



SafeSport Handbook

A strategy for recognizing, reducing and responding to child sexual abuse and other misconduct in recreational activities.

All educational material, forms and online reporting can be found on the East Grand Rapids website using the following link:

<http://www.eastgr.org/index.aspx?NID=472>

What

Relevant individuals (e.g., those individuals who (1) have routine contact with or supervision over athletes and participants, (2) are responsible for enforcing child abuse and misconduct policies, (3) are in managerial or supervisory roles, and (4) are new and current staff members, employees, instructors, coaches, officials and/or volunteer), shall be provided educational material about child sexual abuse and other types of misconduct.

Why

Education is a key component of any prevention strategy. Awareness provides relevant participants with information necessary to more effectively monitor their sport or program, minimize the opportunities for child physical or sexual abuse and other types of misconduct and respond to concerns. It is also a strong public statement that the East Grand Rapids Parks & Recreation Department (“EGRPRD”) places a priority on athlete and participant safety.

Elements

Our policies and procedures require staff members, employees, instructors, coaches, officials and/or volunteers to report abuse, misconduct and violations of participants in any of our programs. To do so, staff members and/or volunteers should have a basic understanding of sexual abusers, as well as “grooming,” the most common strategy offenders use to seduce their victims. Using a combination of attention, affection and gifts, offenders select a child, win the child’s trust (and the trust of the child’s parent or guardian), manipulate the child into sexual activity, and keep the child from disclosing abuse.

Accordingly, staff members and/or volunteers will be provided educational material concerning misconduct in sport before performing services for “EGRPRD”. Misconduct in sport includes:

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Hazing
- Emotional misconduct
- Physical misconduct, and
- Sexual misconduct, including child sexual abuse

PARTICIPANT & ATHLETE PROTECTION POLICY

Overview

In the event that any staff member, employee, instructor, coach, official or volunteer observes inappropriate behaviors (i.e., policy violations), suspected physical or sexual abuse, or misconduct, it is

the personal responsibility of each staff member, employee, instructor, coach, official and volunteer to immediately report his or her observations to an immediate supervisor, an “EGRPRD” administrator.

The “EGRPRD” is committed to creating a safe and positive environment for athletes’ and participants’ physical, emotional and social development and to ensure it promotes an environment free of misconduct.

Staff members, employees, instructors, coaches, officials and volunteers should not attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of child physical or sexual abuse allegations as a condition for reporting to appropriate law enforcement authorities. Instead, it is the responsibility of each staff member, employee, instructor, coach, official and volunteer to immediately report suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse to an immediate supervisor, administrator or a member of East Grand Rapids Parks & Recreation Department.

The “EGRPRD” recognizes that the process for training and motivating athletes and participants will vary with each instructor, coach and participant, athlete, but it is nevertheless important for everyone involved in programs and sports to support the use of motivational and training methods that avoid misconduct.

This Policy applies to

- Staff members, employees, instructors, coaches, officials, contractors and volunteers
- “EGRPRD” athletes, participants

Staff members, employees, instructors, coaches, officials, volunteers, athletes, adults and participants shall refrain from all forms of misconduct, which include:

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Hazing
- Emotional misconduct
- Physical misconduct
- Sexual misconduct, including child sexual abuse

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

Child Sexual Abuse

- (1) Any sexual activity with a child where consent is not or cannot be given. This includes sexual contact with a child that is accomplished by deception, manipulation, force or threat of force, regardless of the age of the participants, and all sexual interactions between an adult and a

child, regardless of whether there is deception or the child understands the sexual nature of the activity.

Note concerning peer-to-peer child sexual abuse: Sexual contact between minors also can be abusive. Whether or not a sexual interaction between children constitutes child sexual abuse turns on the existence of an aggressor, the age difference between the children, and/or whether there is an imbalance of power and/or intellectual capabilities.

(2) Any act or conduct described as child sexual abuse under federal or state law.

Examples

Sexually abusive acts may include sexual penetration, sexual touching or non-contact sexual acts such as verbal acts, sexually suggestive electronic or written communications, exposure or voyeurism.

Emotional Misconduct

(1) A pattern of deliberate, non-contact behavior that has the potential to cause emotional or psychological harm to an athlete or participant. Non-contact behaviors include:

- (a) verbal acts
- (b) physical acts
- (c) acts that deny attention or support

(2) Any act or conduct described as emotional abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. child abuse, child neglect).

Exception

Emotional misconduct does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, discipline or improving athletic performance.

Examples of emotional misconduct prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation:

(1) **Verbal Acts.** A pattern of verbal behaviors that (a) attack an athlete or 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 training or motivational purpose.

(2) **Physical Acts.** A pattern of physically aggressive behaviors, such as (a) throwing sport equipment, water bottles or chairs at, or in the presence of, participants; or (b) punching walls, windows or other objects.

- (3) Acts that Deny Attention and Support. A pattern of (a) ignoring an athlete or participant for extended periods of time or (b) routinely or arbitrarily excluding participants from practice or programming.

Note: Bullying, harassment, and hazing, defined below, often involve some form of emotional misconduct.

Physical Misconduct

- (1) Contact or non-contact conduct that results in, or reasonably threaten to, cause physical harm to an athlete or other participants; or
- (2) Any act or conduct described as physical abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. child abuse, child neglect, assault).

Exceptions

Physical misconduct does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline or improving athlete performance. For example, hitting, punching, and kicking are well-regulated forms of contact in combat sports, but have no place in swimming.

Examples

Examples of physical misconduct prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation:

- (1) Contact offenses. Behaviors that include:
 - (a) punching, beating, biting, striking, choking or slapping an athlete or participant;
 - (b) intentionally hitting a participant with objects or sporting equipment;
 - (c) providing alcohol to a participant under the legal drinking age (under U.S. law);
 - (d) providing illegal drugs or non-prescribed medications to any participant;
 - (e) encouraging or permitting an athlete to return to play pre-maturely following a serious injury (e.g., a concussion) and without the clearance of a medical professional;
 - (f) prescribing dieting or other weight-control methods (e.g., weigh-ins, caliper tests) without regard for the nutritional well-being and health of athlete.
- (2) Non-contact offenses. Behaviors that include:
 - (a) isolating an athlete in a confined space (e.g., locking an athlete in a small space);
 - (b) forcing an athlete to assume a painful stance or position for no athletic purpose (e.g. requiring an athlete to kneel on a harmful surface);

- (c) withholding, recommending against or denying adequate hydration, nutrition, medical attention or sleep.

Note: Bullying, harassment and hazing, defined below, often involve some form of physical misconduct.

Sexual Misconduct

- (1) Any touching or non-touching sexual interaction that is (a) nonconsensual or forced, (b) coerced or manipulated, or (c) perpetrated in an aggressive, harassing, exploitative or threatening manner;
- (2) Any sexual interaction between an athlete or participant and an individual with evaluative, direct or indirect authority. Such relationships involve an imbalance of power and are likely to impair judgment or be exploitative; or
- (3) Any act or conduct described as sexual abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, rape)

Note: An imbalance of power is always assumed between a coach and an athlete.

Types of sexual misconduct include:

- (1) sexual assault,
- (2) sexual harassment,
- (3) sexual abuse, or
- (4) any other sexual intimacies that exploit an athlete or participant. Minors cannot consent to sexual activity with an adult, and all sexual interaction between an adult and a minor is strictly prohibited.

Examples of sexual misconduct prohibited under this Policy include, without limitation:

- (1) Touching offenses. Behaviors that include:
 - (a) fondling an athlete's or participant's breasts or buttocks
 - (b) exchange of reward in sport or program (e.g., team placement, scores, feedback) for sexual favors
 - (c) genital contact
 - (d) sexual relations or intimacies between persons in a position of trust, authority and/or evaluative and supervisory control over athletes or other participants.
- (2) Authority and Trust. Once the unique coach-athlete or instructor-participant relationship is established, the authority and trust on the part of the coach/instructor over the

athlete/participant shall be assumed, regardless of age. Accordingly, sexual interaction or intimacies between a coach/instructor and an athlete or other participant are prohibited, regardless of age, both during coaching/instructing and during that period following coaching/instructing if an imbalance in power could jeopardize effective decision-making.

Imbalance of Power

- (1) Factors relevant to determining whether there is an imbalance of power include, but are not limited to:
 - (a) the nature and extent of the coach's or instructor's supervisory, evaluative or other authority over the athlete/participant
 - (b) the actual relationship between the parties
 - (c) the parties' respective roles
 - (d) the nature and duration of the sexual relations or intimacies
 - (e) the age of the coach or instructor
 - (f) the age of the athlete or participant
 - (g) and whether the coach or instructor has engaged in a pattern of sexual interaction with other athletes or participants
- (2) Exception. This section does not apply to a pre-existing relationship between two spouses or life partners.
- (3) Non-touching offenses. Behaviors that include:
 - (a) a coach or instructor discussing his or her sex life with a participant
 - (b) a coach or instructor asking a participant about his or her sex life
 - (c) coach or instructor requesting or sending a nude or partial-dress photo to participant
 - (d) exposing participant to pornographic material
 - (e) sending participants sexually explicit or suggestive electronic or written messages or photos (e.g. "sexting")
 - (f) deliberately exposing a participant to sexual acts
 - (g) deliberately exposing an athlete to nudity (except in situations where locker rooms and changing areas are shared)

- (h) sexual harassment; specifically, the sexual solicitation, physical advances, or verbal or nonverbal conduct that is sexual in nature, and
- is unwelcome, offensive or creates a hostile environment, and the offending individual knows or is told this
 - is sufficiently severe or intense to be harassing to a reasonable person in the context

Bullying

- (1) An intentional, persistent and repeated pattern of committing or willfully tolerating physical and nonphysical behaviors that are intended, or have the reasonable potential, to cause fear, humiliation or physical harm in an attempt to socially exclude, diminish or isolate the targeted athlete(s), as a condition of membership
- (2) Any act or conduct described as bullying under federal or state law

Exceptions

Bullying does not include group or team behaviors that (a) are meant to establish normative team behaviors, or (b) promote team cohesion.

For example, bullying does not include verbal admonitions to encourage team members to train harder and to push through a difficult training regimen.

Examples of bullying prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation:

- (1) Physical behaviors. Behaviors that include (a) hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, choking, or slapping an athlete or participant; (b) throwing at, or hitting an athlete or participant with, objects such as sporting equipment.
- (2) Verbal and emotional behaviors. Behaviors that include (a) teasing, ridiculing, intimidating; (b) spreading rumors or making false statements; or (c) using electronic communications, social media, or other technology to harass, frighten, intimidate or humiliate (“cyber bullying”).

Harassment

- (1) A repeated 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 athlete or participant or group based on gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression or mental or physical disability; or
- (2) Any act or conduct described as harassment under federal or state law

Examples of harassment prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation:

- (1) Physical offenses. Behaviors that include
 - (a) hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, choking or slapping an athlete or participant
 - (b) throwing at or hitting an athlete or participant with objects including sporting equipment
- (2) Non-physical offenses. Behaviors that include
 - (a) making negative or disparaging comments about an athlete's sexual orientation, gender expression, disability, religion, skin color, or ethnic traits
 - (b) displaying offensive materials, gestures, or symbols
 - (c) withholding or reducing playing time to an athlete based on his or her sexual orientation

Hazing

- (1) Coercing, requiring, forcing or willfully tolerating any humiliating, unwelcome or dangerous activity that serves as a condition for (a) joining a group or (b) being socially accepted by a group's members; or
- (2) Any act or conduct described as hazing under federal or state law

Exception

Hazing does not include group or team activities that (a) are meant to establish normative team behaviors or (b) promote team cohesion.

Examples of hazing prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation:

- (1) requiring, forcing or otherwise requiring the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs
- (2) tying, taping or otherwise physically restraining an athlete or participant
- (3) sexual simulations or sexual acts of any nature
- (4) sleep deprivation, otherwise unnecessary schedule disruption or the withholding of water and/or food
- (5) social actions (e.g. grossly inappropriate or provocative clothing) or public displays (e.g. public nudity) that are illegal or meant to draw ridicule
- (6) beating, paddling or other forms of physical assault
- (7) excessive training requirements focused on individuals on a team

Comment: Activities that fit the definition of hazing are considered to be hazing regardless of an athlete's willingness to cooperate or participate.

WILLFULLY TOLERATING MISCONDUCT

It is a violation of this Participants & Athlete Protection Policy if a staff member, employee, instructor, coach, official and/or volunteer knows of misconduct, but takes no action to intervene on behalf of the athlete(s), participant(s), staff member, employee, instructor, coach, official, and/or volunteer.

REPORTING

Although these policies are designed to reduce child sexual abuse and other misconduct, it can still occur. Staff members, employees, instructors, coaches, officials, volunteers and participants of the "EGRPRD" shall follow the reporting procedures set forth by the East Grand Rapids Parks & Recreation Department's Reporting Policy. The "EGRPRD" does not investigate suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse, or attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of such allegations, as a condition of reporting suspicions or allegations to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

All educational material, forms and online reporting can be found on the East Grand Rapids website using the following link:

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VIOLATIONS

Violations of the Participants and Athlete Protection Policy shall be reported pursuant to our Reporting Policy and will be addressed under our Responding to Abuse, Misconduct and Policy Violations document.

SUPERVISION OF ATHLETES AND PARTICIPANTS

During training and competition, the "EGRPRD" strives to minimize one-to-one interactions to create a safe training/instructing environment and to protect athletes and participants.

APPROPRIATE ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS

Individual Meetings

An individual meeting may be necessary to address an athlete's concerns, training program, or competition schedule. Under these circumstances, coaches, staff members and/or volunteers are to observe the following guidelines:

- Any individual meeting should occur when others are present and where interactions can be easily observed
- Where possible, an individual meeting should take place in a publicly visible and open area, such as the corner of a gym or pool deck

- If an individual meeting is to take place in an office, the door should remain unlocked and open
- If a closed-door meeting is necessary, the coach, staff member and/or volunteer must inform another coach, staff member and/or volunteer and ensure the door remains unlocked

Individual Training Sessions

An individual training session(s) with an athlete or participant may also be desired or necessary. Under these circumstances, written permission of a minor athlete's parents or guardians is required in advance of the individual training session(s), and "EGRPRD" encourages parents and guardians to attend the training session.

PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH ATHLETES

Appropriate physical contact between athletes and coaches, staff members, contractors or volunteers is a productive and inevitable part of sport or instructing. Participants are more likely to acquire advanced physical skills and enjoy their sport or recreational activity participation through appropriate physical contact. However, guidelines for appropriate physical contact reduce the potential for misconduct in sport.

APPROPRIATE PHYSICAL CONTACT

The "EGRPRD" adheres to the following principles and guidelines in regards to physical contact with our participants:

Common Criteria for Appropriate Physical Contact

Physical contact with participants – for safety, consolation and celebration – has multiple criteria in common which make them both safe and appropriate. These include:

- the physical contact takes place in public
- there is no potential for, or actual, physical or sexual intimacies during the physical contact
- the physical contact is for the benefit of the athlete, not to meet an emotional or other need of an adult

Safety

The safety of our participants is paramount and in many instances we make the athletic space safer through appropriate physical contact. Examples include:

- spotting a participant so that they will not be injured by a fall or piece of equipment
- positioning an participant's body so that they more quickly acquire an athletic or recreational skill, get a better sense of where their body is in space, or improve their balance and coordination
- making participants aware that they might be in harm's way because of other participants practicing around them or because of equipment in use

- releasing muscle cramps

Celebration

Sports are physical by definition and we recognize participants often express their joy of participation, competition, achievement and victory through physical acts. We encourage these public expressions of celebration, which include:

- greeting gestures such as high-fives, fist bumps, and brief hugs
- congratulatory gestures such as celebratory hugs, “jump-arounds” and pats on the back for any form of athletic or personal accomplishment

Consolation

It may be appropriate to console an emotionally distressed participant (e.g., an athlete who has been injured or has just lost a competition). Appropriate consolation includes publicly:

- embracing a crying athlete
- putting an arm around an athlete while verbally engaging them in an effort to calm them down (“side hugs”)
- lifting a fallen athlete off the playing surface and “dusting them off” to encourage them to continue competition

PROHIBITED PHYSICAL CONTACT

Prohibited forms of physical contact, which shall be reported immediately under our Reporting Policy include, without limitation:

- asking or having a participant sit in the lap of a coach, administrator, staff member, employee, instructor, official or volunteer
- lingering or repeated embraces of athletes or participants that go beyond the criteria set forth for acceptable physical contact
- slapping, hitting, punching, kicking or any other physical contact meant to discipline, punish or achieve compliance from a participant
- “cuddling” or maintaining prolonged physical contact during any aspect of training, travel or overnight stay
- playful, yet inappropriate contact that is not a part of regular training, (e.g., tickling or “horseplay” wrestling)
- continued physical contact that makes an athlete obviously uncomfortable, whether expressed or not
- any contact that is contrary to a previously expressed personal desire for decreased or no physical contact, where such decreased contact is feasible in a competitive training environment

VIOLATIONS

Violations of these policies must be reported to a supervisor or administrator of the "EGRPRD" and violations will be addressed under our Disciplinary Procedures. Some forms of physical contact may constitute child physical or sexual abuse that must be reported to appropriate law enforcement authorities.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

As part of the East Grand Rapids Parks & Recreation Department's emphasis on athlete and participant safety, all electronic communications between a coach/instructor and athlete/participant must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about sport or recreational activities.

As with any communication, the content of any electronic communication should be readily available to share with the athlete's or participant's family. At the request of a parent or guardian, any email, electronic text, social media or similar communication will copy or include the participant's parents or guardians.

FACEBOOK, MYSPACE, BLOGS AND SIMILAR SITES

Instructors or coaches may not have participants of East Grand Rapids Parks & Recreation Department's programs join a personal social media page.

TWITTER, INSTANT MESSAGING AND SIMILAR MEDIA

Instructor, coaches and participants may "follow" each other. Instructors and coaches cannot "re-tweet" participant message posts. All posts between coach/instructor and participant must be for the purpose of communicating information about team or program activities.

EMAIL AND SIMILAR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

Participants and instructors/coaches may use email to communicate. All email content between instructor/coach and participant must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team or program activities.

TEXTING AND SIMILAR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

Texting is allowed between instructors, coaches and participants. All texts between instructor/coach and participant must be professional and for the purpose of communicating information about program or team activities.

MISCONDUCT

Social media and electronic communications can also be used to commit misconduct (e.g., emotional, sexual, bullying, harassment, and hazing). Such communications by coaches, instructors, staff, volunteers, administrators, officials, parents or athletes will not be tolerated and are considered violations of our Participant Safety Handbook.

VIOLATIONS

Violations of the "EGRPRD's" Electronic Communications and Social Media Policy should be reported to your immediate supervisor or administrator of the "EGRPRD" for evaluation. Complaints and allegations will be addressed under our Disciplinary Procedures.

LOCKER ROOMS AND CHANGING AREAS POLICY

The following guidelines are designed to maintain personal privacy as well as to reduce the risk of misconduct in locker rooms and changing areas. When we travel for competition the facilities may differ from location to location.

MONITORING

"EGRPRD" has predictable and limited use of locker rooms and changing areas (e.g., immediately before and following practices and competitions). This allows for direct and regular monitoring of locker room areas. While constant monitoring inside of locker rooms and changing areas might be the most effective way to prevent problems, we understand that this would likely make athletes uncomfortable and may even place our staff at risk for unwarranted suspicion.

While we do not post staff members inside or at the doors of the locker rooms and changing areas, we do make occasional sweeps of these areas. Staff members conduct these sweeps, with women checking on female-designated areas, and men checking on male-designated areas.

Coaches and staff 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, we will check on the athlete's whereabouts.

We discourage 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 the coach or administrator know about this in advance.

If an athlete needs assistance with his or her uniform or gear (for example, a child under the age of eight), or an athlete's disability warrants assistance, then we ask that parents let the coach or an administrator know beforehand that he or she will be helping the athlete.

MIXED-GENDER TEAMS

If the team consists of both male and female athletes, both female and male privacy rights must be given consideration and appropriate arrangements made. Where possible we try to have the male and female players dress/undress in separate locker rooms and then convene in a single dressing room before the game or team meeting. Once the game is finished, the players may come to one locker room and then the male and female players proceed to their separate dressing rooms to undress and shower (separately), if available. If separate locker rooms are not available, then the athletes will take turns using the locker room to change.

USE OF CELL PHONES AND OTHER MOBILE RECORDING DEVICES

Cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras increase the risk for different forms of misconduct in locker rooms and changing areas. As a result, ***THERE WILL BE NO USE OF A DEVICE'S RECORDING CAPABILITIES IN THE LOCKER ROOMS OR CHANGING AREAS.***

Violations of this policy will be addressed under the Disciplinary Rules and Procedure and may result in the sanctions as set forth therein, including temporary suspension from competition.

TRAVEL POLICY

LOCAL TRAVEL

Local travel will be a standard aspect of our competitive season and the "EGRPRD" has established policies to guide our travel minimize one-on-one interactions and reduce the risk of misconduct. Adherence to these travel guidelines will increase athlete safety and improve the competitive experience while keeping travel a fun and enjoyable experience.

Local travel occurs when the "EGRPRD" does not sponsor, coordinate, or arrange for travel. For local travel, participants/athletes or their parents/guardians (for minor participants) are responsible for making all travel arrangements. In these instances it is the responsibility of the participant/athlete or their parents/guardians (for minor participants) to ensure the person transporting the participant/athlete maintains all safety and legal requirements, including, but not limited to, a valid driver's license, proper insurance, well maintained vehicle, and compliance with all state laws.

In an effort to minimize one-on-one interactions, staff members, coaches, instructors and/or volunteers, who are not also acting as a parent, should not drive alone with an unrelated participant or athlete and should only drive with at least two other participants, athletes or another adult at all times, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the participant's or athlete's parent or guardian in advance of travel.

Coaches, staff members and volunteers who are also an athlete's guardian may provide shared transportation for any athlete(s). We encourage guardians to pick up their athlete first and drop off their athlete last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement. We also recommend completing a shared

travel declaration form signed by the parents/guardians of any minor athlete who is being transported as part of such a carpool arrangement.

Team Travel

Team travel is overnight travel that occurs occasionally so that teams can compete regionally. Because of the greater driving distances, coaches, volunteers, parents and chaperones will often travel with the athletes. However, no coach, or volunteer will engage in team travel without the proper safety requirements in place, including valid drivers' licenses, proper insurance, well-maintained vehicles and compliance with all state laws.

We encourage family members who wish to stay in the team hotel to do so. If family members do not stay in the same hotel, we encourage all athletes to call parents and guardians regularly and allow for any unscheduled calls by either the athlete or parent/guardian.

We encourage minimizing one-on-one time between a coach and athlete by:

- (1) Traveling with an additional coach or chaperone
- (2) Inviting parents/guardians to travel with their athlete (for athletes under age 18)

Depending on the nature of the travel and competition, these guidelines may include:

- (1) Compressing the travel schedule to reduce the number of nights athletes are away from home
- (2) Encouraging more frequent and unscheduled check-in phone calls initiated by parents/guardians (for minor athletes)
- (3) Complying with reasonable parental requests when a child is away from home without a guardian

When only one athlete and one coach travel to a competition, the athlete must have his or her parents' or legal guardian's written permission in advance to travel alone with the coach.

MIXED-GENDER AND MIXED-AGE TRAVEL

Many teams are made up of male and female athletes across various ages. Athletes will only share a room with other athletes of the same sex and age group. Athletes will also be grouped by age and sex for the purposes of assigning an appropriate chaperone. Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an athlete (unless the coach is the parent, guardian, or sibling of that particular athlete).

COACH AND STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

During team travel, coaches and parents will help athletes, fellow coaches and parents adhere to policy guidelines, including, without limitation, the Travel Policy, Locker Rooms and Changing Areas Policy and Reporting Policy.

When not practicing, training, competing, or preparing for competition, coaches and parents will monitor the activities of athletes and fellow coaches during team travel. Coaches will:

- (a) prepare athletes for team travel and make athletes aware of all expectations. Supplemental information will be given to parents/guardians of athletes who are considered inexperienced travelers, new or relatively new to team travel, or who are under the age of 14
- (b) familiarize themselves with all travel itineraries and schedules before the initiation of team travel
- (c) conform to, and monitor for others' adherence, the Athlete Protection Policy and all policies during team travel
- (d) encourage minor athletes to participate in regular, at least daily, scheduled communications with their parents/guardians
- (e) help athletes be on time for all team commitments (as possible)
- (f) assist with team travel logistical needs (as possible)
- (g) support chaperones and/or participate in the monitoring of athletes for adherence to curfew restrictions set based on age and competition schedule
- (h) ensure athletes are complying with hotel room restrictions based on gender or age bracket requirements
- (i) make certain that athletes are not alone in a hotel room with any adult apart from a family member; this includes coaches, staff and chaperones
- (j) not use drugs or alcohol in the presence of minors or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing their coaching duties
- (k) immediately report any concerns about physical or sexual abuse, misconduct, or policy violations
- (l) notify parents before taking any disciplinary action against a minor athlete if the athlete is traveling without his or her parents

PARENT OR GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

If parents/guardians accompany team travel to ensure that the athletes, coaches, and volunteers adhere to the East Grand Rapids Parks & Recreation Department's policy guidelines. While these include the travel policy, it also includes all other relevant policies contained in the Participant Safety Handbook.

Parents or guardians will monitor the activities of all coaches, volunteers and athletes during team travel. Specifically, parents or guardians will:

- (a) familiarize themselves with all travel itineraries and schedules before team travel
- (b) monitor for adherences to "EGRPRD" policies during team travel

- (c) encourage minor athletes to participate in regular, at least daily, scheduled communications with their parents/guardians
- (d) help athletes be on time for all team commitments (as possible)
- (e) assist coaches, staff and other volunteers with team travel logistical needs (as possible)
- (f) monitor athletes for adherence to curfew restrictions set based on age and competition schedule as listed in travel itinerary
- (g) ensure athletes comply with hotel room restrictions based on gender or age bracket requirements
- (h) make certain that athletes are not alone in a hotel room with any adult apart from a family member; this includes coaches, staff and chaperones
- (i) immediately report any concerns about sexual and physical abuse, misconduct or policy violations to an "EGRPRD" administrator

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