**NORFOLK YMCA AQUAJET SWIM TEAM**

**MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY**

**INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR POLICY**

**Revised August 2019**

**Statement of Intent**

We, The Norfolk YMCA Aquajet Swim Club, are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our members so they can participate in swimming in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. The Club is committed to providing each member a responsive environment free of discrimination, violence and bullying. Our Club works to ensure that all members have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a meaningful bond with people in the club community. The Norfolk YMCA Aquajet Swim Club believes that we all have the responsibility to keep ourselves and others safe and that we all have the responsibility to respect ourselves, others, and the property of others.

Any form of abuse is unacceptable in our Club.

If any minor abuse of a minor athlete or any form of inappropriate behavior does occur, all club members should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING Club. This means that anyone who knows that abuse or inappropriate behavior is happening is expected to tell the Coach, parent, Club Representative or other trusted adult.

**Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy**

**The Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy covers five(5) areas:**

**1. ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS**

A. Observable and Interruptible Interactions

One-on-one interactions between a minor athlete and an Applicable Adult (who is not the minor’s legal guardian) must occur at an observable and interruptible distance from another adult unless meeting with a Mental Health Care Professional and/or Health Care Provider (see below) or under emergency circumstances.

B. Meetings

* Meetings between a minor athlete and an Applicable Adult may only occur if another adult is present and where interactions can be easily observed and at an interruptible distance from another adult, except under emergency circumstances.
* If a one-on-one meeting takes place, the door to the room must remain unlocked and open. If available, it must occur in a room that has windows, with the windows, blinds, and/or curtains remaining open during the meeting.
* Meetings must not be conducted in an Applicable Adult or athlete’s hotel room or other overnight lodging location during team travel.

C. Meetings with Mental Health Care Professionals and/or Health Care Providers

If a Mental Health Care Professional and/or Health Care Provider meets with a minor athlete in conjunction with participation, including at practice or competition sites, a closed-door meeting may be permitted to protect patient privacy provided that:

* The door remains unlocked;
* Another adult is present at the facility;
* The other adult is advised that a closed-door meeting is occurring; and
* Written legal guardian consent is obtained in advance by the Mental Health Care Professional and/or

Health Care Provider, with a copy provided to the club.

D. Individual Training Sessions [Recommended]

Individual training sessions outside of the regular course of training and practice between Applicable Adults and minor athletes are permitted if the training session is observable and interruptible by another adult. Legal guardians must be allowed to observe the training session.

**2. SOCIAL MEDIA AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS**

A. Content

All electronic communication from Applicable Adults to minor athletes must be professional in nature.

B. Open and Transparent

Absent emergency circumstances, if an Applicable Adult with authority over minor athletes needs to communicate directly with a minor athlete via electronic communications (including social media), the minor athlete’s legal guardian must be copied. If a minor athlete communicates to the Applicable Adult (with authority over the minor athlete) privately first, said Applicable Adult must copy the minor athlete’s legal guardian on any electronic communication response to the minor athlete. When an Applicable Adult with authority over minor athletes communicates electronically to the entire team, said Applicable Adult must copy another adult.

C. Requests to Discontinue

Legal guardians may request in writing that their minor athlete not be contacted through any form of electronic communication by the club, LSC or by an Applicable Adult subject to this Policy. The organization must abide by any such request that the minor athlete not be contacted via electronic communication, or included in any social media post, absent emergency circumstances.

D. Hours

Electronic communications must only be sent between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., unless emergency circumstances exist, or during competition travel.

E. Prohibited Electronic Communication

Applicable Adults with authority over minor athletes are not permitted to maintain private social media connections with unrelated minor athletes and such Applicable Adults are not permitted to accept new personal page requests on social media platforms from minor athletes, unless the Applicable Adult has a fan page, or the contact is deemed as celebrity contact as opposed to regular contact. Existing social media connections with minor athletes must be discontinued. Minor athletes may “friend” the club and/or LSC’s official page.

Applicable Adults with authority over minor athletes must not send private, instant or direct messages to a minor athlete through social media platforms.

**3.TRAVEL**

A. Local Travel

* Local travel consists of travel to training, practice and competition that occurs locally and does not include coordinated overnight stay(s).
* Applicable Adults must not ride in a vehicle alone with an unrelated minor athlete, absent emergency circumstances, and must always have at least two minor athletes or another adult in the vehicle, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the minor athlete’s legal guardian.
* [Recommended] Legal guardians must pick up their minor athlete first and drop off their minor athlete last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement.

B. Team Travel

Team Travel is travel to a competition or other tea activity that the organization plans and supervises.

* During team travel, when doing room checks two-deep leadership (two Applicable Adults should be present) and observable and interruptive environments must be maintained.
* When only one Applicable Adult and one minor athlete travel to a competition, the minor athlete’s legal guardian must provide written permission in advance and for each competition for the minor athlete to travel alone with said Applicable Adult.
* Team Managers and Chaperones who travel with the club must be USA Swimming members in good standing.
* Unrelated non-athlete Applicable Adults must not share a hotel room, other sleeping arrangement or overnight lodging location with an athlete.
* Minor athletes should be paired to share hotel rooms or other sleeping arrangements with other minor athletes of the same gender and of similar age. When a minor athlete and an adult athlete share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement, the minor athlete’s legal guardian must provide written permission in advance and for each instance for the minor to share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with said adult athlete.
* Meetings during team travel must be conducted consistent with the One-on-One Interactions section of this Policy. Meetings must not be conducted in an individual’s hotel room or other overnight sleeping location.

**4.LOCKER ROOMS AND CHANGING AREAS**

A. Requirement to Use Locker Room or Changing Area

The designated locker room or changing area must be used when an athlete or Applicable Adult changes, in whole or in part, into or out of a swimsuit when wearing just one suit (e.g., deck changing is prohibited).

B. Use of Recording Devices

Use of any device’s (including a cell phone’s) recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras in locker rooms, changing areas, or similar spaces by a minor athlete or an Applicable Adult is prohibited.

C. Undress

An unrelated Applicable Adult must not expose his or her breasts, buttocks, groin or genitals to a minor athlete under any circumstance. An unrelated Applicable Adult must not request an unrelated minor athlete to expose the minor athlete’s breasts, buttocks, groin or genitals to the unrelated Applicable Adult under any circumstance.

D. One-on-One Interactions

Except for athletes on the same team or athletes attending the same competition, at no time are unrelated Applicable Adults permitted to be alone with a minor athlete in a locker room or changing area, except under emergency circumstances. If the organization is using a facility that only has a single locker room or changing area, separate times for use by Applicable Adults must be designated.

E. Monitoring

The club must regularly and randomly monitor the use of locker rooms and changing areas to ensure compliance with this Policy. Locker rooms and changing areas may be monitored by use of the following methods:

* Conducting a sweep of the locker room or changing area before athletes arrive;
* Posting staff directly outside the locker room or changing area during periods of use;
* Leaving the doors open when adequate privacy is still possible; and/or
* Making occasional sweeps of the locker rooms or changing areas with women checking on female locker rooms and men checking on male locker rooms.

Every effort must be made to recognize when a minor athlete goes to the locker room or changing area during practice and competition, and, if the minor athlete does not return in a timely fashion, to check on the minor athlete’s whereabouts.

E. Legal Guardians in Locker Rooms or Changing Areas

Legal guardians are discouraged from entering locker rooms and changing areas. If a legal guardian does enter a locker room or changing area, it must only be a same-sex legal guardian and the legal guardian should notify a coach or administrator in advance.

**5. MASSAGES AND RUBDOWNS/ATHLETE TRAINING MODALITIES**

Definition: In this section, the term ”Massage” refers to any massage, rubdown, athlete training modality including physical modalities (e.g. stretching, physical manipulation, injury rehabilitation, etc.) and electronic or instrument assisted modalities (e.g. stim treatment, dry needling, cupping, etc.)

A. General Requirement

Any Massage performed on an athlete must be conducted in an open and interruptible location and must be performed by a licensed massage therapist or other certified professional. However, even if a coach is a licensed massage therapist, the coach must not perform a rubdown or massage of an athlete under any circumstance.

B. Additional Minor Athlete Requirements

* Written consent by a legal guardian must be obtained in advance by the licensed massage therapist or other certified professional, with a copy provided to the club.
* Legal guardians must be allowed to observe the Massage.
* Any Massage of a minor athlete must be done with at least one other adult present and must never be done with only one minor athlete and the person performing the Massage in the room.
* Recommended: Any Massage of a minor athlete must only occur after a proper diagnosis from a treating physician and be done in the course of care according to the physician’s treatment plan.

**INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR POLICY**

This policy applies to:

* All non-athlete members and adult athlete members
* Participating athlete members
* Participating non-members (e.g. meet marshals, meet computer operators, timers, etc.)
* LSC and club staff and board members
* Any other adult authorized to have regular contact with or authority over minor athletes.

Collectively Applicable Adults.

**What is inappropriate conduct:**

Inappropriate behavior is the use of aggression in any form with the intention of hurting another person. Inappropriate behavior results in pain and distress to the victim.

The Norfolk YMCA Aquajet Swim Club considers inappropriate behavior to include: Bullying, harassment, inappropriate language, inappropriate touching, inappropriate gestures, intentional destruction of personal property, inappropriate use of a cell phone, inappropriate use of social media, misuse of any form of technology.

Inappropriate Behavior can be:

* Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, threatening, intimidation
* Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence, inappropriate

comments, unwanted touching, staring & whistling, intentional destruction of personal property

* Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, name calling
* Homophobic because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
* Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, teasing, taunting
* Cyber All areas of internet, such as email and social media

Mobile threats by text messaging and calls. Inappropriate use of a cell phone in the locker room. Misuse of technology

**Objectives of this Policy**

* All Applicable Adults (Club members, coaches and volunteers, parents) need to understand what inappropriate behavior is.
* All athletes need to understand what inappropriate behavior is.
* All Applicable Adults (Club members, coaches, volunteers, parents) and athletes should know what the club policy is on inappropriate behavior and follow it when an incident is reported.
* Provide clear guidelines and procedures in the event a problem arises.
* As a Club we take any form of inappropriate behavior or abuse seriously. Athletes and parents should be assured that they will be supported when an incident is reported.
* Any form of inappropriate behavior or abuse will not be tolerated.

**Sign and Symptoms**

A child may indicate by signs or behavior that he or she is the victim of inappropriate behavior. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

* Is frightened of walking to or from swim practice or meets
* Doesn’t want to go to practice or meets
* Changes their usual routine
* Is unwilling to attend club events
* Begins to be truant
* Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
* Starts stammering
* Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
* Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
* Feels ill in the morning
* Begins to do poorly in school
* Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
* Has possessions which are damaged or “go missing”
* Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
* Has dinner or other monies continually “lost”
* Has unexplained cuts or bruises
* Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
* Is bullying other children or siblings
* Stops eating
* Is frightened to say what is wrong
* Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
* Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
* Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received
* Not wanting to be alone with a particular person(s)
* Outbursts of anger
* Sudden unexplained personality changes
* Becoming withdrawn or clingy

These signs and behaviors could indicate other problems, but inappropriate behavior should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated.

**Why is it important to Respond?**

Any form of inappropriate behavior hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of inappropriate behavior. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Individuals who are acting inappropriately need to learn different ways of behaving and communicating.

The Norfolk YMCA Aquajet Swim Club has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to these issues.

**What is expected of Applicable adults, athletes, club members**

* Follow and abide by the Club Policy regarding Inappropriate Behavior
* Ensure they communicate their concerns if they find themselves or others being bullied or harassed.

1. Tell the Coach
2. Tell a parent
3. Tell a Club Representative
4. Tell a trusted adult

* If any individual or groups of individuals begin to harass someone, others shouldn’t encourage the behavior by giving it an audience. Instead of laughing or supporting it, they should make it clear that such behavior is not entertaining and will not be tolerated.

**What can you do**

1. Tell the person to stop (You may need a friend to help you) whether it be a coach or another athlete
2. Tell them how the behavior makes you feel
3. Tell them it is a serious offense and they will be reported
4. Tell your Coach, Club Representative or a trusted adult. Tell them exactly what happened (your side of the story).
5. Tell your Coach, Club Representative or trusted adult if the behavior continues as the Club will take all steps to work with you and your family to ensure your protection and well-being.

**What can parents do**

* Stay calm and listen carefully when your child tells you about it
* Affirm that they have the right to feel safe and that you will help them
* Notify the Coach, Club Representative or trusted adult as soon as possible
* Rehearse with your child ways of responding to inappropriate behavior
* Watch for signs of inappropriate behavior

**What you can expect from the Club**

* Complaints will be treated seriously
* Act promptly
* Treat people fairly and listen to both sides of the story
* Stay neutral
* Keep parties to the complaint informed
* Try to maintain confidentiality if possible
* Protect against victimization
* Keep accurate records
* Make decisions based only on information gathered not personal views
* Disciplinary action should be relative to the infraction

**Procedures**

1. Coach, Club Representative or trusted adult will listen seriously to all members who report incidents of inappropriate behavior.
2. As soon as the Coach or other adult becomes aware of an incident, procedures will be initiated for dealing with the problem.
3. Immediate separation of both parties involved during training sessions or in the locker room until the incident has been investigated fully.
4. Counsel will be provided to all parties involved.
5. The inappropriate behavior must be investigated and stopped quickly.
6. If mediation fails and the inappropriate behavior continues, the club will initiate disciplinary proceedings according to the Club Policy.
7. If necessary and appropriate, the police may be consulted.

**Recommended Club Action**

If the Coach or Club Representative decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation, they should follow the procedures outlined below.

1. Attempt reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be that a genuine apology solves the problem. This process can be facilitated by the Coach or Club Representative.
2. If this fails, the Coach or Club Representative should meet with the parent and child alleging inappropriate behavior to get details of the allegation. Minutes should be taken for clarity, which should be agreed upon by all as a true account.
3. The Coach or Club Representative should meet with the alleged bully or harasser and their parent/s and discuss the alleged inappropriate behavior. Give ample opportunity for them to answer and give their view of the allegation. Minutes should again be taken and agreed on.
4. If inappropriate behavior is determined to have taken place, the individual/s should be:
5. warned that the behavior must stop immediately
6. Give notice of temporary suspension for a period of one week
7. Give notice that permanent suspension will occur if the behavior continues.
8. Consideration should be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time.
9. The Coach should monitor the situation for a given period to ensure no new incidents have occurred.
10. All Coaches involved with both individuals should be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process i.e. the warning, punishment.
11. Open communication with all parties involved regarding investigation results, disciplinary action taken.

**Outcomes**

1. The offending parties may be asked to genuinely apologize. Other consequences may take place.
2. In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered.
3. If possible, the individuals will be reconciled.
4. After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated behavior or abuse does not take place.