

COACHING CODE OF CONDUCT

The athlete/coach relationship is a privileged one. Coaches play a critical role in the personal as well as the athletic development of their athletes. They must understand and respect the inherent power imbalance that exists in this relationship and must be extremely careful not to abuse it. Coaches must also recognize that they are conduits through which the values and goals of a sport organization are channelled. Thus how a coach regards his/her sport is often dependent on the behaviour which will allow them to assist their athletes in becoming well-rounded self-confident and productive human beings.

COACHES HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO:

- 1) Treat everyone fairly within the context of their activity, regardless of gender, place of origin, colour, sexual orientation, religion, political belief or economic status.
- 2) Direct comments or criticism at the performance rather than the athlete.
- 3) Consistently display high personal standards and project a favourable image of their sport and of coaching.
- 4) Refrain from public criticism of fellow coaches; especially when speaking to the media or recruiting athletes.
- 5) Abstain from the use of any tobacco products while in the presence of her/his athletes and discourage their use by athletes.
- 6) Abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages when working with athletes or while on or near the playing field.
- 7) Discourage the use of alcohol in conjunction with athletic events or victory celebrations at the playing site.
- 8) Refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing or otherwise offensive language in the conduct of his/her duties.
- 9) Ensure that the activity being undertaken is suitable for the age, experience, ability and fitness level of the athletes and educate athletes as to their responsibilities in contributing to a safe environment.
- 10) Communicate and co-operate with registered medical practitioners in the diagnoses, treatment and management of their athletes' medical and psychological problems. Consider the athletes' future health and well being as foremost when making decisions regarding injured athletes' ability to continue playing or training.
- 11) Recognize and accept when to refer athletes to other coaches or sport specialists. Allow athletes' goals to take precedence over their own.
- 12) Regularly seek ways of increasing professional development and self-awareness.
- 13) Treat opponents and officials with due respect both in victory and defeat and encourage athletes to act accordingly. Actively encourage athletes to uphold the rules of their sport and the spirit of such rules.

- 14) In the case of minors, communicate and co-operate with the athlete's parents or legal guardians, involving them in management decisions pertaining to their child's development.
- 15) In an educational institution, be aware of the academic pressure placed on student-athletes and conduct practices and games in a manner so as to allow academic success.

COACHES MUST:

- 1) Ensure the safety of the athletes with whom they work.
- 2) At no time become intimately and/or sexually involved with their athletes. This includes requests for sexual favours or threat of reprisal for the rejection of such requests.
- 3) Respect athlete's dignity. Verbal or physical behaviours that constitute harassment or abuse are unacceptable (definition of harassment described below).
- 4) Never advocate or condone the use of drugs or other banned performance enhancing substances.
- 5) Never provide under age athletes with alcohol.

DEFINITION OF HARASSMENT:

Harassment takes many forms but can generally be defined as behaviour including comments and/or conduct which is insulting, intimidating, humiliating, hurtful, malicious, degrading or otherwise offensive to an individual, or group of individuals, or which creates an uncomfortable environment.

Harassment may include:

- written or verbal abuse or threats;
- sexually oriented comments;
- racial or ethnic slurs;
- unwelcome remarks, jokes, innuendoes or taunting about a person's body, attire, age, marital status, ethnic or racial origin, religion etc;
- displaying of sexually explicit, racist or other offensive or derogatory material;
- sexual, racial, ethnic or religious graffiti.
- practical jokes which cause awkwardness or embarrassment, endanger a person's safety, or negatively affect performance;
- unwelcome sexual remarks, intimidation or invitations or request whether indirect or explicit;
- leering (suggestive staring), or other obscene or offensive gestures;
- condescension, paternalism or patronizing behaviour which undermines self-respect or adversely affects performance or working conditions;
- physical conduct such as touching, kissing, [patting, pinching, etc.];
- vandalism;
- physical assault.

This code was developed by Promotion Plus Women in Coaching Committee in conjunction with the Ministry of Government Services and The Ministry Responsible for Sport and the Commonwealth Games Coaching Advisory Committee and the Coaches Association of BC.