

# Lorena Little League Child Protection Policy

## OVERVIEW

The Lorena Little League (LLL) has an obligation and commitment as a youth sports organization to provide an environment that is as safe as possible for the children who participate in league activities. The goal of the Lorena Little League Child Protection Policy is to prevent child abuse from occurring through an application screening process for all required volunteers and/or hired workers, ongoing training (see Appendix A) for its staff and volunteers, increased awareness, and mandatory reporting of any abuse. Lorena Little League is committed to enforcing its Child Protection Policy, as highlighted below under "Enforcement."

## CHILD PROTECTION PROGRAM DEFINITION

Defining child abuse is the first step in battling it. Child abuse can take several different forms, and it is important to understand what is considered child abuse and other terms that are mentioned throughout the Child Protection Policy.

**Abuse or Neglect:** The Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act defines child abuse and neglect as, at a minimum, "any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation;" or "an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm."

Different types of Child Abuse or Neglect

- **Neglect** is the negligent failure of a minor's caretaker to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, or supervision which threatens harm to a minor's health, safety, or welfare.
- **Physical Abuse** is any non-accidental, intentional, deliberate act that results in physical injury.
- **Emotional and Psychological Abuse** is any act that diminishes the sense of identity, dignity, and self-worth by humiliation, intimidation, verbal assault, and emotional deprivation.
- **Sexual Abuse** is any type of maltreatment, violation, or exploitation that refers to the involvement of the child in sexual activity to provide sexual gratification or financial benefit to the perpetrator.
- **Bullying** is the intentional, repetitive harmful act, words, and behavior that makes the victim feel hurt, scared, and/or ashamed. Bullying can also be an imbalance of real or perceived power between the bully and the victim. Different types of bullying include, but are not limited to, physical bullying, verbal bullying, emotional bullying, harassment, and hazing.
- **Grooming** is the process where an individual creates a relationship with a minor or the minor's family to gain trust so he or she can take advantage of a minor for a sexual purpose.

**Child/Minor:** Any individual who is younger than age 18 or who is not an emancipated minor.

**Little League Programs and Activities:** Any games, practices, tournaments, approved activities, and approved special games are considered Little League programs and activities.

**Little League Volunteer or Hired Worker:** Refers to any person in the organization who provides regular service to the league and has contact with minors: coaches, managers, the Board of Directors, program workers, coaches, bus and carpool drivers, maintenance workers, umpires, or anyone that has repetitive access to or contact with players or teams.

## VOLUNTEER APPLICATION PROCESS

With the above definitions, we have a better understanding of child abuse, which will prevent potential child abusers from entering the ranks of Lorena Little League. Another aspect of prevention is screening all applicants who wish to be a manager, coach, member of the Board of Directors, and any other person, volunteer, and/or hired worker who provides

regular services to the league and/or have repetitive access to or contact with players or teams.

Lorena Little League requires a process for selecting individuals to fill any of the above positions:

1. **Application** — The LLL will require all Little League Volunteers or Hired Workers to complete a Little League Volunteer Application through the league website. The applicant must also submit a government-issued photo identification card (e.g. driver's license) for the league to verify that the information on his/her volunteer application is correct (e.g. spelling of the name, address, date of birth, etc.). The completed volunteer application enables the Lorena Little League program to run and review a background check.
2. **Background Check** — An annual background check, in compliance with Little League Regulation I(c) 8 and 9, is required to be conducted on every individual before the applicant assumes *any* of his/her duties for the current season. The background check must, at a minimum, meet the standard of a nationwide criminal search, a national sex offender registry search and a review of the [U.S. Center for SafeSport's Centralized Disciplinary Database](#) and the Little League International Ineligible/Suspended List.
3. **Exclusion of Certain Individuals** — LLL shall not permit any person to participate in any manner whose background check reveals a conviction for, guilty plea, no contest plea, or admission to any crime involving or against a minor. An individual is also prohibited from participating as a Little League Volunteer or hired worker if they appear on the [U.S. Center for SafeSport's Centralized Disciplinary Database](#) and/or Little League International Ineligible/Suspended List. LLL may prohibit any individual from participating as a volunteer or hired worker if the league deems the individual unfit or inappropriate to work or volunteer.

## MANDATORY REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE

When an allegation of abuse is made against a LLL volunteer or hired worker, the organization must protect the child from any further potential abuse by keeping the alleged abuser away from all children in the program until the incident is reported to one or more of the below outlets **and** completely investigated.

### Reporting

Any individual who participates in the league must report suspected child abuse, including sexual abuse, within 48 hours to the proper authorities. If a case of abuse is suspected within LLL, it must be reported to the appropriate child services organizations and/or local law enforcement, as well as their League President and District Administrator. LLL will document the report using the LLL Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse Form at the end of this policy.

### Suspending/Terminating

If there are any allegations against an individual in the LLL, the league must assure that the individual will not have any further contact with the children in the league by either suspending or terminating the individual from any further involvement in the league.

## ENFORCEMENT

LLL should establish a culture that does not allow any type of activity that promotes or allows any form of mental, physical, emotional, or sexual misconduct behavior between players, coaches, parents, volunteers, hired workers, and any other individual. LLL officials must remove any individual that is exhibiting any type of mental, physical, emotional, or sexual misconduct and report the individual to the authorities immediately.

LLL will provide all Little League volunteers and hired workers with a League approved identification that must be worn during all LLL events. This identification verifies the volunteer or hired worker has passed a LLL background check and is approved to be in contact with the children of LLL.

In the event of an unforeseen circumstance where a LLL volunteer or hired worker has not completed the volunteer application process, the DOD will monitor that person for the duration of their time on LLL property.

# MANDATORY REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE FORM

Date of Report \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person Reporting \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Minor \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Minor's Parent/Guardians \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number of Parent/Guardians \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Suspected Volunteer/Hired Worker \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number of Suspected Volunteer/Hired Worker \_\_\_\_\_

LLL Position of Suspected Volunteer/Hired Worker \_\_\_\_\_

Date Background Check Performed \_\_\_\_\_

Law Enforcement Agency Contacted \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Law Enforcement Contacted \_\_\_\_\_

Law Enforcement Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Law Enforcement Contact Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

LLL Volunteer Name Reporting to Law Enforcement \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Suspected Child Abuse \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\* Attach LLL Completed Background Check Form\*\*\*\*

# APPENDIX A

## TRAINING AND EDUCATION TO PREVENT CHILD ABUSE

Education is an important tool for both LLL children and volunteers. It empowers them to recognize potentially compromising situations, and it places a barrier between abusers and their victims. Here are a few education tools and prevention suggestions for our Little League volunteers, hired workers, and children.

- **Training:** Training is strongly encouraged for all Little League participants, including players. Little League has Abuse Awareness training videos available to all Little League individuals through USA Baseball's Pure Baseball initiative and the SafeSport Organization. The free Abuse Awareness for Adults courses provides resources to create a positive and safe environment for all athletes, coaches, parents, legal guardians, and umpires by understanding how to recognize misconduct and abuse of all types. Topics covered include how to identify and report incidents and what abuse awareness policies should be in place. The free Abuse Awareness for Minors course provides resources to identify what abuse is and what to do if someone is being abused.
  - [Pure Baseball Abuse Awareness Training](#) (for both adults and players)
  - [SafeSport Reporting Training](#)
- **Meet with Volunteers:** Since Little League is a volunteer-led program, our membership changes from year to year. It is important to hold regular meetings in which both volunteers and parents can talk about child abuse and ask questions. The Child Protection Policy should be reviewed with participants annually. Since LLL could not exist without the time and effort from volunteers and parents, it is important to communicate directly with the volunteers. For that reason, the Little League Child Protection Policy should be freely copied and distributed to all adults in the league.
- **Make Our Position Clear:** LLL has a clearly defined policy for dealing with child abuse. Make adults and minors aware that LLL will not tolerate child abuse in any form. Suspected abuse must be reported and retaliation for good faith reporting is prohibited.
- **Participate in ASAP:** More than 90% of leagues in the United States participate in the [A Safety Awareness Program \(ASAP\)](#). Basic safety procedures can help in the identification and prevention of child abuse.

## APPROPRIATE ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTION GUIDELINES

An adult participant should not allow themselves to be alone with a minor (who is not their child) and should always position themselves in an area where they can be observed by others. Minors must always be supervised by appointed volunteers and/or hired workers who have completed the mandated background check. If an adult participant finds himself or herself alone with a child, he or she should remedy the situation by removing themselves to an area within an observable and/or interruptible distance of another adult over the age of 18.

### *Practices or games*

- **Encourage the Buddy System:** There is safety in numbers. Encourage players to move about in groups of two or more children of similar age, whether an approved adult is present or not. This includes travel, leaving the field, or using the restroom areas. It's far more difficult to victimize a child if they're not alone. If an approved adult must accompany a minor to another location, a minor of the same age or another approved adult should accompany them. All interactions between minors and adults should be observable and within an interruptible distance of another adult.
- **Shower and Toilet Facilities:** Most Little Leaguers® can use toilet facilities on their own, so there should be no need for an adult to accompany a child into restroom areas. However, there can sometimes be special circumstances under which a child requires assistance to use the toilet facilities. For example, within the Tee Ball and Challenger divisions, there may be a need for adult assistance, but there should still be adequate privacy for that child and there must be another approved adult who is within an observable and/or interruptible distance from you and the child you are assisting. Again, the "buddy system" should be utilized

in instances like this.

- **Access to Certain Facilities:** LLL volunteers and/or hired workers must not allow any minors to enter an unsecured area without reviewing the area first. Controlling access to areas where children are present, such as the dugout or locker rooms, protects them from potential abuse and/or harm by outsiders. It's not easy to control the access of large outdoor facilities, but visitors could be directed to a central point within the facility. Individuals should not be allowed to wander through the area without the knowledge of the LLL approved individuals.
- **Proper Supervision:** Minors must always be within the visual contact of an approved volunteer and/or hired workers when outside to verify that they are not approached by a stranger or an individual who is not permitted near the minors. Also, this helps to verify that the minors are participating in safe activities. If you cannot see a player, then they are not being properly supervised. Adults should still respect the minor's privacy in shower and toilet facilities as outlined above.

### *Transportation*

- **Rooming:** Players must room with players of the same age and gender when traveling overnight for Little League-approved tournaments. Girls' rooms should not be adjacent to boys' rooms, and rooms should not have adjoining access, either between children or children and adults.
- **Car Safety:** When traveling in a vehicle with minors, adults must have at least two minors in the vehicle at all times.
- **Rides:** Children dropped off too early or picked up late are potential targets. LLL parents and volunteers should be encouraged to pick up and drop off on time. Little League encourages talking to the youth participating in our program about safety issues. Children should be warned about the risk of strangers and how to avoid accepting rides from anyone that was not pre-arranged by their parent/legal guardian. Children should also be told to always tell someone if they're approached by a stranger for any reason, even if it seems innocent, like to help the stranger find a pet. If a player is left unattended after a practice/game by their parent or guardian, the coach or manager must ask another approved adult to stay behind to wait for the parent/guardian.

### *Physical Contact*

- Physical contact between volunteers and/or hired workers with minors should be very limited. Some examples of appropriate physical touch should be limited to high fives or administering appropriate first aid.

## PROHIBITED ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTION GUIDELINES

To minimize the chance of an individual's opportunity to groom a minor, the following practices relating to one-on-one interactions between a minor athlete and an approved adult volunteer or hired worker should be followed:

- A minor athlete will not be left unattended or unsupervised at any time. The minor athlete should always be within the sight of an approved adult volunteer.
- Volunteers or hired workers are prohibited from being alone with minor athletes unless:
  - There is an emergency.
  - There is written permission from the minor athlete's parent/legal guardian.
  - The volunteer or hired worker is the minor athlete's parent/legal guardian, sibling, or personal care assistant.
- Volunteers or hired workers should not interact one-on-one with unrelated minor athletes in settings outside the regular scope of the official LLL program (e.g. the volunteer's home, a restaurant, a vehicle, personal communication including electronic communication).
- Minor athletes may not reside with unrelated volunteers or hired workers for the purpose of participation qualification.