

# Child Protection Policy



AEL FC Canada is committed to ensuring the safety, well-being, and protection of all children participating in our programs. This policy outlines the standards of behavior expected from coaches, team officials, staff, and volunteers when interacting with children, as well as procedures for reporting and responding to concerns.

## 1. Communication Guidelines

- All communication with children should be transparent and visible. Wherever possible, communication should be directed to or via the parent/guardian.
- Club and team communication platforms such as email, team apps, or approved group messaging should be used for group communication.
- Direct private communication with children via personal phones, social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, texting, etc.), or personal email is not allowed.

## 2. Meetings and Interactions

- Meetings with individual players should occur in the presence of another adult, such as the team manager, assistant coach, or the child's parent/guardian.
- Feedback before, during, or after games/practices is encouraged but must occur in visible, public areas (e.g., training fields, gymnasiums).
- Coaches, officials, and staff must not be alone with a child in a non-visible space, such as a car, change room, or enclosed area. Transportation to and from events is only permitted with the parent/guardian present or with explicit consent.
- Children must not be left alone after training or games if a parent/guardian has not arrived. Coaches or team staff should remain with the child in a visible location until pickup.

## 3. Practice and Training Environment

- Practices and training sessions should be conducted in visible, accessible areas.
- Parents/guardians or other responsible adults should be present in the immediate vicinity for the duration of sessions wherever possible.
- Teams should not be trained alone by a single coach whenever possible.

## 4. Professional Conduct

Coaches, team officials, staff, and volunteers must:

- Refrain from using profanity, ridicule, verbal abuse, or unwarranted physical contact with children.
- Avoid any behavior that violates AEL FC Canada's policies or mandate, including favoritism, intimidation, threats, or discriminatory actions.
- Not take personal photos or videos of children without prior consent from parents/guardians and club approval.
- Not make sexual jokes, comments, or share inappropriate material with or around children.

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## 5. Reporting and Duty to Act

- All staff, coaches, and volunteers have a mandatory duty to report suspected child abuse, sexual misconduct, or inappropriate behaviour.
- Reports should be made to the club, a local Child Welfare Agency, or law enforcement.
- Reports must be made regardless of whether the incident was witnessed personally.
- Any concerns regarding the appropriateness of behaviour should be discussed with a member of the AEL FC Canada Board of Directors.

## 6. Training and Compliance

- All coaches, staff, and volunteers must complete and stay current with Ontario Soccer's Respect in Soccer Program and Protecting Children & Youth in Sport requirements.
- Compliance with this policy is mandatory and a condition of participation with AEL FC Canada.

## 7. Contact

For questions, concerns, or to report an incident, please contact:

AEL FC Canada via Email [aelfccanada@gmail.com](mailto:aelfccanada@gmail.com)

This version is fully aligned with Safe Sport principles and Ontario Soccer child protection requirements.