

## **Sexual Harassment**

Regardless of what any one person's opinion is about this issue, all coaches must be informed and understand what qualifies as sexual harassment.

Any unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature is considered sexual harassment.

Behaviors that constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Remarks, jokes, and comments about a person's body, appearance, sex, or sexual orientation
- Inquiries or comments about a person's sexual activities
- Obscene or suggestive gestures
- Use of inappropriate or derogatory sexual language
- Inappropriate physical contact, including inappropriate touching, patting, and pinching.
- Avoid any behavior that could be considered sexual harassment, and monitor the actions of the other coaches and the players. Here are a few suggestions to help reduce your risk of being falsely accused of sexual harassment.
- Always have other people present when you're interacting with a player.
- Be especially careful about any physical contact with athletes. When teaching a skill in which you need to touch an athlete, make sure other athletes, coaches, or adults are present.
- A pat on the back or a high five is a much better choice than a pat on the buttocks.
- If you accidentally touch a private body part during your coaching, don't just ignore it. Apologize and make it clear that the action was unintentional.
- If you are accused of sexual harassment, listen carefully to the complaint and don't try to make light of the accusation. Respect the other person's viewpoint, identify the offending behavior, and stop it immediately.

Many use the discussion of sexual harassment as an opportunity to crack a joke, however it is best to be prepared for any situation that might occur.