SafeSport Policy

Updated January 2023

Every USRowing Member Organization must have a SafeSport program in place that includes three basic components:

1. Background Screening of key individuals (coaches, administrators, volunteers)
2. SafeSport online training for the key individuals
3. A written SafeSport policy that includes procedures for reporting, investigating and adjudicating complaints.

City Island Rowing Athlete Safety Policy

City Island Rowing is committed to improving the development and safety of athletes involved in our sport.

There are a lot of reasons to row – at any level. A life-long activity, people often row to have fun and spend time with friends, and engage in rigorous competition. Rowing also encourages a healthy lifestyle, builds self-confidence; athletes also do better off the field.They learn goal-setting, teamwork and time management skills. Athletes are less likely to use cigarettes, drugs and alcohol; they have higher graduation rates and are more likely to attend college.

Unfortunately, sport can also be a high-risk environment for misconduct, including child physical and sexual abuse. Here, we identify six primary types of misconduct:

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Hazing
- Emotional Misconduct
- Physical Misconduct
- Sexual Misconduct, including Child Sexual Abuse

All forms of misconduct are intolerable and in direct conflict with the CIR ideals.

Misconduct may damage an athlete's psychological well-being; athletes who have been mistreated experience social embarrassment, emotional turmoil, psychological scars, loss of self-esteem and negative impacts on family, friends and the sport. Misconduct often hurts an athlete's competitive performance and may cause him or her to drop out of sport entirely.

This Policy applies to

- Staff members, volunteers and Board members
- CIR's athletes and parents

Background Screening

All key personnel (coaches, board members, administrators, and chaperones) who will have routine access to minor athletes will have to submit to and pass a comprehensive background check by a 3rd party professional company of the Board's choosing. Current CIR athletes acting in a coaching / volunteer capacity under the age of 18 are exempt.

Duty of Full Disclosure

Each applicant has the affirmative duty to disclose his or her criminal history. Failing to disclose or intentionally misrepresenting an arrest plea or conviction history in an application or any other information provided by an applicant during the screening process is grounds for volunteer dismissal and/or membership revocation or restriction, regardless of when the offense is discovered.

SafeSport online Training

All key personnel (coaches, board members, administrators, and chaperones), are required to complete the USRowing Online SafeSport training program. A copy of the course completion certificate will be forwarded to the SafeSport Officer for record keeping.
All athletes aged 18 years of age or older, must complete the SafeSport Core training program.

The SafeSport Core Training program can be directly accessed through your USRowing member profile or visit: https:/safesporttrained.org
Use the enrollment key: NGBUSR-RFKt8f

All of the above persons must forward a copy of their SafeSport Trained Certification (and applicable annual refresher courses) to the SafeSport Officer for record keeping and compliance.

Minor athletes should highly consider the SafeSport for High School Athletes
Parents of minor athletes are encouraged to take the Parents Guide to Misconduct Course, to learn about the types of misconduct and how to support a positive sport experience for their child.

Reporting, Assessment and Adjudication.

Any person (or parent of an athlete) who experiences or witnesses any inappropriate behavior should immediately contact either CIR's SafeSport Officer or the Board President and inform them of their concerns. An assessment of the complaint will be made without delay. The Board will discuss the matter and an appropriate course of action will be taken immediately.

If a person is dismissed from CIR as a result of a complaint that is sexual in nature, the matter will be reported to the US Center for SafeSport and appropriate authorities as required.

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PROHIBITED CONDUCT

Bullying

(1) An intentional, persistent and repeated pattern of committing or willfully tolerating physical and non-physical behaviors that are intended, or have the reasonable potential, to cause fear, humiliation or physical harm in an attempt to socially exclude, diminish or isolate the targeted athlete(s), as a condition of membership

(2) Any act or conduct described as bullying under federal or state law

Exceptions

Bullying does not include group or team behaviors that (a) are meant to establish normative team behaviors, or (b) promote team cohesion.

For example, bullying does not include verbal admonitions to encourage team members to train harder and to push through a difficult training regimen.

Examples

Examples of bullying prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation:

(1) **Physical behaviors.** Behaviors that include (a) hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, choking, or slapping an athlete; (b) throwing at, or hitting an athlete with, objects such as sporting equipment.

(2) **Verbal and emotional behaviors.** Behaviors that include (a) teasing, ridiculing, intimidating; (b) spreading rumors or making false statements; or (c)using electronic communications, social media, or other technology to harass, frighten, intimidate or humiliate ("cyber bulling").

Harassment

(1) A repeated pattern of physical and/or non-physical behaviors that (a) are intended to cause fear, humiliation or annoyance, (b) offend or degrade, (c) create a hostile environment or (d) reflect discriminatory bias in an attempt to establish dominance, superiority or power over an individual athlete or group based on gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression or mental or physical disability; or

(2) Any act or conduct described as harassment under federal or state law

Exception

None

Examples
Examples of harassment prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation:

(1) **Physical offenses.** Behaviors that include (a) hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, choking or slapping an athlete or participant; (b) throwing at or hitting an athlete with objects including sporting equipment.
(2) **Non-physical offenses**. Behaviors that include (a) making negative or disparaging comments about an athlete's sexual orientation, gender expression, disability, religion, skin color, or ethnic traits; (b) displaying offensive materials, gestures, or symbols; (c) withholding or reducing playing time to an athlete based on his or her sexual orientation.

Hazing

(1) Coercing, requiring, forcing or willfully tolerating any humiliating, unwelcome or dangerous activity that serves as a condition for (a) joining a group or (b) being socially accepted by a group's members; or
(2) Any act or conduct described as hazing under federal or state law

Exception
Hazing does not include group or team activities that (a) are meant to establish normative team behaviors or (b) promote team cohesion.

Examples
Examples of hazing prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation:

(1) requiring, forcing or otherwise requiring the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs
(2) tying, taping or otherwise physically restraining an athlete
(3) sexual simulations or sexual acts of any nature
(4) sleep deprivation, otherwise unnecessary schedule disruption or the withholding of water and/or food
(5) social actions (e.g. grossly inappropriate or provocative clothing) or public displays (e.g. public nudity) that are illegal or meant to draw ridicule
(6) beating, paddling or other forms of physical assault
(7) excessive training requirements focused on individuals on a team

Emotional Misconduct

(1) A pattern of deliberate, non-contact behavior that has the potential to cause emotional or psychological harm to an athlete. Non-contact behaviors include:
    a. verbal acts
    b. physical acts
    c. acts that deny attention or support
(2) Any act or conduct described as emotional abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. child abuse, child neglect).

Exception

Emotional misconduct does not include professionally-accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, discipline or improving athletic performance.

Examples

Examples of emotional misconduct prohibited by this policy include, without limitation:

(1) **Verbal Acts.** A pattern of verbal behaviors that (a) attack an athlete personally (e.g., calling them worthless, fat or disgusting) or (b) repeatedly and excessively yelling at a particular participant or participants in a manner that serves no productive training or motivational purpose.
(2) **Physical Acts.** A pattern of physically aggressive behaviors, such as (a) throwing sport equipment, water bottles or chairs at, or in the presence of, participants; or
(b) punching walls, windows or other objects.
(3) **Acts that Deny Attention and Support.** A pattern of (a) ignoring an athlete for extended periods of time or (b) routinely or arbitrarily excluding participants from practice.

Physical Misconduct

(1) Contact or non-contact conduct that results in, or reasonably threaten to cause physical harm to an athlete or other sport participants; or
(2) Any act or conduct described as physical abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. child abuse, child neglect, assault).

Exceptions

Physical misconduct does not include professionally-accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline or improving athlete performance. For example, hitting, punching, and kicking are well- regulated forms of contact in combat sports, but have no place in swimming.

Examples
Examples of physical misconduct prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation:

(1) **Contact offenses**. Behaviors that include:

(a) punching, beating, biting, striking, choking or slapping an athlete;

(b) intentionally hitting an athlete with objects or sporting equipment;

(c) providing alcohol to an athlete under the legal drinking age (under U.S. law);

(d) providing illegal drugs or non-prescribed medications to any athlete;

(e) encouraging or permitting an athlete to return to play pre-maturely following a serious injury (e.g., a concussion) and without the clearance of a medical professional;

(f) prescribing dieting or other weight-control methods (e.g., weigh-ins, caliper tests) without regard for the nutritional well-being and health of athlete.

(2) **Non-contact offenses**. Behaviors that include:

(a) isolating an athlete in a confined space (e.g., locking an athlete in a small space):

(b) forcing an athlete to assume a painful stance or position for no athletic purpose(e.g. requiring an athlete to kneel on a harmful surface);

(c) withholding, recommending against or denying adequate hydration, nutrition, medical attention or sleep.

Sexual Misconduct

(1) Any touching or non-touching sexual interaction that is (a) nonconsensual or forced, (b) coerced or manipulated, or (c) perpetrated in an aggressive, harassing, exploitative or threatening manner;

(2) Any sexual interaction between an athlete and an individual with evaluative, director indirect authority. Such relationships involve an imbalance of power and are likely to impair judgment or be exploitative; or

(3) Any act or conduct described as sexual abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, rape)

Note: An imbalance of power is always assumed between a coach and an athlete.

Exception
None

Examples
Examples of sexual misconduct prohibited under this Policy include, without limitation:

(1) **Touching offenses.** Behaviors that include: fondling an athlete's breasts or buttocks
   (a) exchange of reward in sport (e.g., team placement, scores, feedback) for sexual favors
   (b) genital contact
   (c) sexual relations or intimacies between persons in a position of trust, authority and/or evaluative and supervisory control over athletes or other sport participants.

Child Sexual Abuse

(1) Any sexual activity with a child where consent is not or cannot be given. This includes sexual contact with a child that is accomplished by deception, manipulation, force or threat of force, regardless of the age of the participants and all sexual interactions between an adult and a child, regardless of whether there is deception or the child understands the sexual nature of the activity.

(2) Any act or conduct described as child sexual abuse under federal or state law.

Exception
None

Examples
Sexually abusive acts may include sexual penetration, sexual touching or non-contact sexual acts such as verbal acts, sexually suggestive electronic or written communications, exposure or voyeurism.

Social Media / Electronic communication Misconduct

Social media and electronic communications can also be used to commit misconduct (e.g., emotional, sexual, bullying, harassment, and hazing). Such communications by coaches, staff, volunteers, administrators, officials, board members, parents, or athletes will not be tolerated and are considered violations of our SafeSport policy. All electronic communications between key personnel and athletes must be Open and Transparent, and professional in nature.

Supervision of athletes and participants:

City Island Rowing is a uniquely small club and as such it is often not possible to have "layers of supervision". That being said, we strive to have all key personnel / athlete interactions happen in public. In the rare instance that reasonable privacy is required, under no circumstances will that happen behind a locked door. All effort will be made to have all meetings between key personnel and athletes observable and interruptible.

At regular regattas, with the team staying in public venues such as hotels and attended by many parents we will not require formal chaperones. When the team is staying overnight with limited parent attendance and or in private residences like VRBO (such as our winter training trip), the club will ensure appropriate chaperones are in place. The names and contact details of the chaperones will be shared with all participant families before the trip. Official chaperones will be required to complete SafeSport Training and pass the background screening test.

In the rare instance where a small subset of the team is traveling for competition (such as Youth Nationals / National Team trials for example) and not one parent is able to attend for part or all of the duration of overnight travel, then all of the participating athletes' parents must sign a letter of permission for their athlete to travel with the team representative, acknowledging the lack of parental attendance. Said permission letter must be submitted to the club secretary for record keeping prior to travel.

Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAP)

USRowing has further expanded its guidelines, regulations and requirements for member organizations. A full copy of the USRowing MAAP is also linked to on our website on the SafeSport page which you are encouraged to read.

This policy now requires member organizations to get parental permission in writing (annually) for Key Personnel to interact with athletes on a one-to-one basis. This is now included in our Annual Waiver.

All one-on-one In-Program Contact between adults and a Minor Athlete must be observable and interruptible.

Monitoring the organization's Policy

The Board shall at its first meeting of each calendar year review the SafeSport Policy to ensure that it is up to date and compliant with USRowing directives. This includes updates to the SafeSport training policy.