

## Code of Conduct to Protect Children



**HALTON HAWKS FC**  
info@hhfc-academy.com

## Contents

Code of Conduct to Protect Children .....	3
Introduction: .....	3
Why a Code of Conduct to Protect Children? .....	3
Treating Children with Dignity and Maintaining Boundaries: .....	3
General Rules of Behaviour: .....	4
Volunteer Screening & Recruitment Process: .....	6
Lead Safety Officer: .....	6
Reporting Requirements: .....	6
Follow up on Reporting: .....	8



## Code of Conduct to Protect Children

### ***Introduction:***

The Halton Hawks FC (HHFC) has developed the following Child Protection Code of Conduct to guide our employees/volunteers and any adult in a position of trust concerning their interactions with children. The safety, rights and well-being of the children we serve are at the core of all our programs and activities. We intend to nurture supportive relationships with children while balancing and maintaining appropriate boundaries in accordance with the Ontario Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017

### ***Why a Code of Conduct to Protect Children?***

Our organization is committed to ensuring all children are protected and safe. A Code of Conduct is an essential 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 this 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.

All coaching staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment for children in which they can learn and coaches are well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behavior and failure to develop, because they have frequent contact with children.

A child or young person is anyone under the age of 18 engaged in any club soccer activity.

### ***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 HHFC

It is important to monitor your own behavior towards children, and pay close attention to the behavior of your peers to ensure that behavior is appropriate and respectful, and will be perceived as such by others.

All of your interactions and activities with children:

- should be known to, approved by the board, where applicable, and the parents of the child tied to your duties , and
- designed to develop the child's skills in the Club's Development I/ Competitive Soccer Program.

Always consider the child's reaction to any activities, conversations, behavior or other interactions. **If at any time you are in doubt about the appropriateness of your own behavior or the behavior of others, you should discuss it with the designated persons within HHFC.** Contact information for HHFC designated persons can be found at the bottom of this page.

**Examples of unacceptable behavior toward a child:**

- Embarrassing
- humiliating
- shaming
- putting them down
- blaming
- showing favouritism

***General Rules of Behaviour:***

**Staff/volunteers of HHFC 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 duties 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 behavior that goes against (or appears to go against) HHFCs 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 behavior . It is a staff/volunteer's duty to report the matter to the designated person, Child Aid Society, or law enforcement, and not to investigate the allegations themselves.

## What Constitutes Inappropriate Behavior:

Inappropriate behavior includes:

1. **Inappropriate Communication.** Communication with a child or his/her family outside of the context of duties for HHFC, regardless of who initiated the exchange.

For example:

- Personal phone Calls
- Electronic communications, email, networking, including friending etc.
- Personal Letters or Cards
- Excessive communications (online and off-line)

2. **Inappropriate Contact.** Spending unauthorized time with a child 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 HHFC designated person. Contact information for HHFC designated persons is at the bottom of this page.

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, social media sites, or any personal storage device. Pictures taken as part of your job duties are acceptable, however, the pictures are to remain with the organization and not be used by you in a personal capacity.

### **Inappropriate behavior also includes:**

5. Telling sexual jokes to a child, or making comments to a child that are or is 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, screen savers, 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

### **Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated, especially as it relates to the well-being of the children involved in activities or programs delivered by HHFC**

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

## ***Volunteer Screening & Recruitment Process:***

To ensure the safety and security of all players, HHFC abides by Ontario Soccer's Guidelines for Volunteer Screening when it recruits, hires and trains all new Coaches. As part of our recruitment process, the Club will:

- specify what the role is and what tasks it involves.
- request valid identification documents from all applicants.
- meet and interview all applicants before hiring them as coaches.
- Require all applicants to provide two references and verify all references
- require all prospective coaches to attend an orientation session to review the Club's policies, procedures and practices.

## ***Lead Safety Officer:***

HHFC has appointed Ricardo Silvino as a Lead Safety Officer ("LSO") to proactively safeguard players and ensure that the Club's Code of Conduct to Protect Children and the Club's Guidelines for Appropriate Conduct are adopted and enforced. The Club's LSO has taken Respect in Soccer Training and has a solid understanding of Canada Soccer's Guide to Safety. The Lead Safety Officer can be contacted by phone at 289 971 1880, or by email [safety@haltonhawksfc.com](mailto:safety@haltonhawksfc.com)

The Club's LSO is the first point of contact for all Members regarding concerns about the welfare of any child or young person. The LSO will liaise directly with the Club's Staff and Administrators, our governing bodies, the Police or any Children's Aid Society and will be familiar with the procedures for referring any concerns. They will also play a proactive role in increasing awareness of the need for dignity & respect and the proper protection of children from inappropriate conduct or abuse of any kind within the Club.

## ***Reporting Requirements:***

It is critical to report any concerns you may become aware of, that could adversely affect the welfare of a child or young person. Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. If you are worried about a child it is important that you report your concerns to the Club's LSO. **Not taking action is not an option.**

HHFC encourages everyone involved with the Club to be aware of the Club's Whistle Blowing Policy and to use it if necessary. Any adult or young person with concerns about an adult in a position of trust within the Club can 'whistle blow' by contacting and reporting their concerns to the Club's Lead Safety Officer, or alternatively by reporting directly to the Halton Regional Police, or the local Children's Aid Society.

All HHFC staff and volunteers **MUST** report suspected child sexual abuse, inappropriate behavior or incidents that they become aware of, whether the behavior or incidents were personally witnessed or not.

If you are a player or a parent who wants to report any concerns about an adult in a position of trust, you can follow the reporting guidelines listed below. Alternatively, you could:

- Deal with the matter directly or seek advice from the Lead Safety Officer.
- Call the 24 Hour Kids Help Phone. You can reach a Kids Help Phone counsellor at 1-800-668-6868.
- Contact the Club's Executive Director by phone at (647) 618-1695 or by email to [info@hhfc-academy.com](mailto:info@hhfc-academy.com)

#### **Where to report:**

1. All allegations or suspicions of **inappropriate behavior** (see above), that anyone learns of or witnesses first-hand, must be reported to the Club's Lead Safety Officer.
2. All allegations or suspicions of **potentially illegal behavior** (ex. child sexual abuse) that anyone witnesses first-hand, must be promptly reported to the LSO, Peel Regional Police and/or the local Children's Aid Society.
3. All allegations or suspicions of **potentially illegal behavior** that anyone learns of must also be promptly reported to the LSO, Peel Regional Police and/or the local Children's Aid Society. Police and/or child welfare will make the determination as to whether the allegation or suspicion requires further investigation.

Keep in mind that you may learn of potentially illegal or inappropriate behavior through the child or some other third party, or you may witness it first-hand. Examples of the type behavior you may learn of or witness and that you must report as set out above include:

- a. Potentially Illegal behavior by an HHFC Staff/Volunteer
- b. Potential Illegal behavior 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 behavior or inappropriate behavior, discuss the issue with the Club's LSO who will support you through the process.**

**Remember: You have an independent duty to report all suspicions of potentially illegal behavior directly to police and/or child welfare.**

### ***Follow up on Reporting:***

When an allegation or suspicion of potentially illegal behavior is reported, police and/or a child welfare agency must be notified. HHFC will follow internally as appropriate.

When an allegation or suspicion of inappropriate behavior is made, the Club's LSO will follow up on the matter to gather information about what happened and determine what, if any, formal or other disciplinary action is required. Any criminal investigation conducted by the Peel Regional Police must be dealt with first before any disciplinary action can be taken by the Halton Hawks FC or any of its governing bodies.

In the case of inappropriate behavior, if:

- Multiple behaviors were reported
- Inappropriate behavior is recurring, or
- The reported behavior is of serious concern the Halton Hawks FC may refer the matter to a child welfare agency or the police.

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

[The Canadian Centre for Child Protection](#)

[Guidelines for Adults Interacting with Children in Sport](#)

[Reporting Sexual Abuse and Misconduct](#)

[Steps for Reporting Child Abuse](#)

[Steps for Reporting Inappropriate Conduct](#)