



## North Mississauga Soccer Club Electronic Communication and Social Media Policy

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### Electronic Communication

All communications between a team official and an athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. The content and intent of all electronic communications must adhere to the Canada Soccer Code of Conduct and Ethics and North Mississauga Soccer Club Code of Conduct and Ethics.

#### **Guiding principles:**

1. Is this communication something that someone else would find appropriate or acceptable in a face-to-face meeting?
2. Is this something I would be comfortable saying out loud to the intended recipient of my communication in front of the intended recipient's parents, other coaching staff, or other athletes?

3. Is this something I would be comfortable with if it were on the front page of my local newspaper?
4. Electronic communications between adults and minors should always be Transparent, Accessible and Professional.

Transparent: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should not only be clear and direct, but also free of hidden meanings, innuendo and expectations.

Accessible: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be considered part of the Club's records. Another coach or parent must be included in the communication so that there is no question regarding accessibility (Rule of Two).

Professional: All electronic communication between a coach and an athlete should be conducted professionally. This includes word choices, tone, grammar, and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a coach.<sup>1</sup>

## **Emails**

1. Athletes and coaches may use email to communicate.
2. When communicating with an athlete through email, a parent, another coach or team personnel must also be copied.
3. Parents or guardians of a minor athlete may request in writing that their child not be contacted by coaches through any form of electronic communication.

## **Texting**

1. Texting is allowed between coaches and minor athletes only for the purpose of communicating information directly related to team activities.
2. Texts between adults and minors should always be Transparent, Accessible and Professional.
3. Parents or guardians of a minor athlete may request in writing that their child not be contacted by coaches through texting.

## **Social Media**

### **Personal Social Media Accounts**

1. Coaches and Team Personnel may have personal Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages, but they are not permitted to have any minor athlete member of the Club join their personal page as a "friend" or "follower".
2. A coach should not accept any "friend" request from a minor athlete and should not follow them back.
3. A coach should remind minor athletes that this is not permitted and explain the safety reasons behind it.
4. Coaches and minor athletes are not permitted to "private message" each other through Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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<sup>1</sup> Canada Soccer – Guide to Safety

5. Coaches are encouraged to set their pages to “private” to prevent minor athletes from accessing the coach’s personal information.
6. Coaches are not permitted to follow minor athletes on Twitter.
7. Coaches and minor athletes are not permitted to “direct message” each other through Twitter.
8. Coaches are not permitted to use pictures with minor athletes on their personal social media pages.

### **Professional Social Media Accounts**

1. Coaches may consider separating personal and professional social media accounts.
2. Professional accounts and teams’ accounts may be helpful in sharing information relating to the team.
3. “Private messaging” is still not permitted. Comments under social media posts may be a good way to address minor athletes’ questions and avoid “private messaging”.
4. A team’s Instagram account may be managed by one of the volunteer parents.
5. Using pictures with minor athletes on professional accounts and teams’ accounts must be discussed with the Club’s Business Manager and athletes’ parents.

### **North Mississauga Soccer Club Social Media Accounts**

1. If the Club has official social media pages, minor athletes and their parents can “friend” the Club for information and updates on team–related matters.
2. If the Club has an official Twitter page, coaches, athletes and parents can follow for information and updates on team–related matters.

### **Social Media Code of Conduct**

1. The Club’s employees are free to publish or comment via social media in accordance with this policy.
2. Some information about North Mississauga Soccer Club is not in the public domain at all times, such as unpublished details about the Club’s financial position, upcoming projects, tentative roster selections, and contemplated coaching assignments. Personal information about members, especially children, can never be published.
3. It is illegal to quote more than short excerpts of someone else's work without explicit permission, and any material must be attributed to the original author/source.
4. Use of logos must be authorized by the Club’s Business Manager.
5. Respect your social media audience, colleagues and the Club:
  - a. no ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity, etc
  - b. proper consideration of privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory - such as politics and religion.
  - c. make it clear that the views and opinions expressed are yours alone and do not represent the official views of the Club
6. If you notice misrepresentations made about the Club in the media, you may point that out. Always do so with respect and with the facts.
7. If you speak about others, make sure what you say is factual and that it does not disparage that party.
8. If you make an error, be up front about the mistake and correct it quickly. If you are modifying an earlier post, make it clear that there is a modification.

# **Photography**

## **General**

1. The Club promotes and celebrates activities, events and competitions through using images of practices, games and its participants.
2. Some coaches also might find it helpful to use photographs or videos as a tool to support a young athlete's skill development.
3. It is prohibited to supply full names of children along with the images, unless:
  - a. it's considered necessary — such as for elite young athletes
  - b. it's in the child's best interests
  - c. the child and parent have consented
4. Only use images of children in suitable dress or kit, including recommended safety wear such as shin pads
5. Avoid images and camera angles that may be more prone to misinterpretation or misuse than others
6. Consider using models or illustrations if you are promoting an activity, rather than the children who are actually involved in it.<sup>2</sup>

## **Official or Professional Photographers<sup>3</sup>**

### North Mississauga Soccer Club should:

1. Inform parents and children that a photographer will be in attendance
2. Ensure parents and children consent to both the taking and publication of films or photos
3. Check the photographer's identity, the validity of their role, and the purpose and use of the images to be taken
4. Issue the photographer identification, which must be worn at all times
5. Provide the photographer with a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of image content and their behaviour
6. Clarify areas where all photography is prohibited (washrooms, changing areas, first aid areas, etc.)
7. Inform the photographer about how to identify — and avoid taking images of — children without the required parental consent for photography
8. Not allow unsupervised access to children or one-to-one photo sessions at events
9. Keep images or video recordings of children securely:
  - a. hard copies of images should be kept in a locked drawer
  - b. electronic images should be in a protected folder with restricted access
  - c. images should not be stored on unencrypted portable equipment such as laptops, memory sticks or mobile phones
10. Avoid using any personal equipment to take photos and recordings of children

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<sup>2</sup> Canada Soccer – Guide to Safety

<sup>3</sup> Canada Soccer – Guide to Safety