



Blacktown & Districts Soccer Football Association Incorporated

Memo to All Club and Team Officials.

11th May 2012.

Facebook, social media and other Child Related Issues.

We are getting constant complaints in regards to material on Facebook, Twitter ETC. At the Coaches and Manager Seminar at the beginning of the season I warned those present about the use of social media and the ramifications of misuse.

I am aware that some clubs have a Facebook page and although I cautioned against it, I know many coaches who have their players as "Facebook Friends".

You should realise that use of social media is publishing and whilst having an argument between two people in private becomes ones' word against the others; once something is published it is libel. Cyber bullying is becoming a huge problem and it is illegal. Remember nothing leaves the internet, it's there forever, even though you think you deleted a comment, it can be easily found.

Australian laws are strict on this issue and a person can be easily sued for published content, true or false!

There is no good reason why an adult should have Facebook friend who are minors. Even Facebook rules and conditions do not allow young children to hold accounts, but many do. Again, published off-hand comments may be misconstrued and the most innocent of remarks can end up in court. Long jail terms wait if the court finds you guilty of offenses against minors.

Some of our officials also struggle with speaking to children in a manner within the law. It is illegal to demean a child, belittle or make a child "stand out" for the wrong reasons. If you are such a coach and cannot help abusing children, you should cease volunteering before you find yourself in trouble.

I would also appreciate it if you remind your team officials of the BDSFA Policy for Transporting Children.

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Transporting of Players Policy

The BDSFA does not recommend player transport by anyone other than the players' parents or guardians.

Persons registering their child to play football are aware that this will entail some travel to and from training and matches. Parents should ensure punctual delivery and pick-up of their children at all times.

Our volunteer coaches, managers and club officials should never take another person's child/children into their vehicle. If unavoidable, ensure that the child is not the only person in the car and will never become the only other person in the vehicle.

Any transport provided to a Child in a private car by a coach, official or other responsible person occurs only with prior consent of the parents or guardians of the child (unless in absolute emergency), and that an additional adult, preferably of the same gender as the Child (or other older children) is also in the car. Children should always sit in the back seat; and where transport is provided to Children in a mini-bus or larger vehicle there is adequate age-appropriate supervision with at least one same gender (of children) coach, official or other responsible adult present at all times.

At the beginning of each season we ask all clubs to ensure their officials are aware of our Codes of Conduct. Whether or not they comply, ignorance is no plea and everyone is deemed to be aware of them and adhere to them at all times.

- *I will remember that players participate for pleasure and winning is only part of the fun*
- *I will never ridicule or yell at players for making a mistake or not winning*
- *I will be reasonable in my demands on player's time, energy and enthusiasm*
- *I will operate within the rules and spirit of the game and teach my players to do the same*
- *I will ensure that the time players spend with me is a positive experience. All players are deserving of equal attention and opportunities*
- *I will avoid over playing the talented players and understand that average players need and deserve playing time*
- *I will not use bad language nor will I harass players, officials, spectators or other coaches*
- *I will ensure that equipment and facilities meet safety standards and are appropriate to the age and ability of all players*
- *I will display control, respect and professionalism to all involved with the sport including opponents, coaches, officials, administrators, the media, parents and spectators. I will encourage my players to do the same*
- *I will show concern and caution toward sick and injured players and follow the advice of a physician when determining whether an injured player is ready to recommence training or competition*
- *I will obtain appropriate qualifications and keep up to date with the latest coaching practices and the principles of growth and development of young players*
- *I will not arrive at the fields intoxicated or drink alcohol at matches*
- *I will not allow the unlawful supply of alcohol at training, games or club facilities*
- *I will respect the rights, dignity and worth of all people involved in the game, regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background*

I agree to abide by this code of conduct and to be subject to the rules and policies of the club/association.

This is my coach's pledge.

FNSW web site contains some very good material in their Member Protection area. You are encouraged to visit.