

Force Soccer Academy

Developing confident, inspired, and competitive athletes.

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Child Protection Policy

Updated January 2026

Introduction:

Burlington Force Soccer Academy has established the following Child Protection Code of Conduct to steer our staff and volunteers in their interactions with children. The safety, rights, and well-being of children engaged in our programs is ingrained in our ethos. We foster enriching relationships with children, ensuring that all conduct is appropriate and respectful, in line with the Ontario Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017.

Why a Code of Conduct to Protect Children?

Our Academy is devoted to the protection and safety of all children. This Code of Conduct is a fundamental component of creating and maintaining a secure environment for children. Prioritizing the safety, rights, and well-being of children in our programs is integral to our operational principles.

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist our personnel and volunteers in fostering positive relationships with the children participating in sports programs offered by our Academy, while exemplifying proper boundaries.

Treating Children with Dignity and Maintaining Boundaries:

All Academy staff and volunteers are expected to:

- Treat all children with respect and dignity.
- Establish, respect, and uphold appropriate boundaries with all children and their families.
- Adhere to the Academy's Code of Conduct.
- Comply with the Academy's Rule of Two Policy.

It is crucial to self-monitor your interactions with children, remain vigilant of your peers' conduct, and ensure all behavior is appropriate and perceived as respectful by all.

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All interactions and activities with children must:

- be transparent to, and where applicable, sanctioned by the board, and the child's parents.
- be related to your roles and responsibilities, and
- aim to facilitate the child's development.

If you are ever uncertain about the appropriateness of any interaction, you should promptly consult with the designated individuals within Burlington Force Soccer Academy.

The designated persons for Burlington Force Soccer Academy are:

- Mihail Markovic
- Jen Markovic

Examples of unacceptable behavior toward a child include:

- Embarrassing, shaming, blaming, humiliating, derogatory comments, or favoritism.

General Rules of Behavior:

Staff and volunteers of Burlington Force Soccer Academy must NOT:

- Initiate or engage in physical contact with a child that may be uncomfortable to the child or perceived as a boundary violation.
- Participating in any communication with a child, within or outside of program activities, could make the child uneasy or be seen as a boundary violation.
- Engage in any actions that contravene the Academy's mission, policies, or this Child Protection Code of Conduct, whether on duty or otherwise.
- Undertake personal inquiries into allegations or suspicions of misconduct. It is their duty to report such matters, not to investigate.

What Constitutes Inappropriate Behavior:

Inappropriate behavior encompasses:

1. Inappropriate Communication, including personal nature contact outside of program duties.
2. Inappropriate Contact, which refers to spending unauthorized time with a child outside of official program times.
3. Favoritism, such as singling out a child for special treatment.
4. Personal Photos/Videos, unless part of official duties.
5. Sexual jokes, explicit comments, or showing sexual material to a child.

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6. Intimidating, threatening, or ridiculing a child.

Such inappropriate conduct is strictly prohibited and will be addressed with utmost seriousness.

Reporting Requirements:

All suspicions or instances of child sexual abuse or inappropriate behavior witnessed or learned of by Academy staff or volunteers must be reported immediately.

When to report:

1. Direct observations of potentially illegal behavior must be promptly reported to law enforcement and/or child welfare.
2. Any learned information about potentially illegal behavior must also be reported without delay.
3. Suspicions or observations of inappropriate behavior must be reported to the designated individuals within Burlington Force Soccer Academy.

Designated persons for Burlington Force Soccer Academy are:

- Director of Operations **Melanie Bradley (mbradley@forcesoccer.ca)**

Always remember, you have an independent responsibility to report suspected illegal activity directly to the police and/or child welfare.

Follow-up on Reporting:

Upon reporting, law enforcement and/or child welfare will take the lead on allegations of illegal activity, with the Academy supporting as necessary. For reports of inappropriate behavior, Burlington Force Soccer Academy will conduct a thorough inquiry to ascertain the facts and decide on the appropriate response, which may include reporting to child welfare or police.

By being part of Burlington Force Soccer Academy, I agree to adhere to this Child Protection Code of Conduct.

Name: _____ Position: _____

Date: _____ Signature: _____