



Code of Conduct to Protect Children

South Four Soccer
Effective Date: December 2023

Code of Conduct to Protect Children Policy

Introduction

South Four Soccer Association has developed the following Code of Conduct to Child Protection Code of Conduct to guide our coaches, employees, and 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 strive to nurture supportive relationships with children while balancing and encouraging appropriate boundaries.

Why a Code of Conduct to Protect Children?

South Four Soccer is committed to ensuring that all children are protected and safe. A Code of Conduct 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.

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

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 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 your interactions and activities with children should be:

- Should be known to, and approved by the board, where applicable, and the parents of the child
- Tied to the coaching/volunteering duties involved.
- Designed to develop the child's skills in the sport.



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Always consider the child's reaction to any activities, conversations, behaviour, or other interactions. If at any time you are in doubt about the appropriateness of your own behaviour or the behaviour of others, you should discuss it with the designated person within your organization.

Examples of **Appropriate** behaviour and **Unacceptable** behaviour towards a child:

Appropriate Behaviour

- Respectful language, tone and attitude
- Respectful personal physical and emotional boundaries
- Engaging with children that would be seen by others in a reasonable boundaries
- Keeping practices open to observations by parents
- Communications with children transparent and accountable

Unacceptable Behaviour

- Sexual/Physical Abuse
- Embarrassing
- Bullying
- Shaming
- Blaming
- Humiliating
- Putting them down
- Discrimination

General Rules of Behaviour

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 behaviour 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.



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- Conduct their own investigation into allegations or suspicions of potentially illegal or inappropriate behaviour – 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 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.) 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 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 behaviour may also include, but not limited to:



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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, screensavers, 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 sport organization.

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

Reporting Requirements

All South Four members, staff and volunteers must report any suspected child sexual abuse, inappropriate behaviour, or incidents listed above that they become aware of, whether the behaviour or incidents were personally witnessed or not to our designated Safe Sport designate immediately.

Where to report:

1. All allegations or suspicions of inappropriate behaviour (see above examples), that a staff/volunteer learns of or witnesses first-hand, must be reported to the Safe Sport designate.
2. All allegations will be treated in a prompt and serious manner. Necessary actions to remove the party from the program, if warranted.
3. All allegations or suspicions of **potentially illegal behaviour** (for example, child sexual abuse) that a staff/volunteer witnesses first-hand, must be promptly reported to police and/or child welfare.
4. To ensure the protection of all children in our care, all allegations, or suspicions of potentially illegal behaviour 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.



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

- Potentially Illegal behaviour by a Staff/Volunteer of the organization
- Potential Illegal behaviour 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 behaviour or inappropriate behaviour, discuss the issue with the designated person within your organization who will support you through the process.

Remember: South Four has an independent duty to report all suspicions of potentially illegal behaviour directly to police and/or child welfare.

Follow up on Reporting

When an allegation or suspicion of potentially illegal behaviour is reported, police and/or a child welfare agency will be notified. South Four Soccer will follow up internally as appropriate.

When an allegation or suspicion of inappropriate behaviour is made South Four Soccer 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 behaviour, if:

- Multiple behaviours were reported.
- Inappropriate behaviour is recurring, or
- The reported behaviour is of serious concern.

South Four Soccer Club may refer the matter to the child welfare agency or the police.

Additional Resources:

[Alberta Soccer – Safe Sport](#)

[Recognizing Child Abuse Tip Card](#)



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[The Canadian Center for Child Protection](#)

[Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868 \(24/7\)](#)