



# Boise Swim Club Safety Policy and Procedure Manual

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## Overview

Boise Swim Club's mission is to : to instill, encourage and sustain a great tradition of excellent aquatics in Boise by enhancing the lives of young athletes in spirit, body, and mind. The principles of Boise Swim Club are built upon a foundation of personal responsibility, commitment, determination and discipline.

All of our athletes are encouraged to respect and appreciate their teammates, coaches, families and competitors and to realize their personal best as a representative of Boise Swim Club, both in and out of the water.

In order to ensure we are able to do this to the best of our ability as a team we have developed a Safety Policy and Procedure Manual modeled after and in alignment with the USA Swimming Safe Sport policies.

## Goals

1. To ensure the safety of all swimmers, coaches, and parents that are apart of our team
2. To align our team with all the current USA Swimming Safe Sport Policies

## Specifications

Failure to comply with the Code of Conduct as set forth in this document may result in disciplinary action issued by the swimmers Lead Group Coach and Manager, Stephanie O'Malley, or Club Owner Deb Hill after consultation with BSC leadership staff. Such discipline may include, but may not be limited to:

- A. Verbal reprimand, suspension, or dismissal from the practice.
- B. Verbal reprimand, suspension, or dismissal from the team.
- C. Proceedings for a LSC or USA Swimming National Board of Review.
- D. If traveling, dismissal from the trip and immediate return home at the athlete's expense.
- E. Disqualification from one or more events, or all events of a competition.
- F. Disqualification from future team travel meets.
- G. Financial penalties associated with cancelled team travel.

## Policies

### I. Electronic Communication

#### Electronic Communication Policy of the Boise Swim Club

##### **PURPOSE**

The Boise Swim 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**

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 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**

Best Practice: The Club 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.

Alternative Option: 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**

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.

## **II. Action Plan to Address Bullying**

### **Action Plan of the Boise Swim Club to Address Bullying**

#### **PURPOSE**

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Boise Swim 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 make how to report bullying clear and understandable.
5. To spread the word that (Name of 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:

- i. causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member's property;
- ii. placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- iii. creating a hostile environment for the other member at any USA Swimming activity;
- iv. infringing on the rights of the other member at any USA Swimming activity; or
- v. 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 USA Swimming Safe Sport staff.

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. It is ok to get another adult to help.
2. Separate the kids involved.
3. Make sure everyone is safe.
4. Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
5. Stay calm. Reassure the kids involved, including bystanders.
6. Model respectful behavior when you intervene.

If bullying is occurring at our club or it is reported to be occurring at our club, we address the bullying by **FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED** and **SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED** using the following approach:

## **FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED**

### **1. First, we get the facts.**

- a. Keep all the involved children separate.
- b. Get the story from several sources, both adults and kids.
- c. Listen without blaming.
- d. Don't call the act "bullying" while you are trying to understand what happened.
- e. It may be difficult to get the whole story, especially if multiple athletes are involved or the bullying involves social bullying or cyberbullying. Collect all available information.

### **2. Then, we determine if it's bullying.** There are many behaviors that look like bullying but require different approaches. It is important to determine whether the situation is bullying or something else.

- a. Review the USA Swimming definition of bullying;
- b. To determine if the behavior is bullying or something else, consider the following questions:
  - What is the history between the kids involved?
  - Have there been past conflicts?
  - Is there a power imbalance? Remember that a power imbalance is not limited to physical strength. It is sometimes not easily recognized. If the targeted child feels like there is a power imbalance, there probably is.
  - Has this happened before? Is the child worried it will happen again?
- c. Remember that it may not matter "who started it." Some kids who are bullied may be seen as annoying or provoking, but this does not excuse the bullying behavior.
- d. Once you have determined if the situation is bullying, support all of the kids involved.

## **SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED**

### **3. Support the kids who are being bullied**

- a. Listen and focus on the child. Learn what's been going on and show you want to help. Assure the child that bullying is not their fault.
- b. Work together to resolve the situation and protect the bullied child. The child, parents, and fellow team members and coaches may all have valuable input. It may help to:
  - i. Ask the child being bullied what can be done to make him or her feel safe. Remember that changes to routine should be minimized. He or she is not at fault and should not be singled out. For example, consider rearranging lane assignments for everyone. If bigger moves are necessary, such as switching practice groups, the child who is bullied should not be forced to change.

- a. Develop a game plan. Maintain open communication between the Club and parents. Discuss the steps that will be taken and how bullying will be addressed going forward.
2. Be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight. Commit to making it stop and consistently support the bullied child.

## ii. Address bullying behavior

1. Make sure the child knows what the problem behavior is. Young people who bully must learn their behavior is wrong and harms others.
2. Show kids that bullying is taken seriously. Calmly tell the child that bullying will not be tolerated. Model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.
3. Work with the child to understand some of the reasons he or she bullied. For example:
  - a. Sometimes children bully to fit in or just to make fun of someone is a little different from them. In other words, there may be some insecurity involved.
  - b. Other times kids act out because something else—issues at home, abuse, stress—is going on in their lives. They also may have been bullied. These kids may be in need of additional support.
4. Involve the kid who bullied in making amends or repairing the situation. The goal is to help them see how their actions affect others. For example, the child can:
  - a. Write a letter apologizing to the athlete who was bullied.
  - b. Do a good deed for the person who was bullied, for the Club, or for others in your community.
  - c. Clean up, repair, or pay for any property they damaged.
5. Avoid strategies that don't work or have negative consequences:
  - a. Zero tolerance or "three strikes, you're out" strategies don't work. Suspending or removing from the team swimmers who bully does not reduce bullying behavior. Swimmers may be less likely to report and address bullying if suspension or getting kicked off the team is the consequence.
  - b. Conflict resolution and peer mediation don't work for bullying. Bullying is not a conflict between people of



equal power who share equal blame. Facing those who have bullied may further upset kids who have been bullied.

6. Follow-up. After the bullying issue is resolved, continue finding ways to help the child who bullied to understand how what they do affects other people. For example, praise acts of kindness or talk about what it means to be a good teammate.

**Support bystanders who witness bullying.** Every day, kids witness bullying. They want to help, but don't know how. Fortunately, there are a few simple, safe ways that athletes can help stop bullying when they see it happening.

- a. Be a friend to the person being bullied;
- b. Tell a trusted adult – your parent, coach, or club board member;
- c. Help the kid being bullied get away from the situation. Create a distraction, focus the attention on something else, or offer a way for the target to get out of the situation. “Let’s go, practice is about to start.”
- d. Set a good example by not bullying others.
- e. Don’t give the bully an audience. Bullies are encouraged by the attention they get from bystanders. If you do nothing else, just walk away.

Source: [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov) – a federal government website managed by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

### III. Locker Room Monitoring Policy

#### MODEL LOCKER ROOM MONITORING 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: Boise State Kinesiology Pool and on occasion the Boise State Kinesiology Annex.

This location has: *A changing area that is shared with the general public. As such, there are likely to be people who are not associated with the Boise 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.

We discourage parents from entering locker rooms and changing areas unless it is truly necessary. In those instances, it should only be a same-sex parent. If this is necessary, parents should let the coach or administrator know about this in advance.

If an athlete needs assistance with his or her uniform or gear (for example, a child under the age of eight), or an athlete's disability warrants assistance, then we ask that parents let the coach or an administrator know beforehand that he or she will be helping the athlete.

### **Policy**

Boise 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, coach, parent, other adult] inside or at the doors of the locker rooms and changing areas, we do make occasional sweeps of these areas. [Staff, coach, parent, other adult] 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.*

## **IV. Photography 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

1. The publishing of a photograph of swimmer under 18 either on a notice board or in a published article or video recording (including video streaming) of swimming competitions (“publication”) should only be done with parents’ consent per the attached form.
2. 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. Therefore any photo that may go to press or on a notice board, be it through a member of the club or official photographer, should receive parental consent before publishing/displaying the photo, preferably in writing.

In the case of open meets and other competitions where the host club has an official photographer present, all parents attending should be made aware of this in your meet information. If photos are to be published anywhere, the individual parent should be given the opportunity to withhold their consent. Their right to do so should be specifically drawn to their attention.

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.



### **Boise Swim Club Photography Consent Form**

Boise 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. The club requires parental consent to take and use photographs.

Parents have a right to refuse agreement to their child being photographed.

As the parent/caregiver of \_\_\_\_\_ I allow the following:

Take photographs to use on the club's secure website

Consent given                       Consent refused

Take photographs to include with newspaper articles

Consent given                       Consent refused

Take photographs to use on club notice boards

Consent given                       Consent refused

Video for training purposes only

Consent given                       Consent refused

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to: Deb Hill

## V. Travel Policy

### **Team Travel Policy for Boise Swim Club**

**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**

Club and LSC travel policies must include these policies. These items are Code of Conduct stipulations in the USA Swimming Rulebook.

- 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 - Further 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 another adult present who is the same gender as the athlete, unless prior parental permission is obtained.
- 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 (unless the other athlete is a sibling or spouse of that particular athlete).
- 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.

### **Section 3 - Other Policies**

#### *Safety*

- a. Additional guidelines to be established as needed by the coaches;
- b. Supervised team room provided for relaxation and recreation;
- c. Respect the privacy of each other;
- d. Only use hotel rooms with interior entrances; and
- e. Must wear seat belts and remain seated in vehicles;

#### *Behavior*

- a. Be quiet and respect the rights of teammates and others in hotel;
- b. Be prompt and on time;
- c. Develop cell phone usage guidelines;
- d. Develop computer use guidelines including social media;
- e. Respect travel vehicles;
- f. Establish travel dress code;
- g. Use appropriate behavior in public facilities;
- h. Establish two different curfews – in own rooms and lights out;
- i. Must stay in assigned hotel room; and
- j. Needs and wellbeing of the team come first.

### *Financial*

- a. No room service without permission;
- b. Swimmers responsible for all incidental charges;
- c. Swimmers responsible for any damages or thievery at hotel;
- d. Must participate in contracted group meals; and
- e. Communicate travel reimbursement information and policies.

### *General*

- a. Establish fair trip eligibility requirements;
- b. Establish age guidelines for travel trips;
- c. Parent(s) responsible for getting swimmer(s) to stated departure point; and
- d. Requirements for families to attend "Team Travel Meets."


## VI. Code of Conduct/Honor Code

### **Required:**

All team members, team staff, and parents of minors are apprised in writing of this Code of Conduct and the attached USA Swimming Code of Conduct. A signature on this document constitutes unconditional agreement to comply with the stipulations of both documents.

### **Expectations**

- a. All swimmers will be at practice on time with all required equipment. If swimmers are going to be late or need to leave early, they will notify the coach ahead of time.
- b. All swimmers will follow the directions and instructions of the coaching staff and display proper respect and sportsmanship toward coaches, officials, administrators, teammates, fellow competitors and the public at all times. .
- c. All swimmers will display proper respect and sportsmanship towards teammates, competitors, other coaches, meet officials, Aquatic staff members, and the general public.
- d. All swimmers will refrain from using inappropriate language or humor.
- e. All swimmers will refrain from intimate displays of affections towards other participants while participating at any Boise Swim Club practice, event or activity.
- f. All swimmers will only engage in age appropriate activities while participating at any Boise Swim Club practice, event or activity.
- g. No "deck changes" are permitted.
- h. Athletes are expected to use available change facilities.

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- i. Team members are reminded when competing in meets, traveling on trips, and attending other meet-related functions, they are representing both themselves and the Boise Swim Club.
  - j. Athlete behavior must positively reflect the high standards of our Team.
  - k. All swimmers will report any inappropriate behavior to the coaching staff immediately upon recognizing or hearing about such behavior.





## Boise Swim Club Safety Policy and Procedure Consent Form

I have read the Boise Swim Club Swimmer Code of Conduct along with our Club Safety Policy and Procedure Manual. As a member of the Boise Swim Club, I agree to adhere to all requirements and expectations.

[Swimmer and Parent signatures required if swimmer is under the age of 18.]

_____	_____	_____
Print Swimmer Name	Swimmer Signature	Date

_____	_____	_____
Print Parent Name	Parent Signature	Date