



GUIDE FOR PEER-TO-PEER INCIDENTS

We must proactively determine how complaints will be handled when a Peer-to-Peer incident occurs. The purpose of this instruction is to provide a guide to establishing a process for the necessary investigation and follow-up to such instances.

How to Handle Peer-to-Peer Incidents:

1. The inappropriate situation is reported, and all necessary members of the leadership team (i.e., Head Coach, CEO, and/or Board President) are notified.
2. Depending upon the nature, severity, and ages of children involved, you may be required to report the incident to local law enforcement. USA Swimming can assist you with this.
3. The parents or guardians of the children involved are all notified of the situation.
4. The leadership team meets with the targeted child and his/her parent/guardian to understand their wishes and explain the next steps.
5. The leadership team meets with the aggressor child and his/her parent/guardian to discuss the situation and develop a safety plan.
6. Copies of the safety plan are distributed to all parties for their reference.

How to Develop a Safety Plan:

1. Ask the child to describe the problematic behavior and the impact such behavior has on the other child and teammates.
 - It is very important throughout the development of the safety plan that the thoughts and feelings of both the aggressor child and the targeted child are considered.
 - Responsibility and accountability are key components to supervision.
 - Using statements of thoughts, feelings and lessons that have been learned when completing a safety plan are more effective and helps increase accountability.
 - Expectations and consequences should be clear and realistic.
2. Identify the child's motivation and find out what made him/her act out in this manner.
3. Explain the behavioral expectations for the child to remain on the team.
4. Identify specific risk areas and help the child control his/her behavior.

5. Demonstrate respect for both parties, and express belief in the aggressor child's ability to control his/her behavior.
 - The safety plan is an accountability tool and should include consequences for behavior that violates the plan.
 - Consequences should be discussed in conjunction with behavioral expectations and clearly articulated to the child and his/her parent/guardian during the safety planning meeting.
 - Consider using a progressive discipline approach up to and including termination from the team.
6. A safety plan is made official by a statement of agreement.
 - The statement of agreement includes all those parties involved in the development and implementation of the safety plan: the team leadership, coach(es), parent/guardian, and athlete.
 - It should also specify the duration of the safety plan and a short description of the progress review when the safety plan reaches its end date.
7. Safe supervision is the focus of how to work with children who have behaved inappropriately around their peers.
 - Through a structured safety plan, the goal is to prevent future abusive situations from happening again.
 - Emphasizing an educational approach in most instances can allow the child who demonstrated inappropriate behavior to remain on the team and learn to make better choices in the future.

Safety Plan Worksheet

1. *This worksheet should be completed together with the aggressor child and his/her parents.*

Explain to the child that he/she has exhibited concerning behavior but you believe they know the right behavior.

2. *A safety plan is a tool to help the child demonstrate appropriate behavior. Explain to the child and his/her parents that the safety plan is private but not confidential. The coaches/administration who work closely with the child will be made aware of the safety plan. The target and his/her parents will also be made aware of the safety plan.*

3. *At the conclusion of the meeting, everyone will agree to and sign the safety plan. If all parties are unable to agree on the safety plan, the outcome will be:*

- *Suspension from the team*
- *Removal from the team*
- *New Practice Group Assignment*
- *Other disciplinary measure(s)*

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