



SSC ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

Electronic Communication Policy of Southeastern Swim Club



PURPOSE

Southeastern Swim Club (SSC) 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 SSC acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, SSC 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.

Electronic communication should not contain or relate to any of the following:

- drugs or alcohol use
- sexually oriented conversation, inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures
- the adult's personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues, or personal problems

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 SSC'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 SSC. 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.

SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATION AND SIMILAR SITES

Coaches may have personal Facebook (or other social media site) pages, but they are not permitted to have any 18 & under athlete member of SSC 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," "instant message," or utilize any chat or IM



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method. Coaches are encouraged to set their pages to “private” to prevent athletes from accessing the coach’s personal information.

TWITTER, TEXTING, AND EMAIL

Coaches and athletes may follow each other on Twitter but should refrain from direct messaging via Twitter. Texting shall only be used for the purpose of communicating information directly related to team activities. When communicating with an athlete through email, a parent, another coach, or a board member should also be copied.

As technology moves forward and social media applications continue to evolve (Instagram, Tumblr, Kik, Vine, etc), coaches must keep their communication in this regard relative to the T.A.P. criteria or refrain from using this as a means of communication with athletes. Coaches will always keep in mind that this form of communication should be for information purposes only.

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.

Coaches Initials: _____

Date: _____