



Child Protection Plan

UOVLL Plan

January 2024



Purpose:

The safety and well-being of all members (not limited to players, umpires, coaches, board members and volunteers) in the Upper Ottawa Valley Little League (known as UOVLL) organization is extremely important. UOVLL is focused on ensuring that the program remains a happy, healthy and safe environment for players, coaches and umpires to grow, learn and enjoy as a whole. UOVLL will strive to ensure that the environment is as safe on and off the field as possible. The UOVLL DOES NOT tolerate any type of abuse against a minor, including but not limited to, sexual, physical, mental and emotional. This also includes any actions that could be seen as any type of bullying, hazing or harassment. Our goal is to prevent child abuse from occurring through required screenings, education, awareness and mandated reporting of abuse.

UOVLL has a zero-tolerance culture that does not allow any type of activity that promotes or allows any form of misconduct or abuse (mental, physical, emotional or sexual) between players, coaches, umpires, parents/guardians/caretakers, spectators, volunteers and/or any other individuals. UOVLL officials (coaches, umpires, volunteers, board members) WILL remove any individual exhibiting any type of harassment, physical, emotional or sexual misconduct and report the individual to the proper authorities (including the executive board) immediately. UOVLL officials who fail to enforce the zero-tolerance culture or fail to abide by the terms of this policy will face removal from the UOVLL program.

Applicability:

The Child Protection Plan applies to anyone who has ANY involvement with the UOVLL, as well as anyone who participates in any UOVLL program and activity, including, but not limited to executive board members, volunteers, managers, coaches, umpires, spectators, players or anyone who provides regular services to the UOVLL and/or have any repetitive access to or contact with players or teams. Anyone who has any questions on who the Child Protection Plan applies to should contact UOVLL at safety@uovll.ca.

Enforcement:

UOVLL has established a culture prohibiting any type of activity that promotes or allows any form of mental, physical, emotional or sexual misconduct behavior between players, coaches, umpires, parents, volunteers, and any other individuals. UOVLL officials MUST remove any individual that is exhibiting any type of mental, physical, emotional or sexual misconduct and report the individual to the proper authorities (including UOVLL board members).

Any official who does not comply with the Child Protection Plan in all aspects will be removed from the UOVLL organization.

Any questions regarding interpretation of the Child Protection Plan should be directed to safety@uovll.ca. The Child Protection Plan will be updated and modified as needed.

Definitions:

Defining child abuse is the first step in fighting it. Child abuse can take several different forms, and it is important to understand what is considered child abuse and other terms that are mentioned in this plan.

Abuse or Neglect: child abuse and neglect are, at a minimum, “any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation” or “an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm.”

Different types of child abuse or neglect:

- Neglect is the negligent failure of a minor’s caretaker to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care or supervision which threatens harm to a minor’s health, safety or welfare.
- Physical Abuse is any non-accidental, intentional, deliberate act that results in physical injury.
- Emotional and Psychological Abuse is any act that diminishes the sense of identity, dignity, and self-worth by humiliation, intimidation, verbal assault and emotional deprivation.
- Sexual Abuse is any type of maltreatment, violation, or exploitation that refers to the involvement of the child in sexual activity to provide sexual gratification or financial benefit to the perpetrator.
- Bullying is the intentional, repetitive harmful act, words and behavior that makes the victim feel hurt, scared and/or ashamed. Bullying can also be an imbalance of real or perceived power between the bully and the victim. Different types of bullying include, but are not limited to, physical bullying, verbal bullying, emotional bullying, harassment and hazing.
- Grooming is the process where an individual creates a relationship with a minor or the minor’s family to gain trust so he or she can take advantage of a minor for a sexual purpose.

Child/Minor: Any individual who is younger than 18 years of age.

League Programs and Activities: Any games, practices, tournaments, approved activities and/or approved special games.

Volunteer: Any person in the organization who provides regular service to the league and has contact with minors. This includes but is not limited to coaches, umpires, managers, executive board members, or any individual who has repetitive access to or contact with players, teams, coaches or umpires.

Volunteer Requirements:

UOVLL has a strict policy requiring volunteers (head coaches, assistant coaches, convenors, executive members) as well as any umpires who are over the age of 18, to have a

VULNERABLE SECTOR CHECK completed before they commence their positions in the association. Persons living in the Upper Ottawa Valley area may contact the UOV OPP (or local police department) and request a VSS. UOVLL will provide a letter of intent as required.

Persons living in Petawawa on either the North Side PMQs or South Side PMQs can go to the Military Police detachment on CFB Petawawa and request a VSS. UOVLL will also provide a letter of intent as well for this as required.

The VSS is a mandatory requirement to volunteer with the UOVLL every 2 years. UOVLL will not reimburse for any additional costs. Coaching applications must be submitted yearly via the registration portal to ensure all information is collected as per Little League international regulations as well.

The UOVLL will not permit any person to participate in any manner whose VSS reveals a pending charge, conviction for, guilty plea, no contest plea or admission to any crime involving a minor. UOVLL also reserves the right to impose stricter guidelines if the league determines that a person is unfit or inappropriate to work as a volunteer in the league or around minors.

Note: if an individual involved with the UOVLL is under investigation for any type of child abuse or has a pending charge against, or involving, a minor, that individual will be removed from UOVLL programs until the outcome of the investigation or pending charges are complete and all allegations are resolved.

If any member of UOVLL becomes aware of information at any time by any means whatsoever that an individual who has regular access to minors within UOVLL has been charged with, convicted of, pled guilty, pled no contest or admitted to any crime involving or against a minor, the UOVLL will immediately contact the proper authorities to confirm the accuracy of the information before allowing the volunteer to participate in a position with the UOVLL.

The UOVLL will properly handle all sensitive documents. We will exercise due diligence to protect any information that is provided. To protect the privacy of volunteers and others, the executive board will only share on a need-to-know basis, any personal, non-public record or information pertaining to volunteers.

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse:

When an allegation of abuse is made against a UOVLL volunteer, the league will protect the child from any further abuse by keeping the alleged abuser away from all children in the program until the incident is reported to the proper authorities AND completely investigated. It is mandatory for all volunteers with the UOVLL to report any actions that may violate this Child Protection Plan. Reporting child abuse will help protect the health and safety of the child(ren). An individual who is required but fails to report suspected child abuse is in violation of this Child Protection Plan and will be subject to investigation.

If allegations are made against an individual in the league, UOVLL must take steps to assure that the individual will not have any further contact with the children in the league. While allegations

of abuse are under investigation or if criminal charges are pending, UOVLL executive will immediately notify the individual that they are no longer permitted to work with the UOVLL organization, until the matter is resolved by an external investigation or through the police/court system. While an individual is under any type of investigation, they may not work/volunteer with any UOVLL activity.

UOVLL will not retaliate against any individual who makes a good faith report of suspected abuse even if the allegation is determined as unsubstantiated. Reporters of abuse should not be afraid to step forward in cases where he/she/they either has first-hand knowledge of or a good faith belief that abuse has occurred, even if there is a possibility that the report is wrong.

UOVLL encourages all individuals in the league to be vigilant and observant in regard to the safety and protection of children in the league.

One-on-One interactions:

Most child sexual abuse or grooming is perpetrated in isolated, one on one situations. By reducing such interactions between players and adult volunteers, you reduce the risk of child sexual abuse. However, one on one time with trusted adults is also healthy and valuable for a child. Policies concerning one on one interactions protect children while allowing for these beneficial relationships. To minimize the chance of an individual's opportunity to groom or abuse a player, policies to be considered in regard to one on one interactions are:

- Volunteers should refrain from being alone with a minor during UOVLL events unless there is an emergency, written permission from the player's parents/legal guardian, the volunteer is the player's parent/legal guardian/sibling or personal care assistant
- A volunteer's interactions with players must be observable, and interruptible by another adult
- Volunteers should refrain from contacting players directly through social media or electronic communication unless another adult volunteer or the player's parents/legal guardian is copied
- Volunteers are discouraged from interacting one on one with unrelated minors in settings outside of UOVLL activities (such as the volunteer's home, a restaurant, a vehicle, personal communication including electronic communication)
- If a volunteer is in a position where he/she is left alone with a player, he/she should not leave the child so long as the volunteer has exhausted all the options to comply with the guidelines of the Child Protection Plan. Likewise, if a child is injured and must be transported to a hospital or urgent care center, the volunteer should not leave the child alone if all options have been exhausted to comply with the Child Protection Plan in an emergency where medical treatment is necessary
- Physical contact between volunteers and players should be very limited; some examples of appropriate physical touch include high fives or administering appropriate first aid.

Summary:

The safety and well-being of all players, umpires, coaches and volunteers in UOVLL is the most important part. This Child Protection Plan provides strict guidelines to volunteers to create an environment that is as safe as possible for the players of UOVLL. Protection is needed at all

levels of the league. UOVLL must place the safety and well-being of the players above all else. Each volunteer, coach, player and parent/guardian must adhere to the requirements of the Child Protection Plan and utilize any other resources provided to assist in the task of keeping our players safe. Parents/guardians play a critical role in assuring the safety of their players. It is critical that UOVLL enforces the Child Protection Plan and offers awareness and guidance as needed to volunteers and parents/guardians. UOVLL is available to offer assistance and guidance to players, coaches, umpires, parents/guardians and volunteers regarding the Child Protection Plan by contacting any Board of Executive committee member or emailing safety@uovll.ca.