

# **POLICY 3: MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICIES**

USA Triathlon Clubs and USA Triathlon-sanctioned events are strongly encouraged to adopt similar Minor Abuse Prevention Policies.

## **Definitions:**

For purposes of this policy:

**USA Triathlon event or activity** means events or activities that are sanctioned, organized or operated directly by USA Triathlon, such as the USA Triathlon National Championships and National Team camps and training.

**Participating Adult** means adult members of USA Triathlon who have contact with and/or authority over athletes who are minors; adults authorized by USA Triathlon to have contact with or authority over an athlete who is a minor; and staff and board members of USA Triathlon.

## **One-on-one Interactions:**

The majority of child sexual abuse is perpetrated in isolated, one-on-one situations. By reducing such interactions between children and adults, you reduce the risk of child sexual abuse. However, one-on-one time with trusted adults is also healthy and valuable for a child. Policies concerning one-on-one interactions protect children while allowing for these beneficial relationships.

1. Application – This policy shall apply to: **Participating Adults**
2. Non-Exclusive Facility
  - a. If USA Triathlon uses a facility not fully under USA Triathlon’s jurisdiction (e.g., for training or competition or similar events) and the facility is used by multiple constituents, Designated Adults are nonetheless required to adhere to the rules set forth herein.
3. Observable and Interruptible:
  - a. One-on-one interactions between minors and a Participating Adult (who is not the minor’s legal guardian) at a USA Triathlon event or activity are permitted, if they occur at an observable and interruptible distance by another adult.
  - b. Isolated one-on-one interactions between minor athletes and a Participating Adult (who is not

the minor's legal guardian) at a USA Triathlon event or activity, that do **not** occur at an observable and interruptible distance by another adult, are prohibited, except in the circumstances described later in this section and emergency circumstances.

4. Meetings:

- a. Meetings between Participating Adults and minors at a USA Triathlon sanctioned event or activity may only occur if another adult is present, except under emergency circumstances. Such meetings must occur where interactions can be easily observed and at an interruptible distance from another adult.
- b. If a one-on-one meeting takes place in an office, the door to the office must remain unlocked and open. If available, it will occur in an office that has windows, with the windows, blinds, and/or curtains remaining open during the meeting.

5. Meetings with Mental Health Care Professionals

- a. If a mental health care professional and/or health care provider meets with minors at a USA Triathlon sanctioned event or activity, a closed-door meeting may be permitted to protect patient privacy – provided that (1) the door remains unlocked, (2) another adult is present at the facility, (3) the other adult is advised that a closed-door meeting is occurring, and (4) written legal guardian consent is obtained by the mental health care professional with a copy provided to USA Triathlon.

6. Individual Training Sessions

- a. Individual training sessions between Participating Adults and minors are permitted at a USA Triathlon event or activity **only** if the training session is observable and interruptible by another adult. The Participating Adult must obtain the written permission of the minor's legal guardian in advance of the individual training. Parents, guardian, and other caretakers must be allowed to observe the training session. Permission for individual training sessions must be obtained at least every six months.

7. Monitoring

- a. When one-on-one interactions between Participating Adults and minors occur at a USA Triathlon event or activity, adults must monitor these interactions. Monitoring includes: knowing that the one-on-one interaction is occurring, the approximate planned duration of the interaction, and randomly dropping in on the one-on-one.

8. Out-of-program contacts

- a. Participating Adults are prohibited from interacting one-on-one with unrelated minor athletes in settings outside of the program (including, but not limited to, one's home, restaurants, and individual transportation), unless parent/legal guardian consent is provided for each out-of-program contact. Such arrangements are nonetheless strongly discouraged.

## **Massages and Rubdowns/Athletic Training Modality**

1. Application – This policy shall apply to: **Participating Adults**
2. Licensed, certified professional
  - a. Any massage or rubdown performed by a Participating Adult on a minor athlete a USA Triathlon event or activity, or a training or competition venue, is prohibited unless such Participating Adult is a licensed professional (a licensed massage therapist or certified athletic trainer)
  - b. Any massage or rubdown performed at a USA Triathlon event or activity, or a training or competition venue, may only be conducted by a licensed professional (a licensed massage therapist or certified athletic trainer) and must be conducted in open and interruptible locations. Any massage or rubdown of a minor athlete must be done with at least one other adult present and must never be done with only the minor athlete and the person performing the massage or rubdown in the room.
    - i. Even if a coach is a licensed massage therapist or certified athletic trainer, the coach shall not perform a rubdown or massage of an athlete under any circumstance.
    - ii. Written consent by a legal guardian shall be provided before providing each massage or rubdown on a minor athlete. Parents, guardians, or other applicable caregivers must be permitted to be in the room as an observer.

## **Locker Rooms, Rest Rooms, and Changing Areas**

1. Application – this policy shall apply to: **Participating Adults**
2. Non-Exclusive Facility
  - a. If USA Triathlon uses a facility not fully under USA Triathlon’s jurisdiction (e.g., for training or competition or similar events) and the facility is used by multiple constituents, Participating Adults are nonetheless required to adhere to the rules set forth herein.
3. Use of recording devices
  - a. Use of any device’s (including a cell phone’s) recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras, and video cameras in locker rooms, rest rooms, changing areas or similar spaces at a USA Triathlon event or activity is prohibited. Exceptions may be made for media and championship celebrations, provided that such exceptions are approved by USA Triathlon and two or more adults are present.
4. Undress
  - a. Under no circumstances shall an unrelated Participating Adult, at a USA Triathlon event or activity, intentionally expose his or her breasts, buttocks, groin, or genitals to a minor athlete.

5. Isolated one-on-one interactions

- a. At no time are unrelated Participating Adults permitted to be alone with a minor in a locker room, rest room, or changing area when at a USA Triathlon event or activity, except under emergency circumstances.
- b. If USA Triathlon is using a facility that has access to a single set of facilities such as locker rooms, rest rooms, or changing areas, it will designate times for use by Participating Adults, if any.

6. Monitoring

- a. USA Triathlon and Participating Adults shall regularly and randomly monitor the use of locker rooms, rest rooms, and changing areas at a USA Triathlon owned or sanctioned event or activity taking place at a facility under USA Triathlon's control (recognized USA Triathlon training site) to ensure compliance with these policies.
- b. To minimize the risk of bullying and hazing, USA Triathlon shall use locker room monitors at USA Triathlon events and activities taking place at a facility under USA Triathlon's control and involving USA Triathlon athletes who are minors, to ensure that minors are not left unattended in locker rooms, rest rooms, and changing areas.
- c. Participating Adults should 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, should check on the athlete's whereabouts.
- d. USA Triathlon discourages 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 a coach or administrator know about this in advance.

## **Social Media & Electronic Communications**

Application – this policy shall apply to: **Participating Adults**

1. Content

- a. All electronic communication originating from Participating Adults to athletes who are minors must be professional in nature.

2. Open and Transparent

- a. Absent emergency circumstances, if a Participating Adult with authority over minor athletes needs to communicate directly with a minor athlete via electronic communications (including social media), another Participating Adult or the minor's legal guardian will be copied.
- b. If a minor athlete communicates to a Participating Adult (with authority over the minor athlete) privately first, said Participating Adult should respond to the minor athlete with a copy to another Participating Adult or the minor's legal guardian.
- c. When a Participating Adult with authority over minor athletes communicates electronically to

the entire team, said Participating Adult will copy another adult.

- d. If a Participating Adult needs to communicate directly with an athlete who is a minor via electronic communications, another Participating Adult or the minor's legal guardian will be copied.
- e. Athletes who are minors may "friend" USA Triathlon's page and their official club or team's page, but not the personal page of a coach or other Participating Adult.

### 3. Requests to Discontinue

- a. Legal guardians may request in writing that their minor athlete not be contacted through any form of electronic communication by USA Triathlon or by the Participating Adults subject to this policy. USA Triathlon and Participating Adults will abide by any such request that their minor athlete not be contacted via electronic communication, absent emergency circumstances.

### 4. Prohibited Electronic Communication

- a. Participating Adults are not permitted to "private message," "instant message," "direct message," or send photos via Snapchat, Instagram, or other social media platforms, to an unrelated minor privately.
- b. Participating Adults are not permitted to maintain social media connections with unrelated minor athletes; such Participating Adults are not permitted to accept new personal page requests on social media platforms from athletes unless the Participating Adult has a fan page, or the contact is deemed as celebrity contact vs. regular contact. Existing social media connections on personal pages with minor athletes must be discontinued.

### 5. Monitoring

- a. USA Triathlon monitors its social media pages and may remove any posts that violate its policies and practices for appropriate behavior.
- b. USA Triathlon will inform the legal guardian of a minor athlete of any prohibited posts, as well as the organization's administrator.

## **Local Travel**

Local travel consists of travel to training, practice, and competition that occurs locally and does not include coordinated overnight stay(s).

### 1. Application – this policy shall apply to: **Participating Adults**

### 2. Transportation

- a. Participating Adults who are not also acting as a legal guardian, shall not ride in a vehicle alone with an unrelated minor athlete, absent emergency circumstances, and must have at least two other minor athletes or another adult at all times, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the minor athlete's parent/legal guardian in advance of each local travel.
- b. Shared or Carpool Travel Arrangement: USA Triathlon encourages parents/legal guardians to

pick up their minor athlete first and drop off their minor athlete last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement.

- c. USA Triathlon encourages parents/legal guardians to receive education concerning child abuse prevention before providing consent for their minor to travel alone with a Participating Adult.

## **Team Travel**

Team travel is travel to a competition or other team activity that USA Triathlon plans and supervises, or travel to a competition or other activity sanctioned by USA Triathlon that a Local Affiliated Organization plans and supervises.

1. Application – this policy shall apply to: **Participating Adults**

3. Team/Competition Travel

- a. When only one Participating Adult and one minor athlete travel to a competition, the minor athlete must have his/her legal guardian's written permission in advance and for each competition to travel alone with the Participating Adult.

4. Hotel Rooms

- a. Participating Adults shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with a minor athlete (unless the Participating Adult is the legal guardian, sibling, or is otherwise related to the minor athlete). However, a parent/legal guardian may consent to such an arrangement in advance and in writing. Furthermore, a parent/legal guardian may consent in advance and in writing to the minor athlete sharing a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an adult athlete.
- b. During travel when doing room checks, attending team meetings, and/or other activities, two-deep leadership (two Participating Adults must be present) and observable and interruptible environments should be maintained.

5. Meetings

- a. Meetings shall be conducted consistent with the organization's policy for one-on-one interactions – i.e., any such meeting shall be observable and interruptible.
- b. Meetings shall not be conducted in a hotel room. If a meeting is needed, the Participating Adult should seek a common area in the hotel such as a lobby or a conference room while abiding by the one-on-one interaction policy.

6. Team travel policies must be signed and agreed to by all minor athletes, parents, and adults traveling with the organization. The Participating Adult facilitating the travel plans must forward all signed

team travel policies to USA Triathlon SafeSport Coordinator at [safesport@usatriathlon.org](mailto:safesport@usatriathlon.org).

7. During team travel, when doing room checks, attending team meetings and/or other activities, two-deep leadership and observable and interruptible environments should be maintained.
8. USA Triathlon encourages parents/legal guardians to receive education concerning child abuse prevention before providing consent for their minor to travel alone with a Participating Adult.