***WHAT***



***Swimming 2020***

**WHAT Swimming Bullying & Behavior Policies**

The following policy outlines the ethics and behavior we at WHAT Swimming expect all our athletes to adhere to, in and out of the pool. All concerns of bullying, cyber bullying, harassment, and stalking are taken seriously and handled with extreme care. This policy is intended to promote a safe and positive environment for athletes, officials, parents, and coaches participating in or affiliated with the WHAT Swimming program. This includes communications via but not limited to: Facebook, Text Messaging, Instant Messaging, Instagram, Twitter, E-Mail, and SnapChat.

**BULLYING:**

All bullying concerns are handled promptly and taken seriously. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. WHAT is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all our members. If bullying does occur, all athletes and parents should expect that the incident will be handled in a professional manner. Anyone who knows that bullying is occurring is expected to tell a coach so that it can be addressed promptly.

**Bullying Action Plan**

If bullying has occurred or is occurring during team-related activities, the bullying is addressed immediately using the following steps:

1. Intervene immediately
2. Separate all involved
3. Make sure everyone is safe (address medical needs if necessary)
4. Reassure all involved
5. Model respectful behavior when intervening

We then address the bullying by finding out what happened and supporting those involved using the following steps:

1. Get the Facts
   1. Keep all involved separated
   2. Get the story from all involved
   3. Listen without bias
   4. Collect all information available
2. Determine if Bullying Occurred
   1. Review USA Swimming definition of bullying
   2. Determine if behavior is bullying by considering these questions:
      1. Is there a history between those involved?
      2. Have there been past conflicts?
      3. Is there a power imbalance?
      4. Has this happened before? Is individual worried of this happening again?
   3. May not matter who started it, use unbiased opinion to determine if bullying occurred
3. Support the individuals who are being bullied
   1. Listen and focus on the individual. Learn what has been going on and show that you want to help. Remind them that bulling is not their fault.
   2. Work together to resolve the situation and protect those bullied.
   3. Ask bullied what can be done to make them feel safe.
   4. Develop a plan. Maintain open communication between coaches and parents.
4. Address bullying behavior
   1. Make individual aware of problem behavior
   2. Show that bullying is taken seriously. Model respectful behavior when addressing problem.
   3. Involve who was bullied to facilitate making amends. Goal is to help them see how their actions affect others.
5. Support Bystanders who witness bullying
   1. Facilitate a positive environment to combat bullying and promote safe environment

**HARASSMENT:**

Harassment occurs when someone with the intent to harass, annoy, alarm, abuse, torment, or embarrass another:

1. Initiates communication and in the course of the communication makes a comment, request, suggestion, or proposal that is obscene;

2. Threatens, in a manner reasonably likely to alarm the person receiving the threat, to inflict bodily injury on the person or to commit a felony against the person, a member of the

person's family or household, or the person's property;

3. Conveys, in a manner reasonably likely to alarm the person receiving the report, a false report, which is known by the conveyor to be false, that another person has suffered death or serious bodily injury;

4. Causes the telephone of another to ring repeatedly or makes repeated telephone communications anonymously or in a manner reasonably likely to harass, annoy, alarm, abuse, torment, embarrass, or offend another;

5. Makes a telephone call and intentionally fails to hang up or disengage the connection;

6. Knowingly permits a telephone under the person's control to be used by another to commit an offense under this section; or

7. Sends repeated electronic communications in a manner reasonably likely to harass, annoy, alarm, abuse, torment, embarrass, or offend another.

**STALKING:**

Stalking is a course of conduct, including the use of electronic technology, directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for his/her own safety or the safety of others or would cause that person to suffer substantial emotional distress. A “course of conduct” means two or more acts in which a person directly, indirectly or through third parties, by any action, method, device or means, follows, monitors, observes, surveils, threatens or communicates to or about a person or interferes with a person’s property. “Reasonable person” means a reasonable person under similar circumstances and with similar identities to the complainant. “Substantial emotional distress” means significant mental suffering or anguish that may, but does not necessarily, require medical or other professional treatment or counseling.

**REPORTING ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF THIS POLICY:**

WHAT Swimming will promptly investigate and resolve alleged violations of this policy.

Any WHAT Swimming participant who believes he or she is being cyberbullied or cyberstalked, or is aware of any such cyberbullying or cyberstalking occurring, is asked to report such behavior(s) to a WHAT Swimming coach. It is important that affected WHAT Swimming participants keep copies of the electronic communication to aid the WHAT Swimming in its investigation. While there is no time limit for reporting alleged violations of this policy, reporting an alleged event as soon as it occurs helps WHAT Swimming in its investigation and, if applicable, take steps to eliminate the inappropriate behavior.

**INVESTIGATING ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF THIS POLICY:**

Upon receiving a report of alleged cyberbullying or cyberstalking, the Head Coach, or other appropriate WHAT Swimming administrator, will investigate the allegation. For participants found in violation of this policy, sanctions may include suspension or expulsion from the WHAT Swimming program.

**ACCEPTABLE COMMUNICATION POLICY:**

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.

For example, as with any communication with a coach, teammate or another athlete, electronic communication should not contain or relate to any of the following:

1. Drugs or alcohol use

2. Sexually oriented conversation; sexually explicit language; sexual activity; sexually explicit pictures

3. The adult’s or athletes’ personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues, or personal problems unless relevant to the WHAT Swimming program or any of its activities.

**FACEBOOK, BLOGS, AND SIMILAR SITES:**

While coaches may have personal Facebook (or other social media site) pages or accounts, coaches are not permitted to have any athlete member of the team join their personal page as a “friend” and coaches are encouraged to mark their pages as “private” to prevent athletes from accessing or viewing the coach’s personal information.

A coach may not accept any “friend” request from a current athlete member of the team. The WHAT Swimming program has an official Facebook page and a “Senior Only” Facebook page that athletes and their parents can “friend” for information and updates on team-related matters.

**TWITTER:**

The WHAT Swimming program has an official Twitter page that coaches, athletes and parents can follow for information and updates on team-related matters.

However, coaches cannot retweet a message posted by a WHAT Swimming participant. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “direct message” each other through Twitter.

**TEXTING AND EMAIL:**

Subject to the general guidelines above, texting and emailing between coaches and athletes is permitted to the extent such communications are directly related to the WHAT Swimming program activities.

Private electronic communications between an Applicable Adult and a minor athlete present an opportunity for the Applicable Adult to initiate grooming behaviors that may lead to abuse. Just as one-on-one interactions between an Applicable Adult and a minor athlete must be observable and interruptible, any communications between an Applicable Adult and a minor athlete should be open, transparent. Additionally, electronic communications between an Applicable Adult and a minor athlete must involve the minor’s legal guardian and take place during the hours of 8am-8pm.

**REQUEST TO DISCONTINUE ALL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS:**

Parents or guardians of a WHAT Swimming participant may request, in writing, that their child not be contacted by coaches through any form of electronic communication.

**Grievance Procedure:**

All grievances should be sent to whatcoaches@gmail.com

WHAT Swimming takes your concerns seriously and will reply in a timely manner. We will conduct a full investigation and find a resolution that will allow for the best outcome by following these steps:

1. Gather all the facts and meet with all parties involved
2. Address disciplinary action if warranted
3. Discuss how we can prevent this problem from happening in the future
4. Follow up with concerned party to ensure that an acceptable resolution has been meet