



## NDGSA Code of Conduct to Protect Children

The Notre-Dame-de-Grâce Soccer Association (NDGSA) issued this Code of Conduct to set expectations for interactions between NDGSA employees/volunteers and children to ensure children in NDGSA programs are protected and safe.

This Code of Conduct is a requirement of Soccer Canada as part of the Club Licensing Program and includes other documentary requirements such as the Guidelines for Appropriate/Inappropriate Conduct between Adults/Adolescents and Children, the Policy requiring that any suspicion of child abuse is reported to law enforcement and the Policy outlining what to do if you witness inappropriate conduct.

### **Why a Child Protection Code of Conduct is important?**

Our organization is committed to ensuring 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 staff/volunteers in developing healthy relationships with the children involved in sport 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 NDGSA.
- Ensure that all children are treated equally, regardless of age, colour, race, citizenship, ethnic background, place of origin, language, beliefs, religion, athletic potential, disability, family situation, matrimonial status, gender identity, gender expression, sex or sexual orientation.

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 of your interactions and activities with children should be:

- known to, and approved by the board or employees of the NDGSA, where applicable, and the parents of the child;
- tied to your duties;
- designed to develop the child's skills in the sport program .



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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 the NDGSA.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour toward a child:

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

### General Rules of Behaviour

NDGSA Staff/volunteers 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 NDGSA activities 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) our mandate, policies, or Code of Conduct to Protect Children, regardless of whether or not they are serving the NDGSA at that moment.
- 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 NDGSA, regardless of who initiated the exchange. For example:
  - a. Personal phone calls not tied to activities with the child
  - b. Electronic communications (email, text message, instant message, online chats, social networking including "friending", etc.) not tied to activities with the child
  - c. Personal letters not tied to activities with the child
  - d. Excessive communications (online or offline)
2. Inappropriate Contact. Spending unauthorized time with a child outside of designated duties with the NDGSA.



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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 recording device to take pictures or videos of a child – or allowing any other person to do so – outside the normal context of team activities, as well as uploading or copying any pictures or videos you may have taken of a child to the Internet without the parent’s authorisation. Pictures and videos taken as part of your job duties (games, practices, team events) are acceptable, however, the pictures/videos must be of a nature that they can be shared with the rest of the team without embarrassing or otherwise harming the child and must not be used by you in a personal capacity.

Inappropriate behaviour also includes:

1. Telling sexual jokes to a child, or making comments to a child that are or is in any way suggestive, explicit or personal.
2. 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
3. Intimidating or threatening a child
4. Making fun of a child.

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

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

We invite all employees and volunteers to take some time to read the Commit to Kids Guidelines for Adults Interacting with Children in Sport via this link:

[https://commit2kids.ca/pdfs/C2K\\_CoachingAssocCanada\\_Interacting\\_en.pdf](https://commit2kids.ca/pdfs/C2K_CoachingAssocCanada_Interacting_en.pdf)

### 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/volunteer witnesses first-hand, must be promptly reported to police and/or child welfare.



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2. 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.
3. 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 designated person of the Board of the NDGSA.

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:

1. Potentially Illegal behaviour by an NDGSA Staff/Volunteer
2. 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 on the Board of the NDGSA who will support you through the process. Remember: You have 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. The NDGSA will follow up internally as appropriate, in accordance with the Commit to Kids Guidelines

([https://commit2kids.ca/pdfs/C2K\\_StepsForReportingChildAbuse\\_CAC\\_en.pdf](https://commit2kids.ca/pdfs/C2K_StepsForReportingChildAbuse_CAC_en.pdf)).

When an allegation or suspicion of inappropriate behaviour is made, the NDGSA 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 accordance with the Commit to Kids Guidelines ([https://commit2kids.ca/pdfs/C2K\\_StepsForReportingInappropriateConduct\\_CAC\\_en.pdf](https://commit2kids.ca/pdfs/C2K_StepsForReportingInappropriateConduct_CAC_en.pdf)).

In the case of inappropriate behaviour, the NDGSA may refer the matter to a child welfare agency or police if:

- multiple behaviours were reported
- inappropriate behaviour is recurring
- the reported behaviour is of serious concern



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I agree to comply with the NDGSA's Code of Conduct to Protect Children

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff/volunteer Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date