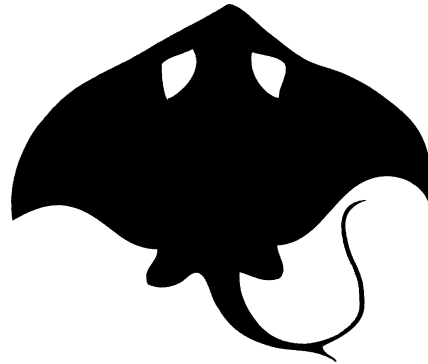




MJCC Stingrays

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MJCC Stingrays Swim Team Parent Handbook 2023-24

The Stingrays Swim Team's goal is to provide our athletes an open and welcoming atmosphere where they can not only expand their athletic abilities but also grow as community members. We challenge them physically, nurture them developmentally, and encourage them to build life-long relationships. The Stingrays coaches will help develop the character and self-discipline necessary to succeed not only in swimming but also in life away from the pool.

MEET OUR COACHES

The Stingrays coaches are a group of talented and dedicated professionals. Our coaches work on developing technique and endurance at a level appropriate for each practice group. The goal of the coaching staff is to provide a supportive and encouraging environment for each swimmer.

Head Coach, Jennie Condon, jcondon@oregonjcc.org

Jennie Condon joined the MJCC in early 2011 and started as the Stingrays' assistant coach in the fall of 2012, moving up to the head coach position in 2014. She is an American Swimming Coaches' Association Level 2 certified coach, a graduate of Hollins University in Virginia and a lifelong athlete and swimmer, including swimming competitively in high school and college. Her combined love of water and working with youth has led her to a 20-plus-year career in aquatics. She spends her time outside the pool horseback riding, reading, and checking out new perspectives on the world through her camera.

Assistant Coach, John Halvorson

John Halvorson joined the Stingrays in 2017 and loves being a part of the team at MJCC. He has been an avid swimmer since high school which has included swimming at Central Washington University as well as competitive sprint and Olympic length triathlons. John has always worked to be around the water including racing, swim instructing, lifeguarding, water skiing, and inner tubing! He spends his time outside of the pool skiing, riding his bike, camping, traveling, and spending time with his friends and miniature Aussie.

Assistant Coaches for Junior Rays, Tiana & Grace Julian

Long-time swimmers and swim mom and daughter, Tiana and Grace love working with young swimmers to develop their strokes and swimming knowledge. Tiana joined the Junior Rays in 2021 and Grace joined her in 2023. They bring a wealth of experience, joy, and empathy to the team.



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REGULAR SEASON PRACTICE SCHEDULE

Stingrays practice consists of in-water training along with occasional dryland exercises to increase strength, speed, endurance and flexibility. Each workout is tailored to the ability level of its target group. Generally speaking, the more experienced the swimmer, the longer they will be swimming.

Practice begins Oct. 2 for returning swimmers and Oct. 3 for new swimmers, and ends May 30, 2024.

Bronze (Beginner)
Mon-Thurs 4:45-5:30pm

Silver (Intermediate)
Mon-Thurs 5:30-6:30pm

Gold (Advanced)
Mon-Thurs 5:15-6:45pm
Fri 4:30-5:30pm

Note: Only the Head Coach may make practice group changes. In order for everyone to benefit fully from the program it is important that each swimmer practices with his or her specified group.

With rare exception, we practice every day that the MJCC is open through practice time, including during school breaks. Any changes to this schedule, including due to inclement weather, will be communicated via email with as much advance notice as is practical and possible.

SWIMMER EXPECTATIONS

We expect each swimmer to treat all participants, members, MJCC staff, coaches, other teams, and volunteers with respect and arrive at every practice and meet with a desire and willingness to work hard and have fun.

- Swimmers should be on deck ready to enter the water at the beginning of their practice time.
- Swimmers should never interfere with the progress of another swimmer, whether through actions or words.
- Swimmers should behave in a way that demonstrates good sportsmanship, sets a good example to other swimmers, and reflects positively on the team. Violent, sexist, racist, homophobic, illegal, or otherwise inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated.
- Swimmers should treat the facility and equipment with respect. Belongings not needed on the deck should be locked in lockers or kept neatly in a bag on the bleachers during practice. Swimmers should never be loud or disruptive in the locker rooms, and must obey age restrictions for saunas, steam rooms, and hot tubs.
- MJCC rules state that children age 12 and under must be accompanied by a responsible caregiver age 16 or older while on campus, unless they are actively participating in a program. If young swimmers want to come early or stay late, they must have an adult supervising them. (It is permissible for swimmers to be dropped off alone as long as they come directly to the pool deck for practice, spending only a reasonable amount of time in the locker rooms to change before and after.)
- Profanity and other inappropriate language or discussion topics are not allowed at practice, meets, or any other team functions.
- Bullying is prohibited. (Please see the attached Anti-Bullying Policy.)
- At meets, swimmers who disagree with an official's call should discuss their concerns with a Stingrays coach, and never directly with the official.
- **Swimmers who cannot adhere to these expectations may be asked to leave the team. We do not give refunds to swimmers dismissed for behavioral reasons.**



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EQUIPMENT

Each swimmer should bring goggles, a swim cap (not required for those with short hair, but highly encouraged for all), and a water bottle to practice each day.

For those new to the sport, we suggest going to a local shop where you can try on suits and goggles to make sure they fit properly for each swimmer. The number one complaint we hear at every single practice is about goggles that do not fit and thus leak or come off. To ensure your swimmer's enjoyment and success, please make sure that they have properly fitting goggles that are replaced at least yearly!

We recommend for practice, and require for meets, that boys wear jammers-style suits and girls wear one-piece suits. Please remember that swimming is a sport and suits should be chosen for their appropriateness as athletic gear, not for fashion! Suits with ties (other than drawstrings in jammers), buckles, zippers, or other metal/plastic parts (no matter how small) are not allowed in competition.

Swimsuits should fit snugly when purchased; they have a tendency to stretch and lose shape over time, so a suit bought large "to grow into" will usually end up too large for comfort and public appropriateness. Please keep an eye on your swimmer's suits so that they can be replaced before they become see-through or otherwise unacceptable. It is usual for a swimmer who comes to practice regularly to go through 2-3 good quality competition-style suits over the course of a season.

We recommend against shirts or rash guards in the pool, and they are illegal for competition unless a religious or other exception is applied for through USA Swimming and granted. These are great tools outdoors where they protect from sun and abrasions, but are not needed for those reasons indoors. They create a lot of drag and the weight inhibits good form with swimmer's arms. If your swimmer is not comfortable without a shirt, please try to find one that fits very snugly (it should be hard to get off when it's wet) and, if possible, has short sleeves.

Team suits and other gear are purchased individually by families through our two vendors. Q Swimwear (<https://qteamstore.com/collections/mjcc-stingrays>) has branded team suits* and other gear (new designs this year!) and SwimOutlet (<http://www.swimoutlet.com/mjccstingrays>) has some more simply branded items not available from Q, as well as some suggestions for practice suits and goggles. We get a credit from SwimOutlet for any gear purchased through the team link, even if it's not in our "store."

*A team suit is not required to swim in meets, but is nice for the swimmers to help them feel part of the team. **Q sizes are sometimes different from other brands; Coach Jennie will have a fit kit in her office through the end of October so that you can make sure your swimmer gets the right size!**

Latex Stingrays swim caps are provided to all swimmers; swimmers who attend meets may also be given a silicone cap if they would like one.



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ATTENDANCE

Stingrays practice is designed to promote the progress of swimmers as athletes in competitive swimming, with components of technique, fitness, and racing skills. The development of endurance, especially, requires that swimmers attend practice with some regularity. We do not have an attendance requirement, but suggest swimmers attend at least twice a week in order to benefit from the program, and more often if they can. If a swimmer will not be able to attend at least twice a week on average, we suggest they stay in swim lessons instead, as once a week is not enough to build the same level of fitness as the other swimmers, and practices will quickly become discouraging. We do not offer pro-rating or refunds for missed practices.

Tardiness - In order for each practice to run smoothly without interruption, it is important for swimmers to be on time to practice. If a swimmer consistently shows up to practice late, we will speak to the swimmer's parents to come up with a solution.

COMMUNICATION

E-MAIL

Our primary means of communication is e-mail. We will generally send out an email with updates and meet information at least once a month during the swim season. If you find you are not receiving emails from us or your email address changes please notify the Head Coach so that you don't miss out on any important information.

PARENT EXPECTATIONS

Our success depends on the support and involvement of our parents! In everything from getting swimmers to practice each day to spending long days at swim meets to volunteering at team functions and competitions, parental involvement is key. We will occasionally ask for volunteers for team events, and timers and officials* are always required at meets – please help out in whatever way you can, and don't hesitate to ask questions or share feedback with the coaches. Without parent volunteers from every team at every meet, our sport would not be able to continue.

*We encourage any parent who is interested to become an official: officials get to learn more about the sport and are an integral part of meet success, including increasing our chances of being invited back to meets. If you are interested, please let the coaches know and we will get you in touch with the right people to get started!

A few things for parents to keep in mind:

- Our coaches are professionals with a broad and deep understanding of competitive swimming and athlete training. Your questions are welcome, but please leave the coaching up to them!
- We expect everyone involved with the Stingrays to demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times and show respect and courtesy to the team members, coaches, competitors, officials, parents, and facilities.
- Only a coach may ever approach an official about a call at a meet.
- Encourage your swimmer and remind them kindly, when appropriate, of advice or instruction that the coaches have given them.
- As we work on details of technique, swimmers will sometimes temporarily slow down, lose focus on other parts of their stroke, or start to feel awkward. These things are completely normal and will result in even better swimming over time; please remind your swimmer of that and encourage him/her to speak to the coach with any questions or concerns.



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- Swimming is a sport made up of hundreds of tiny details – celebrate all accomplishments with your swimmer, even those that seem small!
- The 10 & under age group are the most inconsistent of all swimmers: one day they are finishing with top times and the next day they look like they forgot how to swim! This inconsistency can be frustrating for parents, coaches, and swimmers alike, but it is totally ordinary. Patience and positivity are the keys to getting through this developmental phase.
- Remember that not every time will be a personal record. Plateaus are a regular part of swimming (and, perhaps counterintuitively, tend to become more frequent as swimmers get older and better), and our focus is on improvement over time, not just a single meet or time trial. Be supportive of “bad” meets and remind your swimmer of how far they have come.
- Criticizing, name-calling, use of abusive language or gestures directed toward coaches, officials, volunteers, swimmers, or anyone else will not be tolerated, nor will sexism, racism, homophobia, transphobia, or other offensive language or behavior.
- **If parents cannot adhere to these expectations, their swimmers may be asked to leave the team. We do not give refunds to swimmers dismissed for parent behavior.**

MEETS

We participate in about one USA Swimming-sanctioned “away” meet each month, beginning in November and continuing through May. (Meet information will be distributed separately, as it becomes available.) Entries are completed by the coaching staff for each meet; we will announce sign-ups via email 4-6 weeks prior to each competition. While meet attendance is not required, we do expect that every swimmer will try to make it to at least two meets over the course of the season, as meets provide the best way for swimmers and coaches to chart progress throughout the season. There are additional fees for meets; these are usually under \$60. Please be aware that entries cannot be altered after the deadline, and once entered, families are responsible for paying meet fees even if their swimmer does not make it to the meet.

QUALIFYING MEETS

Some meets have time qualifications that must be met in order to compete. The coaching staff will inform swimmers and parents if they are close to a qualifying time for any event. Qualifying time standards for state championship meets are posted on the Stingrays bulletin board on the pool deck.

SAFESPORT

The US Center for SafeSport is a federally-mandated organization focused on ending abuse in sports. Their mandate is to safeguard athletes from bullying, harassment, hazing, physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, and sexual misconduct. As part of the Olympic Movement, USA Swimming falls under their purview, and thus we have some specific policies that we are required to distribute and implement. We are further required to obtain written acknowledgement of these policies from all athletes, parents, and non-athlete members (see registration paperwork).

Attached to this handbook you will find our Anti-Bullying, Photography, and Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies. We are required to adopt the MAAPP in whole, even though parts of it do not currently apply to how we run our team. For example, we do not have team health care professionals or masseuses, and when we go to meets, each family is responsible for their own transportation and accommodation (we do not organize or supervise travel). Nonetheless, if we were at some point in the future to offer those services, we would do so only in compliance with the regulations outlined in the MAAPP.



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For our swimmers who are also lifeguards at the MJCC, an additional Dual Relationship Consent form will be required each year, so that parents are not involved in work-related matters. If, after reading the attached MAAPP, you feel that a dual relationship (as defined in the policy) exists between your swimmer and an adult member of USA Swimming (regardless of whether that adult is with the Stingrays or another team), please let the Head Coach know so that we can get the appropriate paperwork on file.

Anyone (member or non-member) who has knowledge of any potential SafeSport violations can and should file a report at <https://www.usaswimming.org/safe-sport/report-a-concern>.

SAFESPORT/ATHLETE PROTECTION TRAINING

ALL adult athletes are required to take the Athlete Protection Training course via the USA Swimming website on or before their 18th birthdays. This training must be repeated every 12 months. Athletes who do not stay up-to-date are not eligible to participate in USA Swimming events, including meets and practices. Athletes (and non-athlete USA Swimming members) need to go to their own SWIMS (USA Swimming) account and click on "Education," and then navigate to the correct course. If you take another version of the course or create a non-member account, it will not upload under your membership and you will have to take it over again.

Note that when athletes turn 18, parents will need to delink them from the parent account by logging in, clicking on the athlete in question, and following the prompts. After that, the athlete can create their own account by going to the team link and following the directions to put in their athlete ID number.

Parents and minor athletes can also find free courses on their accounts. We encourage everyone to take advantage of these opportunities to help us create a safe environment for all athletes, both on the Stingrays and beyond.

FROM THE COACHES

We are confident that we are going to have an amazing season! Our door is always open to both swimmers and parents and we encourage your feedback. Our hope is that together we can provide your swimmer with a positive experience that will not be forgotten and help them nurture friendships that will last in the years to come. Thank you for the opportunity to work with your child and for our new swimmers, **WELCOME TO THE TEAM!**



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Swim Meets 101

Meets are a great chance for swimmers to have fun, hang out with friends, and measure progress, as well as for coaches to evaluate both individuals and the group, identifying strengths and weaknesses that may not be immediately apparent during practice. Our focus is on technique and performance relative to the swimmer's previous personal bests – both time and technique – not overall placing. We do not require attendance at meets, but expect that every swimmer will try to attend at least two meets over the course of the season – and we encourage everyone to compete as often as they can.

We register for swim meets about a month in advance by sending out an email with the details of the meet and what the registration deadline is; all parents need to do is reply via email or tell us at practice whether their swimmer will be attending and which day(s). Meets are usually Saturday and Sunday, with an occasional Friday. It is normal for new families to choose one day or the other, though we encourage doing both days when possible. Swim meets usually cost under \$60 (including a \$10 coaching fee), which will be automatically charged to your account. Once the deadline has passed we cannot take new registrations and existing ones will be charged, even if a swimmer does not attend.

Once swimmers are registered, the coaches will decide what events they will swim. Sometimes we will enter swimmers in events that are not their favorites or even where we know they will be disqualified as their technique may not yet be correct. We do this to create well-rounded swimmers who are motivated to continue to improve in all strokes, and we get (unofficial) times even from races that result in disqualification.

Swimmers should pack:

- ✓ swimsuit (one-piece for girls, jammers for boys; no external ties or metal/plastic parts)
- ✓ two pairs of properly-fitting goggles (goggles that leak or fall off lead to poor starts, slow races, and frustrated swimmers)
- ✓ Stingrays swim cap (even if they don't wear one at practice)
- ✓ at least two towels
- ✓ warm clothes (bathrobe/fleece/coat/etc) to wear between races
- ✓ healthy snacks and water
- ✓ books, games, etc to keep entertained between races
- ✓ camp chairs for both spectators and swimmers (don't count on a bleacher seat)

Spectators should come prepared for a lot of downtime and for the venue to be uncomfortably warm even when it is cold outside. USA Swimming rules prohibit parents from the pool deck, but there are always spectator seating areas; swimmers can sit with their parents once they have dried off after each race, or they can sit with teammates on the deck.



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Swimmers should arrive at the pool in time to be ready to get in the water when warm-ups start. The time varies, but will be emailed to everyone in the week prior to the meet. Swimmers who are later may miss their opportunity to warm up. Some parents like to have their swimmers come in their suits and some like to have them change at the pool (all the pools where we compete have access to locker rooms; in no case should a swimmer ever change on deck, even behind towels or under other clothes).

We warm up by swimming a short workout and then practicing a few starts. Warm-ups last about an hour, but depending on how busy the pool is we may start late or finish early. When swimmers arrive they should be able to spot their coach on the deck; they can come over once they are ready so we can get everyone into the water on time.

Heat sheets will be for sale at the meet or provided online and tell the order of races, the swimmers in each, and sometimes roughly when each event should start (times should be considered estimates only). We suggest downloading the app "Meet Mobile" to have access to heat sheets for most (though not all) of the meets we attend. Parents should use a Sharpie to write swimmers' races, heats, and lanes on their arms, so that no one has to memorize. (See the next page for examples.) While coaches can help with this the first time, we do not have time to write races on the arms of twenty swimmers before warm-ups, so we need parents to take on this task until swimmers are old enough to do it themselves.

Our 8 & under swimmers will usually go to a bullpen before the start of each race, and meet volunteers will make sure they get to their race after that. If swimmers are sitting with their parents, they should keep track of where the meet is and make sure they get to their races with time to spare. (Bear in mind the length of races varies: a heat of the 500 free may take 7 minutes, whereas a heat of the 50 free will take under a minute.) We try to walk the first-time swimmers over to the starting blocks for their races, but with many swimmers to coach we can't do that for everyone. As swimmers gain experience, getting themselves to the right place at the right time – and sometimes experiencing the consequence of missing a race if they do not – is one of the many life skills taught by competitive swimming.

Meet sessions are split up by age (usually – but not always – younger swimmers in the morning and older in the afternoon) and usually last about four hours. During that time, each swimmer will have three or four races. Swim meets at first will seem very chaotic, loud, and confusing! The good news is that the chaos and confusion (though not the volume) diminish with experience. There will be other Stingrays parents there who have been doing this for years, too, and they are always happy to answer questions and explain what is happening.



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Parents have another important role at swim meets: as timers and officials. Anyone can and should sign up to take a timing shift at a meet; sign ups can usually be found on a wall behind the blocks or at a table near the entrance. All you have to do is push a couple of buttons, and instructions will be provided if it is your first time. We often have assigned lanes for our team to time at meets, and parents are expected to step up to the task so that the meet can continue. Officials, on the other hand, go through a comprehensive training process before they are expected to perform on their own. Officials get to learn more about the sport and are an integral part of meet success, including increasing our chances of being invited back to meets. Anyone who is interested in becoming an official at any time should let the coaches know, and we will get you started!

Once swimmers have completed all of their own events for the day, they are free to go. Some swimmers like to stay and cheer for their friends, and while it is great to see such team spirit, it is not required. Preliminary results are usually posted at the meet, but final results and awards – if any – are sent in the weeks following. We post results on our bulletin board at the pool and hand out any awards at practice. Most meets only have awards to 6th or 8th place, and races often have thirty or more competitors, so most swimmers do not receive a ribbon: all the more reason to focus on time and technique improvements rather than overall standing.

Finally, a note about relays: relays are a chance for swimmers to compete together as a team. Relays are a lot of fun, but in order enter we have to have enough swimmers of the right age and sex attending the meet the same day. Meets have differing requirements (and some don't have relays at all), so our ability to field relay teams varies. If a swimmer is entered in a relay and does not to come or leaves before the relays, none of the other swimmers on that team will be able to swim in the event, either.

As always, if there are any questions, coaches are available on the pool deck or via email. We'll see you at the pool!

How to decode heat sheets and mark a swimmer's arm:

Event number	#40 Boys 13-14 50 Yard Freestyle					Event name
Heat	Lane	Name	Age	Team	Seed Time	
	Heat 1 of 5 Finals					
	3	Pelletier, Luca J	13	OCST-OR	NT	"No time" (no previous best on record)
	4	Hovhannisyan, Garegin G	13	LOSC-OR	34.09	
	5	Hawk, Caedon I	13	DDAC-OR	35.07	
	Heat 2 of 5 Finals					
	1	Keller, Christian J	13	CS-OR	31.68	
	2	Tran, Ricky K	13	DDAC-OR	31.21	
	3	Barber, Craig H	13	TDPS-OR	30.58	
	4	Maher, Jake H	13	SLST-OR	30.41	
	5	Brandell, Harrison	13	OCST-OR	30.57	
	6	Cozart, Zachary J	13	OCST-OR	30.93	
	7	Blair, Maxwell E	13	RACE-OR	31.60	
Lane	8	Kono, Ben H	13	STRY-OR	32.86	Previous best time

On swimmer's arm:			
[Event number]	[Heat]	[Lane]	[Event name]
E	H	L	
40	2	8	50 free
46	1	4	200 fly
55	6	1	100 back



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2023-2024 Tentative Meet Schedule

While this schedule is subject to revision based on a number of factors – most notably in that meets can be cancelled or be overfull and thus not accept our entries – below is our season plan as it currently stands.

October 7-8

FGSC Season Opener Pentathlon; Forest Grove
(open to returning swimmers only)

November 17-18 (13 & over Fri & Sat; 12 & under Sat only)

THSC Turkey Shoot Invitational; Beaverton
(open to returning swimmers only)

December 8-10 (only distance events Friday night)

FGSC Christmas Invitational; Forest Grove

January 19-21 (only distance events Friday night)

TTSC Winter Qualifier Invitational; Tualatin

February 11

Canby Last Chance Valentine Meet; Canby

February 17-18 (qualifying swimmers only)

Oregon Swimming 10 & Under Championships; TBD

February 22-25 (qualifying swimmers only)

Oregon Swimming 11-14 Championships; TBD

February 29-March 3 (qualifying swimmers only)

Oregon Swimming Senior Championships (15 & over); TBD

March 9-10

Oregon City Spring Forward; Oregon City

April 27-28

GAC Spring Invitational; Camas, WA

May 11

Hood River Spring Sprinter Invitational; Hood River

(Summer meet schedule TBA in late spring)



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Stingrays Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable on the MJCC Stingrays team and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. The Stingrays are 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.

Objectives of the Stingrays' Anti-Bullying Policy:

- To make it clear that the Stingrays will not tolerate bullying in any form.
- To define bullying and give all coaches, parents and swimmers a good understanding of what bullying is.
- To make it known to all parents, swimmers and coaching staff that there is a policy and protocol should any bullying issues arise.
- To make how to report bullying clear and understandable.
- To spread the word that the Stingrays take bullying seriously and that all swimmers and parents can be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct defines bullying in 304.3.7. Bullying is the severe or repeated use by one or more USA Swimming 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:

- i. causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member's property;
- ii. placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- iii. creating a hostile environment for the other member at any USA Swimming activity;
- iv. infringing on the rights of the other member at any USA Swimming activity; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any USA Swimming activity (which for the purposes of this section shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts and other events of a member club or LSC).



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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 their parents;
- Talk to a Stingrays coach;
- Write a letter or email to a Stingrays coach;
- Talk or write to the Aquatics Program Manager or their supervisor; or
- If these individuals have failed to take appropriate action in a reasonable period of time or the perpetrator is one of these individuals, make a report to the USA Swimming SafeSport staff.
 - SafeSport is always an option anyone should feel free to use at any point in the process. Our request is that when possible, athletes and families give us a chance to first address concerns at the team level so that we may do so quickly and with the benefit of our knowledge of all the athletes involved.

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 coach as soon as possible to make sure that memories are fresh, behavior can be accurately recalled, and any bullying can be stopped as soon as possible.

HOW WE HANDLE BULLYING

If bullying is occurring during team-related activities, our goal is to stop bullying on the spot. We:

1. Intervene immediately. We may ask another adult to help.
2. Separate the athletes involved.
3. Make sure everyone is safe.
4. Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
5. Stay calm. Reassure the children involved, including bystanders.
6. Model respectful behavior when we intervene.

If bullying is occurring on our team or it is reported to be occurring on our team, we address the bullying by finding out what happened and supporting the swimmers involved using the following approach:

FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED

1. First, we get the facts. We:
 - a. Keep all the involved children separate.
 - b. Get the story from several sources, both adults and children.
 - c. Listen without blaming.
 - d. Don't call the act "bullying" while we are trying to understand what happened.
 - e. Understand it may be difficult to get the whole story, especially if multiple athletes are involved or the bullying involves social bullying or cyberbullying, so we collect all available information.



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2. Then, we 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. We:
 - a. Review the USA Swimming definition of bullying;
 - b. Determine if the behavior is bullying or something else, considering the following questions:
 - What is the history between the swimmers involved?
 - Have there been past conflicts?
 - Is there a power imbalance? 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 children who are bullied may be seen as annoying or provoking, but this does not excuse the bullying behavior.

SUPPORTING THE ATHLETES INVOLVED

1. To support the swimmers who are being bullied, we:
 - a. Listen to and focus on the child. We learn what's been going on and show we want to help. We assure the child that bullying is not their fault and is not acceptable.
 - 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. To help, we may:
 - Ask the child being bullied what can be done to make them feel safe. Changes to routine will be minimized. They are not at fault and should not be singled out. If moves are necessary, such as switching lanes, the child who is bullied will not be forced to change, but will be allowed to change if they choose.
 - Develop a game plan. We maintain open communication between the team and parents. We discuss the steps that will be taken and how bullying will be addressed going forward.
 - c. Continue to monitor and intervene when needed. We know bullying may not end overnight, but we commit to making it stop and consistently support the bullied child.
2. To address bullying behavior with the child who bullied, we:
 - a. Make sure the child knows what the problem behavior is. We believe that young people who bully must learn their behavior is wrong and harms others.
 - b. Show swimmers that bullying is taken seriously. We calmly tell the child that bullying will not be tolerated and we model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.



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- c. Work with the child to understand some of the reasons they bullied. For example:
 - Sometimes children bully to fit in or to make fun of someone who is a little different from them. There may be some insecurity involved.
 - Other times children act out because something else—issues at home, abuse, stress—is going on in their lives. They also may have been bullied. These children may be in need of additional support themselves.
- d. Involve the athlete 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:
 - Write a letter apologizing to the athlete who was bullied.
 - Do a good deed for the person who was bullied, for the team, or for others in the community.
 - Clean up, repair, or pay for any property they damaged.
- e. Avoid strategies that don't work or have negative consequences:
 - Zero tolerance strategies don't work. Swimmers may be less likely to report and address bullying if suspension or getting kicked off the team is the immediate or primary consequence. Bullying behavior may also continue from a swimmer who is no longer on the team (in other locations or online), and we as a team are then unable to adequately address it, as that athlete is no longer within our purview.
 - Swimmers who bully may, nonetheless, be removed from the team if other interventions are unsuccessful, as we need to protect the whole team from disruptive and negative behavior at team events.
 - Conflict resolution and peer mediation don't work for bullying. Bullying is not a conflict between people of equal power who share equal blame. Keeping the parties to the bullying separate prevents the children who have been bullied from being further upset.



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Stingrays Photography Policy

PURPOSE

There has been much talk about whether it is safe to have images taken of children participating in sports. While the great majority of images are appropriate and are taken in good faith, it is a fact that images can be misused and children can be put at risk if common-sense procedures are not observed.

POLICY

The MJCC Stingrays' publication of a photograph or video of swimmer under 18 in locations or mediums accessible to those outside of the team will only be done with parent's/legal guardian's consent as indicated on the registration form.

In the case of open meets and other competitions where the host club has an official photographer present, all parents attending should be made aware of this by the host team. If photos are to be published anywhere, the host team should give the individual parent the opportunity to withhold their consent.

Families should not share outside of the team, via social media or any other means, photographs that include swimmers outside of their family, unless they have specific permission to do so from the parent/guardian of all minors involved.

All photographs must observe generally accepted standards of decency in particular:

- Action shots should be a celebration of the sporting activity and not a sexualized image in a sporting context.
- No photographs should not be taken or retained where the photograph reveals a torn or displaced swimsuit.
- Photographs must not be taken from behind swimming blocks at the start of a race or exhibit a child climbing out of the swimming pool.
- Photographs must not be taken in locker rooms or bathrooms.



Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy

Effective: September 1, 2021

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This Policy Applies To:

In-Program Contact: Any contact (including communications, interactions or activities) between an Adult Participant and any Minor Athlete(s) related to participation in sport. Examples include, but are not limited to: competition, practices, camps/clinics, training/instructional sessions, pre/post event meals or outings, team travel, video review, team- or sport-related team building activities, celebrations, award ceremonies, banquets, team- or sport-related fundraising or community services, sport education, competition site visits, conventions and/or summits.

Adult Participants: Any adult 18 years of age or older who is a:

- USA Swimming member, either athlete or non-athlete;
- Participating non-member (e.g., meet marshals, meet computer operators, timers, etc.);
- Authorized, approved or appointed by USA Swimming, Zones, Local Swimming Committees ("LSCs") or member clubs to have regular contact with (e.g., ongoing interactions during a 12-month period wherein the individual is in a role of active engagement) or authority over Minor Athletes; and/or
- Within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of USA Swimming, Zones, LSCs or member clubs.

General Requirement

USA Swimming Zones, LSCs and member clubs are required to implement this Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy in full. The Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy must be reviewed and agreed to in writing by all athletes, parents/legal guardians, coaches and other non-athlete members of member clubs on an annual basis with such written agreement to be retained by the club or LSC, as applicable.

Definitions

Athlete: A USA Swimming athlete member.

Authority: When one person's position over another person is such that, based on the totality of the circumstances, they have the power or right to direct, control, give orders to, or make decisions for that person (e.g., when a power imbalance exists).

Dual Relationship: When an Adult Participant has a relationship with a Minor Athlete that is outside of the sport program. Examples of Dual Relationships include, but are not limited to, family members, mental health professionals, teachers, medical professionals and family friends.

Emergency Circumstances: A serious, unexpected and possibly dangerous situation that requires quick action and cannot be avoided. Emergency circumstances include, but are not limited to: a physical, mental or emotional medical emergency involving the Minor Athlete, relative of the Minor Athlete or relative of an Adult Participant; a Minor Athlete's suicidal ideations/behavior; a report of abuse; a severe weather event; and last-minute practice changes.

Electronic Communication: Includes, but not limited to, phone calls, emails, videoconferencing, video coaching, text-messaging and social media.

Event or Facility Under Partial or Full Jurisdiction: Includes any USA Swimming sanctioned event (including all travel and lodging in connection with participation in the event) or any facility that USA Swimming, Zones, LSCs or member clubs owns, leases or rents for practice, training or competition.

In-Program: Activities related to participation in sport. Examples include, but are not limited to: competition, practices, meetings, camps/clinics, training/instructional sessions, pre/post event meals or outings, team travel, video review, team- or sport-related team building activities, celebrations, award ceremonies, banquets, team- or sport-related fundraising or community services, sport education, competition site visits, conventions, conferences, summits and/or workshops.

In-Program Contact: Any contact (including communications, interactions or activities) between an Adult Participant and any Minor Athlete(s) related to participation in sport. Examples include, but are not limited to contact occurring at or related to: competition, practices, meetings, camps/clinics, training/instructional sessions, pre/post event meals or outings, team travel, video review, team- or sport-related team building activities, celebrations, award ceremonies, banquets, team- or sport-related fundraising or community services, sport education, competition site visits, conventions, conferences, summits and/or workshops.

In-Program Massage: Any Massage involving an Adult Participant and any Minor Athlete(s) related to participation in sport. Examples include, but are not limited to Massage occurring at or related to: competition, practices, meetings, camps/clinics, training/instructional sessions, pre/post event meals or outings, team travel, video review, team- or sport-related team building activities, celebrations, award ceremonies, banquets, team- or sport-related fundraising or community services, sport education, competition site visits, conventions, conferences, summits and/or workshops.

In-Program Travel: Any transportation or travel involving an Adult Participant and any Minor Athlete(s) related to participation in sport authorized or funded by the Organization. Examples include, but are not limited to transportation or travel to or related to: competition, practices, meetings, camps/clinics, training/instructional sessions, pre/post event meals or outings, team travel, video review, team- or sport-related team building activities, celebrations, award ceremonies, banquets, team- or sport-related fundraising or community services, sport education, competition site visits, conventions, conferences, summits and/or workshops.

Massage: Any massage, rubdown, athletic training modality including physical modalities (e.g., stretching, physical manipulation, injury rehabilitation, etc.) and electronic or instrument assisted modalities (e.g., stim treatment, dry needling, cupping, etc.).

Minor Athlete: An athlete under 18 years of age who is a USA Swimming member or was a USA Swimming member within the previous 12 months.

Organization: MJCC Stingrays Swim Team

Exceptions

[Note: Exceptions apply only where specified]

Close-In-Age Exception: In-Program Contact between an Adult Participant and a Minor Athlete is permitted if:

- The Adult Participant has no authority over the Minor Athlete; and
- The Adult Participant is not more than four years older than the Minor Athlete.

Dual Relationship Exception: An Adult Participant has a dual role or relationship with a Minor Athlete. This exception requires written consent of the Minor Athlete's parent/legal guardian at least annually.

One-On-One Interactions

- **Observable and Interruptible**
All one-on-one In-Program Contact interactions between a Minor Athlete and an Adult Participant must occur at an observable and interruptible distance from another adult, except:
 - In emergency circumstances;
 - When a Dual Relationship exists; and/or
 - When the Close-In-Age Exception applies.

Meetings and Individual Training Sessions

- **Meetings**
 - Meetings between a Minor Athlete and an Adult Participant may only occur if another adult is present and where interactions can be easily observed and at an interruptible distance from another adult.
 - If a one-on-one meeting takes place, the door to the room must remain unlocked and open. If available, it must occur in a room that has windows, with the windows, blinds, and/or curtains remaining open during the meeting.
 - Meetings must not be conducted in an Adult Participant or Athlete's hotel room or other overnight lodging location during In-Program Travel.
- **Meetings with Licensed Mental Health Care Professionals and/or Health Care Providers**
If a licensed mental health care professional and/or health care provider meets one-on-one with a Minor Athlete at an Event or Facility Under Partial or Full Jurisdiction of the Organization in conjunction with participation, the meeting must be observable and interruptible by another adult, except if:
 - The door remains unlocked;
 - Another adult is present at the facility;
 - The other adult is advised that a closed-door meeting is occurring although the Minor Athlete's identity does not need to be disclosed;
 - The Organization is notified that the licensed mental health care professional and or health care provider will be meeting with a Minor Athlete; and
 - The licensed mental health care professional and/or health care provider obtains consent consistent with applicable laws and ethical standards, which can be withdrawn at any time.

- Individual Training Sessions
- In-Program one-on-one individual training sessions outside of the regular course of training and practice between Adult Participants and Minor Athletes must be observable and interruptible by another adult, except:
 - When a Dual Relationship exists; and/or
 - When the Close-In-Age Exception applies.
- The Adult Participant providing the individual training session must receive advance, written consent from the Minor Athlete's parent/legal guardian at least annually, with a copy provided to the , which can be withdrawn at any time.
- Parents/legal guardians must be allowed to observe the individual training session.

Electronic Communications

- Content
All Electronic Communication from Adult Participants to Minor Athletes must be professional in nature.
- Open and Transparent
 - If an Adult Participant communicates one-on-one with a Minor Athlete via Electronic Communications, the Minor Athlete's parent/legal guardian must be copied or included. If a Minor Athlete communicates to the Adult Participant privately first, said Adult Participant must copy or include the Minor Athlete's parent/legal guardian on any Electronic Communication response to the Minor Athlete. Adult Participants must only use Electronic Communication platforms that allow for Open and Transparent communication.
 - The following exceptions apply to Section II(a):
 - In emergency circumstances;
 - When a Dual Relationship exists; and/or
 - When the Close-In-Age Exception applies.
 - When an Adult Participant communicates electronically to the entire team or any number of Minor Athletes on the team, said Adult Participant must copy another Adult Participant.
- Requests to Discontinue
Parents/legal guardians may request in writing that their Minor Athlete not be contacted through any form of electronic communication by the Organization or by an Adult Participant subject to this Policy. The Organization must abide by any such request that the Minor Athlete not be contacted via electronic communication, or included in any social media post, absent emergency circumstances.
- Hours
Electronic communications must only be sent between the hours of 5:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. local time for the location of the Minor Athlete, unless emergency circumstances exist, or during competition travel.
- Prohibited Electronic Communication
 - Adult Participants are not permitted to maintain private social media connections with Minor Athletes and such Adult Participants are not permitted to accept new personal page requests on social media platforms from Minor Athletes, unless the Adult

Participant has a fan page, or the contact is deemed as celebrity contact as opposed to regular contact. Existing social media connections with Minor Athletes must be discontinued. Minor Athletes may “friend”, “like” or “follow” the Organization’s official page.

- Adult Participants must not send private, instant or direct messages to a Minor Athlete through social media platforms.
- The following exceptions apply to Section V:
- When a Dual Relationship exists; and/or
- When the Close-In-Age Exception applies.

In-Program Travel and Lodging

- Transportation
 - During In-Program Travel, observable and interruptible environments must be maintained.
 - An Adult Participant must not transport a Minor Athlete one-on-one during In-Program Travel and must always transport at least two Minor Athletes or another Adult Participant, except:
 - In emergency circumstances;
 - When a Dual Relationship exists;
 - When the Close-In-Age Exception applies; and/or
 - The Minor Athlete’s parent/legal guardian has provided, at least annually, written consent for the Adult Participant to transport the Minor Athlete one-on-one, which can be withdrawn at any time.
 - Adult Participants, including team managers and chaperones, who travel with the Organization must be USA Swimming non-athlete members of USA Swimming.
- Adult Participants who are parents/legal guardians of Minor Athletes must pick up their Minor Athlete first and drop off their Minor Athlete last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement.

- Lodging
 - An Adult Participant must not share hotel room, sleeping arrangement or overnight lodging location with an Athlete.
 - During In-Program Travel, all In-Program Contact in a hotel room, sleeping arrangement or overnight lodging location between an Adult Participant and a Minor Athlete must be observable and interruptible.
 - During In-Program Travel, when doing room checks, two-deep leadership (two Adult Participants should be present) and observable and interruptible environments must be maintained.
 - The following exceptions apply to II(a), (b) and (c):
 - When a Dual Relationship exists, the Adult Participant is not a coach, and the Minor Athlete’s parent/legal guardian has provided advance, written consent for the lodging arrangement; and/or
 - When the Close-In-Age Exception applies and the Minor Athlete’s parent/legal guardian has provided advance, written consent for the lodging arrangement.
 - Minor Athletes should be paired to share a hotel room, sleeping arrangement or overnight lodging location with other Minor Athletes of the same competition category and of similar age.

- Written Consent
A Minor Athlete's parent/legal guardian must provide written consent, at least annually, for all In-Program Travel and lodging during In-Program Travel, which can be withdrawn at any time.
- Meetings
 - Meetings during In-Program Travel must be conducted consistent with the One-on-One Interactions section of this Policy (e.g., any such meeting must be observable and interruptible).
 - Meetings must not be conducted in an Adult Participant or athlete's hotel room or other overnight lodging location during In-Program Travel.

Locker Rooms and Changing Areas

- Requirement to Use Locker Room or Changing Area
The designated locker room or changing area must be used when an athlete or Adult Participant changes, in whole or in part, into or out of a swimsuit when wearing just one suit (e.g., deck changing is prohibited).
- Observable and Interruptible
All In-Program Contact between Adult Participants and Minor Athletes in a locker room, changing area or similar space must be observable and interruptible, except:
 - In emergency circumstances;
 - A Dual Relationship exists; and/or
 - The Close-In-Age exception applies.
- Private or Semi-Private Space for Minor Athletes
The Organization must provide a private or semi-private place for Minor Athletes that need to change clothes or undress at Events or Facilities Under Partial or Full Jurisdiction of the Organization.
- Use of Recording Devices
Use of any device's (including a cell phone's) recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras in locker rooms, changing areas, or similar spaces by a Minor Athlete or an Adult Participant is prohibited.
- Undress
Adult Participants must not change clothes or behave in a manner that intentionally or recklessly exposes his or her breasts, buttocks, groin or genitals to a Minor Athlete under any circumstance. An Adult Participant must not request a Minor Athlete to expose the Minor Athlete's breasts, buttocks, groin or genitals to the Adult Participant under any circumstance. Nothing in this section shall be construed to apply to areas of the body exposed while wearing swimwear which conforms to the current concept of the appropriate for the individual's competition category.
- Showers
 - Adult Participants must not shower with Minor Athletes unless:
 - The Adult Participant meets the Close-in-Age Exception; and/or
 - The shower is part of a pre- or post-activity rinse while wearing swimwear.

- Parents/legal guardians may request in writing that their Minor Athlete(s) not change or shower with Adult Participants during In-Program Contact. The Organization must abide by such a request.
- Monitoring
The Organization must regularly and randomly monitor the use of locker rooms and changing areas to ensure compliance with this Policy. Locker rooms and changing areas may be monitored by use of the following methods:
 - Conducting a sweep of the locker room or changing area before athletes arrive;
 - Posting staff directly outside the locker room or changing area during periods of use;
 - Leaving the doors open when adequate privacy is still possible; and/or
 - Making occasional sweeps of the locker rooms or changing areas with women checking on female locker rooms and men checking on male locker rooms.

Every effort must be made to recognize when a Minor Athlete goes to the locker room or changing area during practice and competition, and, if the Minor Athlete does not return in a timely fashion, to check on the Minor Athlete's whereabouts.

- Parents/legal guardians in Locker Rooms or Changing Areas
If a parent/legal guardian enters a locker room or changing area, it must only be a parent/legal guardian of the same competition category and the parent/legal guardian should notify a coach or administrator in advance.

Massages, Rubdowns and Athletic Training Modalities

- General Requirement
Any In-Program Massage performed on an athlete must be conducted in an observable and interruptible location and must be performed by a licensed massage therapist or other certified professional. However, even if a coach is a licensed massage therapist, the coach must not perform a rubdown or massage of an athlete under any circumstance.
- Additional Minor Athlete Requirements
 - Written consent by a parent/legal guardian must be obtained in advance at least annually by the licensed massage therapist or other certified professional which can be withdrawn at any time.
 - Parent/legal guardians must be allowed to observe the Massage, except for competition or training venues that limit credentialing.
 - Any Massage of a Minor Athlete must be done with at least one other Adult Participant physically present and must never be done with only the Minor Athlete and the person performing the Massage in the room.
 - Any Massage of a Minor Athlete must be performed with the Minor Athlete fully or partially clothed, ensuring that the breasts, buttocks, groin or genitals are always covered. Nothing in this section shall be construed to apply to areas of the body exposed while wearing swimwear which conforms to the current concept of the appropriate for the individual's competition category.