



# Reporting Child Sexual Abuse & Misconduct

*The below is part of SYSI's Abuse and Safety Policy included in our seasonal coach package and available on our website at the start of each season.*

## 3.3. Reporting Child Sexual Abuse and Misconduct

NOTE: The below information is not meant to be exhaustive or intended to or to use in place of legal counsel but is to be intended as a quick reference for use in a sporting environment. Consult with child welfare, law enforcement and legal counsel if child abuse is alleged or suspected.

3.3.1 There is a legal and ethical responsibility to act, when a person becomes aware that a child may be or has been abused.

3.3.2 Individuals are responsible for reporting concerns, not proving abuse.

3.3.3 A person has a legal duty to report incidences of abuse, sexual or otherwise, even if it has occurred in the past and is no longer occurring. The offender may still have access to other children and those children may be at risk.

### 3.3.4 Stepwise Action for Reporting Child Sexual Abuse

- a) All reports, claims and disclosures must first be conducted through the Zone Association and their assigned safety designate. If the claim is alleged to have occurred in programs SYSI directly manages – Parent and Tot, Dream League, Kids in the Park, and Alliance Academy and PSL programs – the report must be made to the SYSI safety designate.
- b) Child discloses abuse or abuse is discovered with the adult involved in the abuse being a coach or volunteer
- c) Coach/Volunteer who receives disclosure
  - i. Notifies law enforcement and/or child welfare about the incident(s)
  - ii. Consults with child welfare about notifying the parents; and
  - iii. Notifies the supervisor/manager, as well as a representative from Saskatoon Youth Soccer. The supervisor/manager in turn notifies the head of the organization.
- d) Head of the organization suspends coach/volunteer suspected of abuse without pay until case is resolved.
  - i. If the individual is a volunteer or unpaid staff, consider if the individual should be dismissed from their position immediately
- e) A child welfare agency and/or police will carry out any investigation. Organization(s) should conduct an internal follow up in consultation with police/child welfare and adjust(s) internal policies if needed.

Potential outcome of investigation:

  - i. Substantiated/guilty. Coach/volunteer is dismissed from his/her position
  - ii. Inconclusive/not guilty. Seek legal counsel. Consider if coach/volunteer should be dismissed, with or without severance.
  - iii. Criminal processes can be complex and lengthy. A finding of not guilty may not necessarily mean that the abuse did not occur. Consult with a lawyer.
- f) Document the outcome of the investigation on the incident report form. Document the results of the internal follow-up.

### 3.3.5 Many of the steps above would also apply when:

- a) A child divulges abuse by someone outside the organization
- b) A peer divulges on behalf of another child
- c) An adult suspects that a child is being/or has been abused
- d) The safety of the child and other children in the organization must always be ensured in the process.

### 3.3.5 Legal guidance should be sought prior to suspension or dismissal