ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION BEST PRACTICES

Purpose

USA Swimming member clubs are required to have an electronic communication policy for coaches and non-athlete members to follow. Similarly, athletes should be made aware that there are certain standards for electronic communication for all individuals associated with the club. The ability of coaches and non-athlete members to adhere to the required policy relies, in part, on the ability of athletes to respect the boundaries established for healthy electronic communication with the team.

Athletes should remember that swimming for the club is a privilege, and they are expected to portray themselves, their team, and their community in a positive manner at all times.

Expectations

The club holds the following expectations of athletes:

- Athletes will not use derogatory language, including sexist, racist, homophobic, obscene, or profane material of any kind.
- Athletes will not use social media to degrade, demean, or attack any person, team, or organization.
- Athletes will not use social media to contact his/her coach(es) and will instead post appropriate material to the club's profile.
- Athletes will not call or text their coach, except in an emergency or if a parent/guardian is included in the communication.
- All communication between athletes and coaches will be related to the activities of the team and should, whenever possible, be limited to in-person communication during team practices or events.

Things to remember: Texting

- Text messages and photos can be saved or screen-shot. Once the message is transmitted, the sender does not have control.
- Texting between athletes and coaches is not okay unless it is an emergency situation or another adult (such as a parent/guardian or another coach) is copied on the text.
- It is typically more effective to discuss an issue in person.

Things to remember: Social Media

- Once you post something online, it is public and permanent—even if you delete it.
- Many employers, college admissions officers, and athletic recruiters review social networking sites as part of their evaluation of an applicant. Carefully consider how others may perceive the information and content that you share about yourself.
- Never post your email address, home address, phone number, or other personal information, as it could lead to unwanted attention, stalking, or identity theft.