

Bill Summary

- Orgs must institute required comprehensive abuse prevention on an annual basis for adults working with minors directly.
- Orgs must have a mandatory reporting policy for adults working directly with minor athletes.
- Orgs must have a prohibited conduct policy.
- Orgs must have a mechanism to receive reports of possible violations of prohibited conduct policy.
- Orgs must adjudicate reports of misconduct (violations of prohibited conduct policy) consistently, fairly and using independence when possible.
- Any individual who is permanently ineligible for an org's programming (banned) must be publicly disclosed.
- Orgs should be required to conduct background checks on adults working with minor athletes. At minimum, these checks should include a national criminal check and the national sex offender registry. Ideally a 5 year county check is run.

Issue

Among the findings from a self-reported survey of 685 rec and travel sports organizations across the U.S.:

- 56% lack a policy governing one-on-one interactions between adults and minors. That's a concern given that a reported 1 in 10 children in the U.S. are sexually abused before age 18, 90% know their abuser, and more than 80% of child sexual abuse occurs in one-on-one situations. According to research by UCLA.
- Roughly 50% do not have a policy on athlete emergency care, such as return to play from concussion, cardiac arrest, heat illness, and lightning strikes.
- 47% of organizations do not require coaches and staff take abuse prevention training.
- 33% do not have a background check policy for coaches and staff (such as criminal or sex offender checks), or an appeals policy if a person gets denied work in the organization. The lack of an appeals policy opens organizations up to greater liability if sued.
- 13% lack a policy on prohibited conduct for staff, parents, players and referees. Without a documented policy that clearly communicates how to deal with inappropriate behavior, organizations accept greater liability risk when ejecting someone.

Solution

The bill is attempting to create health and safety certification for youth sports organizations through audits that inform the public if organizational policies exist and are being implemented. Organizations receive insurance discounts from Players Health if they implement safety policies. "What we're missing is getting parents to care enough to ask questions and hold organizations accountable to have standards," Burks said. "Parents can't have a voice if they don't know what standards to hold the organization to."

SB24-113 Safer Youth Sports

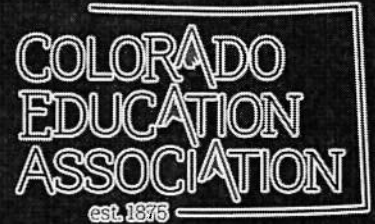
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