SOCIAL MEDIA AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

PURPOSE: To address the issue that one-on-one electronic communications and social media can increase the risk of abuse and grooming.

ENTIRE TEAM COMMUNICATION: Always copy another adult on any direct communication to a minor athlete or a group of minor athletes.

WHO (Collectively “Applicable Adults”):
- Adult members of a Covered Organization (USOC/NGB) who have regular contact with minor athletes (e.g., coaches, athletes, etc.).
- Adults authorized by the USOC/NGB to have regular contact with minor athletes (e.g., volunteers, chaperones, medical personnel, adult athletes, etc.).
- Adults authorized by the USOC/NGB to have authority over minor athletes (e.g., coaches, officials, volunteers, chaperones, medical personnel, adult athletes, etc.).
- USOC/NGB staff and board members.

THREE REQUIREMENTS

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

2. OPEN AND TRANSPARENT
   No one-on-one communication between Applicable Adults (with authority over minor athletes) and minor athletes.

3. REQUESTS TO DISCONTINUE
   If requested by a legal guardian, no electronic communication to minor athletes may take place absent emergency circumstances.

SAFESPORT BEST PRACTICES

- Create and use public/team pages exclusively for electronic communication.
- Maintain a list of minor athletes whose legal guardians have requested a discontinuance of electronic communications. This makes it easy to ensure no such communication takes place.
- Provide Applicable Adults official email addresses (e.g., individual@organization.org) that are managed by the USOC/NGB and instruct Applicable Adult to use for all USOC/NGB communication.
- Designate an Applicable Adult for each team/club/organization to be copied on all electronic communication.
- Use apps designed for team communication that allow all communication to be seen by all team members (e.g., Teamworks, TeamSnap, SIPlay, etc.).

This product was supported in part by grant number 2018-KY-B8-0001, awarded by the SMART Office, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this product are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.