

Electronic Communication Policy of the College Area Swim Team

College Area Swim Team recognizes the prevalence of electronic communication and social media in today's world. Many of our swimmers use these means as their primary methods of communication. While CAST acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, we also realize that there are associated risks that must be considered when adults use these methods to communicate with minors.

General CAST Rule: All communication between a CAST coach or an adult representing CAST and a CAST swimmer must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. The content and intent must adhere to the USA Swimming Code of Conduct.

Electronic communications should be **Transparent, Accessible, and Professional (TAP):**

Transparent: All electronic communication should be clear, direct, and free of hidden meanings, innuendo and expectations.

Accessible: All electronic communication between CAST coaches or an adult representing CAST and CAST swimmers should be considered part of the club's record. Whenever possible, include another coach or parent in the communication so that there is no question regarding accessibility.

Professional: All electronic communication should be conducted professionally with appropriate word choices, tone, grammar and subject matter.

Before sending an electronic communication, consider the following questions as guiding principles for your content:

- Is this communication something that someone else would find appropriate or acceptable in a face-to-face meeting?
- Is this something I would be comfortable saying out loud to the intended recipient of my communication in front of the intended recipient's parents, the coaching staff, the board, or other athletes?
- Is this something I would be comfortable with if it were on the front page of my local newspaper?

Electronic communications should not contain references or relate to any of the following subject matter:

- Drug or alcohol use;
- Sexually oriented conversation, sexually explicit language and/or sexual activity;
- The adult's personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues or personal problems; and or
- 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.

FACEBOOK

CAST coaches may have personal Facebook pages, but they are not permitted to have any current minor CAST swimmer join their personal page as a “friend”. CAST coaches are not allowed to accept any “friend” request from a minor CAST swimmer, and will inform the swimmer as such if a request is made. CAST coaches and minor CAST swimmers are not permitted to “instant message” each other through Facebook chat or other IM method. The term minor above refers to non-adult swimmers and extends to include adult (18 year old) swimmers while they are still in high school.

CAST swimmers and their parents can “friend” the CAST Facebook page for information and updates on team-related matters.

REQUEST TO DISCONTINUE ALL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

Parents or guardians of a CAST swimmer may request that their child not be contacted by coaches or CAST staff through any form of electronic communication.

Sources:

1. USA Swimming.org , Safe Sport Handbook, Model Policy: Anti-Bullying (Appendix B)