**Prince William Swim Club**

**Safe Sport Policies and Practices**

The following policies have been adopted and approved by the Prince William Swim Club as components of its 2018-2019 Safe Sport Policy. The Policy covers the following areas:

* PWSC Safe Sport Operations Policy
* PWSC Bullying Policy
* PWSC Electronic Communications Policy
* PWSC Team Travel Policy
* PWSC Locker Room Monitoring Policy
* PWSC Photography Policy

**Prince William Swim Club Safe Sport Operations Policy**

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. 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.
4. Coaches should not invite or have an athlete(s) to their home without the permission of the athlete’s parents (or legal guardian).
5. 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.
6. Athletes should not ride in a coach’s vehicle without written parental permission submitted to the Board of Directors.
7. 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. When athletes are age 12 & under, chaperones and/or team managers may stay with athletes. Where chaperones/team managers are staying in a room with athletes, they should be the same gender as the athlete and written consent should be given by the athlete’s parents (or legal guardian).
8. 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.
9. Communications between non-athlete adult members and athletes should not include any topic or language that is sexual or inappropriate in nature.
10. 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.
11. 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.
12. Coaches and other non-athlete adult members should avoid horseplay and roughhousing with athletes.
13. 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.
14. Coaches should not initiate contact with or accept supervisory responsibility for athletes outside club programs and activities without written parental permission submitted to the Board of Directors.
15. Coaches should not engage in sexual intimacies with a former athlete for at least two years after the cessation or termination of professional services.

Because sexual intimacies with a former athlete are frequently harmful to the athlete, and because such intimacies undermine public confidence in the coaching profession and thereby deter the public’s use of needed services, coaches should not engage in sexual intimacies with former athletes even after a two-year interval except in the most unusual circumstances. The coach who engages in such activity after the two years following cessation or termination of the coach-athlete relationship bears the burden of demonstrating that there has been no exploitation, in light of all relevant factors, including:

* 1. The amount of time that has passed since the coach-athlete relationship terminated;
  2. The circumstances of termination;
  3. The athlete’s personal history;
  4. The athlete’s current mental status;
  5. The likelihood of adverse impact on the athlete and others; and
  6. Any statements or actions made by the coach during the course of the athlete- coach relationship suggesting or inviting the possibility of a post-termination sexual or romantic relationship with the athlete or coach.
  7. Both the athlete and the coach must be 18 years of age or older.

\*\* Where written permission is required, it can be provided electronically via email.

**PWSC Bullying Policy**

**Action Plan of the Prince William Swim Club to Address Bullying**

**PURPOSE**

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable within Prince William Swim Club (the “Club”) and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. The Club 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 the Club’s Bullying Policy and Action Plan:

1. To make it clear that the Club will not tolerate bullying in any form.
2. To define bullying and give all board members, coaches, parents and swimmers a good understanding of what bullying is.
3. To make it known to all parents, swimmers and coaching staff that there is a policy and protocol should any bullying issues arise.
4. To clearly state how to report bullying.
5. To spread the word that Prince William Swim Club takes bullying seriously and that all swimmers 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:

1. causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member’s property;
2. placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
3. creating a hostile environment for the other member at any USA Swimming activity;
4. infringing on the rights of the other member at any USA Swimming activity; or
5. 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 Club Coach, Board Member, or other designated individual;
  + Write a letter or email to the Club Coach, Board Member, or other designated individual;
  + Make a report to the PWSC Safe Sport Coordinator via email at Todd.May@ed.gov.

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.
2. Separate the kids involved.
3. Make sure everyone is safe.
4. Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
5. The PWSC Safe Sport Coordinator will respond to the impacted parents within 48 hours of the incident or complaint.

**PWSC Electronic Communications Policy**

**PURPOSE**

The Prince William Swim Club (the “Club”) 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 Club acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, the Club 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 **T**ransparent, **A**ccessible and **P**rofessional.

*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.

**FACEBOOK, MYSPACE, BLOGS, AND SIMILAR SITES**

The Club 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**

Prince William Swim Club does not currently have an official Twitter account.

Coaches and athletes may follow each other on Twitter. Coaches cannot retweet an athlete message post. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “direct message” each other through Twitter.

**TEXTING & EMAIL**

Subject to the general guidelines mentioned above, texting and email are allowed between coaches and athletes for the purpose of communicating information directly related to

team activities.

**REQUEST TO DISCONTINUE ALL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS**

The parents or guardians of an athlete may request in writing to the Board of Directors that their child not be contacted by coaches through any form of electronic communication.

**PWSC TEAM TRAVEL POLICY**

**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**

These items are Code of Conduct stipulations in the USA Swimming Rulebook which have been adopted in full by Prince William Swim Club:

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 ‐ Prince William Swim Club Adopted 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 vehicle without written parent permission submitted to the Board of Directors.

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. Where athletes are age 13 & over, chaperones

and/or team managers would ideally stay in nearby rooms. When athletes are age 12 &

under, chaperones and/or team managers may stay with athletes. Where chaperones/team

managers are staying in a room with athletes, they should be the same gender as the

athlete and written consent should be given by athlete’s parents (or legal guardian).

d. 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.

e. 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.

f. A copy of the Club Code of Conduct must be signed by the athlete and his/her parent or

legal guardian.

g. Team or LSC officials should obtain a signed Liability Release and/or Indemnification Form

for each athlete.

h. Team or LSC officials should carry a signed Medical Consent or Authorization to Treat Form

for each athlete.

i. Curfews shall be established by the team or LSC staff each day of the trip.

j. 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. 12 & Under athletes will be accompanied by a

chaperone.

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 minor athlete.

**PWSC LOCKER ROOM MONITORING POLICY**

*The Safe Sport Program does not require locker room monitoring policies, but Prince William Swim Club supports the following 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:

We practice at: Dale City Recreation Center, Chinn Recreation Center, Prince William County School Aquatic Center and Veteran’s Park

Both locations have male and female locker rooms with changing areas shared with the general public, as well as family changing areas. As such, there are likely to be people who are not associated with Prince William Swim Club in the changing area around the time of practice.

**MONITORING**

**General Policy Considerations**

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.

Prince William Swim Club has staggered practices, with different groups arriving and departing throughout the day. It is therefore not practical to constantly monitor locker rooms and changing areas over this extended course of time. While we do not post staff, coaches, parents, other adults inside or at the doors of the locker rooms and changing areas, we do make occasional sweeps of these areas. Parents and 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: (***305.3*** *Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone camera, is not allowed in changing areas, rest rooms or locker rooms).*

**PWSC Photography Policy**

*The Safe Sport Program does not require a club photography policy, but Prince William Swim Club supports the following policy.*

**PURPOSE**

There has been much talk about whether it is safe to have images taken of children participating in sports. While the great majority of images are appropriate and are taken in good faith, it is a fact that images can be misused and children can be put at risk if common‐ sense procedures are not observed.

**POLICIES**

A parent or guardian has a right of refuse to have children photographed. The exercise of this right of refusal cannot be used as grounds for refusing entry into a swimming competition. To exercise the right of refuse parents can return the attached form or provide in writing their wishes to not have children photographed.

In the case of open meets and other competitions where the host club has an official photographer present, all parents attending will be made aware of this in our meet information. If photos are to be published anywhere, the individual parent will be given the opportunity to withhold their consent.

All photographs must observe generally accepted standards of decency in particular:

* Action shots should be a celebration of the sporting activity and not a sexualized image in a sporting context.
* Action shots should not be taken or retained where the photograph reveals a torn or displaced swimsuit.
* Photographs should not be taken from behind swimming blocks at the start of a race or exhibit a child climbing out of the swimming pool.
* Photographs should not be taken in locker‐rooms or bathrooms.

***Sample Photography Consent Form***

Prince William Swim Club may wish to take photographs (individual and in groups) of swimmers under the age of 18 that may include your child during their membership in the club. All photos will be taken and published in line with club policy. If you do not wish your child to be included in photographs please complete the following and return to his/her coach.

As the parent/caregiver of

I do not allow the following:

Take photographs to use on the club’s secure website

Consent refused

Take photographs to include with newspaper

Consent refused

Take photographs to use on club notice boards

Consent refused

Video for training purposes only

Consent refused

Signed:

Dated:

**Please return this form to the PWSC Head Coach.**