



THE PLAYER THE COMMUNITY THE GAME

Safeguarding

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Abbotsford Soccer Association (ASA)

1. Policy Statement

Abbotsford Soccer Association (ASA) is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the safety, welfare, and well-being of all children, young people, and adults at risk who participate in, or are connected to, ASA programs and activities.

ASA believes that all children and young people have the right to enjoy soccer in a safe, positive, and inclusive environment, free from abuse, harm, neglect, bullying, and exploitation. Safeguarding is a shared responsibility and is embedded throughout every aspect of the Club's work.

The ASA Board of Directors endorses this policy and is committed to ensuring that safeguarding remains a core priority of the organization.

2. Purpose of the Policy

This policy aims to:

- Protect children, young people, and adults at risk from harm;
- Promote a safe, positive, and supportive environment;
- Ensure clear procedures for reporting and responding to safeguarding concerns;
- Support staff, coaches, volunteers, parents, and participants in understanding their safeguarding responsibilities;
- Ensure ASA complies with all relevant provincial and federal safeguarding legislation and sport governing body requirements.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All ASA Board members;
- All staff, coaches, officials, contractors, and volunteers;
- All participants, including players, referees, and program attendees;
- All ASA-related activities, including training sessions, games, tournaments, meetings, travel, and events.



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4. Definitions

Under the Child, Family and Community Services Act (British Columbia):

- **Child:** Any person under the age of 19.
- **Youth:** Any person aged 16 or 17.
- **Adult at Risk:** An individual aged 19 or older who may be vulnerable due to disability, illness, or other circumstances.

Safeguarding refers to the actions taken to protect individuals from harm and to promote their welfare.

5. Principles of Safeguarding at ASA

ASA is guided by the following principles:

- The welfare of the child or young person is paramount;
- All participants are treated with respect and dignity;
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility;
- Concerns are taken seriously and responded to promptly;
- Confidentiality is respected and information is shared only on a need-to-know basis;
- ASA listens to and values the voice of children and young people.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone at ASA

All individuals involved with ASA have a responsibility to:

- Act in the best interests of children and young people;
- Be alert to signs of abuse or neglect;
- Report concerns in line with this policy;
- Behave in a manner that promotes safety and positive role modelling.



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Safeguarding Officer

ASA has a designated Safeguarding Officer responsible for overseeing safeguarding matters:

Dean Colthorp

Safeguarding Officer

Phone: (778) 345-7285

Email: dean@abbotsfordsoccer.com

The Safeguarding Officer will:

- Receive and manage safeguarding concerns;
- Ensure appropriate action is taken;
- Liaise with statutory agencies where required;
- Maintain secure records;
- Provide guidance and support to staff and volunteers.

7. Safe Recruitment

ASA is committed to safe recruitment practices. This includes:

- Mandatory Criminal Record Checks (CRC) for all staff, coaches, and volunteers working with children or vulnerable groups;
- Interviews and screening prior to appointment;
- Reference checks where applicable;
- Ongoing training and supervision.

No individual will be permitted to work unsupervised with children or young people without meeting ASA safeguarding requirements.

8. Data Protection and Confidentiality

ASA collects and stores personal information only for legitimate operational and safeguarding purposes. All data is:

- Collected with appropriate consent;
- Stored securely;
- Accessed only by authorized personnel;
- Retained and disposed of in accordance with applicable data protection legislation.



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Consent is required for photography and media use. Participants and parents/guardians may withdraw consent at any time.

9. What Is Abuse?

Abuse is any action or lack of action that causes harm. Abuse can occur in any setting and may include:

- **Physical Abuse:** Causing physical harm (e.g., hitting, shaking, burning);
- **Sexual Abuse:** Any sexual activity without consent or involving a child;
- **Emotional Abuse:** Persistent behavior that damages emotional development or self-worth;
- **Bullying:** Repeated behavior intended to hurt, intimidate, or humiliate (including online);
- **Neglect:** Failure to meet basic physical or emotional needs.

Abuse is never acceptable and is never the fault of the child or young person.

10. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

If You Are Worried About a Child or Young Person

All safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately.

- Speak to the person in charge of the activity or the Safeguarding Officer;
- If there is immediate danger, call **911**.

The Safeguarding Officer will assess the concern and determine appropriate next steps, which may include referral to:

- Child Protection Services;
- Police;
- Health or social services;
- Canada Soccer or relevant sport bodies.

Information will be shared only with those who need to know to protect the individual.



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11. External Reporting and Support

Emergency

Police / Ambulance / Fire: **911**

Child Protection Services (BC)

1-800-663-9122

Canada Soccer – Whistleblower Hotline

1-800-661-9675

Email: whistleblower@canadasoccer.com

Canadian Sport Helpline

1-888-837-7678 (8am–8pm ET, 7 days a week)

Website: abuse-free-sport.ca

Kids Help Phone

1-800-668-6868

Website: kidshelpphone.ca

12. Policy Review

This Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there are changes in legislation, best practice, or organizational structure.