

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Approved October 20, 2026

Introduction

The Opeongo Minor Soccer Club has developed a Code of Conduct to Protect Children to guide our volunteers in their interactions with children. The safety, rights and well-being of children we serve are at the core of our daily operations. We nurture supportive relationships with children while balancing and encouraging appropriate boundaries.

Why a Code of Conduct to Protect Children?

Our organization is 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.

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

The Code of Conduct approved by the Board of Directors on October 20, 2026

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 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, 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, 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 unacceptable behaviour toward a child:

- criticizing
- embarrassing
- shaming
- blaming
- humiliating

General Rules of Behaviour

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 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, or 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 potentially illegal or inappropriate behaviour – it is a volunteer's duty to report the matter to his/her supervisor/designated person or Child Welfare Agency, not to investigate.

What Constitutes Inappropriate Behaviour

1. Inappropriate behaviour includes:

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

        i. Personal phone calls

        ii. Electronic communications (email, text message, instant message, online chats, social networking (including "friending"), etc.)

iii. Personal letters

iv. 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 your supervisor) 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:

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 activities or programs delivered by the 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 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 volunteer witnesses first-hand, must be promptly reported to police and/or child welfare.

2. To ensure the protection of all children in our care, all allegations or suspicions of potentially illegal behaviour that a 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 volunteer learns of or witnesses first-hand, must be reported to your supervisor.

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

1. Potentially Illegal behaviour by a Volunteer of the organization
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 within your organization 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 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 police.