



*The Most Important People Protecting Children*

# THE VIGILANT PARENT

*US YOUTH SOCCER  
RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE*

# ***FACT:***

- **The pedophile child molester commits an average of 281 acts with 150 partners.**
- **In Texas, a convicted child molester told police he molested 240 children before getting caught.**

## ***FACT:***

- **1 in 4 girls is sexually abused before the age of 18.**
- **1 in 6 boys is sexually abused before the age of 18.**

## ***FACT:***

- **30-40% of abusers are a family member.**
- **50% are abused by someone outside the family whom they trust.**



Pedophiles are drawn to places where they can be with children.

**All youth sports offer such a place.**



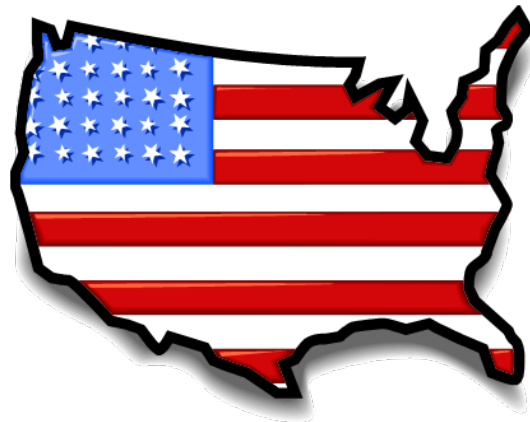
## ***WHAT WE'RE DOING:***

US Youth Soccer instituted the **Kidsafe Program** in 1994 to foster safe circumstances for every child who participates in any activity affiliated with US Youth Soccer.

## ***KIDSAFE Requires:***

- Use of an employment/volunteer disclosure statement for all volunteers, employees, coaches and program administrators who are involved with any sanctioned or sponsored programs of the affiliated organizations.
- Identification of a Risk Management Coordinator (RMC) and an alternate for the organization.

**Many State Associations,  
Leagues, Clubs & Teams  
are doing more – including  
background checks.**



NOTHING  
Can -- No rule,  
The Vigilant Parent!  
No policy,  
No law --

## ***WHAT YOU CAN DO:***

- **Educate yourself & your parents.**
- **Know the risk.**
- **Understand the types of pedophiles who prey on youth.**

# *The Pedophile*

## *The fixated, seductive sexual offender*

- Creates & seeks opportunities for access to children
- Has tremendous aptitude for identifying children's needs & vulnerabilities
- Is highly manipulative and seductive

# *The Pedophile*

## *The fixated, seductive sexual offender*

- Takes the time to gain the child's and parents' trust before acting
- Creates "special" relationships
- Convinces child to distrust other adults

Sports  
can open the door for  
this predator.

By offering success,  
they take advantage of the  
needs & desires of both  
parents & players!

# ***The Molester***

## ***The abductor, sexual psychopath***

- This is the nightmare we read about in the news
- Seeks vulnerable, exposed, unsupervised and easily manipulated children – often the very young
- May be become fixated or obsessed with a child – generally from a distance



Parks, playgrounds,  
school yards &  
sports fields  
are places  
where a molester  
can strike.

# *The Seducer*

## *The sexual harasser, sexual exploiter*

- Preys on older adolescents & young adults
- Makes sexual behavior, sexual advance or romantic involvement part of the terms & conditions for participation
- Players feel that coach's benefits -- from playing time to recommendations -- are based on an intimate or sexual relationship



Remember:  
cell phones &  
computers  
open avenues of  
contact to your child.

**MONITOR THEIR USE!**

***WHAT YOU CAN DO?***

**Become an  
active, involved,  
vigilant parent**

## **TAKE THE QUIZ!**

**You're driving to practice, you bring:**

- a) A debit card – you have groceries to buy.**
- b) A really good book so you can sit under a tree, read, relax & still keep an eye on things.**
- c) An overnight bag. You've had enough soccer, you're spending the weekend at the beach.**

## **TAKE THE QUIZ!**

**As you get ready to leave practice, you realize Tommy is still waiting for a ride:**

- a) Be thankful you're not coaching & leave.**
- b) Tell the coach you'll give Tommy a ride.**
- c) Wait with the coach until Tommy's parents arrive.**

## **TAKE THE QUIZ!**

**You notice a stranger watching the game intently:**

- a) Figure he's a college coach watching your child, after all he's the best u6 player around.**
- b) Leave him alone. It must be a parent from the other team. Don't start a fight.**
- c) Say "hi" and strike up a conversation!**

## ***STRATEGIES TO PROTECT YOUTH FROM PEDOPHILES***

- **Check references thoroughly. Don't be afraid to ask a coach, assistant coach, trainer or administrator about their previous experience.**
- **Question expansion of the coaching relationship into other areas such as social interaction. There is a difference between team activities and coach/player activities.**
- **Do not encourage activities that leave a coach or trainer alone with a single child.**

## ***STRATEGIES TO PROTECT YOUTH FROM PEDOPHILES***

- **Be wary of a coach with rigid age preferences.**
- **Help create an open environment that makes sure players know that they will be supported for seeking help with anything that makes them uncomfortable. Assure them that there are multiple avenues of support.**
- **Conduct “exit interviews” with players who withdraw from a team without explanation.**



Talk to your child!

Be Visible!

Be active!

BE INVOLVED!

## ***STRATEGIES TO PROTECT FROM MOLESTORS***

- **Never leave young children unsupervised, even in a “safe” place.**
- **Teach children to check with a parent before going anywhere with another adult.**
- **Give your child permission to run away from adults who make them feel uncomfortable.**

## ***STRATEGIES TO PROTECT FROM MOLESTORS***

- **Never let children go to public restrooms unescorted.**
- **Never leave a child alone waiting for transportation after a practice or game. This includes not leaving a child alone with any single adult in this situation.**
- **Approach adults who appear to be observing children at a game or practice. Strike up a conversation; ask them who they are and why they're there.**

## ***Strategies to Protect Youth from the Sexual Harasser, Exploiter***

- **Monitor situations closely**
- **Establish boundaries between team activities and social activities**
- **Do not tolerate flirtation, banter, teasing or any conduct that blurs the boundaries between youth and adult**

## ***Strategies to Protect Youth from the Sexual Harasser, Exploiter***

- **Make sure parents are involved & included in team activities that are social in nature and in tournament travel**
- **Be available as an adult/parent to take part in team activities, to wait for late parents to pick up children and to observe practices.  
Don't interfere in coaching!**

## ***Strategies to Protect Youth from the Sexual Harasser, Exploiter***

### **Watch for indicators:**

- **Coach/adult who seeks personal intimacy with a player or discloses intimate, personal or emotional feelings for a player**
- **Coach/adult who “courts” a player or responds in kind to flirting or seductive behavior**
- **Coach/adult who makes physical contact excessively or disproportionately with one player**

If You Suspect  
A Child Is  
Being Harmed...

*If you suspect a child is being harmed:*

**DO NOT**

**Jump to conclusions**

**Gossip**

**Speculate**

*If you suspect a child is being harmed:*

Most **DO NOT** importantly

**be afraid**

**to take**

**action!**

*If you suspect a child is being harmed:*

**Do:**

**Document Your  
Concerns Carefully!**

*If you suspect a child is being harmed:*

**Do:**

**Speak Out**

- **Talk to your child or have another respected adult talk to the child.**

*If you suspect a child is being harmed:*

**Do:**

**Speak Out**

- **Normalize your questions by saying “sometimes kids feel uncomfortable” and then asking how they feel.**

*If you suspect a child is being harmed:*

**Do:**

**Speak Out**

- **Talk to parents if your concern is about another child. Be specific about what you have observed.**

*If you suspect a child is being harmed:*

**Do:**

**Speak Out**

- It may be appropriate to talk to the coach or involved adult if you have observed red flags.

*If you suspect a child is being harmed:*

**Do:**

**Report**

- If you are reasonably sure there is a problem, talk to a club administrator.

*If you suspect a child is being harmed:*

**Do:**

**Report**

- If necessary go up the ladder to the League, State or Regional Risk Management Coordinator.

*If you suspect a child is being harmed:*

**Do:**

## **Involve Authorities**

- **If you have a genuine concern, contact your state's Child Protective Services. You may be able to remain anonymous.**

*If you suspect a child is being harmed:*

**Do:**

## **Know Your Laws**

- **Your state or local laws may mandate that you report suspected child abuse and/or neglect.**

The involvement of  
vigilant parents  
-- *caring adults* --  
is the best form of  
Risk Management!



***US YOUTH SOCCER***  
***RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE***

Bob Brantley, Committee Chair

Region I

Region II

Region III

Region IV

For more information contact us at:



***The Game for All Kids!***<sup>®</sup>

