

South Jersey Soccer League Statement on Verbal Abuse

The South Jersey Soccer League (“SJSL”) is committed to providing a safe playing environment free from all verbal abuse for all of our young players and members. The League has adopted a “zero tolerance” policy and will not tolerate any instances of emotional or verbal abuse from any of our players, coaches, referees, officials, parents, spectators or volunteers during an SJSL sponsored game or program.

Emotional or verbal abuse may include, but is not limited to: insulting, threatening, mocking or demeaning behavior, or making abusive statements regarding an individual’s race, gender, religion, nationality, ethnicity, sex or age. It may, for example, take the form of “talking smack” or “talking trash”, as the practice is referred to by some players, and may include insulting the competency or ability of an individual, or it may involve the use of profanity or inappropriate language. This type of behavior is not a part of the game and will not be accepted even in the heat of the moment. Abuse of this or any related kind is unacceptable.

Violations of this policy are usually brought to the League’s attention by the referees assigned to officiate our league matches and are included in the referee’s game report. The League understands, however, that referees may not always be in a position to witness and report all of the incidents that may occur. Accordingly, questions and concerns raised by any interested party should be directed to the member club in question and then forwarded for the League’s review. SJSL maintains a Committee in place to investigate all reported complaints and allegations of verbal or emotional abuse brought to its attention. SJSL will use its authority to levy sanctions against any party that is determined to have violated this policy to the fullest extent possible pursuant to the League’s Rules and Regulations. The SJSL expects any conduct that the member clubs find to be in violation of this policy to be promptly reported to the League.

The League strongly believes that the spirit of sportsmanship must prevail in order to provide its players with a rewarding experience. Please do not allow the actions of a few to ruin the enjoyment of everyone else. Soccer should be celebrated as a beautiful game, not as a mean spirited competition. Coaches are reminded to set an appropriate example for their players and they are encouraged to discuss this policy with their team, their parents and any and all spectators.

Adopted October 21, 2013