubs and other youth sport organizations will follow CASL's lead. "Regardless of the level of play, we expect that everyone at CASL will embrace what we are trying to accomplish. Losing even one player or family from our sport due to disgraceful conduct or language by others is tragic and we will diligently enforce our Code."

"Every year we read stories about youth sports events where enthusiasm for the game has gotten out of hand and pure ugliness has broken out." Slagle states: "Our new season starts in early August and our goal is from that point forward is for everyone involved with CASL to have more fun with our game than ever before."

Below is the complete CASL Code of Conduct:

GENERAL CODE OF CONDUCT

Whereas: The safety, welfare and well-being of our youth players are the primary concern and responsibility of the Capital Area Soccer League (CASL).

All members, employees, volunteers, and contractors acting as a representative of or on behalf of CASL, in the course of doing business with CASL, or attending a CASL event will adhere to the following:

1. All children will be equally treated with respect regardless of sex, race, religion, and culture.
2. Children will not be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, and their right to say no will be respected.
3. At no time during a CASL game, practice or other CASL event will any employee, volunteer, or contractor be alone with a single child where they cannot be observed by others.
4. Children will not be left unsupervised.
5. Children will not be dropped off and left at any field before that child is under adult supervision.
6. Coaches/team personnel will not leave any child unsupervised until the child is picked up.

7. Any type of abuse will not be tolerated and may be cause for immediate dismissal.
8. No player will ever be subjected to:
 - i) Physical abuse – including but not limited to: striking, spanking, shaking, slapping, etc.
 - ii) Verbal abuse – including but not limited to: humiliation, degrading comments, threats.
 - iii) Sexual abuse – including but not limited to: inappropriate sexual touching or exposure or conduct which creates a sexually hostile environment.
 - iv) Mental abuse – including but not limited to: shaming, cruelty, or neglect such as withholding food, water, basic care, etc.
6. Use of positive techniques of guidance is encouraged, including redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than comparison and criticism. Staff, volunteer coaches, and team officials will have age appropriate expectations and set up guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline.
7. Physical restraint will be used only when necessary to protect the child or other children from harm. When physical restraint is administered, the situation must be immediately documented in writing to the CASL CEO.
8. The use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs immediately before and during CASL events involving CASL players is prohibited. Employees, volunteers, and contractors may be subject to drug screening.
9. Intimate displays of affection will be refrained from.
10. Smoking or the use of tobacco is prohibited.
11. The use of profanity in the presence of CASL players is prohibited.
12. Inappropriate jokes and sharing intimate details of one's personal life are prohibited.
13. Social Networking between adults and individual CASL Players is discouraged. Electronic and phone communications with CASL players should be limited to soccer specific topics.