London Ramblers Basketball
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Athlete Protection Guidelines

Definitions

1. The following terms have these meanings in these Guidelines:
    a. "Person in Authority" – An individual who holds a position of authority within the club including, but not limited to, coaches, managers, support personnel, chaperones, and directors
    b. "Vulnerable Participants" – Includes minors and vulnerable adults (people who, because of age, disability or other circumstance, are in a position of dependence on others or are otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by people in positions of trust or authority)

Purpose

2. These athlete protection guidelines describe how Persons in Authority can maintain a safe sport environment for athletes.

Interactions between Persons in Authority and Athletes – Rule of Two

3. For interactions between Persons and Authority and Athletes, the club strongly recommends the 'Rule of Two' for all Persons in Authority who interact with athletes. The 'Rule of Two' is a directive that says that an athlete must never be alone one-on-one with an unrelated Person in Authority.
4. The club recognizes that fully implementing the 'Rule of Two' may not always be possible. Consequently, at a minimum, interactions between Persons in Authority and Athletes must respect the following:
    a. The training environment should be open and transparent so that all interactions between Persons in Authority and Athletes are observable
    b. Private or one-on-one situations must be avoided unless they are open and observable by another adult or Athlete
    c. Persons in Authority shall not invite or have an unrelated Vulnerable Participant (or Vulnerable Participants) in their home without the written permission and concurrent knowledge of the Vulnerable Participant's parent or guardian
    d. Vulnerable Participants must not be in any situation where they are alone with an unrelated Person in Authority without another screened adult or Athlete present unless prior written permission is obtained from the Vulnerable Participant's parent or guardian

Practices and Competitions

5. For practices and competitions, the club and its members recommends:
    a. A Person in Authority should never be alone with a Vulnerable Participant prior to or following a competition or practice unless the Person in Authority is the Vulnerable Participant's parent or guardian

b. If the Vulnerable Participant is the first Athlete to arrive, the Athlete's parent should remain until another Athlete or Person in Authority arrives
c. If a Vulnerable Participant would potentially be alone with a Person in Authority following a competition or practice, the Person in Authority should ask another Person in Authority (or a parent or guardian of another Athlete) to stay until all of the Athletes have been picked up. If an adult is unavailable, another Athlete, who is preferably not a Vulnerable Participant, should be present in order to avoid the Person in Authority being alone with a Vulnerable Participant
d. Persons in Authority giving instructions, demonstrating skills, or facilitating drills or lessons to an individual Athlete should always do so within earshot and eyesight of another Person in Authority
e. Persons in Authority and Athletes should take steps to achieve transparency and accountability in their interactions. For example, a Person in Authority and an Athlete who know they will be away from other Participants for a lengthy period of time must inform another Person in Authority where they are going and when they are expected to return. Persons in Authority should always be reachable by phone or text message

Communications

6. For communication between Persons in Authority and Athletes, the club recommends:
    a. Group messages, group emails or team pages are to be used as the regular method of communication between Persons in Authority and athletes
    b. Persons in Authority may only send personal texts, direct messages on social media or emails to individual athletes when necessary and only for the purpose of communicating information related to team issues and activities (e.g., non-personal information)
    c. Electronic communication between Persons in Authority and Athletes that is personal in nature should be avoided. If such communication occurs, it must be recorded and available for review by another Person in Authority and/or by the Athlete's parent/guardian (when the Athlete is a Vulnerable Participant)
    d. Parents and guardians may request that their child not be contacted by Persons in Authority using any form of electronic communication and/or to request that certain information about their child may not be distributed in any form of electronic communications
    e. All communication between Persons in Authority and athletes must be between the hours of 6:00am and midnight unless extenuating circumstances exist
    f. Communication concerning drugs or alcohol use (unless regarding its prohibition) is not permitted
    g. Persons in Authority are not permitted to ask athletes to keep a secret for them
    h. A Person in Authority should not become overly-involved in an athlete's personal life

Travel

7. For travel involving Persons in Authority and Athletes, the club recommends:
    a. Teams or groups of Athlete shall always have at least two Persons in Authority with them
    b. Screened parents or other volunteers will be available in situations when two Persons in Authority cannot be present
    c. No Person in Authority may drive a vehicle alone with an Athlete unless the Person in Authority is the Athlete's parent or guardian
    d. A Person in Authority may not share a room or be alone in a hotel room with an athlete unless the Person in Authority is the athlete's parent or guardian
    e. Room or bed checks during overnight stays must be done by two Persons in Authority
    f. For overnight travel when athletes share a hotel room, roommates will be age-appropriate (e.g., within 2 years of age) and of the same gender identity

Locker Room / Changing Area / Meeting Room

8. For locker rooms, changing areas and other closed meeting spaces, the club recommends:
    a. Interactions between a Person in Authority and an individual athlete should not occur in any room where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy such as the locker room, meeting room, restroom, or changing area. A second Person in Authority should be present for any necessary interaction in any such room
    b. If Persons in Authority are not present in the locker room or changing area, or if they are not permitted to be present, they should still be available outside the locker room or changing area and be able to enter the room or area if required

Photography / Video

9. For all photography and video of an Athlete, the club recommends:
    a. Parents/guardians should sign a photo release form (i.e., as part of the registration process) that describes how an athlete's image may be used by the club
    b. Photographs and video may only be taken in public view, must observe generally accepted standards of decency, and be both appropriate for and in the best interest of the athlete.
    c. The use of recording devices of any kind in rooms where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy is strictly prohibited.
    d. Examples of photos that should be edited or deleted include:
        i. Images with misplaced apparel or where undergarments are showing
        ii. Suggestive or provocative poses
        iii. Embarrassing images

Physical Contact

10. The club understands that some physical contact between Persons in Authority and athletes may be necessary for various reasons including, but not limited to, teaching a skill or tending to an injury. For physical contact, the club recommends:

a. Unless it is not possible because of serious injury or other circumstance, a Person in Authority should always clarify with an athlete where and why any touch will occur. The Person in Authority must make clear that they are requesting to touch the athlete and not requiring the physical contact
b. Infrequent, non-intentional physical contact, particularly contact that arises out of an error or a misjudgment on the part of the athlete during a training session, is permitted
c. Making amends, such as an apology or explanation, is encouraged to further help educate athletes on the difference between appropriate and inappropriate contact
d. Hugs lasting longer than 5 seconds, cuddling, physical horseplay, and physical contact initiated by the Person in Authority is not permitted. The club is aware that some younger athletes may initiate hugging or other physical contact with a Person in Authority for various reasons (e.g., such as crying after a poor performance), but this physical contact should always be limited.

Reporting Inappropriate Behaviour & Child Sexual Abuse

11. The following are quick steps for reporting from the Canadian Centre for Child Protection's Commit to Kids Program. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list or replace legal advice. Users are strongly encouraged to consult with any or all of child welfare, law enforcement, and legal counsel as appropriate to a given situation.
    a. *Reporting Inappropriate Conduct*
        i. A child discloses information or information is discovered indicating that a coach/volunteer may have acted inappropriately. Document the information.
        ii. Coach who receives the report notifies the ethics committee or technical directors. Document.
        iii. Technical director or ethics committee notifies the head of the organization.
        iv. Consultation between the ethics committee and the head of the organization to decide if concern is warranted. Document.
        v. If warranted, meet with accused coach/volunteer to discuss allegations and concerns. The individual is told about the complaint without disclosing the source. The individual is asked to respond to the allegation. Document.
        vi. If the head of the organization determines that the nature of the conduct is not sufficiently serious to warrant formal action, the organization may choose to clarify expectations with the coach/volunteer as outlined in the Code of Conduct. Document.
        vii. If the head of the organization determines that the nature of the conduct is sufficiently serious to warrant action, an internal follow-up takes place. Document.
        viii. Organization conducts an internal follow up and is documented. Outcomes of the follow up:

1. ***Inappropriate conduct is not substantiated***. Follow internal policies. No further action necessary but organization may choose to take the opportunity to remind all coaches/volunteers of the Code of Conduct.
2. ***Inappropriate conduct is substantiated***. Next steps will depend on severity of the conduct, the nature of the information gathered during internal follow up, and other relevant circumstances (such as past inappropriate conduct of a similar nature). Varying levels of disciplinary action may be appropriate. For example, it may be prudent for an organization to report concerns to child welfare or law enforcement.
3. ***Inconclusive***. Next steps will need to be carefully considered and depend on the nature of the information gathered during the internal follow up. Work through options, assess the risk, and consult professionals as needed.

ix. Adequately supervise and monitor the coach/volunteer consistent with internal policies. Document.
x. *Note*: Consider when/if the child's parents should be notified about allegations of inappropriate conduct.

b. *Reporting Child Sexual Abuse*

i. Child discloses abuse or abuse is discovered with the adult involved in the abuse being a coach/volunteer. Document the information.
ii. Coach/volunteer who receives disclosure notifies law enforcement and/or child welfare about the incident; consults with child welfare about notifying parents; and notifies the supervisor/manager who in turn notifies the head of the organization. Document.
iii. Head of the organization/manager suspends the coach/volunteer suspected of abuse with or without pay until the case is resolved. Seek legal guidance prior to suspension and/or dismissal. If the individual is a volunteer or unpaid staff, consider if the individual should be dismissed from their position immediately. Document.
iv. A child welfare agency and/or police carry out an investigation. Organization should conduct an internal follow up in consultation with police/child welfare and adjust internal policies if needed. Potential outcomes of investigation:

1. ***Substantiated/guilty***. Coach/volunteer is dismissed from their position.
2. ***Inconclusive/not guilty***. Seek legal counsel. Consider if coach/volunteer should be dismissed, with or without severance.
3. *Note:* Criminal processes can be complex and lengthy. A finding of not guilty may not necessarily mean that the abuse did not occur.

Consult with a lawyer for this and prior to suspension and/or dismissal.

v. Document the outcome of the investigation on an incident report form. Document the results of the internal follow up.