Top Corner Sports LLC

CODE OF CONDUCT

Zero Tolerance for Abuse

ABUSE TOLERANCE
Top Corner Sports has a **zero tolerance for abuse** in all youth sports camps, teams, programs or activities. It is the responsibility of every coach and volunteer to to participate in the effort to create a safe environment for all sports participants.

Definitions

Top Corner Sports ACTIVITY
"**Top Corner Sports** Activity" includes any class, camp, clinic, event, league and program that qualify any coach, assistant coach, team training, team manager, referee, league president, league delegate, labor employee, or any other individual over the age of 18 seeking affiliation with any affiliated program within **Top Corner Sports** who has direct or indirect contact or influence on a minor athlete.

Reporting Abuse or Suspicions of Abuse

REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES
Given **Top Corners Sport's zero tolerance for abuse**, **Top Corner Sports** encourages a culture of communication regarding matters that place an athlete at risk.

Top Corner Sports supports and encourages a culture of communication related to abuse or suspected abuse of athletes. If you see or suspect inappropriate interaction with or between athletes, it is your responsibility to report the inappropriate interaction to a supervisor, or other designated **Top Corner Sports** representative.

Because sexual abusers 'groom' athletes for abuse, it is possible that a coach or volunteer may witness behavior intended to 'groom' a child for sexual abuse. Coaches and volunteers are asked to report any 'grooming' behaviors, any policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to a supervisor, or other designated **Top Corner Sports** representative.

All reports of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this Code of Conduct and state law, to law enforcement, Child Protective Services, or other appropriate agency.

ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES
Coaches and volunteers who supervise other leaders are charged with the diligent enforcement of all athlete safety policies contained in this Code of Conduct. A violation of these policies can be grounds for immediate dismissal from **Top Corner Sports** Activities. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of a designated **Top Corner Sports** representative.

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REPORTING VIOLATION OF POLICY

In order to maintain a safe environment for athletes, coaches and volunteers must be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission, or situation that is a violation of these policies. All questions or concerns related to abuse or should be directed to a designated **Top Corner Sports** representative.

CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATION

Any person accused of committing a prohibited act or any act considered to be harmful to a child will be immediately suspended from all **Top Corner Sports** activities. This suspension will continue during any investigation by **Top Corner Sports**, law enforcement or any child protective agency.

Any person found to have committed a prohibited act may be prohibited from any future **Top Corner Sports** Activity.

Failure to report a prohibited act as designated in this policy is a violation of this policy and grounds for dismissal or removal. Coaches or volunteers who fail to report a prohibited act may be restricted from participation in any **Top Corner Sports** Activity.

REPORTING SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE TO AUTHORITIES

Top Corner Sports, and organizations and individuals related to Top Corner Sports, do not investigate suspicions or allegations of physical or sexual abuse, or attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of such allegations, as a condition of reporting suspicions or allegations to appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Top Corner Sports, and organizations and individuals affiliated with **Top Corner Sports**, will comply with all laws requiring a person to make a report to the appropriate law enforcement agency if that person has cause to believe a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect.

If a coach or volunteer has cause to believe a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect, that coach or volunteer can make a report directly to the appropriate reporting authorities or may report to an immediate supervisor, coach, league official, or designated **Top Corner Sports** representative – who in turn will report the abuse or neglect. In the event relevant state law requires the individual with the cause to believe that a child may have been abused or neglected to report rather than delegate the responsibility, the individual will comply with the applicable reporting laws.

When a report is made, the designated **Top Corner Sports** representative will be notified as soon as possible.

In no way does any provision in this policy discourage any coach or volunteer from reporting a suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities.

RESPONSE TO REPORT OF ABUSE

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When a report of abuse or neglect occurs, team or league representatives will take the necessary and appropriate action to ensure a safe environment for the person at risk.

Prohibited Substances and Activities

INTOXICANTS
Coaches and volunteers are prohibited from being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while participating in any **Top Corner Sports** Activity. Coaches and volunteers are prohibited from providing alcohol or illegal drugs to minor athletes or any other program participant.

TOBACCO
Top Corner Sports programs and activities are tobacco-free. **Top Corner Sports** requires coaches and volunteers to refrain from the use or possession of tobacco products while in the presence of minor athletes or their parents. Coaches and volunteers are prohibited from providing tobacco products to minor athletes.

NUDITY
Coaches and volunteers that participate in **Top Corner Sports** Activities should never be nude in the presence of minor athletes.

SEXUALLY ORIENTED CONVERSATIONS
Coaches and volunteers that participate in **Top Corner Sports** Activities are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with minor athletes. Coaches and volunteers are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating, or sexual activities with any minor athlete in the program. This provision includes the use of cellular phones, text messages, e-mail, instant messaging, Facebook, and online chat rooms or other social media. See also Electronic Communication and Social Media, below.

POSSESSION OF SEXUALLY ORIENTED MATERIALS
Coaches and volunteers that participate in **Top Corner Sports** Activities are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, videos, etc.) while in the presence of minor athletes.

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Physical Contact with Athletes

Appropriate physical contact between minor athletes and coaches or volunteers is a productive and inevitable part of sport. Athletes are more likely to acquire advanced physical skills and enjoy their sport participation through appropriate physical contact. However, guidelines for appropriate physical contact reduce the potential for abuse and misconduct in athletics – as well as false allegations of abuse.

APPROPRIATE PHYSICAL CONTACT

Top Corner Sports, and organizations and individuals affiliated with **Top Corner Sports**, acknowledge and adhere to the following principles and guidelines regarding physical contact with minor athletes.

Common Criteria for Appropriate Physical Contact

Physical contact with minor athletes – for safety, consolation and celebration – has multiple criteria that make it both safe and appropriate. These include:

1. The physical contact takes place in public;
2. There is no potential for (or actual) physical or sexual intimacies during the physical contact;
3. The physical contact is for the benefit of the athlete, not to meet an emotional or other need of an adult.

Safety

The safety of minor athletes is paramount, and in many instances the athletic activity is made safer through appropriate physical contact. Examples include:

1. Spotting an athlete so that he or she will not be injured by a fall or piece of equipment;
2. Positioning an athlete's body so that he or she more quickly acquires an athletic skill, gets a better sense of where his or her body is in space, or improves balance and coordination;
3. Making athletes aware that he or she may be in harm's way due to other practicing athletes, or equipment use;
4. Releasing muscle cramps.

Celebration

Sports are physical by definition. **Top Corner Sports** recognizes that participants often express a joy of participation, competition, achievement and victory through physical acts. **Top Corner Sports** encourages these public expressions of celebration, which include:

1. Greeting gestures such as high-fives, fist bumps, and brief hugs;
2. Congratulatory gestures such as celebratory hugs, "jump-arounds" and pats on the back for any form of athletic or personal accomplishment.

Consolation

It may be appropriate to console an emotionally distressed athlete (e.g., an athlete who has been injured or has just lost a competition). Appropriate consolation includes, publicly:

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1. Embracing a crying athlete – in a public place or circumstance;
2. Putting an arm around an athlete while verbally engaging them in an effort to calm them down ("side hugs");
3. Lifting a fallen athlete off the playing surface and "dusting them off" to encourage them to continue competition.

PROHIBITED PHYSICAL CONTACT

Prohibited forms of physical contact include, without limitation:

1. Asking or having a minor athlete sit in the lap of a coach or volunteer;
2. Lingering or repeated embrace of a minor athlete that goes beyond the criteria set forth for acceptable physical contact;
3. Slapping, hitting, punching, kicking or any other physical contact meant to discipline, punish or achieve compliance from a minor athlete;
4. "Cuddling" or maintaining prolonged physical contact of a minor athlete during any aspect of training, travel or overnight stay;
5. Playful, yet inappropriate contact that is not a part of regular training, (e.g., butt-pats, tickling or wrestling-type "horseplay");
6. Continued physical contact that makes a minor athlete obviously uncomfortable, whether expressed or not;
7. Any contact that is contrary to a previously expressed personal desire by the minor athlete for decreased or no physical contact, where such decreased contact is feasible in a competitive training environment.

The above physical contact is prohibited between adult and minor athlete AND between minor athletes. Coaches and volunteers must model the behavior expected from minor athletes. The above forms of Prohibited Physical Contact will be immediately reported to a team official, a league official, or other designated **Top Corner Sports** representative.

Some forms of physical contact may constitute physical or sexual abuse that **must be reported to appropriate law enforcement authorities.** When appropriate, the Prohibited Physical Contact will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement authority.

Misconduct

BULLYING

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at any **Top Corner Sports** activity, and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to the victim. **Top Corner Sports** is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all participants. If bullying does occur, incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Any minor athlete who is aware of bullying behavior is expected to report this to Dan Adams dadams@topcornersports.com or 908 722 3333 **Top Corner Sports** representative.

Objectives of **Top Corner Sports's** Bullying Policy and Action Plan:

1. To clearly communicate that **Top Corner Sports** will not tolerate bullying in any form.
2. To define bullying and give minor athletes, coaches, volunteers and parents a suitable understanding of those behaviors that constitute 'bullying'.

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3. To make it known to minor athletes, coaches and volunteers that a policy and protocol exist should bullying issues arise.
4. To clearly communicate how to report bullying behavior.
5. To communicate to minor athletes, coaches, volunteers and parents that **Top Corner Sports** takes bullying seriously, and will immediately investigate and address all reports of bullying.

HARASSMENT

Harassment is the repeated pattern of physical and/or non-physical behaviors that

1. Are intended to cause fear, humiliation or annoyance;
2. Offend or degrade;
3. Create a hostile environment;
4. Reflect discriminatory bias in an attempt to establish dominance, superiority or power over an individual athlete or group based on gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion or mental or physical disability; or
5. Any act or conduct described as harassment under federal or state law.

Examples of harassment prohibited in **Top Corner Sports** Activities include, without limitation:

Physical offenses. Behaviors that include

1. Hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, choking or slapping a minor athlete or participant;
2. Throwing at or hitting a minor athlete with objects including sporting equipment.

Non-physical offenses. Behaviors that include

1. Making negative or disparaging comments about an athlete's disability, religion, skin color, or ethnic traits;
2. Displaying offensive materials, gestures, or symbols; and
3. Withholding or reducing playing time to an athlete based on his or her disability, religion, skin color, or ethnic traits.

HAZING

Hazing is defined as coercing, requiring, forcing or willfully tolerating any humiliating, unwelcome or dangerous activity that serves as a condition for

1. An athlete joining a group;
2. An athlete being socially accepted by a group's members; or
3. Any act or conduct described as hazing under federal or state law.

Hazing does not include group or team activities that are meant to establish normative team behaviors or promote team cohesion.

Examples of hazing prohibited in **Top Corner Sports** Activities include, without limitation:

1. Requiring, forcing or otherwise requiring an athlete to consume alcohol or illegal drugs;
2. Tying, taping or otherwise physically restraining an athlete;
3. Sexual simulations or sexual acts of any nature;
4. Sleep deprivation, otherwise unnecessary schedule disruption or the withholding of water and/or food;

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5. Social actions (e.g. grossly inappropriate or provocative clothing) or public displays (e.g. public nudity) that are illegal or meant to draw ridicule;
6. Beating, paddling or other forms of physical assault; and
7. Excessive training requirements directed at a particular athlete or a group of athletes.

Activities that fit the definition of hazing are considered to be hazing regardless of an athlete's willingness to cooperate or participate.

WILLFULLY TOLERATING MISCONDUCT

It is a violation of this Code of Conduct if a coach, volunteer or participant knows of misconduct, but takes no action to intervene on behalf of the minor athlete(s). All forms of misconduct should be reported to Dan Adams dadams@topcornersports.com or 908 722 3333 **Top Corner Sports** representative.

PEER-TO-PEER SEXUAL ABUSE

Approximately 1/3 of all reported sexual abuse occurs at the hands of other children or minors. Coaches and volunteers have an obligation to report peer-to-peer sexual abuse in accord with state mandatory reporting requirements. Whether sexual interaction between athletes constitutes 'sexual abuse' depends on the existence of an aggressor and whether there is an imbalance of power between the parties (e.g., an age difference between the athletes, disparity in size or the existence of a physical or intellectual disability). **If you have concern that an interaction between minor athletes may constitute sexual abuse, report the interaction to appropriate law enforcement authorities and a coach, team official, league official or other designated Top Corner Sports representative.**

Peer-to peer sexual abuse risk is highest:

1. Any location that is less easily seen; or
2. Any time minor athletes are unclothed or changing clothes, for any reason.

Due to this risk, coaches and volunteers will be aware of locations and facilities that are less easily seen or supervised. These locations and facilities vary per team and activity, and can include practice and competition locations, restrooms, changing areas, locker rooms, dorms and hotels. These areas will be supervised regularly by coaches and volunteers, where possible and appropriate.

Local and Team Travel

For some **Top Corner Sports** Activities, travel is a standard aspect a competitive season, and **Top Corner Sports** provides the following policies to reduce the risk of abuse and misconduct. Adherence to these travel guidelines will increase athlete safety and improve the competitive experience while keeping travel a fun and enjoyable experience.

We distinguish between travel to training, practice and local competition **("local travel")**, and team travel involving a coordinated overnight stay **("team travel")**.

Local Travel

Local travel occurs when the team does not sponsor, coordinate, or arrange for travel. For local travel, athletes or their parents/guardians are responsible for making all travel arrangements. In these instances, it is the responsibility of the athlete or their parents/guardians to ensure the person transporting the athlete maintains all safety and legal

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requirements, including, but not limited to, a valid driver's license, proper insurance, well maintained vehicle, and compliance with all state laws.

In an effort to minimize one-on-one interactions, a coach or volunteer, who is not also acting as a parent, should not drive alone with an unrelated athlete and should drive with at least two other athletes or another adult at all times. In any case where a coach or volunteer is involved in the athlete's local travel, a parental release is required in advance. Efforts must be made to ensure that a coach or volunteer is not alone with an athlete or participant, by, e.g., picking up athletes in groups.

A coach or volunteer who is also an athlete's guardian may provide shared transportation for any athlete(s). We encourage guardians to pick up their athlete first and drop off their athlete last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement. We also recommend completing a shared travel declaration form signed by the parent/guardian of any minor athlete who is being transported as part of such a carpool arrangement.

Team Travel

Team travel is overnight travel that occurs when the team sponsors, coordinates or arranges for travel so that the team can compete locally, regionally, nationally or internationally. Because of the greater distances, coaches, volunteers and chaperones will often travel with athletes. However, no coach or volunteer will engage in team travel without the proper safety requirements in place, including a valid driver's license, proper insurance, well-maintained vehicle and compliance with all state laws.

Team travel requires adequate supervision through coaches, volunteers and other adult chaperones.

For team travel, a team representative will book hotel accommodations and air travel in advance; the team representative will prioritize the choice of hotel accommodations that have rooms accessed from within the building, as opposed to street access ('hotel' vs. 'motel' access).

Athletes will share rooms, with 2-4 athletes assigned per room depending on accommodations. A team representative will notify hotel management regarding any special arrangements; for example, a team representative will request the hotel to block pay-per-view channels and will request an additional large room or suite such that athletes may socialize as a group. Team meetings do <u>not</u> occur in hotel rooms (of the coach or an athlete); a team representative will reserve a separate space for adults and athletes to socialize.

To ensure the propriety of athletes and to protect coaches and volunteers, there will be no male athletes in the rooms of female athletes, and no female athletes in the rooms of male athletes (unless the athletes are siblings accompanied by a parent/guardian). A coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an athlete, unless the coach is the parent, guardian, sibling or spouse of that particular athlete.

When visiting public places such as shopping malls, movie theaters, etc., athletes will stay in groups of no less than three persons. Athletes who are 12 years of age and under will be accompanied by an adult chaperone at all times.

Athletes are expected to remain with the team at all times during the trip. Athletes are not to leave the competition venue, the hotel, a restaurant, or any other place at which the team has

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gathered, without the knowledge and permission of the coach, volunteer or chaperone.

We encourage family members who wish to stay in the team hotel to do so. If family members do not stay in the team hotel, we encourage all athletes to call parents and guardians regularly. A team representative will allow unscheduled calls to the athlete by a parent/guardian, if requested by either the athlete or the parent/guardian.

TRAVEL NOTIFICATION

A team representative will provide reasonable advance notice before any team travel. Notice will include the dates, location and duration of competition. Travel notice will also include designated team hotels for overnight stays. A team representative will designate a contact person for team travel to help with travel details and provide information to parents.

A team representative will post specific travel itineraries when they become available. These will include a more detailed, hour-by-hour itinerary as well as contact information for coaches and team travel chaperones.

COACH AND VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

During team travel, coaches and volunteers will help athletes, fellow coaches and volunteers adhere to policy guidelines, including the travel policies and reporting policies.

When not practicing, training, competing, or preparing for competition, coaches and volunteers will monitor the activities of athletes, fellow coaches and volunteers during team travel. Coaches and coaches will:

1. Prepare athletes for team travel and make athletes aware of all expectations. Supplemental information will be given to parents/guardians of athletes who are considered inexperienced travelers, new or relatively new to team travel, or who are under the age of 14;
2. Familiarize themselves with all travel itineraries and schedules before the initiation of team travel;
3. Conform to, and monitor for others' adherence, the policies of the Code of Conduct and all other team policies during team travel;
4. Encourage minor athletes to participate in regular communication with their parents/guardians;
5. Help athletes be on time for all team commitments (as possible);
6. Assist with team travel logistical needs (as possible);
7. Support chaperones and/or participate in the monitoring of athletes for adherence to curfew restrictions based on age and competition schedule, as listed in travel itinerary;
8. Ensure athletes are complying with hotel room restrictions based on gender or age requirements;
9. Make certain that athletes are not alone in a hotel rooms with any adult apart from a family member, including coaches, volunteers and chaperones;
10. Refrain from using drugs or alcohol in the presence of minors or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing any program or coaching duty;
11. Immediately report any concerns about physical or sexual abuse, misconduct, or policy violations;
12. Notify parents before taking any significant disciplinary action against a minor athlete if the athlete is traveling without his or her parents.

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CHAPERONE RESPONSIBILITIES
Chaperones accompany team travel to ensure that the athletes, coaches and volunteers adhere to schedules and guidelines, including the travel policy and all other relevant policies contained in the Code of Conduct. Each chaperone must undergo a background check screening and follow all **Top Corner Sports** Bylaws, Rules & Policies. (e.g. including Code of Conduct).

Electronic Communications & Social Media

All electronic communications between a coach and minor athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about program activities.

As with any communication, the content of any electronic communication should be readily available to share with the athlete's family. At the request of a parent or guardian, any email, electronic text, social media or similar communication will copy or include the athlete's parents or guardians.

FACEBOOK, MYSPACE, BLOGS AND SIMILAR SITES
Coaches or volunteers can communicate with minor athletes through sites like Facebook, but all communication needs to be in group form and public (no private communication). If a Facebook page is used, all coaches and parents must be included. Coaches may not have athletes join a personal social media page. All posts, messages, texts, or media of any kind shared among athletes or between coach and athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities or for team-oriented motivational purposes.

TWITTER, INSTANT MESSAGING AND SIMILAR MEDIA
All communication is to be public in nature. Coaches and minor athletes may "follow" each other. Coaches cannot "re-tweet" athlete message posts. Coaches and volunteers are not permitted to "direct message" minor athletes through Twitter (or similar media). Coaches and volunteers are not permitted to post inappropriate off-color content or comment on inappropriate off-color posts. If there is doubt, treat the content as inappropriate.

EMAIL AND SIMILAR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS
Athletes and coaches may use email to communicate if the athlete is at least 14 years of age. All email content between coach and athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about program activities. Where possible, the minor athlete's parent should be copied on e-mail communications. Email communication between coaches and minor athletes is allowed during the hours of 7am and 10pm.

TEXTING AND SIMILAR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS
Texting is allowed between coaches and a minor athlete if the athlete is at least 14 years of age. Where possible, texts between a coach and an athlete must be a group text – the text should include another athlete, volunteer, a parent, or another coach/assistant. All texts between a coach and an athlete must be professional and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. No texting is allowed between a coach and an athlete before 7am or after 10pm, unless there is a specific soccer activity that requires a text communication.

The use of Snapchat (and similar apps) with minor athletes is not permitted.

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ELECTRONIC IMAGERY
From time to time, digital photos, videos of practice or competition, and other publicly obtainable images of the minor athlete – individually or in groups – may be taken. These photos and/or videos may be used for athlete instruction (i.e. practice and game films), team videos, team websites, or offered to the athletes' families. The use of photos/videos is permissible as long as the athlete or athletes are in public view and such imagery is both appropriate and in the best interest of the athlete and the program. Photo or video imagery must not be contrary to any rules or guidance outlined in this Code of Conduct.

REQUEST TO DISCONTINUE
The parent or guardian of a minor athlete may request in writing that their athlete not be contacted by coaches through any electronic communication; that request must be honored. Additionally, a parent or guardian of a minor athlete may request in writing that photographs or videography of their athlete not be posted on program or team websites, understanding that group photography or videography may render this impracticable; to the extent this request is practicable, it should be honored.

MISCONDUCT
Social media and electronic communication can be used inappropriately. (e.g., emotional abuse, sexual abuse, bullying, harassment, and hazing). Such communication by coaches, volunteers, officials, administrators, parents or other athletes will not be tolerated.

Electronic communication should not contain or relate to any of the following:

1. Drugs or alcohol use;
2. Sexually oriented conversation, sexually explicit language or sexual activity;
3. An adult's personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues, or personal problems; and
4. Inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures.

Any communication concerning a minor athlete's personal life, social activities, relationships, family issues or personal problems must be transparent, accessible and professional.

Parental Contact and Involvement

PARENTAL CONTACT
Parents of minor athletes will be contacted if their athlete becomes ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem while participating in a **Top Corner Sports** Activity.

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