

Miami Country Day Aquatics

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION POLICY

PURPOSE – Miami Country Day Aquatics (the “Club”) recognizes the use of electronic communication and social media in today’s world. The Club acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, and the Club also realizes the risks that must be considered when adults use these methods to communicate with minors.

GENERAL CONTENT - All communications between a coach or other adult and an athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. The content and intent of all electronic communications must adhere to the USA Swimming Code of Conduct regarding Athlete Protection. For example, as with any communication with an athlete, electronic communication should not contain or relate to any of the following:

- *drugs or alcohol use;*
- *sexually oriented conversation; sexually explicit language; sexual activity;*
- *the adult’s personal life , social activities, relationship or family issues, or personal problems;*
- *inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures*

Note: Any communication concerning an athlete's personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues or personal problems must be transparent, accessible and professional.

The guiding principle everyone should use in communication is: “Is this communication something that someone else would find appropriate in a face-to-face meeting?” or “Is this something you would be comfortable saying out loud to the intended recipient, in front of their parents, the coaching staff, the board, or other athletes?” With respect to electronic communications, a simple test that can be used in most cases is whether the electronic communication with swimmers is Transparent, Accessible and Professional.

Transparent: Your communication should not only be clear and direct, but also free of hidden meanings, innuendo and expectations.

Accessible: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be considered a matter of record and part of the Club’s records. Whenever possible, include another coach or parent in the communication.

Professional: All electronic communication between a coach and an athlete should be conducted professionally as a representative of the Club. This includes word choices, tone, grammar, and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a staff member.

If your communication meets all three of the T.A.P. criteria, then it is likely your method of communication with athletes will be appropriate.

FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, MYSPACE, BLOGS, AND SIMILAR SITES -

Coaches may have personal Facebook (or other social media site) pages, but they are not permitted to have any athlete member of the Club join their personal page as a “friend.” A coach should not accept any “friend” request from an athlete. In addition, the coach should remind the athlete that this is not permitted. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “private message” each other through Facebook. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “private or instant message” each other. Coaches are encouraged to set their pages to “private” to prevent athletes from accessing the coach’s personal information. The Club has an official Facebook page that athletes and their parents can “friend” for information and updates on team-related matters.

FACEBOOK - The Club has an official FB page that coaches, athletes and parents can follow for information and updates on team-related matters. Coaches are not permitted to follow club athletes on Facebook. Likewise, athletes are not permitted to follow coaches on Facebook. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “direct message” each other through Facebook.

TEXTING - Subject to the general guidelines mentioned above, texting is allowed between coaches and athletes during the hours from 6am until 9pm. Texting only shall be used for the purpose of communicating information directly related to team activities.

EMAIL - Athletes and coaches may use email to communicate between the hours of 6am and 9pm. When communicating with an athlete through email, a parent, another coach, or a board member must also be copied.

REQUEST TO DISCONTINUE ALL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS - The parents or guardians of an athlete may request in writing that their child not be contacted by coaches through any form of electronic communication.