



# POSEIDON SWIMMING

## Electronic Communication Policy

### PURPOSE

Poseidon Swimming, Inc. (PSDN) 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 PSDN acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, PSDN also realizes that there are associated risks that must be considered when adults use these methods to communicate with minors.

### CONTENT OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

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, or sexual activity
- Inappropriate information about the adult's or athlete's personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues, or personal problems
- Inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures

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?"
- "Is this something you would be comfortable saying out loud to the intended recipient's parents, the coaching staff, the board, or other athletes?"

Any communication from adults representing PSDN to athletes must be:

- Transparent
- Accessible

- Professional

If the communication meets these three criteria (TAP), then it is likely the method of communication with athletes will be appropriate.

### **Transparent:**

Communications 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 PSDN's records. Whenever possible, include another coach or parent in the communication so that there is no question regarding accessibility.

### **Professional:**

All electronic communication by a coach to an athlete or parent should be conducted professionally as a representative of PSDN. This includes word choices, tone, grammar, and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a staff member.

## **FORMS OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION**

Athletes and coaches may use the following forms of electronic communications if the communication is transparent, accessible and professional (TAP) and complies with the following additional guidelines

- Texting and E-mail
  - Coaches and athletes may text or e-mail each other for the purpose of communicating information directly related to team activities.
  - Electronic communications must only be sent between the hours of 5:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. local time for the location
  - The parents or guardians of an athlete may request in writing that their child not be contacted by coaches by text message or e-mail.
- Social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, blogs, etc.
  - Only social media sites approved by PSDN and containing its logo (PSDN branded social media sites) will be used by PSDN or its coaches for communicating information and updates on team-related activities.
    - Athletes, parents and coaches can "friend" or "follow" any PSDN branded social media site.
    - Parents, coaches and athletes may post information or pictures or comment on posts provided the content is transparent, accessible and professional (TAP) and complies with PSDN's electronic communication policy.

- Athletes, parents and coaches will not use direct messaging or email functions to communicate with each other.
- Coaches may have personal social media sites but PSDN athletes are not permitted access to those sites. A coach should not accept any requests from an athlete to "friend" or "follow" their personal social media sites.

When using PSDN branded social media sites, athletes, coaches and adults must be aware that any information posted online:

- Is widely accessible
- May remain on the Internet indefinitely
- May be shared by others
- May be disseminated automatically by social networking tools
- Can be printed out as a hard copy by others
- Can be subpoenaed in a legal proceeding

When using social media, coaches, athletes and parents should:

- Be respectful - Don't post negative comments about other swim team(s), coach(s), swimmer(s) or parent(s). Take the high road even if "mudslinging" is taking place on social media sites.
- Use integrity when posting information.
- Assume that anything posted can be read by anyone at any time.
- Be thoughtful of other's privacy. Don't share something publicly about another individual if you wouldn't want similar information publicly shared about you.
- Avoid posting information or pictures that may be considered embarrassing, disruptive, false, misleading, defamatory, profane, objectionable, inflammatory, discriminatory, threatening, hateful, abusive or harassing.