



Policy for the Protection of Children

August 2019

In pursuing its mission, the Westmount Soccer Club (WSC) is committed to providing:

- an environment that supports participant's physical and emotional safety, free of bullying, discrimination, and harassment;
- a safe soccer experience for all participants; and
- facilities and equipment that are safe, well-maintained, and in good condition.

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to provide:

- measures to be followed to promote a fun, safe soccer experience for all, including physical, mental and emotional safety;
- guidelines for Appropriate/Inappropriate Conduct;
- the process to be followed when inappropriate conduct is witnessed; and
- requirements for communications of this policy.

Code of Conduct

The WSC has adopted a Code of Conduct so that all involved with the organization are aware of their obligations to uphold our values of respect and engagement. The Code of Conduct is the cornerstone of providing a safe soccer experience and must:

- support our mission;
- set our expectations regarding the protection of children;
- be reviewed annually by the Board of Directors;
- be signed by all directors, coaches and managers; and
- be posted on our website to be shared with players, parents, coaches, managers and our community.

Rule of Two

The Rule of Two serves to protect players in potentially vulnerable situations by ensuring that more than one adult is present. The goal of this policy is to implement procedures that limit the instances where these situations are possible.

The WSC defines *vulnerable situation* as any interaction between a coach and minor athlete which takes place out of earshot or observation of others. It can include closed doors meetings, travel and training environments. A public space, whether outdoors or indoors, is considered to a vulnerable situation if no other adults are actively present.

For purposes of the Rule of Two, the WSC identifies level of supervision as follows:

- Gold Standard – two trained coaches or managers
- Secondary level – one coach or manager, and one other adult
- Tertiary level - one coach or manager, and two athletes

While the Gold Standard is the preferred environment, it is not expected that it will be reached at all times. The one-on-one interaction between a coach and a minor athlete, without another individual present, is unpermitted and to be avoided in all circumstances. In all instances, one coach or volunteer must be of the same gender of the participating athletes.

The alternatives presented for the vulnerable situations below are acceptable and would be considered to be in alignment with the Rule of Two:

- Getting to and from the field – Parents or guardians are responsible for the transportation of athletes to and from events. The Rule of Two does not apply as no coaches or managers are present.
- On field situations (i.e. games or practices) – Tertiary level. For example, it is permissible for one coach to take a practice (though two or more is preferred). A one-on-one training session is permitted if other adults are around the public space.
- Off field situations (i.e. use of arena rooms or indoor training) – Secondary level.
- Car travel - Tertiary level. Children under 12 must be in the backseat and all passengers must be wearing seatbelts. All drivers must have valid license and insurance.
- Out-of-town tournaments – Gold standard applies to any vulnerable situation.

The Rule of Two does not apply if the athlete is the child of the coach or manager in question. Players, parents, coaches, and team personnel must be educated on this Rule of Two policy and the policy posted on line.

Primary Liaison for Child Protection

The Board of the WSC must identify one individual who will be the primary liaison for child protection and safety (“Primary Liaison”). This individual will be responsible for:

- Completing the Commit to Kids online training;
- Being familiar with the Canada Soccer Guide to Safety and ensuring the principles identified therein are followed;
- Ensuring training is provided to coaches and managers on the Code of Conduct, the Rule of Two and measures to be taken if inappropriate behaviour or situations are witnessed;
- Be present at pre-season team meetings to be introduced to and meet with parents and players;
- Conduct a mid-season check-in with each team, including parents, players and managers; and
- Being the point of contact for any matters pertaining to child protection or safety.

The contact information (name, telephone numbers, etc.) of the primary liaison for child protection must be provided to coaches, managers, players and parents by posting it on the WSC website.

Effective August 2019, the primary liaison is Sarah Ava Nouraeyan, and can be contacted at 514 589 9181 or sarah.nouraeyan@gmail.com .

Selection and Monitoring of Coaches

To be selected as a coach, the candidate:

- must meet with and be recommended by the Technical Director;
- must meet with and be recommended the WSC Primary Liaison, or an individual designated by the Primary Liaison;
- must submit to and pass a background check for people working with vulnerable clients, as conducted by the Société de police de Ville de Montréal;*
- must be trained on the Code of Conduct, the Rule of Two and measures to be taken if inappropriate behaviour or situations are witnessed;
- must complete Respect in Sport Activity Leader training; *and
- must sign the Code of Conduct.

If a coaching candidate has previous experience in another organization, the candidate should provide an explanation for changing from the previous organization. A release should be requested to allow the WSC to contact the candidate's the most recent organization with whom the candidate has worked/volunteered. The WSC should consider contacting the previous organization if there is not a clear reason for a change in organization (i.e. a move).

To be selected as a returning coach, the coach must:

- continue to meet the approval of the Technical Director and the WSC Primary Liaison after considering the feedback from the previous season(s);
- sign the Code of Conduct, annually; and
- must resubmit to and pass the SPVM background check annually.*

* A coach awaiting SPVM screening results or required courses may participate in WSC activities but should be under close supervision.

Appropriate and Inappropriate Behaviours

All WSC stakeholders are expected to model behaviour that enhances healthy relationships with children. All interactions and activities with children (including electronic communication) should be transparent, accountable, tied to coaching/volunteer duties and in response to meeting the child’s needs.

<i>Examples of Appropriate Behaviour:</i>	<i>Examples of Inappropriate Behaviour:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respectful language, tone and attitude towards others • Respectful of personal physical and emotional boundaries • Responding to children to meet the child’s needs and not the adult’s • Engaging with children in a manner that would be seen by a reasonable observer as maintaining reasonable boundaries • Keeping practices open to observation by parents • Communication with children is transparent and accountable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disrespectful language • Humiliating or intimidating children • Inappropriate touching of children (e.g., massaging, stroking, caressing, roughhousing, tickling) • Confiding or sharing overly personal information with a child • Asking children to keep secrets • Electronic communication, including pictures, with children that is personal and not directly tied to coaching duties • Communication that is sexual or flirtatious in nature • Pictures taken in change rooms

These examples do not address every situation nor is it meant to be an exhaustive list of acceptable or unacceptable conduct. Individuals are expected to exercise common sense and good judgment when interacting with children.

Injury Prevention, Injury and Return to Play

Although serious injuries or accidents are rare, WSC must be ready to deal with them if and when they occur.

Emergency Action Plan

The following measures should be taken:

- Each team should be supplied with a first aid kit, which must be accessible at all times, and must be checked regularly;
- Each team should select a person in charge for first aid and emergency situations;
- Managers should identify any parent medical doctors and, if applicable, their specialties;
- All parents should have emergency contact information in Team Stuff;
- All parents should inform the coach or manager of any relevant injury or health problem;

- Should a serious injury occur, 911 should be called for an ambulance and parents notified. As well, if the injury is in Westmount, Public Security can be contacted at (514) 989-5222; and
- The Technical Director or Primary Liaison should be notified of a serious injury.

Concussions

- All coaches should receive training on identifying and managing concussions in accordance with FSQ guidelines;
- Anyone with suspected concussion following an injury must be immediately removed from playing or training;
- Players may not return to play without clearance; and
- Heading drills should be restricted in accordance with FSQ and CSA guidance.

Heat

- The WSC will follow FSQ guidelines;
- In hot conditions, frequent water breaks are encouraged.

Facility and Equipment Safety

- The grounds and facilities need to be appropriate and the equipment needs to be in good condition for the well-being and safety of the participants. The City of Westmount should be notified of any unsafe conditions, through the appointed field liaison.
- No on field activities can be played when one can hear thunder. Westmount Arena or the Murray Hill shelter can be used as safe places during a storm.

Reporting

All coaches 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 learned of. In reporting, it is important to distinguish between illegal behaviour and inappropriate behaviour. This duty to report applies even if the information is told in confidence.

Where to report:

1. All allegations or suspicions of inappropriate behaviour, that a coach or volunteer witnesses first-hand or learns of, must be reported to the Primary Liaison, or if unavailable, to the Technical Director or the President (designated contacts).
2. All allegations or suspicions of potentially illegal behaviour (for example, child sexual abuse) that a coach or volunteer witnesses first-hand or learns of, must be promptly reported to police and/or child welfare. This includes suspicion related to non-soccer activities which WSC coaches or volunteers may become aware of related to a third party, such as a parent, teacher or babysitter. Call 911 if there is a

crime in progress or life or physical integrity is at risk. For child welfare, call the Director of Youth Protection (child protection agency). For services in English in Montreal, call 514-935-6196. For services in French in Montreal, call 514-896-3100. For the police, call the Société de police de Ville de Montréal at 514 393-1133. Incidents can also be reported on-line at <https://spvm.qc.ca/en/Contact> . Reporting to one of the designated contacts is also desirable.

If a coach or volunteer is not sure whether the issue witnessed or heard about involves potentially illegal behaviour or inappropriate behaviour, the Primary Liaison or other designated contact should be informed immediately and such person will support the coach or volunteer through the process.

Action by Coach or Volunteer

Unless informed otherwise, the coach or volunteer should not attempt to conduct an independent investigation. Police and/or child welfare will make the determination as to whether a potential illegal allegation or suspicion requires further investigation, and the designated contacts will do so for inappropriate behaviour. Communication regarding the incident should be conducted with discretion, after consultation with the authorities and / or designated contacts.

Follow up on Reporting

The WSC will follow up internally as appropriate. The action taken by the organization will depend upon the nature of the incident, distinguishing between illegal behaviour and inappropriate behaviour. When an allegation or suspicion of potentially illegal behaviour is reported, police and/or a child welfare agency will be notified. When an allegation or suspicion of inappropriate behaviour is made, the Primary Liaison 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 WSC may refer the matter to a child welfare agency or police.

In the event that a coach or volunteer's misconduct is serious enough to lead to dismissal, it must be reported to Lac St. Louis Soccer and the FSQ.

The designated contact will advise the individual who reported the incident that appropriate steps were taken.

Additional Resources

Canada Soccer Association Guide to Safety:

https://www.canadasoccer.com/files/CANADASOCCER_GuidetoSafetyEN.pdf

Commit 2 Kids website: <https://commit2kids.ca/en/>

Guidelines for Adults Interacting with Children in Sport:

https://commit2kids.ca/pdfs/C2K_CoachingAssocCanada_Interacting_en.pdf

Kids Help Phone - 1-800-668-6868 or <https://kidshelpphone.ca> .