



Pennsylvania Elite Cheerleading, Inc.

USASF Safe Sport Code

Adopted September 2018

SEXUAL ABUSE AND MISCONDUCT POLICY

The U.S. All Star Federation has determined that the U.S. All Star Federation's policies prohibiting sexual abuse and misconduct shall be the same as the applicable policies of the U.S. Center for SafeSport (USCSS). Furthermore, all persons within the jurisdiction of the U.S. All Star Federation shall comply with the sexual abuse and misconduct policies of the USCSS. All terms not defined herein shall have the meaning set forth in the USCSS Policies & Procedures. Any violation of the sexual abuse and misconduct policies by a Covered Individual (outlined below) shall subject such person to appropriate disciplinary action, including but not limited to suspension, permanent suspension, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities.

Jurisdiction Over Covered Individuals Pursuant to the SafeSport Policy

The jurisdiction of the USCSS applies to (collectively, "Covered Individuals"):

1. Any individual who currently is, or was at the time of a possible SafeSport Code Violation, within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of the U.S. All Star Federation, and/or who is seeking to be within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of the U.S. All Star Federation, for example through application for membership;
2. All individuals, both athletes and non-athletes, the U.S. All Star Federation formally authorizes, approves or appoints (i) to a position of authority over athletes or (ii) to have frequent contact with athletes; and
3. Additional individuals the U.S. All Star Federation identifies as being within the code's jurisdiction.

The U.S. All Star Federation has determined that Covered Individuals within the U.S. All Star Federation and its programs includes:

1. Those persons registered with the U.S. All Star Federation as Registered Members:
 - a. All Star Program participants, owners, coaches, and personnel
 - b. Event Producer and Affiliate Member owners and employees
2. All persons serving as a member of the U.S. All Star Federation's Board of Directors, on a national or regional level committee or board, or in any other similar positions appointed by the U.S. All Star Federation.
3. All staff or officials at The Cheerleading Worlds[®] or The Dance Worlds[®].
4. All U.S. All Star Federation national staff.
5. Any person that is hired, elected or appointed by a U.S. All Star Federation Event Producer Member, Affiliate Member or Member Program to a position of authority over athletes or that have any contact with minors (even if not registered with U.S. All Star Federation).

Reporting Obligations

In addition to any legal obligation of an entity or person to report sexual abuse or misconduct to law enforcement authorities, all Covered Individuals are required to promptly report any alleged violations of the Sexual Abuse and Misconduct Policy to the U.S. All Star Federation. A Covered Individual's failure to report may subject such person to disciplinary action.

The duty to report to the U.S. All Star Federation and the U.S. All Star Federation's jurisdiction to investigate shall not supersede any local, state, or federal reporting requirements or jurisdiction, and shall not affect or impair the ability of any party that reports to the USASF from also reporting to the appropriate local, state or federal authorities.

Prohibited Conduct and Jurisdiction

The U.S. All Star Federation or their designee shall have authority and jurisdiction over the investigation and resolution of any allegations of violations by any Covered Individual of those policies set forth in the USCSS Policies & Procedures, which prohibit sexual behavior involving minors by an adult Covered Individual and in some cases between minors, sexual exploitation, non-consensual sexual conduct, or non-consensual sexual acts, sexual or romantic relationship involving an imbalance of power, sexual harassment and related criminal dispositions.

Coaches should refrain from touching body parts that could be perceived as invasive or inappropriate, even for corrective measures.

Appropriate spotting does not constitute sexual misconduct. It is understood that spotting is a necessary physical interaction between coaches and athletes. Infrequent, accidental touching of an athlete during spotting that could be perceived as invasive or inappropriate should not be misconstrued as sexual misconduct. To avoid that perception, coaches need to stay highly trained on proper spotting techniques and should acknowledge the occurrence if an accidental touch does occur. Program Owners are encouraged to put in place a process of documentation of such accidental touches. Diligent oversight on the part of Program Owners will allow for the tracking a pattern of misconduct, should one exist.

The U.S. All Star Federation or their designee shall also have authority and jurisdiction over the investigation and resolution of reports or allegations of the U.S. All Star Federation SafeSport policies described herein and prohibiting physical misconduct, emotional misconduct, bullying, threats, hazing, and harassment where such conduct is reasonably related to and accompanies a report or allegations involving sexual misconduct.

The U.S. All Star Federation or their designee shall also have authority and jurisdiction over the investigation and resolution of reports or allegations of:

1. A Covered Individual's failure to report a violation required to be reported under the Policies & Procedures,
2. Bad faith reporting of an allegation within the jurisdiction of the U.S. All Star Federation,
3. Retaliation against any participant in the proceedings under the jurisdiction of the U.S. All Star Federation, and
4. Abuse of process in the proceedings under the jurisdiction of the U.S. All Star Federation, all as further defined in the Policies & Procedures.

PHYSICAL ABUSE AND MISCONDUCT POLICY

It is the policy of the U.S. All Star Federation that there shall be no physical abuse of any participant involved in any of its Member Programs by any employee, volunteer, independent contractor (including

choreographers and guest coaches or clinicians) or other participant. Physical abuse means physical contact with a participant that intentionally causes or has the potential to cause the participant to sustain bodily harm or personal injury. Physical abuse also includes physical contact with a participant that intentionally creates a threat of immediate bodily harm or personal injury. Physical abuse may also include intentionally hitting or threatening to hit an athlete with objects or sports equipment.

In addition to physical contact or the threat of physical contact of a participant, physical abuse also includes the providing of alcohol to a participant under the age of consent and the providing of illegal drugs or non-prescribed medications to any participant.

Without limiting the above, any act or conduct described as physical abuse or misconduct under applicable federal or state law constitutes physical abuse under this Policy.

Physical abuse does not include physical contact that is reasonably designed to coach, teach, demonstrate or improve a skill associated to All Star Cheer or Dance, including physical conditioning, team building and appropriate discipline. Permitted physical conduct may include, but is not necessarily limited to, physical touch that is non-threatening, non-sexual in manner with the purpose of training and direction.

Any U.S. All Star Federation member who engages in any act of physical abuse is subject to appropriate disciplinary action including but not limited to suspension, permanent suspension, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE AND MISCONDUCT POLICY

It is the policy of the U.S. All Star Federation that there shall be no emotional abuse of any participant involved in any of its Member Programs by an employee, volunteer, independent contractor or other participant. Emotional abuse involves a pattern of deliberate, non-contact behavior that has the potential to cause emotional or psychological harm to a participant. These behaviors may include verbal acts, physical acts or acts that deny attention or support.

Examples of emotional abuse prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation: a pattern of

1. Verbal behaviors that:
 - a. attack a participant personally (e.g., calling them worthless, fat, or disgusting); or
 - b. repeatedly and excessively yelling at a particular participant or participants in a manner that serves no productive motivational purpose;
2. Physically aggressive behaviors, such as
 - a. throwing sport equipment, water bottles, or chairs at or near participants; or
 - b. punching walls, windows, or other objects; and
3. Acts that deny attention and support, such as ignoring a participant for extended periods of time, or routinely or arbitrarily excluding participants from practice or training.

While a single incident of any of the above behaviors may be inappropriate and justify a review and/or disciplinary or other action by the U.S. All Star Federation or any of its Member Programs, such behaviors would typically not constitute emotional abuse unless a pattern of such conduct had occurred.

Constructive criticism about an athlete's performance is not emotional abuse or misconduct. Further, emotional abuse does not include generally-accepted and age appropriate coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, motivation, team building, appropriate discipline, or improving athletic performance.

A U.S. All Star Federation member who engages in any act of emotional abuse is subject to appropriate disciplinary action including but not limited to suspension, permanent suspension, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities.

Note: Bullying, threats, harassment, and hazing, defined in the next section, often involve some form of emotional misconduct.

BULLYING, THREATS & HARASSMENT POLICY

The U.S. All Star Federation supports an environment that is free from threats, harassment, and any type of bullying behavior. The purpose of this Policy is to promote consistency of approach and to help create a climate in which all types of bullying, harassing or threatening behavior are regarded as unacceptable.

Bullying

Bullying is the use of coercion to obtain control over another person or to be habitually cruel to another person. Bullying involves an intentional, persistent or repeated pattern of committing or willfully tolerating physical and non-physical behaviors that are intended to cause fear, humiliation, or physical harm in an attempt to socially exclude, diminish, or isolate another person. Bullying can occur through written, verbal or electronically transmitted expression or by means of a physical act or gesture. Bullying behavior is prohibited in any manner in connection with any U.S. All Star Federation sanctioned activities or events.

Examples of bullying prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation, physical behaviors, including punching, kicking or choking; and verbal and emotional behaviors, including, the use of electronic communications (i.e. , "cyber bullying"), to harass, frighten, degrade, intimidate or humiliate. Bullying does not include group or team behaviors that are reasonably designed to establish normative team behaviors or promote team cohesion.

Threats

A threat to harm others is defined as any written, verbal, physical or electronically transmitted expression of intent to physically injure or harm someone else. A threat may be communicated directly to the intended victim or communicated to a third party. Threatening behavior is prohibited in any manner in connection with any U.S. All Star Federation sanctioned activities or events.

Harassment

Harassment includes any pattern of physical and/or non-physical behaviors that (a) are intended to cause fear, humiliation, or annoyance, (b) offend or degrade, (c) create a hostile environment, or (d) reflect discriminatory bias in an attempt to establish dominance, superiority, or power over an individual participant or group based on gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression, or mental or physical disability.

Examples of harassment prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation such non-physical offenses as

(a) making negative or disparaging comments about a participant's gender, sexual orientation, gender expression, mental or physical disability, race, religion, skin color, ethnic traits or other legally protected grounds;

(b) displaying offensive materials, gestures, or symbols; and (c) withholding or reducing practice or playing time to a participant based on his/her sexual orientation, gender expression (not to include prohibitions on participation when eligibility is based on gender), disability, religion, skin color, ethnic traits or any legally protected grounds.

While other team members are often the perpetrators of harassment, it is a violation of this Policy if a coach or other responsible adult knows or should know of the harassment but takes no action to intervene on behalf of the targeted participant(s).

A U.S. All Star Federation participant or parent of a participant who engages in any act of harassing behavior is subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including but not limited to, suspension, permanent suspension, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities. The severity and pattern, if any, of the harassing behavior and/or result shall be taken into consideration when disciplinary decisions are made.

Hazing

There shall be no hazing of any participant involved in any of the U.S. All Star Federation's Member Programs by any employee, volunteer, independent contractor or other participant

Hazing includes any conduct which is intimidating, humiliating, offensive, or physically harmful. The hazing conduct is typically an activity that serves as a condition for joining a group or being socially accepted by a group's members.

Examples of hazing prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation, requiring or forcing (including through peer pressure) the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs; tying, taping, or physically restraining a participant; sexual simulations or sexual acts of any nature; sleep deprivation, or the withholding of water and/or food; social actions (e.g. grossly inappropriate or provocative clothing) or public displays (e.g. public nudity) that are illegal or meant to draw ridicule; beating, paddling, or other forms of physical assault, and verbal abuse or threats or implied threats.

Hazing includes any act or conduct described as hazing under federal or state law. Activities that fit the definition of hazing are considered to be hazing regardless of a person's willingness to cooperate or participate.

Hazing does not include group or team activities that are meant to establish normative team behaviors, or promote team cohesion, so long as such activities do not have reasonable potential to cause emotional or physical distress to any participant.

While other team members are often the perpetrators of hazing toward their teammates, it is a violation of this Policy if a coach or other responsible adult knows or should know of the hazing but takes no action to intervene on behalf of the targeted participant(s).

A U.S. All Star Federation participant or parent of a participant who violates this Hazing Policy is subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including but not limited, to suspension, permanent suspension and/or referral to law enforcement authorities.

Sexual Abuse and Prevention Policy

The “Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act” was signed into law February 12, 2018 by President Trump.

The Act makes it a criminal offense NOT to take the following measures – there is NO grace period, it is effective immediately:

1. **Mandatory Incident Reporting:** The Act requires Organizations to provide a tool for “Mandatory Reporters” to immediately report suspicions of abuse. The list of “Mandatory Reporters” now includes any adult authorized to interact with a minor athlete at a sports organization, facility, event, or treatment.

2. **Consistent Abuse Prevention Training:** The Act requires Youth Sports Organizations to provide consistent training on prevention and reporting of child abuse to all adult members who are in regular contact with minors/amateur athletes. Effective prevention training allows adults to see and recognize problematic behaviors before a minor is abused.

3. **Confidential Notifications:** The Act requires Organizations to provide a “mechanism for communication” for all participants and volunteers where they can confidentially report incidents of abuse, or suspicion of abuse.

4. **Audit Trail & Reporting:** The Act requires Organizations to establish “oversight procedures” to create records for each incident, including the responses taken to follow acceptable procedures, and can be proven during “random audits” of the organization.

Below are a list of available resources for families to educate themselves:

1. Safesport Tool Kit for parents: <https://resources.safesport.org/toolkits/Parent-Toolkit-Complete/index.html>
2. FREE online parent training is available at www.athletesafefy.org
3. Darkness to Light Website <https://www.d2l.org/>
4. Stewards of Children Prevention Toolkit App available on mobile devices.

Refer to the following handouts for policies and procedures:

1. Youth Sexual Abuse Prevention Policy and Procedures
2. Protecting Youth Athletes from Sexual Abuse

Action Plan of Pennsylvania Elite Cheerleading, Inc to Address Bullying

PURPOSE

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Pennsylvania Elite Cheerleading, Inc. and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. The Program 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, program owner or athlete/mentor.

Objectives of the Program’s Bullying Policy and Action Plan:

1. To make it clear that the Program will not tolerate bullying in any form.
2. To define bullying and give all program owners, coaches, parents and athletes a good

understanding of what bullying is.

3. To make it known to all parents, athletes and coaching staff that there is a policy and protocol should any bullying issues arise.

4. To make the process of how to report bullying clear and understandable.

5. To spread the word that Pennsylvania Elite Cheerleading, Inc. takes bullying seriously and that all athletes and parents can be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

The U.S. All Star Federation Professional Responsibility Code prohibits bullying. Generally, bullying is the use of aggression, whether intentional or not, which hurts another person. Bullying results in pain and distress.

Bullying is the severe or repeated use by one or more U.S. All Star Federation 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:

1. Causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member's property;
2. Placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
3. Creating a hostile environment for the other member at any U.S. All Star Federation activity;
4. Infringing on the rights of the other member at any U.S. All Star Federation activity; or
5. Materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any U.S. All Star Federation activity, which for the purposes of this section shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts and other events of a Member Program or Event Producer.

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 Team Coach, Program Owner, or other designated individual; and/or
- Write a letter or email to the Team Coach, Program Owner, or other designated individual.

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

FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED

1. First, 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, 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 U.S. All Star Federation 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 what can be done to make him or her feel safe.
 - ii. Develop a game plan. Maintain open communication between the Program and parents. Discuss the steps that will be taken and how bullying will be addressed going forward.
 - c. Be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight. Commit to making it stop and consistently support the bullied child.

4. Address bullying behavior

- a. Make sure the child knows what the problem behavior is. Young people who bully must learn their behavior is wrong and harms others.
 - b. Show kids that bullying is taken seriously. Calmly tell the child that bullying will not be tolerated. Model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.
 - c. Work with the child to understand some of the reasons he or she bullied. For example:
 - i. 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.
 - ii. 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.
 - d. 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:
 - i. Write a letter apologizing to the athlete who was bullied.
 - ii. Do a good deed for the person who was bullied, for the Program, or for others in your community.
 - iii. Clean up, repair, or pay for any property they damaged.
 - e. Avoid strategies that don't work or have negative consequences:
 - i. Zero tolerance or “three strikes, you're out” strategies don't work. Suspending or removing from the team athletes who bully does not reduce bullying behavior. Athletes may be less likely to report and address bullying if suspension or getting kicked off the team is the consequence.
 - ii. 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.
 - f. 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.
5. 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 Program Owner.
 - 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.

Electronic Communication Policy

As part of the U.S. All Star Federation's emphasis on safety and athlete protection, communications involving any participant, and especially our minor participants, should be appropriate, productive, and transparent. Effective communication concerning travel, practice or competition schedules, and administrative issues among coaches, administrators, participants and their families is critical. However,

the use of mobile devices, web-based applications, social media, and other forms of electronic communications increases the possibility for improprieties and misunderstandings and also provides potential offenders with unsupervised and potentially inappropriate access to participants. The improper use of social media, mobile and electronic communications can result in misconduct. Adherence to the Electronic Communications Policy helps reduce these risks.

This policy is designed specifically for U.S. All Star Federation Members for the protection of athletes. The following are considered adults:

1. Any person, 18 years of age or older affiliated with the program, that has a role within the program that does or could have interaction with participants.
2. Any adult athletes (as defined in the PRC) that is a member of the program that may train within the program or be a member of a team. This includes, but is not limited to, program owners, coaches, choreographers, photographers, team parents, adult age participant and employees of the member organization.

All electronic communication between coach and participant must be for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. Coaches, participants and all team personnel must follow common sense guidelines regarding the volume and time of day of any allowed electronic communication. All content between coaches and participants should be readily available to share with the public or families of the participant or coach. If the participant is under the age of 18, any email, text, social media, or similar communication must also copy or include the participant's parents.

Social Media

Social media makes it easy to share ideas and experiences. The U.S. All Star Federation recognizes, however, that social media, mobile and other electronic communications can be especially concerning where minor participants are involved. Owners, coaches and other adult members of the All Star community are prohibited from having participants joined to or connected through their personal Facebook page or any other similar social media application. To facilitate communication, an official organization or team page may be set up and participants and parents may join (i.e., "friend", "follow" or "like") the official organization or team page and coaches can communicate to participants through that site. All electronic communication of any kind between coach and participant, including use of social media, must be non-personal in nature and be for the purpose of communicating information about team activities or for team oriented motivational purposes.

Personal Social Media Sites

An adult affiliated with a program may have a personal social media page or site, with the following restrictions regarding athletes:

1. May not invite or allow an athlete to "friend" or join a personal social media site or similar online community.
2. May not "private" or "instant" message athletes (including snapchats).
3. Must inform parents and athletes that the above is not permitted.
4. It is recommended that adults make their pages "private" to restrict athlete access.

Email, Text Messaging and Similar Electronic Communications

Owners, coaches, team parents and participants may use email and text messaging to communicate. All email and text message content between coaches/team parents and participants must be non-personal in nature and be for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. Emails and text messages from a coach to any minor participant must include a copy to the participant's parents.

Abuse and Misconduct

Social media and other means of electronic communication can be used to commit abuse and misconduct (e.g., emotional, sexual, bullying, harassment, and hazing). Such communications by any employee, volunteer, independent contractor or other participant of a U.S. All Star Federation Member Program will not be tolerated and are considered violations of U.S. All Star Federation's SafeSport Program.

A U.S. All Star Federation participant or parent of a participant who violates this Electronic Communication Policy is subject to appropriate disciplinary action including but not limited to suspension, permanent suspension, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities.

The following four points are defined as definitively inappropriate conduct. Any communication with an athlete either verbal or electronic may not involve or relate to any of the following:

1. Inappropriate or sexually explicit photos
2. Sexual innuendos, sexual conversation, explicit language, or sexual activity,
3. Drug or alcohol use, and/or
4. The adult should not relay information about their personal life or social life outside of the professional environment or discuss relationships or personal problems.

Regardless of the adult's role in relationship to the athlete, it is the responsibility for the adult to maintain these guiding principles when communicating electronically.

1. Does the conversation pertain to the team and team activities?
2. Is the content of the electronic conversation something that any parent, boss or other adult would agree is professional in nature?
3. Is the electronic communication accessible to anyone at any time?
4. Can the information conveyed to the athlete be used as a permanent part of the athlete's record?

Sportsmanship Code of Conduct

Promoting and exhibiting good sportsmanship is a must for all coaches, parents, and athletes. Coaches, parents, and affiliated adults are direct role models to the youth athletes. Please be sure to model

appropriate sportsmanship in these categories and hold the youth to upholding the most positive sportsmanship at all times.

Below are a few guidelines for athletes to follow:

1. Play by the Rules: learn and obey the rules of the sport, train to perform routines within those guidelines.
2. Show Respect: I will treat all other teams and team members with the utmost respect in every possible circumstance. I will respect myself enough to agree to train and compete with my safety and the safety of my teammates as first priority. I will behave within every event's Code of Conduct, recognizing the authority of the event officials and workers in every possible circumstance. I will appreciate honest efforts made fairly in the quest of victory.
3. Optimize my experience by meeting athletes from other programs and learn to respect my competitors.
4. Make pursuit of victory more important than winning. My will to train to win matters most. While victory should be my expected goal, defeat is not a disgrace.
5. Interact, in person, and on the internet or other social media outlets, with integrity. I will not comment or post negatively about my teammates, coaches, or my opponents on any forms of social media. I understand that doing so reflects poorly upon the image of my sport, my program, and myself.
6. Strive to see the BIG picture and exercise self-control in adverse circumstances. I will increase focus and intensity at practice rather than retaliate or blame others. I understand that I am responsible for my behavior, and I will not allow the prospect of defeat be an excuse for unethical or unsportsmanlike behavior.
7. Exemplify sportsmanlike conduct: I will be a positive role model on my team and within my community. I understand that I am a leader and that every choice I make affects those who follow me. I will uphold the promise to the best of my abilities and always work to improve myself, my team, and my sport. I understand I am expected to be a positive example both in my private and public settings!