



10 TIPS FOR PARENT/GUARDIANS

Skate Canada is committed to be a leading safe sport organization in Canada and internationally that treats individuals with respect, dignity, and fairness in alignment with our core values, whereby all participants are entitled to feel and know they are safe, and in an environment that is free from all forms of misconduct.

1. GET EDUCATED

Education is the most important tool for preventing misconduct. There are resources that can help you understand how abuse occurs, recognize signs of grooming behaviours, boundary violations and what to do when you suspect a child's safety is at risk.

Learn about the issue of child sexual abuse and the behaviours and situations that present risk to children and youth. Download the free resources from Canadian Centre for Child Protection, [Understanding Child Sexual Abuse](#) to learn more.

The Respect in Sport Parent Program helps define a model of behaviour for all parents and creates a more rewarding, safe, and respectful environment for everyone involved. This online program reinforces a parent's role in a child or youth's activities, encourages positive sport behaviours, and provides insight into the various role other individuals (such as coaches and officials) play. This program empowers parents to ensure the safety of their children, encourage positive and effective communication, and to enhance a child's fun and camaraderie of the activity. [Take Respect in Sport – Parent Program](#).

2. SCREENING

Screen and check child protection policies at the organizations and activities your child attends. For more tips on screening organizations download [3 Steps for Choosing a Child Safe Organization](#) from Commit to Kids.

Coaches are in a leadership role and in a position of trust with Skate Canada stakeholders. To help ensure the safety and well-being of our stakeholders and their families, Skate Canada requires that all coaches 18 years of age or older complete a screening through the approved company every three years. For more information see [Section 5 – Screening of the Professional Coach Membership Procedure](#).

3. CREATE HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

It is important to establish healthy boundaries between athletes and coaches and have clear expectations about the coach's role. A coach can often serve as a teacher, a mentor, or a role model for a young person. A coach is not an athlete's friend, peer, or romantic partner. Skate Canada clubs, schools and all youth sport organizations should spell out prohibited behaviours to ensure strong and safe boundaries between adults and athletes. Be empowered and ask for Skate Canada's policies and guidelines regarding boundaries between coaches and athletes.

4. EDUCATE YOUR CHILD

Teach your child about personal safety. Kids in the Know is a program of Canadian Centre for Child Protection. Visit kidsintheknow.ca for age-appropriate resources.

We have made learning about safety fun with the Safe Sport Children’s Activity Book. Download and print the activity book for free [HERE!](#)

5. RECOGNIZE AND ADDRESS HIGH RISK AREAS

Abusers need privacy, access, and control to perpetuate misconduct and abuse. One way to reduce the risk of abuse is to implement policies and guidelines designed to limit one-on-one interactions between adults and minor athletes. For this reason, every Skate Canada club and school is encouraged to implement the National Safe Sport Program which includes misconduct policies and procedures, the Rule of Two, Social Media and Electronic Communication, Travel and Locker Room Guidelines and more! For more information on the club’s commitment refer to the **CLUB AND SCHOOL SAFE SPORT COMMITMENT** section of the Safe Sport Handbook.

6. GET INVOLVED

Be involved in your child’s life. Attend their activities and pay attention to interactions between adults and the children; know who they are building relationships with.

7. BE VIGILANT

Pay attention and respond to interactions between children and adults. If you are uncomfortable with the way an adult is interacting with a child, get involved.

8. TAKE NOTE OF CHANGES

Kids will have off days, but it’s important to pay attention to changes in their behaviour patterns. Often when kids are distressed, they will communicate more through behaviour than words.

9. SPEAK UP AND REPORT MISCONDUCT

If you recognize questionable behaviours – say something! Report any instances of known or suspected sexual misconduct or abuse to local law enforcement and directly through Skate-Safe, our external independent third-party. For more information on how to report misconduct refer to the “[Reporting Misconduct Flowchart](#)”.

10. TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN

All forms of misconduct can be hard topics for parents to talk about with their children but having these conversations are extremely important. On going and open communication with children about their bodies and appropriate boundaries will make it easier for them to talk to you about if anyone makes them feel uncomfortable. Refer to the [UNDERSTANDING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE](#) section of the Safe Sport Handbook for more information.