



TEMECULA VALLEY GIRLS SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION
43980 Mahlon Vail Circle #804, Temecula, CA 92592
www.TVGSA.org Tax ID #20-5670340 Non-Profit ID #31172

SAFETY FIRST

Emergencies

Always know your own limitations when assessing the severity of an injury. When in doubt, call for help.

If you are at all uncertain of what to do in case of an emergency **Call 911**.

Be Prepared

Know if your athletes have asthma and know the asthma emergencies signs.

Know if your athletes have allergies, if they carry an epi-pen and what their allergic reaction signs are.

Water and hydration are critical for an athlete, whether it is hot outside or not. You should never punish your athletes by withholding water from them.

First Aid

The four R.I.C.E. Principles for treatment of injuries are: REST, ICE, COMPRESSION and ELEVATION.

How to Stop a Nosebleed

Nosebleeds are caused by broken blood vessels inside the nose and are especially common in children ages 2 to 10. Nosebleeds usually stop on their own but will stop more quickly with the following steps:

- Pinch nose between thumb and forefinger and apply moderate pressure by squeezing against the nasal septum (midsection of the nose) for 15 minutes.
- Lean head forward, not backward, so that the blood does not trickle down the throat. This will prevent gagging.
- Breathe through the mouth
- Apply a cold, soft compress around the nose while it is being pinched.
- Once bleeding stops, elevate the head above the heart, don't lay down completely flat. This helps alleviate nasal pressure.
- Instructions for home:
 - Turn on a cool vaporizer to moisten the mucus membranes which will help prevent the nosebleed from reoccurring.
 - Apply a small amount of petroleum jelly to the inside of the nostrils to moisten the passages and prevent the nosebleed from reoccurring.
 - Avoid blowing nose for 14 hours and then blow gently.
 - Avoid lifting heavy objects or engaging in strenuous activities after a nosebleed. This can produce momentary surges in blood pressure which can cause the nose to bleed again.

Tips and Warnings for Nosebleeds:

Nosebleeds are classified as anterior or posterior. Anterior (in the front) are the everyday common nosebleeds. Posterior (in the back) nosebleeds involve heavy bleeding from deep within the nose and are much more difficult to stop. Posterior nosebleeds occur most often in the elderly, due to hardening of the nasal arteries, nasal tumors and anticoagulant medications.

Anterior nosebleeds occur most often in the fall and winter when upper respiratory infections leave the nose dry. Weather conditions can also contribute to a dry nose.

Never wedge cotton, tissue or gauze up into the nose to stop a nosebleed.

Seek medical care if the nose continues bleeding after 20 minutes, if the bleeding worsens rather than improves, or if there are specific medical conditions or concerns. This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice or treatment.

How to Recognize Signs of Dehydration

Proper hydration is very important to the safety of athletes.

Know the Signs and Be Educated!

- Children are at an increased risk of dehydrating because they do not tolerate temperature extremes as well as adults do.
- Don't wait for an athlete to be thirsty. Thirst is not a good indicator of the need to drink the appropriate amount of water. By the time an athlete is thirsty, they may already be dehydrated.
- If the athlete or parent provides information that the athlete has been sick with vomiting and/or diarrhea, they need to be rehydrating prior to athletic activities.

Symptoms

Symptoms of dehydration include:

- Headache
- Unusual crankiness and fatigue
- Infrequent urination
- Cramps (usually in the abdomen or legs)
- Dry or sticky mouth

First Aid

Treat the athlete suffering from suspected dehydration with the following:

- Rest in a cool, shaded or air-conditioned area.
- Drink plenty of water
- Restrict athletic activity (as necessary)

How to Recognize and Treat Heat Stress

Heat Stress can escalate quickly from a very mild case to a life threatening situation of heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Treat immediately and monitor carefully. The information below is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice or treatment, rather as guidelines in which managers should educate themselves to heat stress.

Plan Ahead

- Make sure to have some form of shade for athletes.
- Allow athletes to rest periodically when the temperature is warm.
- Remind athletes throughout the week to drink water. Athletes should be hydrating every day and not just on game day.
- Listen to your athlete. If they are feeling strange, overheated or just not right, allow the athlete to take a break in the shade.
- Be an advocate for your athlete. Athletes may not recognize their own heat related situation. If they are overdressed (i.e. jacket) for the weather, discuss this with the athlete and parent.
- Know the signs for heat stress (heat exhaustion and heat stroke). They are listed below:

Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is the body's response to an excessive loss of the water and salt, usually through excessive sweating.

Symptoms

Symptoms of heat exhaustion include:

- Heavy sweating
- Extreme weakness or fatigue
- Dizziness, confusion
- Nausea
- Clammy, moist skin
- Pale or flushed complexion
- Muscle cramps
- Slightly elevated body temperature
- Fast and shallow breathing

First Aid

Treat the athlete suffering from suspected heat exhaustion with the following:

- Rest in a cool, shaded or air-conditioned area.
- Drink plenty of water
- Soak uniform in water

How to Recognize and Treat Heat Stress (continued)

Heat Stroke

Heat stroke is the most serious heat -related disorder. It occurs when the body becomes unable to control its temperature. The body's temperature rises rapidly and the sweating mechanism fails. When this occurs, the body is unable to cool down. When heat stroke occurs, the body temperature can rise to 106 degrees Fahrenheit or higher within 10 to 15 minutes. Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not given.

Symptoms

Symptoms of heat stroke include:

- Hot, dry skin or profuse sweating
- Hallucinations
- Chills
- Throbbing headache
- High body temperature
- Confusion/dizziness
- Slurred speech

First Aid

Take the following steps to treat an athlete with suspected heat stroke:

- **Call 911**
- Move the athlete to a cool shaded area.
- Cool the athlete using methods such as:
 - Soaking clothes with water.
 - Spraying, sponging, or soak with water.
 - Fanning body.

Personal Safety

An athlete's personal safety is equally important as their physical safety.

Below are some important guideline questions regarding player personal safety? The answer to each question should be "YES" for every practice and at every game.

- Is there a badged adult female or their own parent escorting an athlete to the bathroom (depending on age)?
- Is the athlete's parent going with the athlete back out to the parking lot if something was left in her car?
- As a manager, are you observant to a person that seems out of place or is acting strangely?
- If a player tells you something doesn't seem right, are you finding out what's going on?
- Is every person who interacts with your players on the field or at practice badged? And are you as the manager, enforcing the TVGSA badge requirements for your team coaches and parents?
- Do you keep in mind that a badge isn't a free pass? Meaning if someone is acting strangely and they have a badge, we all still need to be observant.
- Do you and your coaches/parents follow the rule, "See something, say something?"

As adults, we are on the front lines to protect our athletes. We all need to be consistent and minimize these risks by practicing smart safety EVERY TIME we are on the fields.

Sexual Abuse Of Athletes By Coaches A Significant Problem

Your young daughter loves basketball. She eats drinks and sleeps it. She spends hours outside in your driveway shooting hoops.

A coach for a local competitive team sees her playing basketball in the schoolyard during recess and invites her to join his team. You're overjoyed. She doesn't have many friends and her self-esteem isn't the greatest in the world. She thinks of herself as unattractive and awkward. This will give her a chance to build up her confidence, to participate in a sport she loves plus perhaps make new friends as well.

Still, you have reservations. You feel compelled to do your homework into the coach's background. And with good reason too.

According to **Robert Shoop** a Kansas State University expert who has studied sexual harassment and abuse in schools, incidents of sexual abuse by coaches and teachers are comparable in magnitude to, but have been overshadowed by the incidents of alleged abuse committed by priests in the Catholic Church. This abuse isn't just limited to coaches. Band directors, music teachers or anybody who has access to your child in a private environment outside of the school setting could be a predator as well.

So, how do you know if your child is safe with their little league coach or not? Do your homework, according to **Shoop**.

Although he admits there is a substantial amount of money involved, **Shoop** recommends that any agency that sponsors sports activities or parents themselves conduct a thorough background check on every coach that includes a fingerprint check and have the coach sign a statement of ethics reflecting the ethical policy of the organization.

Shoop also recommends that school districts have a written policy that explicitly talks about sexual abuse and sexual harassment as well as have an anti-fraternization policy that specifically states teachers should not be involved in romantic or sexual relationships with students.

Students should also be "educated" about the potential for this abuse to occur. Shoop said this, along with having a grievance procedure, and having teachers and parents pay attention to what's happening, will help reduce the problem.

To protect themselves from false accusations, Shoop recommends coaches follow these guidelines:

- Conduct open practices.
- Have an assistant coach or another parent at practice.
- Avoid transporting players to and from games or practices.
- Let parents make the decision or be involved in selecting uniforms when coaching players of the opposite sex.
- Avoid personal communication with players.
- Avoid buying players gifts.
- Be on the alert if you have a child who shows particular fondness for you.

How do you know if your child is safe with their sports coach? Just do your homework, said Shoop.

He is regularly consulted on issues pertaining to educational law, risk management and sexual harassment prevention. He is the author or co-author of 14 books including "Sexual Exploitation in Schools: How to Spot it and Stop it" and more than 100 journal articles, monographs and book chapters about legal issues. He also has produced award-winning video programs designed to eliminate sexual harassment in public schools and businesses.

"I've had coaches that I've interviewed who said 'I went into coaching because it gave me access to kids' and 'I made a point of being nice to the moms and dads and being real nice to the kids around the moms and dads so they'd see how great a guy I was' or 'I don't drink and I don't smoke so they trusted their kid with me' Shoop said. "You can't screen people out by guessing whether they're good person or bad person because the person who's going to molest will act as nice as anybody else."

Although the vast majority of abuse cases occur between male teachers or coaches and female student athletes, Shoop is quick to caution that female to male and same sex abuse from student athlete to coach or teacher can occur as well.

Shoop said often kids are molested by coaches who are now in their third or fourth school district. They have been either arrested or incarcerated for child molestation and simply move from town to town prior to being identified as a molester, showing up and expressing a desire to coach. Often, the "good old boy" system is alive and well helping these coaches obtain job after job.

So what should parents do to ensure their child's coach is not a predator?

Although he admits there is a substantial amount of money involved, Shoop recommends that any agency that sponsors sports activities conduct a thorough background check on every coach -which includes a fingerprint check- and have the coach sign a statement of ethics that specifies the ethical policy of the organization.

Shoop also recommends that school districts and organizations that sponsor athletic teams have a written policy that explicitly talks about sexual abuse and sexual harassment and have an anti-fraternization policy that specifically states teachers should not be involved in romantic or sexual relationships with students.

"Coaches or teachers shouldn't be going over to their students' house after school," Shoop said. "They shouldn't be buying them presents; they shouldn't be making phone calls to them at night. And the students should know that when any of these things happen, it's inappropriate; a red flag should be raised."

Students should also be educated about the potential for this abuse to occur. Shoop said this, along with having a grievance procedure and having teachers and parents pay attention to what's happening, will help reduce the problem.

"You have to warn the kids that this could happen," Shoop said. "I have worked with kids who are being sexually molested by their father, for example, and they believe that that's happening to every child. They don't understand that what's happening to them is unique because no one's helped them to understand what an appropriate relationship is."

"Consequently," Shoop continued, "if nobody tells a child that there are adults who will harm you, that you need to be careful, they're not likely to understand that what's happening to them is harmful."

According to Shoop, denial of the problem is as negligent as failing to conduct background checks.

"There is sort of a righteous indignation that many coaches feel -they just get angry about this whole topic because it embarrasses them," Shoop said. "They feel like they're good people and they get sick of hearing about the 'bad people'- that talking about it makes people think they're bad."

"In many cases other kids know that the coach or the teacher is molesting another kid but they feel so loyal to their friend that they don't tell anybody," Shoop continued. "The same thing is true with teachers who become suspicious but they just can't believe it because the coach or teacher is such a nice guy. So teachers, coaches and students have to be willing to at least raise suspicions when they have them, rather than turn their back on them and fail to see the things that are right in front of them."

Shoop said it's a tragedy that good, competent, ethical people have to be afraid or even leave the field of coaching because of fear of false accusations that may destroy their reputation. He recommends these suggestions for coaches to protect themselves:

- Conduct open practices. "Coaches don't like obnoxious, overbearing parents coming in and coaching their kids from the stands," Shoop said. "That's understandable but the downside is, once you have a closed practice and some allegation comes up that a person did something, you don't have any witnesses there and people get suspicious when they go, 'oh yeah, he told us we can't hang around the practice. I guess he must have done that so he could do something bad.'"
- Have an assistant coach or another parent at practice. "The issue of having another person there the majority of the time- whether it's a spouse, a friend or parent volunteer being involved as a co-coach eliminates one less opportunity to be alone with the children," Shoop said.

- Avoid transporting players to and from games or practices. "The problem, of course, becomes there's always that emergency or that weird situation where suddenly the coach gets a phone call from somebody that can't get to a practice or a game," Shoop said. "But that's an unusual situation where the parent knows about it as opposed to just a practice where 'I live by you, I will just drop you home. Even though it's so natural to do it, you don't want to be alone in a car with one of your athletes.'"
- When coaching players of the opposite sex, even for something like selecting uniforms, let parents make the selections or be involved. "I worked in cases where the coach selects the uniforms and they end up being low cut in the front, high legs and it becomes awkward for the girls to wear some of the uniforms that the coaches pick."
- Avoid personal communication with players. "I would make it a practice to keep all the e-mails I send and keep them printed out," Shoop said. "If it's an e-mail saying 'practice is tomorrow at 3:30, be there, that's fine. But if that kid e-mails you and says, 'Dear coach, you are the only person on that Listens to me and I just want to tell you some things that are happening and maybe you can help me with it,' be careful. You are not their counselor, therapist or their doctor and you don't want to get into those situations.'"
- Avoid buying players gifts. "It's such a temptation to have a kid having a birthday and buy her a little doll or buy them - depending on the age of the child - something that maybe they can't get from their parents or they don't have," Shoop said. "But it's just not a good idea to buy gifts. If you buy gifts for one, you should buy gifts for all of them. And it's much better to have a fund that parents contribute to and you buy the team things for everybody rather than saying, 'Oh gee, I notice this Kid is coming and their baseball glove is just shot. I've got an old glove I'll give to them. In that case, give it to the parent and have the parent give it to the kid. Don't you give it to them directly?'"
- Be on the alert if you have a child who shows particular fondness for you. "It's so flattering and a nice feeling to have children like you and feel you're a good person," Shoop said. "But if a child is showing inappropriate interest in you, seems to want to hang around you or tells you how great you are and how special you are, the tendency would be to be drawn toward that child. My feeling would be that you need to set boundaries and make sure that you don't spend any more time with that child than you would any other child. Realize that if a child is particularly dependent and particularly emotionally unstable that that's likely a kid who's going to make a false complaint. If you reject that child and then suddenly they say, 'Oh yeah, he did something to me. So it's better to nip those kinds of thing in the bud and have a professional relationship. If you go out with them afterwards to have a hamburger or pop or something after a game, that's fine but it's much better to do it with parent volunteers than to do it with just you and the kids.'"

While a lot of Shoop's suggestions sound like common sense, he said predators can and do use all those situations to develop contact with their victims. The naive person gets involved in something without even knowing it and then it gets very difficult to get out.

"If you behave in a way your behavior could be misconstrued, and then later someone misconstrues it, you're going to have to take the responsibility that you put yourself in that situation Shoop said.

Reference

http://www.aphroditewomenshealth.com/news/20030526004941_health_news.shtml © 2002 - 2013 Aphrodite Women's Health and its licensors. All rights reserved. Article date 26 June 2003