THPFC Protecting Children Code of Conduct

Toronto High Park FC is committed to providing a safe, respectful, inclusive, and development focused environment for every child who participates in our programs. The safety, rights, dignity, and wellbeing of children are central to how we operate as a club and must be reflected in the conduct of all employees, coaches, volunteers, team officials, and representatives.

This Code of Conduct to Protect Children outlines the standards expected of all adults working with or supporting children within THPFC programs. It is designed to help guide appropriate behaviour, maintain clear and healthy boundaries, support positive relationships, and ensure that any concerns relating to child safety, welfare, or inappropriate conduct are taken seriously and reported through the proper channels.

All THPFC representatives share a responsibility to protect children from harm and to model behaviour that reflects the values of respect, fairness, care, and accountability. By following this Code of Conduct, we help ensure that every child can enjoy soccer in an environment where they feel safe, supported, and valued.

Purpose

The safety, rights and well-being of children within our club are at the core of our daily operations. We nurture supportive relationships with children while balancing and maintaining appropriate boundaries in accordance with the https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/17c14 (Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017)

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 Employees/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 Toronto High Park Football Club.

It is important to monitor your own behaviours towards children and pay close attention to the behaviours of your peers to ensure that behaviour is appropriate and respectful, and will be perceived as such by others. If you are unsure of the appropriateness of behaviour of yourself or others, please consult the program manager or senior club leadership.

All your interactions and activities with children;

- Should be known to, and approved by, your supervisor/designated person and/or the parents of the child;
- Tied to your duties, and;
- Designed to meet the child's needs, not your own needs.

Always consider the child's reaction to any activities, conversations, behaviours or other interactions. If at any time you are in doubt of the appropriateness of your own behaviour or the behaviour of others, you should discuss with a coordinator or a leader of the organization.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour towards a child:

- Constant Criticism
- Embarrassing
- Shaming
- Blaming
- Humiliating

General Rules of Behaviour

Employees/volunteers of Toronto High Park Football Club must not;

- Engage in any sort of physical contact with a child that may make the child of a reasonable observer feel uncomfortable, or that may be seen by a reasonable observer to be violating reasonable behaviour.
- Engage in any communication with a child within or outside of job/volunteer duties, 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, of 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 potential illegal or inappropriate behaviour – it is an employee/volunteer's duty to report that matter to his/her supervisor or Board of Directors, not to investigate.

Inappropriate Behaviours

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 Toronto High Park Football Club.

The following are the inappropriate behaviours:

- Inappropriate Communication. Communication with a child or his/her family outside of work/volunteer context, regardless of who initiated the exchange. For example:
- Personal Phone Calls;
- Electronic communication (email, text message, instant message, online chats, social networking (including 'friending'), etc.;
- Inappropriate Contact. Spending unauthorized time with a child or the child's family outside of designated work times and volunteer activities. You must report all contact BEFORE the contact occurs;
- Favouritism. Singling out a child or certain children and providing special privileges and attention;

- 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 (when known to your supervisor or any club authority) are acceptable, however, the pictures are to remain with the organization and not be used by you in a personal capacity.

Inappropriate behaviour also includes;

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

Reporting Requirements

All Toronto High Park Football Club directors, employees and volunteers must report suspected child sexual abuse, inappropriate behaviour or incidents that they become aware of, whether the behaviour or incidents are personally witness or not.

Our incident report can be found here

All reports of any kind will be sent to the Director of Operations (DOO). Child safeguarding issues should also be reported to the Executive Director (ED). Their contact details can be found here.

All allegations or suspicions of potentially illegal behaviour that an employee/volunteer witnesses first-hand, must be promptly reported to police and/or child welfare.

To ensure the protection of all children in our care, all allegations or suspicions of potentially illegal behaviour that an employee/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.

All allegations or suspicions of inappropriate behaviour through the child of some other third party, or you may witness it first-hand must be reported to Toronto High Park Football Club (DOO). Examples of the type of behaviour you may learn of or witness and that you must report as set out above includes;

- Potentially illegal behaviour by an Employee/Volunteer of Toronto High Park Football Club
- Potential Illegal behaviour by a third party, such as a Parent, Teacher, Babysitter, Coach.

Follow up on Reporting

When an allegation or suspicion of potentially illegal behaviour is reported, police and/or child welfare agencies will be notified. Toronto High Park Football Club will follow up internally as appropriate.

Then an allegation of suspicion of inappropriate behaviour is made, Toronto High Park Football Club 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

Toronto High Park Football Club may refer the matter to a child welfare agency or to the police.