

## Best Practice Guidelines

The following Best Practice Guidelines are strongly recommended for all USA Swimming members.

1. Parents should be encouraged to appropriately support their children's swimming experience.
2. All swimming practices should be open to observation by parents.
3. Two-deep Leadership: One coach member and at least one other adult who is not in the water should be present at all practices and other sanctioned club activities whenever at least one athlete is present. Clubs and coaches should evaluate their seasonal plans and map out how to best accomplish this strongly recommended guideline.
4. Open and Observable Environment: An open and observable environment should be maintained for all interactions between adults and athletes. Private, or one-on-one situations, should be avoided unless they are open and observable. Common sense should be used to move a meeting to an open and observable location if the meeting inadvertently begins in private.
5. Coaches should not invite or have an athlete(s) to their home without the permission of the athlete's parents (or legal guardian).
6. During team travel, when doing room checks, attending team meetings and/or other activities, two-deep leadership and open and observable environments should be maintained.
7. Athletes should not ride in a coach's vehicle without another adult present who is the same gender as the athlete, unless prior parental permission is obtained.

8. During overnight team travel, if athletes are paired with other athletes they shall be of the same gender and should be a similar age. Where athletes are age 13 & Over, chaperones and/or team managers would ideally stay in nearby rooms.

9. When only one athlete and one coach travel to a competition, at the competition the coach and athlete should attempt to establish a “buddy” club to associate with during the competition and when away from the venue.

10. Communications between non-athlete adult members and athletes should not include any topic or language that is sexual or inappropriate in nature.

11. Non-athlete adult members should respect the privacy of athletes in situations such as changing of clothes, showering, etc. Non-athlete adult members should protect their own privacy in similar situations.

12. Relationships of a peer-to-peer nature with any athletes should be avoided. For example, coaches should avoid sharing their own personal problems with athletes.

13. Coaches and other non-athlete adult members should avoid horseplay and roughhousing with athletes.

14. When a coach touches an athlete as part of instruction, the coach should do so in direct view of others and inform the athlete of what he/she is doing prior to the initial contact. Touching athletes should be minimized outside the boundaries of what is considered normal instruction. Appropriate interaction would include high fives, fist bumps, side-to-side hugs and handshakes.

15. Coaches should not initiate contact with or accept supervisory responsibility for athletes outside club programs and activities.

16. Coaches should not engage in sexual intimacies with a former athlete for at least two years after the cessation or termination of professional services.

# Upper Dublin Aquatic Club Athlete Code of Conduct

The following honor code is in effect throughout the year. Note: some of the items refer specifically to team travel. Additionally, anyone who, in the opinion of the coach or coaches, acts in a manner that would interfere with the travel objectives listed below, will be subject to immediate return home (at the expense of the parent and/or swimmer) and other punishments including barring from future travel meets or other competition, suspension from practice, or dismissal from the team.

1. UDAC team members should be respectful of their peers, all coaches and parents. Any UDAC team member not acting in such a manner will be asked to change or stop that behavior. If that team member fails to comply, they will be asked to leave and disciplinary procedures will follow.

2. UDAC athletes will treat all training and competition venues with the utmost respect. They will put all training equipment in its storage location after each work out. They will assist in the cleanup of the team area after each day's competition.

3. UDAC will travel as a team and as individual families in order to compete with the best and further strive to better competition. Everyone is expected to behave in an exemplary manner. The reputation of UDAC, as well as the other athletes with you, is dependent on your behavior. The coaching staff holds the final word on any rules, regulations, or disciplinary action.

4. Be punctual to all warm-up times and meetings. Team meetings are mandatory.

5. The consumption or purchase of alcohol, smoking or chewing tobacco, or use of any other illegal drug or USOC banned substance of any kind will not be allowed. In addition, any team member found to be in the presence of others (regardless of team affiliation) partaking in any of the above activities will be subject to the same punishments and probable expulsion from UDAC. Any swimmer suspected

of such activity will appear before a review committee composed of the director, the head coach, the club president, and at least one other UDAC board member.

6. At no time will male and female athletes be in the same room together unless a coach or chaperone is in the room or has approved situation. This applies to UDAC members or members of any other team.

7. No team member may be out of their room after the assigned bed time. Permission must be obtained from the coach to leave the room past this time. Cell phone use is discontinued at the lights out time.

8. Any damages or thievery incurred at a motel will be at the expense of the athletes assigned to that room, and further disciplinary action will be taken. No loud or boisterous behavior will be tolerated in the hallways or public areas, and such behavior should be kept to a minimum in your rooms.

9. All team members will be polite in restaurants. Leave a minimum 15% tip. If there has been a problem with the service, see the coach. 10. All team members must agree to follow the rules about practice and meet behavior.

# Upper Dublin Aquatic Club Parent Code of Conduct

As parent/guardian of a swimmer and/or diver with the Upper Dublin Aquatic Club, I will abide by the following guidelines:

1. I will support the values of Sportsmanship, Teamwork, Self Discipline, Loyalty, Commitment, and Hard Work at meets, practice, and other swimming events, in all my dealings with coaches, parents, swimmers and officials.
2. I will not interfere with the coaches on the pool deck or coach or instruct the team or any swimmer, either at practice or meets. If I have a concern with my swimmer or the program I understand the appropriate course of action is to schedule an appointment with the coaching staff to discuss my concerns.
3. I will demonstrate good sportsmanship at all meets, practices and club events. I will maintain control and conduct myself in a manner that is respectful of others. I understand that criticizing, name-calling, use of abusive language or gestures directed towards swimmers, coaches, officials, volunteers or any other parent is unsportsmanlike will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action.
4. I agree to sign this Code of Conduct understanding that violation of this code may result in sanctions on participation with the Upper Dublin Aquatic Club including loss of membership.

# UDAC Team Travel Policy

Team members will display proper respect and sportsmanship toward coaches, officials, administrators, teammates, fellow competitors and the public at all times.

Purpose: Athletes are most vulnerable to misconduct during travel, particularly overnight stays. This includes a high risk of athlete-to-athlete misconduct. During travel, athletes are often away from their families and support networks, and the setting – new changing areas, locker rooms, workout facilities, automobiles and hotel rooms – is less structured and less familiar. Team Travel is defined as overnight travel to a swim meet or other team activity that is planned and supervised by the club or LSC.

Section 1 - USA Swimming Required Policies Club and LSC travel policies must include these policies. These items are Code of Conduct stipulations in the USA Swimming Rulebook.

- a. Club travel policies must be signed and agreed to by all athletes, parents, coaches and other adults traveling with the club. (305.5.D)
- b. Team managers and chaperones must be members of USA Swimming and have successfully passed a USA Swimming-administered criminal background check. (305.5.B)
- c. Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an athlete (unless the coach is the parent, guardian, sibling, or spouse of that particular athlete). (305.5.A)
- d. When only one athlete and one coach travel to a competition, the athlete must have his/her parents' (or legal guardian's) written permission in advance to travel alone with the coach. (305.5C)

## Section 2 -UDAC Policies

- a. During team travel, when doing room checks, attending team meetings and/or other activities, two-deep leadership and open and observable environments should be maintained.
- b. Athletes should not ride in a coach's personal vehicle without another adult present who is the same gender as the athlete, unless prior parental permission is obtained.
- c. During overnight team travel, if athletes are paired with other athletes they shall be of the same gender and should be a similar age.
- d. To ensure the propriety of the athletes and to protect the staff, there will be no male athletes in female athlete's rooms and no female athletes in male athlete's rooms (unless the other athlete is a sibling or spouse of that particular athlete).
- e. A copy of the Club Code of Conduct must be signed by the athlete and his/her parent or legal guardian
- f. Curfews shall be established by the team or LSC staff each day of the trip.
- g. Team members and staff traveling with the team will attend all team functions including meetings, practices, meals, meet sessions, etc. unless otherwise excused or instructed by the head coach or his/her designee.

k. The directions & decisions of coaches/chaperones are final.

l. Swimmers are expected to remain with the team at all times during the trip. Swimmers are not to leave the competition venue, the hotel, a restaurant, or any other place at which the team has gathered without the permission/knowledge of the coach or chaperone.

m. When visiting public places such as shopping malls, movie theatres, etc. swimmers will stay in groups of no less than three persons.

n. The Head Coach or his/her designee shall make a written report of travel policy or code of conduct violations to the appropriate club or LSC leadership and the parent or legal guardian of any affected athlete.

#### Behavior

a. Be quiet and respect the rights of teammates and others in hotel;

b. Be prompt and on time;

c. Respect travel vehicles;

f. Establish travel dress code;

g. Use appropriate behavior in public facilities;

h. Adhere to two different curfews established by coaches – in own rooms and lights out;

i. Must stay in assigned hotel room;

j. Needs and wellbeing of the team come first.

#### Financial

a. No room service

b. Swimmers responsible for all incidental charges;

c. Swimmers responsible for any damages or thievery at hotel;

d. Must participate in contracted group meals;

e. Communicate travel reimbursement information and policies.

f. Team members and staff will refrain from any illegal or inappropriate behavior that would detract from a positive image of the team or be detrimental to its performance objectives.

g. The possession or use of alcohol or tobacco products by any athlete is prohibited.

h. The possession, use, or sale/distribution of any controlled or illegal substance or any form of weapon is strictly forbidden.

e. No “deck changes” are permitted. Athletes are expected to use available change facilities.

Team members are reminded that when competing in meets, traveling on trips, and attending other meet-related functions, they are representing both themselves and UDAC. Athlete behavior must positively reflect the high standards of the club.

Failure to comply with the Honor Code as set forth in this document may result in disciplinary action. Such discipline may include, but may not be limited to:

Dismissal from the trip and immediate return home at the athlete's expense;

Disqualification from one or more events, or all events of competition;

Disqualification from future team travel meets;

Dismissal from the team;

Proceedings for a LSC or USA Swimming National Board of Review.

# Bullying Policy

Action Plan of Upper Dublin Aquatic Club (UDAC) to Address Bullying USA Swimming has outlined the below policy, derived from [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov) - a federal government website managed by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, as a model for member clubs. This policy applies to all UDAC-sponsored activities, including practice, competition, clinics, lessons plus all UDAC-sponsored events held outside the natatorium.

**PURPOSE** Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at UDAC and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. UDAC is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all of our members. If bullying does occur, all athletes and parents should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a coach, board member or athlete/mentor.

Objectives of UDAC's Bullying Policy and Action Plan:

1. To make it clear that the UDAC will not tolerate bullying in any form.
2. To define bullying and give all board members, coaches, parents and athletes a good understanding of what bullying is.
3. To make it known to all parents, athletes and coaching staff that there is a policy and protocol should any bullying issues arise.
4. To make how to report bullying clear and understandable.
5. To spread the word that UDAC takes bullying seriously and that all athletes and parents can be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

**WHAT IS BULLYING?** The USA Swimming Code of Conduct prohibits bullying. Generally, bullying is the use of aggression, whether intentional or not, which hurts another person. Bullying results in pain and distress.

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct defines bullying in 304.3.7. Bullying is the severe or repeated use by one or more USA Swimming members of oral, written, electronic or other technological expression, image, sound, data or intelligence of any nature (regardless of the method of transmission), or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at any other member that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of: i. causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member's property;

- ii. placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- iii. creating a hostile environment for the other member at any USA Swimming activity;
- iv. infringing on the rights of the other member at any USA Swimming activity; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any USA Swimming activity (which for the purposes of this section shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts and other events of a member club or LSC).

**REPORTING PROCEDURE** An athlete who feels that he or she has been bullied is asked to do one or more of the following things: • Talk to your parents; • Talk to a UDAC Coach, Board Member, or other designated individual; • Write a letter or email to the UDAC Coach, Board Member, or other designated individual; • Make a report to the USA Swimming Safe Sport staff.

There is no express time limit for initiating a complaint under this procedure, but every effort should be made to bring the complaint to the attention of the appropriate club leadership as soon as possible to make sure that memories are fresh and behavior can be accurately recalled and the bullying behavior can be stopped as soon as possible.

**HOW WE HANDLE BULLYING** If bullying is occurring during team-related activities, we **STOP BULLYING ON THE SPOT** using the following steps:

1. Intervene immediately. It is ok to get another adult to help.
2. Separate the kids involved.
3. Make sure everyone is safe.
4. Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
5. Stay calm. Reassure the kids involved, including bystanders.
6. Model respectful behavior when you intervene.

If bullying is occurring at UDAC or it is reported to be occurring at our club, we address the bullying by **FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED** and **SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED** using the following approach:

**FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED**

1. First, we get the facts.
  - a. Keep all the involved children separate.
  - b. Get the story from several sources, both adults and kids.
  - c. Listen without blaming.

d. Don't call the act "bullying" while you are trying to understand what happened.

e. It may be difficult to get the whole story, especially if multiple athletes are involved or the bullying involves social bullying or cyber bullying. Collect all available information.

2. Then, we determine if it's bullying. There are many behaviors that look like bullying but require different approaches. It is important to determine whether the situation is bullying or something else.

a. Review the USA Swimming definition of bullying;

b. To determine if the behavior is bullying or something else, consider the following questions:  What is the history between the kids involved?  Have there been past conflicts?  Is there a power imbalance? Remember that a power imbalance is not limited to physical strength. It is sometimes not easily recognized. If the targeted child feels like there is a power imbalance, there probably is.  Has this happened before? Is the child worried it will happen again?

c. Remember that it may not matter "who started it." Some kids who are bullied may be seen as annoying or provoking, but this does not excuse the bullying behavior.

d. Once you have determined if the situation is bullying, support all of the kids involved.

#### SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED

3. Support the kids who are being bullied

a. Listen and focus on the child. Learn what's been going on and show you want to help. Assure the child that bullying is not their fault.

b. Work together to resolve the situation and protect the bullied child. The child, parents, and fellow team members and coaches may all have valuable input. It may help to:

i. Ask the child being bullied what can be done to make him or her feel safe. Remember that changes to routine should be minimized. He or she is not at fault and should not be singled out. For example, consider rearranging lane assignments for everyone. If bigger moves are necessary, such as switching practice groups, the child who is bullied should not be forced to change.

ii. Develop a game plan. Maintain open communication between UDAC and parents. Discuss the steps that will be taken and how bullying will be addressed going forward.

c. Be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight. Commit to making it stop and consistently support the bullied child.

#### 4. Address bullying behavior

a. Make sure the child knows what the problem behavior is. Young people who bully must learn their behavior is wrong and harms others.

b. Show kids that bullying is taken seriously. Calmly tell the child that bullying will not be tolerated. Model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.

c. Work with the child to understand some of the reasons he or she bullied. For example: i. Sometimes children bully to fit in or just to make fun of someone is a little different from them. In other

words, there may be some insecurity involved. ii. Other times kids act out because something else—issues at home, abuse, stress—is going on in their lives. They also may have been bullied. These kids may be in need of additional support.

d. Involve the kid who bullied in making amends or repairing the situation. The goal is to help them see how their actions affect others. For example, the child can: i. Write a letter apologizing to the athlete who was bullied. ii. Do a good deed for the person who was bullied, for UDAC, or for others in your community. iii. Clean up, repair, or pay for any property they damaged. e. Avoid strategies that don't work or have negative consequences: i. Zero tolerance or "three strikes, you're out" strategies don't work. Suspending or removing from the team athletes who bully does not reduce bullying behavior. Athletes may be less likely to report and address bullying if suspension or getting kicked off the team is the consequence. ii. Conflict resolution and peer mediation don't work for bullying. Bullying is not a conflict between people of equal power who share equal blame. Facing those who have bullied may further upset kids who have been bullied.

e. Follow-up. After the bullying issue is resolved, continue finding ways to help the child who bullied to understand how what they do affects other people. For example, praise acts of kindness or talk about what it means to be a good teammate.

5. Support bystanders who witness bullying. Every day, kids witness bullying. They want to help, but don't know how. Fortunately, there are a few simple, safe ways that athletes can help stop bullying when they see it happening.

a. Be a friend to the person being bullied;

b. Tell a trusted adult – your parent, coach, or UDAC board member;

c. Help the kid being bullied get away from the situation. Create a distraction, focus the attention on something else, or offer a way for the target to get out of the situation. "Let's go, practice is about to start."

d. Set a good example by not bullying others.

e. Don't give the bully an audience. Bullies are encouraged by the attention they get from bystanders. If you do nothing else, just walk away.

# Electronic Communication Policy of UDAC

**PURPOSE** Upper Dublin Aquatic Club recognizes the prevalence of electronic communication and social media in today's world. Many of our athletes use these means as their primary method of communication. While UDAC acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, UDAC also realizes that there are associated risks that must be considered when adults use these methods to communicate with minors, in this case, UDAC athletes under the age of 18.

**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 athletes 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 UDAC’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 UDAC. This includes word choices, tone, grammar, and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a staff member. Communication should only occur between the hours of 7 a.m. and 9 p.m.

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, INSTAGRAB, TWITTER, 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 UDAC 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.

UDAC 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: UDAC 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 7am until 9pm. 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 7am and 9pm. 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.

# UDAC LOCKER ROOM MONITORING POLICY

**PURPOSE** The following guidelines are designed to maintain personal privacy as well as to reduce the risk of misconduct in locker rooms and changing areas.

**FACILITIES** The following is a description of our practice and competition facilities to allow athletes and their families to plan their use: UDAC practices take place at Upper Dublin High School Natatorium. This location has a changing area that is shared with the general public. As such, there may be people who are not associated with Upper Dublin Aquatic Club (“UDAC”) in the changing area around the time of practice.

**MONITORING** Coaches and staff make every effort to recognize when an athlete goes to the locker room or changing area during practice and competition and, if they do not return in a timely fashion, we will check on the athlete’s whereabouts. Parents are prohibited from entering locker rooms and changing areas unless it is an emergency or truly necessary (e.g. a child’s disability warrants assistance). In those instances, it should only be a same-sex parent. If this is necessary, parents must let the coach or administrator know about this in advance. UDAC has staggered practices, with different groups arriving and departing at various times. It is therefore not practical to constantly monitor locker rooms and changing areas over this extended course of time. While we do not post coaches inside the locker rooms and changing areas, we do make occasional sweeps of these areas. Coaches conduct these sweeps, with women checking on female locker rooms, and men checking on male locker rooms.

**USE OF CELL PHONES AND OTHER MOBILE RECORDING DEVICES** Cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras increase the risk for different forms of misconduct in locker rooms and changing areas. The USA Swimming Athlete Protection Policies prohibit the use of such devices in the locker room or other changing area: Article 305.3 Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone camera, is not allowed in changing areas, restrooms or locker rooms.