



The Traveling Dojo

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Child Protection Policy & Agreement

Updated July 22, 2025

Child Protection Policy

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard the welfare of children and young people (under the age of 18) participating in our martial arts and self-defense programs by ensuring they are protected from abuse, harm, or neglect in any form.

The Traveling Dojo will assign a designated **Child Protection Officer (CPO)** who is responsible for promoting the safety and well-being of children (see Appendix A for the *Child Protection Officer (CPO) Role Description*).

Policy Statement

Our martial arts school is committed to providing a safe, positive, and nurturing environment for all children. We believe that:

- Children should be protected from all forms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- The welfare of every child is paramount.
- Every child has the right to participate in self-defense and martial arts in a safe and supportive environment.
- All people working with children must recognize and accept their responsibility to develop awareness of the issues that cause children harm.

Scope

This policy applies to all instructors, assistants, volunteers, staff, contractors, and visitors involved with the school.

Code of Conduct

Appendix B *Code of Conduct for Working with Children* is incorporated into policy in its entirety.



Definitions of Abuse

Abuse includes, but is not limited to:

- **Physical Abuse:** Hitting, shaking, throwing, etc.
- **Emotional Abuse:** Threatening, humiliating, isolating.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Inappropriate touching, exposure, or exploitation.
- **Neglect:** Failing to meet basic needs such as food, clothing, and supervision.

Reporting Concerns

If a child is in immediate danger, contact emergency services (911).

All other concerns should be reported to the **Designated Child Protection Officer (CPO):**

Name:	Mark O'Connor
Contact:	301-613-3658 mark@travelingdojomartialarts.com

The CPO will follow these steps:

1. Listen without judgment or promises.
2. Record the concern factually and confidentially.
3. Report to appropriate authorities as required by law.
4. All concerns will be taken seriously and handled confidentially, with information shared only on a need-to-know basis.

Recruitment & Training

All staff and volunteers must undergo background checks (e.g., criminal record check, depending on jurisdiction).

Staff will receive child protection training annually.

New hires will be briefed on this policy and required to sign this policy which is inclusive of the *Code of Conduct for Working with Children* policy agreement.



Parental Involvement

Parents/guardians are welcome to observe classes.

Children will not be photographed, filmed, or featured in marketing without explicit, written parental consent.

Note: *The Traveling Dojo's Liability Waiver (signed as part of the membership agreement) has a Media Release clause applicable **only to members**. Unless modified or otherwise agreed to in writing after the date of the Liability Waiver, the terms of the Liability Waiver will be in force.*

Parents are encouraged to communicate any special needs, sensitivities, or concerns regarding their child.

Safe Involvement

Training areas will be supervised at all times.

Children will never be left unattended.

A first aid kit and emergency procedures (reference *The Traveling Dojo Emergency Procedures*) will be readily available.

Review And Updates

This policy will be reviewed annually or after any incident, legislative change, or feedback from staff, parents, or students.



Acknowledgment

I have read and understand the *Child Protection Policy & Agreement* and *Code of Conduct for Working with Children* policy. I agree to abide by its principles and acknowledge my responsibility to protect the welfare of children at The Traveling Dojo.

Print Name

Role (*owner, director, CPO, staff member, volunteer*)

Signature

Date



Appendix A:

Child Protection Officer (CPO) Role Description

The Child Protection Officer (CPO) is a designated member of The Traveling Dojo's staff, responsible for promoting the safety and well-being of children.

Key Responsibilities:

- Serve as the first point of contact for any child protection concerns within the school.
- Receive and document any disclosures or observations of abuse or neglect.
- Maintain appropriate records confidentially.
- Report concerns to the appropriate external agencies (e.g., Child Protective Services, police) as required.
- Ensure the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding children are followed.
- Keep up to date with child protection training and legal obligations.
- Support staff and volunteers in recognizing and responding to safeguarding concerns.

The CPO must be approachable, trustworthy, and capable of handling sensitive issues with discretion and urgency. They act as a liaison between the martial arts school, parents, and outside agencies.



Appendix B:

Code of Conduct for Working with Children

This Code of Conduct outlines the expected behavior and responsibilities of all instructors, assistants, staff, and volunteers who work with or around children at The Traveling Dojo. This policy is designed to protect both children and adults and promote a safe, respectful, and supportive environment.

General Principles

- Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity.
- Act as a positive role model in words, actions, and appearance.
- Place the well-being and safety of each child above all other considerations.
- Encourage open communication with children and listen to their concerns.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries and avoid any behavior that could be misinterpreted.

Physical Contact

- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with children.
- If physical contact is required for instruction or safety, explain the reason and seek the child's permission beforehand.
- Ensure physical contact is respectful, appropriate, and observable by others.

One-on-One Situations

- Avoid being alone with a child where others cannot observe interaction.
- If one-on-one instruction is necessary, ensure it takes place in a visible and open environment.
- Inform a supervisor or parent when one-on-one contact is unavoidable.

Communication

- Use professional and age-appropriate language when speaking to children.
- Do not engage in private messaging or social media communication with children without parental consent.
- Avoid making jokes or comments that could be perceived as inappropriate or offensive.



Prohibited Conduct

- Do not hit, grab, shake, or physically discipline a child.
- Do not engage in any form of sexual behavior, grooming, or inappropriate conduct.
- Do not ridicule, bully, shame, or use degrading language toward a child.
- Do not share personal contact information with children unless required and approved.

Reporting

- Report any concerns, suspicions, or disclosures of abuse or misconduct immediately to the Child Protection Officer.
- Cooperate with investigations and maintain confidentiality.
- Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, including termination or reporting to authorities.