Electronic Communication Policy of North Iowa Splash Swim Team (May 2018)

PURPOSE

The North Iowa Splash (the “Club”) 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 the Club 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.

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; and

 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.

Whether one is an athlete, coach, board member or parent, the guiding principle to always use

in communication is to ask: “Is this communication something that someone else would find

appropriate or acceptable in a face‐to‐face meeting?” or “Is this something you would be

comfortable saying out loud to the intended recipient of your communication in front of the

intended recipient’s 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:  All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be

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 so that there is no question regarding accessibility.

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, 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

“instant message” each other through Facebook chat or other IM method.

The Club has an official Facebook page that athletes and their parents can “friend” for

information and updates on team‐related matters.

Coaches are encouraged to set their pages to “private” to prevent athletes from accessing the

coach’s personal information.

TWITTER

Best Practice:  The Club has an official Twitter page that coaches, athletes and parents can

follow for information and updates on team‐related matters.   Coaches are not permitted to

follow athletes on Twitter.  Likewise, athletes are not permitted to follow coaches on Twitter.

Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “direct message” each other through Twitter.

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.

EMAIL

Athletes and coaches may use email to communicate between the hours of 8am and 8pm.

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.