

Parents and Players:

The decision to allow youth sports to return to full gaming rests in the hands of our California Governor, Gavin Newsom, and our local elected representatives. Together, their lack of concern to address the needs of our youth is troubling. While many other states have allowed the return of youth sports, California is behind the curve. **If your family supports allowing a return to contact gaming, we ask that you join us in our "10-10-10" rally/protest to bring youth sports back in the best interest of our children.** This effort may seem extreme, but we have tried everything to work with the State and County, including providing them with extremely cautious Return to Play protocols. In return, we expected a more rapid reopening, but still, have seen no progress.

In addition to helping young children maintain healthy lifestyles and gain important life skills, our programs keep teens off the streets and engaged in positive activities with coaches, mentors, and positive role models. Amid a global pandemic, an economic depression, social injustice, and a reported increase in anxiety, depression, and attempted suicides, it has never been more important to make these programs available.

Children's physical and mental health as well as social and emotional well-being is jeopardized. When they see other states playing, our kids are asking "What About Us?", especially when movie theaters, beauty salons, schools and now playgrounds are open. They are wondering why no one is listening or caring about them. **Enough is enough! We need to be their voice and get the attention of the media, our politicians and most importantly Governor Newsom.**

Some points and background to consider:

- In June, San Diego County gave youth sports the ability to return to the field for distanced training and day camps. "Youth sports" were not specifically included in the guidance at that time.
- On August 3rd, the State finally provided a limited Youth Sports Guidance. They have yet to come back with a full reopening plan and have neglected any conversation in reference to youth sports.
- We have been in the same position for 16+ weeks without a recorded case of COVID transmission (through soccer) among our players.
- Our teams and other sports are being forced to travel to other states to play the game they love. The insanity of being forced to do this should not go unnoticed.
- Every discussion San Diego Clubs have had with the County Public Health Officials have always ended with "we are following State guidance" on what is officially allowed.
- Soccer is an outdoor sport and outdoor activity has a low risk for transmission.
- Other states are looking at sports individually and addressing risks accordingly. Soccer does not have sustained close contact and is played outdoors.

- Most states, including those surrounding California, have already allowed gaming to return in ways that adhere to strict health protocols that will protect players, coaches and families. California should do the same.
- We know from studies and our own personal experience, that from a mental health standpoint, young people are already suffering from six months of virtual school learning, lockdowns and a suspension of extracurricular activities. The negative impact of continuing the ban on youth could have significant consequences in the future.
- Many youth soccer players are hoping for an opportunity to play at the collegiate level. As other states continue to play and our state does not, the continued development of our players is stalled.
- Modifications to the game environment can be easily made to open safely: screenings, masks while not playing, sideline limitations, etc.

**Please join us for the "WHAT ABOUT US" Rally/Protest
County Administration Center
1600 Pacific Highway, San Diego 92101
October 10, 2020 at 10AM**

This event is open to all families and players from all sports, players are encouraged to wear team jerseys, bring club banners, masks and social distancing is required.

We will be meeting on the West Plaza (facing the bay), please arrive by 9:30 am so we can start promptly at 10AM and be done by 11AM.