



CODE OF CONDUCT TO PROTECT CHILDREN

reviewed January 15, 2024

SMSA has developed the following Child Protection Code of Conduct to guide our board/coaches/volunteers in their interactions with children. The safety, rights and well-being of children we serve are at the core of our daily programs. We nurture supportive relationships with children while balancing and encouraging appropriate boundaries. The safety, rights and well-being of children participating in our programs is a priority in our daily operations.

Treating Children With Dignity and Maintaining Boundaries

All staff/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 to monitor your own behavior towards children, and pay close attention to the behavior of your peers to ensure that behavior 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, and
- designed to develop the child's skills in the sport program

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 discuss it with the designated person within your organization.

Examples of unacceptable behavior toward a child:

- embarrassing
- shaming
- blaming

- humiliating
- putting them down

General Rules of Behavior

Staff/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 duties with the child, 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 a staff/ volunteer's duty to report the matter to the designated person, Child Welfare Agency, or law enforcement, not to investigate.

What Constitutes Inappropriate Behavior

Inappropriate behavior 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.) 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. 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 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 to a child, or making comments to a child that are or is 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

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

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

All staff 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.

Where to report:

1. All allegations or suspicions of potentially illegal behavior (for example, child sexual abuse) that a staff/volunteer witnesses first-hand, must be promptly reported to police and/or child welfare.

2. To ensure the protection of all children in our care, all allegations or suspicions of potentially illegal behavior that a staff/volunteer learns of must also be promptly reported to police and/or child welfare. Police and/or child welfare will make the determination as to whether the allegation or

suspicion requires further investigation.

3. All allegations or suspicions of inappropriate behavior (see above examples), that a staff/volunteer learns of or witnesses first-hand, must be reported to the designate for the sport organization.

Keep in mind that you may learn of potentially illegal or inappropriate behavior through the child or some other third party, or you may witness it first-hand. Examples of the type behavior you may learn of or witness and that you must report as set out above includes:

- a. Potentially Illegal behavior by a Staff/Volunteer of the organization
- b. Potential Illegal behavior by a third party, such as a Parent, Teacher, Babysitter, Coach.

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.

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 sport organization will follow up internally as appropriate.

When an allegation or suspicion of inappropriate behavior is made, the sport 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 child welfare agency or police