



CODE OF CONDUCT TO PROTECT CHILDREN IN SPORT

1 Introduction

The Fredericton District Soccer Association has developed the following Code of Conduct to Protect Children in Sport to guide all employees and volunteers in their interactions with children involved in FDSA programmes. Our commitment to providing a healthy sporting environment centres on the safety, rights, and well-being of the children we serve. Young people form the core of our daily programmes and we work tirelessly to ensure supportive relationships while balancing and encouraging appropriate boundaries.

2 Why a Code of Conduct to Protect Children in Sport is Important

As our association is committed to ensuring the safety and protection of all children, a *Code of Conduct to Protect Children in Sport* is paramount in providing clear guidelines outlining our priorities regarding the health, safety, well-being, and rights of all children participating in FDSA programmes.

Our *Code of Conduct to Protect Children in Sport* guides all staff and volunteers in their duty of care when working with young people. It is this legal obligation that reinforces our commitment and responsibility to model appropriate boundaries and professional contact at all times while delivering safe programming for children.

3 Treating Children with Dignity and Maintaining Boundaries

Following the guidance of Soccer Canada and International Safeguards for Children in Sport, as an association we believe in the following principles:

- *“All children have the right to participate, enjoy, and develop through sport, in a safe and inclusive environment, free from all forms of maltreatment including bullying, abuse, harassment, violence, discrimination, neglect, and exploitation”*
- *“Children have the right to have their voices heard, listened to, and to know what avenues they have to turn to when they have a concern about their participation in sport”*
- *“Children have a right to be involved in shaping policies and practices that impact their health and safety”*

- *“Children have the right to be treated with dignity and respect and not be discriminated against based on gender, race, age, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, beliefs, and religious affiliation”*

Following these principles, all staff and volunteers must:

- *Treat all children with respect and dignity*
- *Establish, respect, and maintain appropriate boundaries with all children and families involved in activities or programmes delivered by the Fredericton District Soccer Association*

⇒ It is important to monitor your own behaviour towards children and pay close attention to the behavior 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*
- *Should be tied to your duties as staff or volunteer, and*
- *Should be designed to develop competencies and skills in the child’s programme*

⇒ Always consider a child’s perspective and reaction to any activities, conversations, behaviour or other interactions. Note: If at any time you are in doubt about the appropriateness of your own behaviour or the behaviour of others, you must discuss it with the designated person with the Fredericton District Soccer Association.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour toward children include:

- Embarrassing
- Shaming
- Blaming
- Humiliating

4 General Rules of Behaviour

All staff and volunteers of the Fredericton District Soccer Association must not:

- *Engage in any form 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 a child, that may make a 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 Fredericton District Soccer Association's mandate, policies, or Code of Conduct to Protect Children in Sport, regardless of whether or not they are serving the association at that moment.*
- *Conduct their own investigation into allegations or suspicions of potentially illegal or inappropriate behaviour – it is a staff and volunteer's duty to report the matter to the designated person, Child Welfare, or law enforcement, not to investigate.*

5 What Constitutes Inappropriate Behaviour

According to the Fredericton District Soccer Association, if a staff member or volunteer is in doubt about the appropriateness of their behaviour or the behaviour of others, you must discuss it with the designated person within the organization. Inappropriate behaviour includes:

⇒ **Inappropriate Communication** – Communication with a child or their family outside of the context of duties for the organization, regardless of who initiated the exchange. Examples of inappropriate communication includes:

- Personal phone calls not tied to organizational duties with a child
- Electronic communication (email, text message, instant message, online chats, social media platforms) not directly tied to organizational duties with a child
- Personal letters not directly tied to organizational duties with a child
- Excessive communications (either online or offline)

⇒ **Inappropriate Contact** – Spending unauthorized time with a child outside of designated organizational duties.

⇒ **Favouritism** – Singling out a child or certain children and providing special privileges and attention. Examples of favouritism includes:

- Paying extended attention over time to a child
- Sending personal gifts to a child
- Providing or allowing privileges that are excessive, unwarranted, or inappropriate

⇒ **Taking Personal Photos and/or 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 organizational duties are acceptable, however, images are to remain with the Fredericton Districts Soccer Association and not be used by any staff or volunteer in a personal capacity.

Additional Examples of Inappropriate Behaviour Includes:

- ⇒ Telling sexual jokes to a child or making/directing comments to a child that is suggestive, explicit, or personal.
- ⇒ 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.
- ⇒ Intimidating and/or threatening a child.
- ⇒ Talking down-to, belittling, or making fun of a child.

Inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated in any form, especially as it relates to the health, safety, and well-being of children involved in activities and/or programmes delivered by the Fredericton District Soccer Association. Further elaboration and definitions regarding FDSA's player protection policy can be found in Policy No. 013 (<http://www.fdsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Pol-013-Player-Protection-Dec-7-151.pdf>).

- **Child abuse** is defined as any form of physical, emotional, and/or sexual mistreatment or lack of care which causes physical and/or emotional injury/trauma to a child. A common characteristic of all forms of abuse against children and youth is an abuse of power, authority, and/or breach of trust. In New Brunswick, a person is considered a minor up until the age of 19.

Whether or not a particular behaviour or action constitutes inappropriate behaviour will be a matter determined by Fredericton District Soccer Association in consultation with relevant parties, having regard to all of the circumstances, including past behaviour, allegations, and/or suspicions related to such behaviour.

6 Reporting Requirements

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

Procedure Regarding Where to Report:

- Any and/or all allegations, or suspicions, of potentially inappropriate and/or illegal behaviour that a staff and/or volunteer witnessed first-hand, must be promptly reported to appropriate authorities including, but not limited to, New Brunswick Child Protection Services, the police, and/or the RCMP.
- To ensure the protection of all children in our care, all allegations or suspicions of potentially illegal behaviour that a staff member learns of must also be promptly reported to New Brunswick Child Protection Service, police, or the RCMP. These government bodies will make the determination as to whether the allegation or suspicion requires further investigation.

- All allegations or suspicions of inappropriate behaviour (see previous section) that a staff member of volunteer learns of or witnesses first-hand must be reported to the designate responsible within the organization.

IMPORTANT: Please be mindful that you may learn of potentially illegal or inappropriate behaviour through the child or a third-party reporting, or you may witness it first-hand. Specific examples of the type of behaviour you may learn of or witness and that you must report (as set out above) includes:

- ⇒ Potential illegal behaviour by a staff member of volunteer of the Fredericton District Soccer Association.
- ⇒ Potential illegal behaviour by a third party, such as a parent, teacher, babysitter, player, or coach.

REMEMBER: You have an independent duty to report all suspicions of potentially illegal behaviour directly to police, RCMP, and/or child welfare.

7 Follow-up and Post-Mortem Reporting

When an allegation or suspicion of potentially illegal behaviour is reported, New Brunswick Child Protection Services, police, and/or the RCMP must be notified. The Fredericton District Soccer Association will follow-up internally as is appropriate.

When an allegation or suspicion of inappropriate behaviour is made, the association will follow up on the matter to gather information about what occurred and determine what, if any, formal or disciplinary action is required. In the case of inappropriate behaviour:

- ⇒ If:
 - A) Multiple behaviours were reported
 - B) Inappropriate behaviour is recurring, or
 - C) The reported behaviour is of serious concern
- ⇒ The association may refer the matter to New Brunswick Child Protection Services, police, and/or RCMP.

8 Agreement and Signature

I, _____, agree to comply with *Fredericton District Soccer Association's Code of Conduct to Protect Children in Sport*.

FDSA Volunteer and/or Staff Member

Date