

AYF/AYC Child Abuse/Molestation Risk Management Program

- (A) Child abuse/molestation has become a growing concern within recent years and can take many forms including verbal abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, and sexual abuse. Any form of child abuse/molestation is despicable and goes against everything that American Youth Football, Inc. and American Youth Cheerleading (AYF/AYC) stands for.
- (B) AYF/AYC is committed to addressing concerns over child abuse/molestation by informing and educating its affiliated leagues on this risk by providing guidelines for establishing a risk management plan that may significantly lessen but not totally eliminate the chance of an occurrence. Failure to implement a child abuse/molestation risk management program may expose leagues and its officials, volunteers and other representatives to significant legal liability.
- (C) AYF/AYC strongly recommends that all franchised leagues adopt and implement a child abuse/molestation risk management program. Guidelines for establishing a child abuse/molestation risk management program are available at no charge through the AYF/AYC national office, or the league may develop a similar comprehensive program.
- (D) AYF/AYC has no operational control over league security including the selection of volunteers associated with independent leagues which affiliate with its program. Therefore, it is the sole responsibility of the independent leagues to take action by adopting and implementing a child abuse/molestation risk management program.
- (E) Various youth sports/leagues have adopted criminal background checks for coaches/volunteers as the sole means for protecting against this risk. While criminal background checks are an important aspect that should not be overlooked, they are just part of a comprehensive risk management program.
- (F) Elements of the AYF/AYC Child Abuse/Molestation Risk Management Program are highlighted below:
 - (1) Screen all volunteers who have repeated access to youth by requiring completion of a Volunteer Application and by running a criminal background check. All criminal background checks indicating a conviction involving crimes against a minor must result in disqualification of the volunteer. In addition, other charges and convictions may be an indication of an unfit volunteer and may result in disqualification.
 - (2) Distribute materials to educate administrators, volunteers, and parents on the warning signs of child abuse/molestation and how to respond to an allegation.
 - (3) Appoint a Conduct Official to administer the program and to be the primary contact for allegations of child abuse/molestation.
 - (4) Encourage the use of a “buddy system” where a non-related adult is never alone with a single child.
 - (5) Encourage the use of take home/pickup policies to ensure that a single child is not being transported by a volunteer as a result of a parent failing to pick up a child in a timely manner.
 - (6) Prohibition of any overnight sleepover event at any official’s house.
 - (7) Limiting the distribution of directories/rosters with names, phone numbers, addresses, and pictures to persons on a “need to know” basis.