



Thornhill Soccer Club

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Code of Conduct to Protect Children in Sport

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Introduction

Thornhill Soccer Club has developed the following Child Protection Code of Conduct to guide our employees/volunteers in their interactions with children. The safety, rights and well-being of the children we serve are at the core of our daily programs.

We nurture supportive relationships with children while balancing and encouraging appropriate boundaries.

Why we have a Child Protection Code of Conduct

Our organization is committed to ensuring all children are protected and safe. A Code of Conduct is an integral part of creating safe environments for children. The safety, rights and well-being of children participating in our programs are prioritized in our daily operations.

The Code of Conduct intends to guide our staff or volunteers in developing healthy relationships with the children involved in sports programs delivered by our organization and model appropriate boundaries for children.

Treating Children With Dignity and Maintaining Boundaries

All staff or 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 crucial to monitor your behaviour towards children and pay close attention to the behaviour of your peers to ensure that behaviour is appropriate and respectful and will be perceived as such by others.

All of your interactions and activities with children

- should be known to, and approved by the board, where applicable, and the parents of the child
- tied to your duties
- designed to develop the child's skills in the sports program

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

If you are in doubt about the appropriateness of your own behaviour or the behaviour of others at any time, you have to discuss it with the designated person within the club immediately



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Examples of unacceptable behaviour toward a child

- embarrassing
- shaming
- blaming
- humiliating
- putting them down

General rules of behaviour

Staff or volunteers of the organization must not

- Engage in any physical contact with a child that may make the child or a reasonable observer feel uncomfortable.
- Engage in any communication with a child within or outside of duties with the child that may make the child uncomfortable
- Engage in any behaviour that an observer may see as violating reasonable boundaries.
- Engage in any behaviour 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 investigation into allegations or suspicions of potentially illegal or inappropriate behaviour. A staff or volunteer must report the matter to the designated person, Child Welfare Agency, or law enforcement, not investigate.

What Constitutes Inappropriate Behaviour

Inappropriate behaviour includes

1) **Inappropriate Communication**

Communication with a child or his/her family outside of the context of duties for the organization, regardless of who initiated the exchange.

For example:

- Personal phone calls not tied to duties with the child
- Electronic communications (email, text message, instant message, online chats, social networking including "friending," etc.) are not tied to duties with the child
- Personal letters not tied to duties with the child
- Excessive communications (online or offline)

2) **Inappropriate Contact**

Spending unauthorized time with a child outside of designated duties with the organization.

3) **Favouritism**

Singling out a child or certain children and providing special privileges and attention.

For example:

- paying a lot of attention
- giving or sending personalized gifts
- allowing privileges that are excessive, unwarranted or inappropriate



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4) **Taking Personal Photos/Videos**

Using a personal cell phone, camera or video to take pictures of a child, or allow any other person to do so, and 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 are acceptable; however, the pictures are to remain with the organization and not be used by you.

- 5) Telling sexual jokes to a child or making comments to a child that are or are in any way suggestive, explicit or personal
- 6) Showing a child material that is sexual, 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

Inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated, especially as it relates to the well-being of the children involved in activities or programs delivered by the sports organization.

The organization will determine whether or not a particular behaviour or action constitutes inappropriate behaviour regarding all of the circumstances, including past behaviour and allegations or suspicions related to such behaviour.

Reporting Requirements

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

Where to report

- 1) All allegations or suspicions of **potentially illegal behaviour** (for example, child sexual abuse) that a staff or volunteer witnesses first-hand must be promptly reported to the police, child welfare, or both.
- 2) To protect all children in our care, all allegations or suspicions of **potentially illegal behaviour** that staff or volunteer learns of must also be promptly reported to the police, child welfare, or both. The police, child welfare, or both will determine whether the allegation or suspicion requires further investigation
- 3) All allegations or suspicions of **inappropriate behaviour** (see above examples) that staff or volunteer learns of or witnesses first-hand must be reported to the designate for the sports organization.

Keep in mind that you may learn of potentially illegal or inappropriate behaviour through the child or some other third party, or you may witness it first-hand.

Examples of the typical behaviour you may learn of or witness and that you must report as set out above includes:

- Potentially Illegal behaviour by a Staff or volunteer of the organization
- Potential Illegal behaviour by a third party, such as a Parent, Teacher, Babysitter, Coach



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If you are not sure whether the issue you have witnessed or heard about involves potentially illegal behaviour or inappropriate behaviour, discuss the issue with the designated person within your organization who will support you through the process

You have an independent duty to report all potentially illegal behaviour suspicions directly to the police, child welfare, or both.

Follow up on Reporting

When an allegation or suspicion of potentially illegal behaviour is reported, the police, a child welfare agency, or both will be notified.

The sport organization will follow up internally as appropriate.

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

In the case of inappropriate behaviour, if:

- multiple behaviours were reported
- inappropriate behaviour is recurring, or
- the reported behaviour is of grave concern

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

Acknowledgement and Acceptance of the Code of Conduct

I hereby declare that I will follow and comply with the Code of Conduct to Protect Children laid out in this document by the Thornhill Soccer Club

Name

Role

Signature

Date