



Zero Tolerance Policy against Abuse

The JAWS Swim Team is committed to providing a safe environment for its members and participants, and to preventing abusive conduct in any form. Every member, as described by the JAWS Swim Team's bylaws, of this organization is responsible for protecting our participants and ensuring their safety and well being while involved in sponsored activities.

To this end, the JAWS Board of Directors, have established the following guidelines of behavior and procedures for our staff, volunteers, and participants.

All members of this organization, as well as parents and invitees are expected to observe and adhere to these guidelines.

1. We are committed to providing a safe environment for our participants and staff. We do so by appointing all staff and volunteers--and anyone else affiliated with our organization--as protection advocates. Every member of this organization is responsible for reporting any cases of questionable conduct or alleged mistreatment toward our members by any staff member, employee, volunteer, parent, sibling, or other participant in the organization.
2. Abuse of any kind is not permitted within our organization. This means we do not tolerate physical, sexual, emotional or verbal abuse or misconduct from anyone connected to this organization in any way.
3. Physical and sexual abuse, including, but not limited to, 'Striking, hitting, kicking, biting, spitting, indecent or wanton gesturing, lewd remarks, indecent exposure, any and all unwanted physical contact, any form of sexual contact or inappropriate touching, are strictly prohibited within our organization.
4. Emotional abuse or verbal abuse is also prohibited. These include, but are not limited to such forms of abuse as: yelling, insulting, threatening, mocking, demeaning behavior, or making abusive statements in regard to a person's race, gender, religion, nationality/ethnicity, sex or age.
5. To further protect our youth participants, as well as our staff and volunteers, we strongly advise that no adult person allow him/herself to be alone with a child or with any group of children during sponsored activities. In particular, we recommend that adults related to this organization:
 - a. Do not drive alone with a child participant in the car
 - b. Do not take a child alone to the locker room, bathrooms, or any other private room
 - c. If you must have a private conversation with a youth participant, do it within view of others instead of in a private office
6. Supervision/Chaperone ratio: We recommend that for any sponsored activity, the ratio of adults to youth participants be 1:15--one (or more) adults for every fifteen children.

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7. When traveling overnight with youth participants, children should be paired up with other children of same gender and similar age group, with chaperones in separate but nearby rooms. Participants traveling with their parents excluded.

8. We want to empower our children to trust their feelings and let them know that their concerns, fears, and hopes are important by listening to them. Open communication between children and all parents, or between children and other adults in the organization may help early warning signs of abuse to surface.

9. We encourage parents to become as active as possible in sponsored activities, games, practices, and other events. The more the parents are involved, the less likely it is for abusive situations to develop.

10. We will respond quickly to any and all allegations of abuse within this organization. This information will be communicated to the authorities for investigation and will be reviewed by the organization's directors.

11. Any person accused of sexual or physical abuse may be asked to resign voluntarily or may be suspended by the board until the matter is resolved. Regardless of criminal or civil guilt in the alleged abuse, the continued presence of the person could be detrimental to the reputation of the organization and could be harmful to the participants. A participant or staff member, who is accused but later cleared of charges, may apply to be reinstated within the organization. Reinstatement is not a right, and no guarantee is made that he or she will be reinstated to her or her former position.

12. We promote good sportsmanship throughout the organization and encourage qualities of mutual respect, courtesy and tolerance in all participants, staff, and volunteers. We advocate building strong self-images among youth participants. Children with a strong self-image may be less likely targets for abuse; similarly, they may be less likely to abuse or bully others around them.

I have read and understand the JAWS Swim Team's Zero Tolerance Policy against Abuse Policy.

Swimmer Signature

Swimmer Signature

Swimmer Signature

Swimmer Signature

Parent /Guardian Signature

Parent /Guardian Signature