



Howick Hustle Minor Soccer Code of Conduct to Protect Children

December 2023

The Howick Hustle Minor Soccer has developed this Code of Conduct to Protect Children because we are committed to ensuring all children are protected and safe. A Code of Conduct to Protect Children 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. We nurture supportive and inclusive relationships with children while balancing and encouraging appropriate boundaries.

The intent of this policy is to guide our volunteers in their interactions and development of healthy relationships with the children involved in the activities or programs delivered by our organization and to model appropriate boundaries for children.

For these purposes, and in keeping with the Government of Canada, “minor child” is defined as a person under the age of 18, and all Howick Hustle Minor Soccer Club youth referenced documents are to be interpreted as pertaining to youth under the age of 18.

Treating Children with Dignity and Maintaining Boundaries

All 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 that we monitor our own behaviour towards children, and pay attention to the behaviour of our peers to ensure that the behaviour is appropriate and respectful, and will be perceived by others the same way.



All interactions and activities with children should be:

- ❖ Known to, and approved by, a supervisor/designated person and/or the parents/guardians of the child.
- ❖ Tied to your duties
- ❖ Designed to meet the child's needs

Always consider the child's reaction to any activities, conversations, behaviour and other interactions.

If at any time you are in doubt about the appropriateness of your own behaviour of the behaviour of others, you should discuss it with the Executives.

General Rules of Behaviour:

- ❖ Always adhere to the "RULE OF TWO". This means that any one-on-one interaction between a person in authority and an athlete must take place within the presence of another person in authority, with the exception of medical emergencies. A person of authority is defined as a coach, screened volunteer or another adult.

Rule of Two

- The goal is to ensure all interactions and communications are open, observable and justifiable.
- Its purpose is to protect participants (especially minors) and coaches in potentially vulnerable situations by ensuring that a coach is never alone with a player.

Good Rule of Two Implementation Practices and Practical Tips

Clubs and teams can consider the following practical tips when working toward implementing the Rule of Two:

- a. Take the Responsible Coaching Movement Pledge.



- b. The coach is never alone and out of sight with a participant without another screened coach or screened adult (parent or volunteer) present.
- c. Allow the training environment to be open to observation.
- d. To hold the club or team accountable, share these guidelines with parents/guardians and players and ask them to help identify situations, and acknowledge instances, when the club or team was not following the Rule of Two
- e. If a participant rides in a coach's vehicle, another adult should be present (see Guidelines-Travel below).
- f. Consider the gender identity of the participant(s) when selecting the screened coaches and volunteers who are present. For teams that only have coaches who do not share the same gender identity of some or all the athletes (i.e., for girls' and womens' teams with male coaches), ask a parent/guardian or other volunteer of the gender identity of the athletes to serve as a regular volunteer or 'bench parent/support' with the team (see Guidelines-Gender Identity below).
- g. Recruit a Team Liaison or other individual to help find parents/guardians or volunteers to assist in situations where coaches may potentially not be present.
- h. Ask parents or other individuals who volunteer with the team to participate in the organization's screening process and obtain a criminal record check.
- i. Eliminate one-to-one electronic messaging. Ensure that all communications are sent to the group and/or include parents/guardians (see Applying the Rule of Two in a Virtual Setting below).

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 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, or Code of Conduct to Protect Children, regardless of whether or not they are serving the organization at that moment.



What Constitutes Inappropriate Behaviour?

Inappropriate behaviour includes:

1. Inappropriate Communication. Communication with a child or his/her family outside of a work/volunteer context, regardless of who initiated the exchange. For example:

- ❖ Personal phone calls or letters
- ❖ Electronic communications (email, text message, instant message, online chats, social networking (including “friending”), etc.)
- ❖ Excessive communications (online or offline)

2. 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 with a child or the child’s family outside of designated work times and activities BEFORE the contact occurs to the designated person within your 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 (when known to the executives) are acceptable, however, the pictures are to remain with the organization and not be used by you in a personal capacity.

5. Telling sexual jokes or making comments to a child that are 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 (shaming, embarrassing, humiliating, criticizing, or blaming).

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

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 an Executive Member, 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.

All employees 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.

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 organization will follow up internally as appropriate.

When an allegation or suspicion of inappropriate behaviour is made, the 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 behaviour, if:



- ❖ Multiple behaviours were reported;
- ❖ Inappropriate behaviour is recurring, or;
- ❖ The reported behaviour is of serious concern;
- ❖ The organization may refer the matter to a child welfare agency or polices

Discipline

In the event that an employee/volunteer fails to abide by this policy and its associated guidelines, the individual will be disciplined as per the Club's Discipline Policy.

Training / Competition Environment

- ❖ A 'Person in Authority' should never be alone with an athlete prior to or following a game or practice, unless the 'Person in Authority' is the athlete's parent or guardian. If the athlete is the first athlete to arrive, the athlete's parent/ guardian should remain until another athlete or 'Person in Authority' arrives. Similarly, if an athlete would potentially be alone with a 'Person in Authority' following a game or practice, the 'Person in Authority' should ask another 'Person in Authority' (or a parent or guardian of another athlete) to stay until all the athletes have been picked up. If an adult is not available then another athlete should be present in order to avoid the 'Person in Authority' being alone with a single athlete.
- ❖ Persons in Authority' giving instructions, demonstrating skills, or facilitating drills or lessons to an individual athlete should always be doing so within earshot and eyesight of another 'Person in Authority'