

SAFE SPORT STAR TEAM POLICIES

STAR Swimming is committed to safeguarding all of its members with the welfare of its athletes as the highest priority. Safe Sport is USA Swimming's comprehensive abuse prevention program and provides tools for swim clubs to educate their members and intervene in risky situations. To enable us to comply with Safe Sport guidelines, the following codes of conduct are followed by STAR athletes, coaches, families, and volunteers:

Codes of Conduct

A. ATHLETE Code of Conduct

The purpose of a code of conduct for athletes is to establish a consistent expectation for athletes' behavior. The following statements are expectations for all athletes on the STAR Swimming Team:

- Athletes will respect and show courtesy to my teammates and coaches at all times.
- Athletes will demonstrate good sportsmanship at all practices and meets.
- Athletes will set a good example of behavior and work ethic for the younger teammates.
- Athletes will be respectful of all teammates' feelings and personal space. Swimmers who exhibit sexist, racist, homophobic, or otherwise inappropriate behavior will be faced with consequences.
- Athletes will show respect for all facilities and other property (including locker rooms) used during practices, competitions, and team activities.
- Athletes will refrain from foul language, violence, behavior deemed dishonest, offensive, or illegal.
- If an athlete disagrees with an official's call, he/she will talk with their coach and not approach the official directly.
- Athletes will obey all of USA Swimming's rules and codes of conduct.

If an athlete were to violate this code of conduct, they may be subject to disciplinary action determined by the coaches and the board of directors.

B. PARENT Code of Conduct

The purpose of a code of conduct for parents is to establish consistent expectations for behavior by parents. The following statements are expectations for all parents whose children swim on the STAR Swimming Team:

- Parents will set the right example for their children by demonstrating sportsmanship and showing respect and common courtesy at all times to the team members, coaches, competitors, officials, parents, and all facilities.
- Parents will get involved by volunteering, observing practices, cheering at meets, and talking with their child and their coach about their progress.
- Parents will refrain from coaching their child from the stands during practices or meets.

- Parents understand that criticizing, name-calling, use of abusive language or gestures directed toward coaches, officials, volunteers, and/or any participating swimmer will not be tolerated.
- Parents will respect the integrity of the officials.
- Parents will direct their concerns to their child's training group coach, head coach or a SafeSport supervisor.

If a parent fails to adhere to these expectations, they may be subject to disciplinary action.

C. **MEET VOLUNTEER Code of Conduct**

The purpose of a code of conduct for STAR meet volunteers is to establish consistent expectations for behavior by volunteers. The following statements are expectations for all volunteers at STAR Swimming hosted meets:

- Volunteers will set the right example for the athletes by demonstrating sportsmanship and showing respect and common courtesy at all times to the team members, coaches, competitors, officials, parents, and all facilities.
- Volunteers will refrain from coaching the athletes during the meets.
- Volunteers understand that criticizing, name-calling, use of abusive language or gestures directed toward coaches, officials, other volunteers, and/or any participating swimmer will not be tolerated.
- Volunteers are expected to adhere to the start and end times outlined under the "Job Sign-up". They are expected to stay for the length of their entire job or until a volunteer coordinator or meet director excuse them from their duties. Any emergency causing the volunteer to arrive late, leave early, or miss altogether should be communicated to the volunteer coordinator as soon as possible.
- Volunteers will direct their concerns to the coordinator for the volunteer's acting position, meet director, or SafeSport supervisor.

If a meet volunteer fails to adhere to these expectations, they may be subject to disciplinary action.

D. **COACH Code of Conduct**

The purpose of this code of conduct for coaches is to establish common expectations for all members of the coaching staff of STAR swim club. It is to be used as a guide to promote a positive team environment and good sportsmanship.

The following statements are expectations for our STAR Coaching staff:

- At all times, adhere to USA Swimming's rules and code of conduct.
- Set a good example of respect and sportsmanship for participants and fans to follow.
- Act and dress with professionalism and dignity in a manner suitable to his/her profession.
- Respect officials and their judgment and abide by the rules of the event.
- Treat opposing coaches, participants, and spectators with respect.
- Instruct participants in sportsmanship and demand that they display good sportsmanship.

- Coach in a positive manner and do not use derogatory comments or abusive language.
- Win with humility and lose with dignity.
- Treat every athlete fairly, justly, impartially, intelligently, and with sensitivity.
- Always place the well-being, health, and safety of swimmers above all other considerations, including developing performance.
- Continue to seek and maintain their own professional development in all areas in relation to coaching and teaching children.
- Always maintain a professional separation between coach and athlete.

Any complaints of a coach violating this code of conduct will be brought to the attention of his/her supervisor and/or the club's board of directors.

Electronic Communication Policy

A. Direct Communication

STAR Swimming recognizes the prevalence of electronic communication and social media in today's world. Many of our swimmers use these means as their primary method of communication. While STAR Swimming acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, the club also realizes that there are associated risks that must be considered when adults use these methods to communicate with minors.

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 adhering to the stipulated guidelines provided in the Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policy (MAAPP). 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; and
- inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures

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 means that all electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be clear. Your communication should not only be clear and direct, but also free of hidden meanings, innuendo and expectations.

Accessible means that all electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be considered a matter of record and part of STAR Swimming records.

Professional means that all electronic communication between a coach and an athlete should be conducted professionally as a representative of STAR Swimming. 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.

TEXTING: Subject to the general guidelines mentioned above, texting is allowed between coaches and athletes during the hours from 8am until 8pm. Texting only shall be used for the purpose of communicating information directly related to team activities.

E-MAIL: Athletes and coaches may use e-mail to communicate between the hours of 8am and 8pm.

When communicating with a minor athlete through text or e-mail, the athlete's legal guardian must also be copied on any/all message(s).

B. Social Media Sites

FACEBOOK: 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 social media sites. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to "instant message" each other through chat or other IM method. Coaches are encouraged to set their pages to "private" to prevent athletes from accessing the coach's personal information.

STAR Swimming has an official Facebook page that athletes and their parents can "friend" for information and updates on team-related matters.

TWITTER/INSTAGRAM: STAR Swimming has an official Twitter/INSTAGRAM page that coaches, athletes and parents can follow for information and updates on team-related matters. Coaches are not permitted, as per www.usaswimming.org/protect, to follow athletes on social media sites. Likewise, athletes are not permitted to follow coaches on these sites either. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to "direct message" each other using Twitter or Instagram.

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. This request is to be made directly to the coach and Board of Directors at any time.

BULLYING POLICY

PURPOSE

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at STAR Swimming and will not be tolerated. Our club is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all our members. If bullying does occur, all athletes and parents should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a coach, parent or board member.

Objectives of the Club's Bullying and Action Plan:

1. To make clear that the club will not tolerate bullying in any form.
2. To define bullying and give all board members, coaches, parents and swimmers a good understanding of what bullying is.
3. To make it known to all parents, swimmers and coaching staff that there is a policy and protocol should any bullying issues arise.
4. To make the protocol of reporting bullying clear and understandable.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct prohibits bullying. Generally, bullying is the use of aggression, whether intentional or not, which hurts another person.

In accordance with The USA Swimming Code of Conduct, Star defines bullying as the severe or repeated use of physical acts of oral, written, or electronic messages directed to another that, to a reasonably objective person has the effect of:

1. causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member's property.
2. placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage of his/her property.
3. creating a hostile environment for the other member at any USA Swimming activity.
4. infringing on the rights of the other member at any USA Swimming activity.

REPORTING PROCEDURE

An athlete who feels that he or she has been bullied is asked to talk to his/her parents or talk to a coach or board member in person or via e-mail. There is no express time limit for initiating a complaint under this procedure, but every effort should be made to bring the complaint to the attention of the appropriate club leadership as soon as possible to make sure that memories are fresh, the behavior can be accurately recalled, and the bullying behavior can be stopped as soon as possible.

HOW STAR HANDLES BULLYING

If bullying is occurring at our club or it is reported to be occurring at or club, we address the bullying by FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED and SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED using the following:

FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED

1. First we will get the facts by getting the story from several sources, beginning with the swimmers. We will collect all the information available. We will listen without blaming and will not label the act until all information is collected and we determine if the situation is one of bullying.

2. In order to determine if the act is bullying, we will consider the following:
 - What is the history between the swimmers involved?
 - Have there been past conflicts?
 - Is there a power imbalance?
 - Has this happened before? Is a child worried it will happen again?
 - What are the differences in the two sides of the story?

SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED

If the coaches or board decide that bullying has occurred, STAR will:

- a) Listen and focus on the victim. Learn what's been going on and show we want to help.
- b) Assure the bullied athlete that bullying is not his or her fault.
- c) Work together to resolve the situation and protect the bullied child.
- d) Develop a plan to address behaviors going forward.

ADDRESSING BULLYING BEHAVIOR

In order to address the bullying behavior, STAR will:

- a) Make sure the aggressor knows what the problem behavior is
- b) Calmly tell the aggressor that bullying will not be tolerated. Model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.
- c) Involve the child who bullied in making amends or repairing the situation (e.g., written apology, etc.)
- d) In the event of a severe bullying incident or repeated bullying offences with the same offender, the head coach and/or board will determine if disciplinary consequences should be assigned to the child who bullied.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT POLICY

The board shall have the power to discipline, suspend, or terminate membership in the club in accordance with the policies and procedures set forth in the bylaws and/or club policy handbook. It is the expectation that the board will make every effort to resolve any conflict or dispute occurring **between members**. All conflicts brought to the board will be handled with due process in a timely and confidential manner.

Any member or members having a complaint against another member for an infraction of any bylaw, rule, policy, procedure, or behavioral misconduct may report in writing as outlined below. The complaint must be filed within 15 days of the incident, infraction or discovery of the alleged violation.

All complaints will be submitted in writing to the club president and will contain the following information (if the club president has a conflict of interest in the matter, the complaint will be submitted to another club officer):

1. Name, contact information, USA Swimming membership number and signature of the party/parties filing the complaint.
2. Name of the party/parties against whom the complaint is brought.

3. The specific bylaw, rule, policy, procedure, or guideline allegedly violated.
4. A statement of the facts surrounding the alleged violation. Include all necessary information such as date and time, location, specific facts, witnesses and testimony.
5. Description of actions taken to attempt to resolve this matter informally.
6. The desired action or outcome the grievant wishes to be taken to resolve the conflict by the board.

The club officer who receives the complaint will appoint a review panel of three people from the club membership who are not related or involved with the alleged incident/infraction. The officer will name one of the members of the review panel as chair of the review panel. The review panel will evaluate the complaint and determine what, if any, further action is necessary.

If accepted, a copy of the complaint will be sent to the person against whom the complaint has been filed. The parties to the matter will be notified in writing of the names of the members of the review panel. In the event any party believes that a member of the review panel has a conflict of interest, an objection to that member shall be submitted in writing to the club officer within three days of the notification in writing. The objection will indicate with specificity what the basis of the conflict of interest is. The club officer shall determine if the review panel member will be replaced. The decision of the club officer is final. The respondent will have 10 days from the receipt of the complaint to respond to the complaint in writing. The review panel will send a copy of the response to the person filing the complaint.

Upon receiving the response, the chair of the review panel will then schedule a meeting with all parties involved within 7 days for a full investigation of the matter and come to a decision to resolve the complaint.

The review panel will report the findings and recommendations to the club board within 7 days of the last meeting scheduled in the matter. The decision will be presented to the board which may adopt the recommendation, modify the recommendation, or return the matter to the review panel with directions for further investigation and/or for further recommendations by the review panel. Once the decision is adopted or modified by the board, the outcome will be considered final and will be communicated in writing to both parties within 7 days of the final action by the board.