



# COACHES RESOURCE

## ESTABLISHING BOUNDARIES



Boundaries are essential for fostering healthy, supportive relationships in sports. While establishing these boundaries can be challenging, they play a key role in maintaining professionalism and personal well-being for coaches and club administrators. Clear boundaries help set expectations for interactions with caregivers and ensure that everyone understands their roles.



Effective communication, connection, and care are crucial in creating a positive environment for coaches, athletes, and caregivers. Coaches should build strong rapport with athletes while recognizing the limits of their role—offering safety and support without overstepping into areas like clinical mental health care, which requires specialized expertise. By setting and respecting boundaries, we can cultivate a balanced and successful team environment.

### ACTIONS TO TAKE TO SUPPORT BOUNDARIES AND POSITIVE PARENT RELATIONSHIPS

#### PROACTIVE COMMUNICATION



**Communicate Early and Often:** Keep caregivers informed from the start to prevent assumptions and ensure everyone is on the same page.

**Manage Caregiver Chats Carefully:** If you establish a chat for real-time updates, clarify its purpose and the type of information that will be shared. Maintain professionalism in all interactions within this chat.

**ACTION:** Establish a consistent schedule for sending team updates (e.g., weekly emails) to reduce reactive questions and protect coaches' downtime.

#### CLEAR EXPECTATIONS FOR TEAM SELECTION



**Standardize Team Selection:** Use key metrics and qualitative expectations (e.g., time management, effort, and teammate support) to guide team selection. Create a clear document outlining these criteria and distribute it to all families.

**Address Perceived Subjectivity:** Avoid conflicts and favoritism by grounding team selection in measurable criteria. Without clear tracking and metrics, athletes may compete for favoritism, and caregivers might question their athlete's exclusion.

**ACTION:** Develop a comprehensive team selection document detailing how athletes will be evaluated on both behaviours and skills. Share this document with caregivers during the season's parent meeting.



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## SUPPORTING CAREGIVER RELATIONSHIPS

Working with the caregivers requires care, diligence and respect. Caregiver Meetings are a key opportunity to provide information, and to establish the culture of the team.

Caregivers should be orientated to the code of conduct in a way that helps them to understand the content of it, and the ways they can support it coming to life. This includes expectations for behaviour, and how to encourage a welcoming and supportive environment, as well as providing information on navigating difficult situations throughout the season.

Caregivers should also be made aware of progressive discipline processes for both minor infractions as well as the process to file formal complaints for maltreatment.

**ACTION:** Organize Caregiver Meetings to convey essential information and establish the team's cultural expectations.

## GUIDANCE ON SETTING UP CAREGIVER MEETINGS

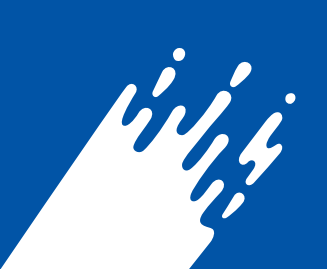
Some key considerations include:

- **Consistency and Structure:** Ensure meetings are regular and well-organized.
- **Advance Agenda:** Provide a clear agenda beforehand.
- **Comfortable Environment:** Hold meetings in a safe, open space with adequate seating (avoid using small spaces like dressing rooms).
- **Defined Topics:** Clearly outline what will and will not be discussed.
- **Separate Meetings:** Schedule two distinct meetings to focus on different aspects and reinforce commitment to team culture.





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## Caregiver Meeting Agendas

### Caregiver Meeting 1

**Focus:** Operations



Proposed Agenda to Include:

- Budget for the year & the team (include additional costs beyond registration & info on funding supports if some available)
- Schedule of practices & competitions
- Travel plans
- Share key documents & info, this may include local club info as well as connecting to the Provincial/Territory information and National Sport information
- Provide team selection information and criteria

### Caregiver Meeting 2

**Focus:** We All Swim Together culture meeting



Proposed Agenda to Include:

- Review code of conduct
- Discuss team values & how the team will live those
- Explain expectations of behaviours
- Share office hours
- Establish communication standards (Frequency, chat expectations, etc.)
- Process for filing a complaint for maltreatment and how athletes will be disciplined progressively for minor infractions of the code of conduct.

