

Code of Conduct for People in Positions of Authority When Dealing with Children and Young People

The Code of Conduct should be followed at all times and by all Members and all people involved in any way with SLS.

Adhering to Role Boundaries

Persons in Positions of Authority should act within the confines of their duties at all times, subject to a direction by a relevant Senior Person.

Do



- make it clear to the Child or Young Person what your role is within the Club and to them (i.e., As a coach my role is to train, instruct and guide you and not to be your best friend or counsellor)
- seek a Child or Young Person's permission to touch or interact when demonstrating an activity. At all times you are to avoid any intimate part of a Child or Young Person's body e.g., genitals, backside or breast area
- stick to contacting a Child or Young Person via their parents or guardians rather than contact the Child directly.

Don't



- adopt an ongoing welfare role with a Child or Young Person that is beyond the scope of your role, or that is the responsibility of another member (e.g., a counsellor)
- engage in the massage/stretching of Children or Young People, if not your specified role within the Club. If authorised to conduct such activity you must first ask the Child or Young Person's permission and ensure it is always within line of sight of other adults. Massage/stretching can be done only with the prior authorisation of a parent or guardian and wherever possible in their presence
- try to engage in activities with Children and Young People outside your specified role, such as watching a Child's basketball game, playing virtual video games together or attending their birthday party
- use personal rather than Club approved equipment, unless authorised by the Club
- offer overnight/weekend/holiday care of Children and Young People as respite to parents or extra tuition or coaching.

Uniform and Identity Card/Pass/Badge/Working with Children Check (WCC)

Persons in Positions of Authority other than parents/carers of Children and Young People or Participants should have available their uniform or identification tag/badge/pass (where issued and/or available) only while involved in delivering services, programs, events or activities or as required by their role, such as when representing an SLS Entity at designated events and functions, or to and from that work.

Do



- try to be identifiable in your role when delivering services, programs, events or activities
- make it clear to a Child or Young Person if you are off-duty and refer them to someone who is on duty and representing SLS entity.

Don't



- wear your uniform when not delivering services, events or activities as required by your role

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Use of Language and Tone of Voice

Language and tone of voice used in the presence of Children and Young People should:

- provide clear direction, boost their confidence, encourage or affirm them
- not be harmful—therefore, avoid language that is intended to be, or is received or likely to be received by the individual it is directed at or any other person as:
 - discriminatory, racist or sexist
 - derogatory, belittling or negative, for example, by calling a Child or Young Person a 'loser' or telling them they are 'too fat'
 - threatening or frightening
 - profane or sexual.

Similar language and tone of voice should be used in all Member-to-Member transactions.

Do



- talk to the Child or Young Person in a professional manner and with respect
- use language that is encouraging and supportive and that supports a fun and inclusive environment
- pick up on and address a situation when negative language or tone is being used by a Child or Young Person, parent/guardian or other Member and reinforce that it is not appropriate and not right.

Don't



- make inappropriate comments about a Child/Young Person's appearance, including excessive flattering comments
- have inappropriate conversation or enquiries of a sexual nature (e.g., questions about a Child or Young Person's sexuality or his/her sexual relationship with others)
- use pet names
- make jokes or innuendos of a sexual nature
- use obscene gestures and language
- discuss personal lifestyle details of self, other staff or Children and Young People
- single out a Child or Young Person or denigrate them in front of peers or other members.

Supervision of Children and Young People

Persons in Positions of Authority responsible for supervising Children and Young People in relation to whom SLS Entities have a direct role in providing activities, events, programs and services must strive to ensure that those Participants:

- engage positively within the delivery of the service, program, event or facility
- behave appropriately towards one another
- are in a safe environment and are protected from external threats.

Do



- try not to be alone with a Child. If you find yourself in a situation where you are alone with a Child you should wait with the Child in an area that is open and light until the parent arrives, and use your mobile to inform another Person in Position of Authority of the situation.

Don't



- allow a Child to leave with an adult or Person in a Position of Authority without the prior authorisation of the Child's parent or guardian.

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Use of Electronic Communications

Other than between Children and Young People, wherever possible, social media messages (such as text, email, Facebook or Instagram, Snapchat, WhatsApp) sent to a Child or Young Person by a Person in a Position of Authority should be copied to their parent or carer.

Do



- try to communicate through the parent/guardian rather than the Child
- restrict communication, if communication with a Child is necessary, to issues directly associated with delivering services, activities or programs that are SLS related, such as advising that training is cancelled
- try to communicate in a group text rather than texting a Child individually
- inform the parent or guardian or Persons in Position of Authority within your club if a Child communicates with you outside your role, and kindly advise the Child that that behaviour is inappropriate.

Don't



- befriend the Child or Young Person on social media
- ask a Child or Young Person to not tell their parents or carers when you have communicated with them
- send photos or videos to directly to a Child or to another person without the prior authority of their parent or guardian
- upload or publish still/moving images or audio recordings of Children or Young People without the prior authorisation of their parent or guardian.

Giving Gifts to Children and Young People

Other than parents/carers of Children and Young People giving gifts to their own child or children, the giving of gifts by Persons in Positions of Authority to Children and Young People to whom services are provided is subject to:

- obtaining prior authorisation from a Senior Person permitted to authorise gift-giving from an SLS Entity
- parents or other responsible adults being made aware of any gift given.

Do



- make sure, if giving a gift to a Child or Young Person, that all Children and Young People are receiving a gift, and it is done in the presence of their parents or guardians and with their prior authorisation.

Don't



- give out personal gifts or special favours
- single out a Child with a gift or special favours
- give out personal gifts to a Child without the presence of another Person in a Position of Authority and without prior authorisation of their parent or guardian.

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Photographs of Children and Young People

Subject to all relevant SLSA policies (including this Policy) Children and Young People to whom a service is delivered are to be photographed while involved in a relevant SLS service, activity, event or facility only if:

- prior approval has been granted by the relevant Child and Young Person or the parents/guardian of the relevant Child and Young Person and by the relevant SLS Entity
- the context is directly related to participation in SLS
- the Child or Young Person is appropriately dressed and posed
- the image is taken in the presence of other Persons in Positions of Authority.

Do



- ask permission from the Child's parent or guardian before taking any photos or videos
- say something if you see someone acting suspiciously
- delete any photos as soon as they are no longer required
- ensure the context in which you are taking photos or videos is directly related to their participation in SLS.

Don't



- use any camera/video device including phones in change rooms or bathrooms
- forward, share or send on any photos or videos of a Child or Young Person
- publish a photo or video on social media without the prior approval of the Child or Young Person's parent or guardian.

Change Room Arrangements

Persons in Positions of Authority:

- should avoid one-on-one situations with Children and Young People in a change room area
- are not permitted to use the change room area to, for example, undress, while Children and Young People are present unless they are also competing in a SLS event or are participating in a SLS training environment
- need to ensure adequate supervision in public change rooms when they are used
- need to provide the level of supervision required for preventing Child Abuse by members of the public, adult service users, peer service users or general misbehaviour, while also respecting a Child's privacy.

In addition, females should avoid entering male change rooms and males should avoid entering female change rooms in any circumstance (other than an emergency). If a female has to enter a male change room or a male has to enter a female change room, adequate supervision is required.

Do



- knock or announce yourself before entering change rooms
- try to have at least one other adult with you in a change room with Children
- try to get changed in an individual closed cubicle.

Don't



- undress in the presence of Children and Young People
- isolate yourself and a Child from others in the change room.

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Physical Contact with Children and Young People

Any physical contact with Children and Young People must be appropriate to the delivery of SLS services, events, programs or activities, such as when fitting sporting equipment like goggles, and appropriately correcting technique and based on the needs of the Child or Young Person (such as to assist or comfort a distressed young person) rather than on the needs of Persons in Positions of Authority.

Do



- seek a Child or Young Person's permission to touch or interact when demonstrating an activity. At all times you are to avoid any intimate part of a Child or Young Person's body e.g., genitals, backside or breast area
- check that physical contact is acceptable to a particular Child or Young Person. Even non-intrusive touch may be inappropriate if a Child or Young Person indicates he/she does not wish to be touched
- respect and respond to signs that a Child or Young Person is uncomfortable with touch
- try to use verbal directions rather than touch (e.g., ask a Child or Young Person to move in a particular way, rather than physically place the Child or Young Person in the required position)
- try to discourage younger Children from inappropriate expectations of hugs or cuddles. This should be done gently and without embarrassment or offence to the Child. For example, offer a high five as encouragement
- kindly and appropriately tell a Child or Young Person who is inappropriately or excessively touching another Child or Young Person to stop, and raise the concern with a Person in a Position of Authority
- use non-intrusive gestures to comfort a Child or Young Person who is experiencing grief and loss or distress, such as a hand on the upper arm or upper back
- use non-intrusive touch (e.g., congratulating a Child or Young Person by shaking hands or a pat on the upper arm or back). Try to accompany such touch with positive encouraging words.

Don't



- initiate, permit or request inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact with a Child or Young Person (e.g., massage, kisses, tickling and wrestling games) or facilitating situations that unnecessarily result in close physical contact with a Child or Young Person
- single out the same Child or Young Person when performing demonstrations
- inflict corporal punishment (physical discipline, smacking, long runs in hot weather, no water breaks etc.).

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Sexual Misconduct and Relationships

Under no circumstances is any form of sexual behaviour to occur between, with, or in the presence of, Children or Young People participating in any SLS environment. Engaging in sexual behaviour while participating in SLS services, events, programs or activities is prohibited even if the Children or Young Persons involved may be above the legal age of consent.

‘Sexual behaviour’ needs to be interpreted widely to encompass the entire range of actions that would reasonably be considered to be sexual in nature, including but not limited to:

- ‘contact behaviour’, such as sexual intercourse, kissing, fondling, sexual penetration or exploiting a Child through prostitution
- ‘non-contact behaviour’, such as flirting between adults and Children and Young People, sexual innuendo, inappropriate text messaging, inappropriate photography or exposure to pornography or nudity.

Consensual intimate relationships (whether or not of a sexual nature) between a Person in a Position of Authority and an adult Participant should, where possible, be avoided as they can have harmful effects on the Participant involved and on other Members and on our organisation’s public image.

Do



- avoid at all costs any consensual intimate relationships between Persons in Positions of Authority and an adult Participant or Younger Person. This may be, for example, a 17-year-old coach and a 15-year-old Participant
- advise a Person in a Position of Authority if you are aware of, or are involved in, a relationship with a Person in a Position of Authority or you are a Person in a Position of Authority who is having a relationship with a fellow member.

Don't



- undress in front of or expose yourself in any way to a Child or Young Person
- flirt with or make any innuendo or sexual connotations towards a Child or Young Person
- do any of the above-mentioned actions in person or online.

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Overnight Stays and Sleeping Arrangements for Children and Young People

Standards of conduct that must be observed by Persons in Positions of Authority during an overnight stay include but are not limited to:

- providing Children and Young People with privacy when bathing and dressing
- observing appropriate dress standards when Children and Young People are present—such as no exposure to adult nudity
- not allowing Children and Young People to be exposed to pornographic material, for example, through movies, television, the internet or magazines
- not leaving Children and Young People under the supervision or protection of unauthorised persons, such as hotel staff or friends
- not involving sleeping arrangements that may compromise the safety of Children and Young People, such as unsupervised sleeping arrangements, or an adult sleeping in the same bed as a Child or Young Person unless authorised to do so by a relevant SLS Entity, as appropriate
- the right of Children and Young People to contact their parents, or others, if they feel unsafe, uncomfortable or distressed during the stay must be respected. As a representative of SLS you are required to facilitate contact with parents whenever a Child feels distressed or unsafe.
- parents expecting that their Children and Young People can, if they wish, make contact.

Do



- make sure there are appropriate levels of supervision. General rule is a minimum of two adults with a ratio of 1:8
- plan appropriate accommodation. If Children share a room they should be the same age and sex
- plan for emergencies. If you need to administer first aid, do so only if you are qualified and in the presence of others
- keep parents informed and let them know: aim of the trip; destinations and venues; competition details; supervision levels; roles and responsibilities of accompanying adults and the estimated time of arrival and departure
- keep Children informed and let them know: what's expected of them; roles and responsibilities of adults accompanying them; their rights and who to talk to if they have any concerns.

Don't



- share rooms with Children. If an adult presence is required, there should always be more than one Child in the room with the adult
- be alone in a room with a Child
- remove a Child's clothing, even in an emergency, unless you have their permission and at least one other person is with you.

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Transporting Children

Children and Young People are to be transported by Persons in Positions of Authority [other than by their parent(s)/carer(s)] only in circumstances that are directly related to the delivery of SLS services, events, programs or activities. For example, Children and Young People should not be given casual lifts unrelated to SLS services, events or activities by Persons in Positions of Authority.

Children and Young People are to be transported by Persons in Positions of Authority only with prior authorisation from a relevant SLS Entity Senior Person and from the Child or Young Person's parent/carer. Gaining approval involves providing information about the proposed journey.

Do



- vary the order in which you drop the Children off if you regularly take Children home from practice, so that you're not always alone with the same Child
- have a Person in a Position of Authority ask the Child whether they feel comfortable travelling with you
- tell the Child's parents the route you'll be taking and the estimated time of arrival.

Don't



- allow a Child to sit in the front seat. Make sure the Children sit in the back seats.

Positive Guidance

Children or Young Persons participating in SLS events, services, programs and activities should be made aware of the acceptable limits of their behaviour so that a positive experience can be provided for all Participants. There are times, however, when Persons in Positions of Authority will be required to use appropriate techniques and behaviour management strategies to ensure:

- an effective and positive environment
- the safety and/or wellbeing of Children, Young People or other SLS personnel.

Persons in Positions of Authority should use strategies that are fair, respectful and appropriate to the developmental stage of the Children and Young People involved. Children and Young People need to be provided with clear directions and given an opportunity to redirect their misbehaviour in a positive manner.