



Electronic Communication Policy of the Bozeman Barracuda Swim Club

PURPOSE

The Bozeman Barracuda Swim Club (BSC) 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 BSC acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, the BSC 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.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY:

Each BSC athlete must exhibit ethical and responsible conduct in all online communications and activities and respect the rights and privacy of all other BSC, LSC and USA Swimming athletes, coaches, officials, and parents. BSC prohibits cyberbullying or cyberstalking of any athlete, coach, or official by any means or method, including but not limited to the use of Facebook, Text Messaging, Instant Messaging, Twitter, E---Mail, and SnapChat. Cyberbullying and Cyberstalking are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

CYBERBULLYING:

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology of any kind. Cyberbullying involves the use of electronic information and communication technologies to support deliberate or repeated harassment, intimidation and/or hostile behavior by an individual or group through personal attacks or other means that harms others, whether intentional or not. Examples of cyberbullying includes mean text messages, emails, tweets, or posts including rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

CYBERSTALKING:

Cyberstalking involves the use of electronic information and communication technologies to communicate words, images, or language directed at or about a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person. Harassing, intimidating, and hostile mean any electronic communication that is perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic including race, color, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, physical attributes, socioeconomic status, physical or mental ability or disability or any other characteristic related to athletic performance that a reasonable person should know under any of these circumstances:



- Will have the effect of harming another athlete or has the effect of substantially interfering with another athlete's performance or opportunities.
- Has the effect of having a negative impact on another athlete's emotional or psychological well-being.
- Has the effect of insulting or demeaning another athlete to cause disruption in or substantial interference with practice, any swim meet, or any other BSC related activity.
- Has the effect of creating a hostile environment for any athlete at any USA Swimming activity or swim meet.
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any BSC practice, workout, or other events or swim meets of any other club or high school.

REPORTING:

If cyberbullying or cyberstalking does occur, the incident will be dealt with in accordance with the discipline policy. Any athlete who is being bullied or stalked or is aware of any such bullying or stalking occurring is asked to talk to his or her parents or talk to a BSC coach. When an athlete talks to his or her parents or a coach, the athlete should also show to the parents or the coach the electronic communication that constitutes the incident.

Safeguarding the electronic communication as evidence of the bullying or stalking will help BSC conduct its investigation of any incident. While there is no time limit for reporting bullying incidents, reporting quickly gives the Club an opportunity to address the situation immediately and stop the bullying.

Upon receiving a report of cyberbullying or cyberstalking, the Coach will commence an investigation of the incident. The results of the investigation may include but are not limited to immediate temporary suspension from the Club or immediate permanent expulsion from the Club.

BSC takes cyberbullying and cyberstalking seriously and will follow the Discipline policy for any reported incidents. Any type of bullying and stalking is counterproductive to the team atmosphere and team spirit BSC wants to maintain and foster on a daily basis.

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 BSC 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.



The following rules were developed for those who wish to participate in BSC Social Media:

- “Bozeman Barracuda Swim Club participates in the following social media venues: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.
- The BSC Facebook page is called, “Bozeman Barracuda Swim Club, Official Facebook Page “ It is THE OFFICIAL Facebook PAGE! There are other fish in the ocean, but this is the only one you’ll need to socially connect with our swim families
- Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are places for its members to connect socially, not the business itself! All administrative/business of the Bozeman Barracuda Swim Club is accessed through our website at: www.bozemanbarracudas.org or by contacting our coaches at: Kyle.r.harris11@gmail.com
- All email communication with our coaches needs to have the Head Coach copied in the discussion.
- All our groups are closed or by invitation only. This is to protect the privacy of its members.
- Only those people who are affiliated with BSC may be allowed membership. The BSC admin is entitled to deny entry to any member they choose. They are also allowed to remove members that don’t comply with the rules set forth. Please keep in mind that we also have the right to ban any member that blocks an admin.
- It is considered impolite to repost or draw attention to the fact that a group admin or another member has deleted your comment
- Think before you post! What goes up can never really come down. Respect the privacy of others!
- If someone mentions you by name please respond directly to that person on the same post. If the comment is inflammatory please report it to the group admin.
- There will be no cursing allowed on any social media venue – ever. This also includes any statement or post that the group admin deems inappropriate, derogatory or negative in nature.
- Do not post graphic or disturbing photos, videos and other media in this group. If you are not sure about the content that you want to post, email the group admin.
- Do not advertise your business in this group. We are not interested in your career, only our swim team and all of the great kids that are a part of it!
- Please stick to the mission statement of our group. Irrelevant content does not belong here.
- If you are going to comment, we would prefer it if you could try and add valuable discussion to the conversation. Be friendly, be fair and use common sense.
- If a single individual starts a discussion that all other members disagree with, it may, at the discretion of the group admin, be considered trolling. Trolls will be booted out of the group.



- If a member personally attacks another member with words that are harmful, threatening or not in--line with our mutual respect policy, that member may receive one warning or, based on the egregiousness of the post, may be removed from the group entirely without warning at the admin's discretion.
- Before posting pictures/videos of swimmers please make sure that the parent of said swimmer has given you permission to post said picture/video.
- All opinions will be treated with mutual respect, unless they violate the aforementioned rules. Treat your fellow group members with that same respect.
- All communication on social media is subject to the expected behavior outlined in the Bozeman Barracuda Code of Conduct for Athletes and Parents, and can be used in the preceding of disciplinary action or Board of Review process.

TWITTER

The BSC 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.

