Special Olympics Ontario

BEST PRACTISES



SOMETIMES THINGS HAPPEN!

SO, HOW CAN I BE BEST PREPARED?

- BE SURE EVERYONE IS FULLY REGISTERED
- COACHES ARE TRAINED & ORIENTATED
- RATIO IS ALWAYS MET
- COACHES KNOW THEIR ROLES & RESPONSIBILITES AT PRACTISE/COMPETITION
- ATHLETES ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE RULES AND EXPECTATIONS

MINOR INCEDENTS

- ATHLETE REUSES TO GET OUT OF THE POOL WHEN ASKED
- STRUCK OUT & SWORE….”OH $HIT”
- ROUTINELY SHOWS UP LATE OR FREQUENT ABSESNCE

MAJOR INCEDENTS

- ASSAULT
- DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY
- THREATS
- VERBAL ABUSE

NOW WHAT?

- Speak with the athlete & possibly guardian about the infraction(s) of the Code of Conduct.
- Discuss possible next steps.
- Submit an SOO Incident Report & possibly contact an SOO Staff.
- Inform Community Coordinator/Council

REPORTING & DOCUMENTATION

Record or document an incident/occurrence as soon as possible. Back dated documentation can be problematic & is not recommended.

If you are documenting at a later date, include this date as a point of reference.

Record any/all related verbal communication as close to verbatim as possible.

Record sequentially.

Point form notes are quite acceptable.

Do not use language/words that you are not familiar with. Words and language used out of context can cause confusion and can reduce the validity of your recordings.

REPORTING & DOCUMENTATION

If it is a hand written or a generic word document, number your pages sequentially. Ie. ½ – 2/2.

Make sure your recordings include the time and date, location of the incident/occurrence.

If incident/occurrence was witnessed, observed or heard by others please include their full given name, and their contact information.

Do not inject your opinion or editorialize, allow the facts to speak for themselves.

Be sensitive to the privacy of others, your documentation should only be shared with necessary individuals.

Contact your Program Consultant if you are unsure who should receive a copy of

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

On April 3, 2026 @ 7:15 PM at MacDonalds Field, I heard Mike Jones tell John Smith he was going to beat him up after softball practise

At swim practise on April 6, 2026, Suzie Que shared with me that she “is afraid of Bowling Coach Sandy Castles”.

On May 15, 2026, I called Head Coach Mike Johnson and asked when I could pick up the floor hockey equipment? Mike responded with profanities and hung up the phone.

After soccer practice on August 6, 2026 @ 7:30 PM in the parking lot adjacent to Flanders Field, I observed volunteers and athletes drinking beer.

PROBLAMATIC EXAMPLES

George stole Sam’s phone, nobody saw him take the phone but I know he did it

I think what Suzie meant to say was…….

I just know Oliver started this whole mess

I was told not to report incidents to SOO

INCIDENT REVIEW

Incident has been fully reviewed by Council and possibly SOO.

SOO follows a progressive discipline model.

Verbal, written, possible suspension. Some situations may warrant immediate suspension.

SOO believes coaches & communities need a level of authority on the ground. (suspensions of 2 weeks & under)

Coaches/Community Councils **must consult** SOO for longer in duration suspensions.

Considerations

1. Chronological age.
2. Cognitive ability/age.
3. First time offence or repeated behavior.
4. If repeated, is it within scope of past infractions.
5. Escalating behavior in either frequency or severity.
6. Was there any provocation, perceived or otherwise?
7. Any life events (med. change/loss of a loved one/ moved).
8. Any criminality.
9. Environment (separation anxiety/ different routine/ fatigue).
10. Impact on victim or others.

I DON’T FEEL COMFORTABLE & DON’T KNOW WHAT TO DO!

SOO is here to help you, don’t ever be nervous or hesitant to contact SOO staff!

SOO doesn’t expect volunteers to have all the answers or to manage on their own!

SOO will take major situations off your plate.