



Respecting Boundaries: Coach vs. Friend



Recognizing Unsafe or “Too Comfortable” Behaviors



- ★ **Unnecessary one-on-one time.**
Private rides, meetings, or secret talks not required by role.
- ★ **Exclusive or secretive behavior.**
Inside jokes, pet names, or contact that singles someone out.
- ★ **Personal comments.**
Remarks about body, appearance, relationships, or home life.
- ★ **Defensive reactions.**
Dismissing concerns (“You don’t understand,” “It’s fine”).
- ★ **Overdependence.**
One adult becomes the go-to for everything, beyond sport.
- ★ **Unequal treatment.**
Rule-bending, favoritism, or fear of losing special attention.



Personal Information: Support vs. Prying

- **Coach: appropriate support.**
General check-ins, listening, offering resources, and referring to other trusted adults.
- **Coach: avoid probing.**
Don't push for details about personal issues if a swimmer is uncomfortable.
- **Coach: not a therapist.**
Stay within role—validate, then connect to proper support.
- **Peer: supportive approach.**
Ask if they want to talk and respect “no.”
- **Peer: respect boundaries.**
Be present without needing all the details.
- **Peer: avoid prying.**
No pressure for secrets, screenshots, or full explanations.

Language in Texts, Meets, Practices etc.

- **Sport-appropriate only.**
No sexual, romantic, or body-focused comments.
- **Respectful tone.**
No insults, slurs, or harmful “jokes.”
- **Reasonable timing.**
No late-night or excessive one-on-one messaging.
- **Transparent communication.**
Group chats visible to parents/clubs; no secret or disappearing messages.





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Differing Roles

Coach role

- Primary roles are **teacher, leader, and safety-holder**, not peer or romantic partner.
- Care is shown through fair treatment, clear expectations, safe training, and consistent follow-through.
- Emotional support focuses on listening, validating, and connecting swimmers to appropriate help, while keeping professional distance.

Peer role

- Can be friendly and supportive, but **do not replace adults in handling disclosures of harm or abuse.**
- Encourage teammates to seek help from trusted adults when safety is involved.
- Set a positive example in behavior, sportsmanship, and inclusion so newer swimmers understand team culture.