



## **POLICY - CODE OF CONDUCT TO PROTECT CHILDREN**

Effective Date: 2019 Revision

---

### **Related Policies**

- Policy - Code of Conduct
- Sports4all Guidelines on Safe Working Practice for Adults Working with Children/Youth

### **Why a Code of Conduct Specifically for Children?**

The Sports4all has developed this Code of Conduct to Protect Children because we are committed to ensuring all children are protected and safe. A Code of Conduct to Protect Children is an important part of creating safe environments for children. The safety, rights and well-being of children participating in our programs is a priority in our daily operations. We nurture supportive and inclusive relationships with children while balancing and encouraging appropriate boundaries.

The intent of this policy is to guide our employees/volunteers in their interactions and development of healthy relationships with the children involved in the activities or programs delivered by our organization and to model appropriate boundaries for children.

For the purposes of the Sports4all, and in keeping with the Government of Canada, “minor child” is defined as a person under the age of 18, and all Sports4all youth (child, minor, minor child) referenced documents are to be interpreted as pertaining to youth under the age of 18.

### **See:**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/refugee-protection/canada/processing-provincial-definitions-minor.html>

### **Treating Children with Dignity and Maintaining Boundaries**

All employees/volunteers must:

- Treat all children with respect and dignity.
- Establish, respect, and maintain appropriate boundaries with all children and families involved in activities or programs delivered by the organization.

It is important that we each monitor our own behavior towards children, and pay close attention to the behavior of our peers to ensure that behavior is appropriate and respectful, and will be perceived as such by others.

All interactions and activities with children:

- Should be known to, and approved by, a supervisor/designated person and/or the parents of the child.
- Tied to your duties.
- Designed to meet the child's needs not our own needs.

Sports4all prohibits the use of SMS (text & video) communications with children/youth under the age of 12. SMS communications are applicable only to teams aged U13 and up with express consent of the parent/guardian.

Always consider the child's reaction to any activities, conversations, behavior or other interactions.

**If at any time you are in doubt about the appropriateness of your own behavior or the behavior of others, you should send an email to [info@sports4all.ca](mailto:info@sports4all.ca) and Sports4all will designate a person within the organization to assist you.**

### **General Rules of Behavior**

- Always adhere to the "Rule of Two"
  - This means that any one-on-one interaction between a Sports4all representative and an athlete must take place within the presence of the second adult, with the exception of medical emergencies.
  - Should there be a circumstance where a screened, trained, and certified representative is not available, a screened volunteer, parent, or adult can be recruited.
- Review and practice "Sports4all Guidelines on Safe Working Practice for Adults Working with Children and Youth"

Employees/volunteers of the organization must not:

- Engage in any sort of physical contact with a child that may make the child, or a reasonable observer feel uncomfortable, or that may be seen by a reasonable observer to be violating reasonable boundaries.
- Engage in any communication with a child within or outside of job/volunteer duties, that may make the child uncomfortable or that may be seen by a reasonable observer to be violating reasonable boundaries.
- Engage in any behavior that goes against (or appears to go against) the organization's mandate, policies, or Code of Conduct to Protect Children, regardless of whether or not they are serving the organization at that moment.
- Conduct their own investigation into allegations or suspicions of potentially illegal or inappropriate behavior – it is an employee/volunteer's duty to report the matter to his/her supervisor/designated person or Child Welfare Agency, not to investigate.

## What Constitutes Inappropriate Behavior

Inappropriate behavior includes:

1. **Inappropriate Communication.** Communication with a child or his/her family outside of a work/volunteer context, regardless of who initiated the exchange. For example:
  - Personal phone calls or letters
  - Electronic communications (email, text message, instant message, online chats, social networking (including “friending”), etc.)
  - Excessive communications (online or offline)

2. **Inappropriate Contact.** Spending unauthorized time with a child or the child’s family outside of designated work times and volunteer activities. You must report all contact with a child or the child’s family outside of designated work times and activities BEFORE the contact occurs to the designated person within your organization.

3. **Favoritism.** Singling out a child or certain children and providing special privileges and attention. For example, paying a lot of attention to, giving or sending personalized gifts, or allowing privileges that are excessive, unwarranted or inappropriate.

4. **Taking Personal Photos/Videos.** Using a personal cell phone, camera or video to take pictures of a child, or allowing any other person to do so, as well as uploading or copying any pictures you may have taken of a child to the Internet or any personal storage device. Pictures taken as part of your job duties (when known to your supervisor) are acceptable, however, the pictures are to remain with the organization and not be used by you in a personal capacity.

Inappropriate behavior also includes:

5. Telling sexual jokes or making comments to a child that are in any way suggestive, explicit or personal.

6. Showing a child material that is sexual in nature, including, signs, cartoons, graphic novels, calendars, literature, photographs, screen savers, or displaying such material in plain view of a child, or making such material available to a child.

7. Intimidating or threatening a child. 8. Making fun of a child (shaming, embarrassing, humiliating, criticizing, or blaming).

Whether or not a particular behavior or action constitutes inappropriate behavior will be a matter determined by the organization having regard to all of the circumstances, including past behavior, and allegations or suspicions related to such behavior.

## Reporting Requirements

If you are not sure whether the issue you have witnessed or heard about involves potentially illegal behavior or inappropriate behavior, discuss the issue with the designated person within your organization who will support you through the process. Remember: You have an independent duty to report all suspicions of potentially illegal behavior directly to police and/or child welfare.

# INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT

## STEPS FOR REPORTING:

This card is a component of the Commit to Kids® program. It is intended as a quick reference for use in a sporting environment and is not meant to be exhaustive or to replace legal advice. Users are strongly encouraged to consult with any or all of child welfare, law enforcement and legal counsel as appropriate to a given situation.

### 1

A child discloses information or information is discovered indicating that a coach/volunteer may have acted inappropriately. (Document)

### 2

Coach who receives the report notifies the supervisor/manager. (Document)

### 3

Manager notifies the head of the organization.

### 4

Consultation between the manager and head of the organization to decide if concern is warranted. (Document)

### 5

If warranted, meet with accused coach/volunteer to discuss allegations and concerns. The individual is told about the complaint without disclosing the source. The individual is asked to respond to the allegation. (Document)

### 6

If the head of the organization determines that the nature of the conduct is not sufficiently serious to warrant formal action, the organization may choose to clarify expectations with the coach/volunteer as outlined in the Code of Conduct to Protect Children. (Document)

As part of any investigation or internal follow-up process, an organization should critically assess the adequacy of existing child protection policies and practices in light of concerns raised. If needed, strengthen policies and practices to better protect children.

**NOTE:** Consider when/if the child's parents should be notified about allegations of inappropriate conduct.

### 7

If the head of the organization determines that the nature of the conduct is sufficiently serious to warrant action, an internal follow-up takes place. (Document)

### 8

Organization conducts an internal follow up. (Document)  
**OUTCOME OF FOLLOW-UP:**

**A) Inappropriate conduct is not substantiated.** Follow internal policies. No further action necessary but organization may choose to take the opportunity to remind all coaches/volunteers of the Code of Conduct to Protect Children.

**B) Inappropriate conduct is substantiated.** Next steps will depend on severity of the conduct, the nature of the information gathered during internal follow-up, and other relevant circumstances (such as past inappropriate conduct of a similar nature). Varying levels of disciplinary action may be appropriate. For example, it may be prudent for an organization to report concerns to child welfare or law enforcement.

**C) Inconclusive.** Next steps will need to be carefully considered and depend on the nature of the information gathered during the internal follow-up. Work through options, assess risk and consult professionals as needed.

### 9

Adequately supervise and monitor coach/volunteer, consistent with internal policies. (Document)

Many of these steps would also apply when:

- A coach/volunteer reports observing inappropriate behaviour by another coach/volunteer
- A peer discloses on behalf of another child



*The safety of the child and other children in the organization must be ensured at all times in the process.*



is operated by



CANADIAN CENTRE for CHILD PROTECTION®

*Helping families. Protecting children.*

[www.commit2kids.ca](http://www.commit2kids.ca)

"CANADIAN CENTRE for CHILD PROTECTION" and "Commit to Kids" are registered in Canada as trademarks of the Canadian Centre for Child Protection Inc.  
©2017, Canadian Centre for Child Protection Inc. All rights reserved. No posting online without permission. Users may save one copy and print a reasonable number of copies for non-commercial purposes.

All employees and volunteers must report suspected child sexual abuse, inappropriate behavior or incidents that they become aware of, whether the behavior or incidents were personally witnessed or not.

### **Follow up on Reporting**

When an allegation or suspicion of potentially illegal behavior is reported, police and/or a child welfare agency will be notified. The organization will follow up internally as appropriate.

When an allegation or suspicion of inappropriate behavior is made, the organization will follow up on the matter to gather information about what happened and determine what, if any, formal or other disciplinary action is required.

In the case of inappropriate behavior, if:

- multiple behaviors were reported;
- inappropriate behavior is recurring, or;
- the reported behavior is of serious concern;

the organization may refer the matter to a child welfare agency or police.

**If at any time you are in doubt about the appropriateness of your own behavior or the behavior of others, or have any questions and concern regarding the safety of children, or members, you should send an email to [info@sports4all.ca](mailto:info@sports4all.ca) and Sports4all will designate a person within the organization to assist you.**