



Mokena Youth Athletic Association Mokena Burros

Social Media and Digital Communication with Young People Guidelines

Guidelines and requirements for coaches, Jr. Coaches, volunteers and Board Members

For the purpose of these guidelines, the term "Coach and Group" is used to apply to all adults working with participants of the Mokena Burros. Participants are all young persons of Grade School age participating in The Burros; Tackle Football, Cheerleading and or Flag Football.

For the purpose of these guidelines, electronic communication includes, but not limited to, contact with participants via email, text messaging, social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Snap Chat) and instant messaging systems.

Introduction

As technology develops, the internet and its range of services can be accessed through various devices including mobile phones, computers and game consoles. Although the internet has many positive uses, it provides the key method for the distribution of indecent images of children. Furthermore, social networking sites, chat rooms and instant messaging systems are increasingly being used by online predators to "sexually groom" children and young people. In addition, electronic communication is being used more and more by young people as a means of bullying their peers.

All adults working with participants for the Burros are required to adhere to the following guidelines which form part of the Mokena Youth Athletic Association's (Burros) Code of Conduct Policy

The Mokena Burros will investigate any Coach, Jr. Coach, Volunteer or Board Member (known as the Group) who is not adhering to this guideline.

General Practice

It is inappropriate for the Group to communicate on a *one on one* basis with participants under the age of 14 years by

- Text message
- E-mail
- Instant messaging or through social networking sites

Any and all electronic communication by the above methods shall be directed to the Parent or Legal Guardian of the participant only, without including the participant.

The Group should also limit all electronic communication to Burros related matters.

All members of the Group should always behave responsibly and respectfully when online or texting.

The Group shall not post or discuss unfavorable comments about coaches, athletes, volunteers, parents or the Burros.

Coaches and Jr. Coaches mobile phones should be turned off during practices and games except in the case where a mobile phone is used as a point of contact or for emergencies.

Text Messaging

- Text messaging is NOT the preferred method of communication between adults and young people. However, where they are used, they should be group (bundled) messages and should be sent to the Parent or Legal Guardian. Text messaging of participants is a violation of the Burros Code of Conduct.

Social Networking

Coaches shall NOT have participants under the age of 18 as their "friends" on social networking sites when the primary reason for the relationship is the Burros and they have a position of trust in relation to the participant. No member of the Group shall ask a participant to "friend" them on any social networking site. Should a participant in the Burros request to become a named friend on your social networking page or request that you become a named friend on their page you should decline if any of the below apply:

- You are part of the Group in a position of responsibility in the Burros
- You hold a position of trust and responsibility in the Burros

- Your contact with the participant is through the Burros. Consent of the parent/legal guardian of the participant does not apply within these guidelines.

A social network site should never be used as a medium by which to abuse or criticize Burros Members or other programs and to do so would be in breach of the Burros Code of Conduct and therefore subject to disciplinary action, up to and including removal from the position the person holds within the Burros.

The Group is advised to consider carefully what they post as some comments can be seen by friends of friends. This also applies to comments left on other people’s pages and the sharing of photographs. Consider your position as a role model in this area. Any and all comments or posting should never be to promote the success of an individual participant or a “few” of the participants. Any such comments or postings shall be in a positive manner and promote the Team or Squad as a whole.

The publishing of a photograph or video footage on a social networking site is governed by the same requirement as any other media and subject the same requirements as above.

Burros Facebook Page

The Burros Facebook page is set up for the Burros to promote its activities and success to the wider community, all members must be aware that this Page is visible to all users and should not contain information about the participants individually.

Guidelines to Group Members who have children that participate in the Mokena Burros

Many parents are part of social media networks that their children sign up to for security reasons. This enables them to view their child’s activity and help ensure the safety of their own child. The Burros will not prevent a parent who is also in the Group from using this form of protection for their child’s online activities. On sites such as Facebook, for example, this will give the parent access, via their child’s account, to all the participants listed as friends or followers of their child. Therefore, in such cases:

- The Group member should not have direct contact or communication with these participants.
- The Group member should not accept a participant as a friend on Twitter or Instagram/ etc.
- The Group member shall not follow participants
- The Group should block participants so as they are not visible to postings
- The Group member should never use the private messaging options on these sites to contact participants.

Any Member of the Group found to be in violation of these guidelines shall be suspended immediately by an Executive Board Member. That Executive Board Member shall convene a meeting of the Full Board to discuss the allegations/violations within 24 hours of the allegation or violation. The Group member shall be present at the meeting. Upon findings of the Board, disciplinary action shall be taken as deemed necessary including and up to termination of the Member from their permission. The Participants Parent or Legal Guardian shall also be present.

I, _____, a Coach, Volunteer and or Board Member, agree to abide by the terms of the Burros Social Media and Communication Guidelines and understand that I can be held liable for violation of these guidelines

_____ Date
Coach, Volunteer, Board Member

I, _____, a Jr. Coach, agree to abide by the terms of the Burros Social Media and Communication Guidelines and understand that I can be held liable for violation of these guidelines. I have signed this agreement in the presence of my Parent or Legal Guardian

_____ Date
Jr. Coach

_____ Date
Jr. Coaches Parent or Legal Guardian