



DC Soccer Club: Creating a Safe Environment for Every Athlete

SafeSport Overview and Reporting

At DC Soccer Club, player safety is our highest priority. SafeSport training is designed to help coaches, staff, and volunteers recognize potential risks, maintain appropriate professional relationships, and respond appropriately when concerns arise. While no training can prevent every situation, understanding these principles helps create a culture where every player can learn, compete, and grow in a safe, respectful, and supportive environment.

For additional information about SafeSport policies, training, and reporting resources, please visit the U.S. Center for SafeSport at <https://uscenterforsafesport.org/>.

1. Recognizing Warning Signs

One of the most important responsibilities of every adult working with young athletes is recognizing behaviors that may indicate abuse, misconduct, or inappropriate relationships.

Warning signs may include:

- Sudden changes in a player's behavior or personality.
 - A child becoming withdrawn, anxious, or fearful around a particular adult.
 - An adult seeking excessive one-on-one time with an athlete.
 - Secretive communications through text messages or social media.
 - Favoritism or providing gifts, special privileges, or opportunities to one player.
 - Bullying, hazing, harassment, or repeated inappropriate language.
 - Recognizing warning signs does not mean assuming misconduct has occurred. Rather, it means remaining observant and taking concerns seriously so they can be addressed appropriately.
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2. Preventing Misconduct

Creating a safe environment begins long before a problem occurs. Coaches and staff should consistently follow practices that reduce risk and protect both athletes and adults.

Examples include:

- Avoid unnecessary one-on-one situations whenever possible.
- Ensure activities remain observable and interruptible.
- Follow club policies regarding supervision.
- Use approved communication channels with players and families.



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- Treat every player with dignity, respect, and fairness.
- Report policy violations or concerns promptly.

Good prevention practices help establish clear expectations and reduce situations where misconduct could occur.

3. Maintaining Healthy Boundaries

Healthy boundaries create trust while maintaining appropriate professional relationships between adults and athletes.

Professional boundaries include:

- Using appropriate language at all times.
- Keeping physical contact instructional, appropriate, and respectful.
- Communicating with players in a transparent manner that includes parents or guardians when appropriate.
- Avoiding favoritism or relationships that could appear inappropriate.
- Respecting athletes' privacy in locker rooms, travel, and changing areas.
- Maintaining professionalism both on and off the field, including on social media.

Healthy boundaries protect athletes while also protecting coaches from misunderstandings or allegations of inappropriate conduct.

4. Reporting Concerns

Every coach and staff member has a responsibility to act when they observe or suspect misconduct.

If you witness or become aware of behavior that raises concern:

- Ensure the immediate safety of the athlete.
- Report concerns immediately using the club reporting procedures listed below.
- If there is an immediate danger or suspected criminal conduct, contact emergency services or the appropriate authorities.
- Do not attempt to investigate allegations yourself.
- Document factual observations and allow trained professionals to handle the investigation.



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Prompt reporting helps protect athletes and ensures concerns are addressed appropriately and professionally.

Reporting a SafeSport Concern

If you see, hear, or suspect a SafeSport violation, please contact:

Greg Andrulis
Executive Director, DC Soccer Club
gregandrulis@dcsoccerclub.org

and/or

Jennifer Werth
Human Resources, DC Soccer Club
JenniferWerth@dcsoccerclub.org

Our Commitment

Every interaction with a player contributes to the culture of our club. SafeSport is more than a required training course—it is a commitment to creating an environment where every athlete feels safe, respected, included, and valued.

By recognizing warning signs, preventing misconduct, maintaining healthy boundaries, and reporting concerns appropriately, each member of our club plays an important role in protecting our players and strengthening the trust that families place in DC Soccer Club.

Together, we can ensure that every player enjoys the game in an environment that is safe, respectful, and worthy of the trust our families place in DC Soccer Club.