



**West Virginia Soccer Association**

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**To: All WVSA Clubs, WVSA BOD, WVSA Staff, Registered Coaches, Referees and Administrator and to all parents of WVSA players**

**Fr: Dave Laraba, WVSA Executive Director**

**Re: Behavior at games and on Social Media**

This correspondence is to address some behavior that was exhibited at soccer games this spring and at the WVFC Capital Cup event. I also need to address the use of social media. WVSA is now under the US Safe Sport Code and all clubs need to review the code, and the sections on Prohibited Behavior and Social Media use, with all members and parents.

There have been some very good games at WV State League, local leagues, the Capital Cup and other games. However, parental behavior has been a recurring issue at some of these events. Parents have been yelling at each other and at players from opposing teams. At the Capital Cup, Shawnee Sports Complex Staff, Capital Cup Tournament Staff and Kanawha County Deputies were called to several matches in the 9-10U and 11-12U groups. There were other incidents during the tournament that needed attention that involved the parents of several clubs. There have also been social media postings by adults making comments concerning opposing players.

**This is unacceptable!!!** WVSA will take steps, including but not limited to playing games with no parents or enforcing silent sidelines if this behavior continues. Social Media should be used to congratulate players on their play and post results and accomplishments. **WVSA Clubs are directed to address behavior and social media to all their members and parents immediately. WVSA will deal with any issues of parental behavior at any WVSA event like WVSA State Cup, Open Cup, Target United Cup or ODP event swiftly.**

The US Safe Sport Code, US Soccer and WVSA Player Safety Policies have sections on Prohibited Behavior and Social Media use. These policies are very specific and the types of behavior that is unacceptable. Any WVSA Registered, Coach, Referee, Administrator, WVSA BOD or Staff member are now Mandatory Reporters!!! Prohibited behavior may be reported to WVSA, US Soccer, US Safe Sport and Law Enforcement depending on the circumstances and severity. The mandatory reporting is 24/7 and can be behavior of registered or non-registered persons. **These policies also cover actions by any persons toward a minor player or referee!!!**

**I understand that only a small number of people affiliated with WVSA are causing these issues, but everyone needs to do their part in calling out inappropriate behavior when it is witnessed.**

Thank you for your attention to this very important issue and contact me with any questions, comments or concerns at [dave@wvsoccer.net](mailto:dave@wvsoccer.net). You can also visit the WVSA Safe Sport Policy (see Appendix A & B) at the following link: [http://www.wvsoccer.net/youth/wvsa\\_risk\\_management\\_link/](http://www.wvsoccer.net/youth/wvsa_risk_management_link/). You can also view the US Soccer Policy at this link: <http://www.safesoccer.com>.

