

Policies and Best Practice Guidelines for Athlete Protection

On September 18, 2010, USA swimming passed a set of Athlete Protection Policies in order to more clearly outline acceptable and unacceptable behavior for swim teams.

In order to provide a positive experience and a safe environment for athletes, all non-athlete adult coaches and participants of the NPDSC should maintain professionalism and avoid any appearance of impropriety in their relationships with athletes. Coaches, in particular, should recognize the influence, power and position of trust they have with athletes and should use these only in an athlete's best interest.

It is proposed that the NPDSC endorse the USA Swimming Athlete Protection Policies, and ensure that this is the code of conduct enforced at all conference activities. The entire set of policies can be found on www.usaswimming.org, but the policies most pertinent to our swim conference appear below:

Athlete Protection Policies

- 305.1 Inappropriate touching between an athlete and an adult non-athlete member or Participating Non-Member is prohibited, including, but not limited to, excessive touching, hugging, kissing, sexually oriented behavior, sexually stimulating or otherwise inappropriate games, and having an athlete sit on a non-family member adult's lap.
- 305.2 Any rubdown or massage performed on an athlete by any adult member or Participating Non-Member, excluding the spouse, parent, guardian, sibling, or personal assistant of such athlete, is prohibited unless such adult is a licensed massage therapist or other certified professional. Any rubdown or massage performed at a swim venue by a licensed professional must be conducted in open/public locations and must never be done with only the athlete and licensed massage therapist in the room. Even if a coach is a licensed massage therapist, the coach shall not perform a rubdown or massage of an athlete under any circumstances.
- 305.3 Use of audio or visual recording, including a cell phone camera, is not allowed in changing areas, rest rooms or locker rooms.