



LIBERTY
LIVE.CHURCH

ABUSE PREVENTION

LIBERTY SPORTS POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Dear Liberty Sports Volunteer or Staff Member,

Welcome to Liberty Sports!

At Liberty, we take our responsibility to care for children very seriously. These guidelines are intended to facilitate a safe and nurturing environment in which children can grow in relationship with Jesus Christ.

The pages of this handbook provide a general overview of procedures and guidelines for volunteers and staff members. Our policies are intended to create a safe environment for children, protecting children, you, and the mission of Liberty. The following procedures have been adopted and will be diligently enforced.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Regina Barnes', followed by a horizontal line.

Regina Barnes
Recreation Director

**Liberty
Policies & Procedures
for Sports**

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Overview of Liberty's Safety System

Because we desire to protect minors involved in our ministry, Liberty requires all staff members and volunteers working with minors (and other vulnerable populations) to complete FIVE SAFETY STEPS before ministry work or volunteer placements begin.

STEP ONE: Screening Process

Staff members and volunteers working or serving with children are required to complete Liberty's Screening Process, which includes:

- an Employment Application (employees only);
- a Volunteer Application (volunteers); and
- references to be checked (employees and volunteers).

STEP TWO: Criminal Background Check

Liberty requires that all staff members and volunteers working or volunteering in Kid/Student's activities undergo a criminal background check. Depending upon the ministry position, differing levels or intensity of criminal background check may be required.

STEP THREE: Policies & Procedures

Staff members and volunteers are required to review the policies contained in this manual and sign electronically indicating that he or she has read and understood the material and agrees to comply with policy requirements.

STEP FOUR: Personal Screening Interview

Liberty requires that all staff and volunteers to have a Personal Screening Interview. The interviewer will have access to the staff or volunteer's application, references, and pertinent background information. A template is provided for the interviewer.

STEP FIVE: Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

Liberty policies and procedures require that staff members and volunteers avoid abusive behavior of any kind. Staff members and volunteers are required to report any policy violations to a supervisor, Ministry Director, or Executive Pastor of Ministries. Staff members and volunteers should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abusers and their behaviors in 'grooming' a child for sexual abuse. Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child's trust (and the trust of the child's parent or 'gatekeeper'), manipulate the child into sexual activity and keep the child from disclosing the abuse.

To equip Liberty staff members and volunteers with information necessary to recognize abuser characteristics and grooming behavior such as gift giving to a child, rule breaking with a child, playful yet inappropriate touch, or arranging time alone with a child through gaining the trust of parents and staff. Liberty requires all staff members and volunteers to complete sexual abuse awareness training.

Sports Safety Policy

ABUSE TOLERANCE

Liberty has a **zero tolerance for abuse** in ministry programs and ministry activities. It is the responsibility of every staff member and volunteer at Liberty to act in the best interest of all minors in every program.

In the event a staff member or volunteer observes any inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse or neglect (physical, emotional, or sexual) it is that individual's responsibility to immediately report their observations to the Recreation Director, Campus Pastor, or the Executive Pastor of Ministries.

TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE

Generally, child abuse is categorized in four primary forms:

1. Physical abuse
2. Emotional abuse
3. Neglect
4. Sexual abuse

1. Physical abuse: Abuse in which a person deliberately and intentionally causes bodily harm to a child. Examples may include violent battery with a weapon (knife, belt, strap, etc.), burning, shaking, kicking, choking, fracturing bones, and any of a wide variety of non-accidental injuries to a child's body.

Possible Signs of Physical Abuse

- Exhibits severe depression and/or withdrawal
- Hostile and aggressive behavior toward others
- Fearfulness of parents and/or other adults
- Destructive behavior toward self, others, and/or property
- Inexplicable fractures or bruises inappropriate for child's developmental stage
- Burns, facial injuries, pattern of repetitious bruises

2. Emotional abuse: Abuse in which a person exposes a child to spoken and/or unspoken violence or emotional cruelty. Emotional abuse sends a message to the child of worthlessness, badness, and being not only unloved, but undeserving of love and care. Children exposed to emotional abuse may have experienced being locked in a closet, being deprived of any sign of parental affection, being constantly told they are bad or stupid, or being allowed or forced to abuse alcohol or drugs. Emotional abuse is often very difficult to prove and is devastating to the victim.

Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse

- Exhibits severe depression and/or withdrawal
- Exhibits severe lack of self-esteem
- Failure to thrive
- Threatens or attempts suicide

- Speech and/or eating disorders
- Goes to extremes to seek adult approval
- Extreme passive/aggressive behavior patterns

3. Neglect: Abuse in which a person endangers a child's health, safety, or welfare through negligence. Neglect may include withholding food, clothing, medical care, education, and even affection and affirmation of the child's self-worth. This is perhaps the most common form of abuse.

Possible Signs of Neglect

- Failure to thrive
- Pattern of inappropriate dress for climate
- Begs or steals food; chronic hunger
- Depression
- Untreated medical conditions
- Poor hygiene

4. Sexual abuse: Sexual Abuse consist of any tricked, forced, manipulated, or coerced sexual activity for the pleasure of the abuser. The abuser may be an adult or more dominant peer. Often, the child is physically and psychologically dependent upon the perpetrator of the abuse. Examples of sexual abuse may include fondling, intercourse, incest, and the exploitation of and exposure to child pornography or prostitution.

Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse

- Unusually advanced sexual knowledge and/or behavior for student's age and developmental stage
- Depression – cries often for no apparent reason
- Promiscuous behavior
- Runs away from home and refuses to return
- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Bruised/bleeding in vaginal or anal areas
- Exhibits frequent headaches, stomachaches, extreme fatigue
- Sexually transmitted diseases

In addition to these indicators, students who have been sexually abused at church may exhibit some of the following:

1. Unusual nervousness or anxiety about being left in the classroom.
2. Reluctance to participate in church activities that were previously enthusiastically approached.
3. Comments such as "I don't want to be alone with ____" in reference to a volunteer or teacher.
4. Nightmares including a volunteer or teacher as a frightening character.
5. Unexplained hostility toward a volunteer or teacher.

REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

Liberty is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse or neglect will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to Child Protective Services, or another appropriate agency.

Because sexual abusers ‘groom’ children for abuse, it is possible a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to ‘groom’ a child for sexual abuse. Staff members and volunteers are asked to report ‘grooming’ behavior, policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to the Recreation Director, Campus Pastor, or the Executive Pastor of Ministries.

ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES

Liberty staff members and volunteers who supervise other staff members or volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of all Liberty policies. Violations of these policies are grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or reassignment from Recreation positions for both volunteers and staff members. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of the Executive Pastor of Ministries and the Executive Team.

Reporting Abuse or Suspicions of Abuse

REPORTING VIOLATION OF POLICY

All questions or concerns related to inappropriate, suspicious, or suspected grooming behavior should be directed to the Recreation Director, Campus Pastor, or the Executive Pastor of Ministries. The Recreation Director is then responsible to report the abuse to the Executive Pastor of Ministries.

CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATION

Any person accused of committing a prohibited act or any act considered by Liberty to be harmful to a child will be immediately suspended from participation in the Sports Ministry. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement or Child Protective Services.

Any person found to have violated this policy may be prohibited from future participation as a staff member or volunteer in all activities and programming involving children at Liberty. If the person is an employee, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from Liberty.

Failure to report a policy violation is grounds for termination of an employee. Volunteers who fail to report a policy violation may be restricted from participation in any future activities involving minors at Liberty.

REPORTING SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

Staff members and volunteers at Liberty are required to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect, or any inappropriate behavior to the Recreation Director, Campus Pastor, or the Executive Pastor of Ministries. If the Executive Pastor of Ministries was not the person the report was made to, he should be informed as soon as possible.

Under the Commonwealth of Virginia Statute § 63.2-1509, the following guidelines that can apply to the church are provided.

The following persons who, in their professional or official capacity have reason to suspect that a child is an abused or neglected child, shall report the matter immediately, within 24 hours, to the local department of the county or city wherein the child resided or wherein the abuse or neglect is believed to have occurred or the Department's toll-free child abuse or neglect hotline:

- 1. Any person 18 years of age or older associated with or employed by any public or private organization responsible for the care, custody or control of children;*
- 2. Any person providing full-time or part time child care for pay on a regular basis;*
- 3. Any athletic coach, director of other person 18 years of age or older employed by or volunteering with a private sport organization or team.*
- 4. Administrators or employees 18 years of age or older of public or private day camps, youth center or youth recreation programs.*

The person making a report must identify, if known:

- The name and address of the child,
- The name and address of the person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child, and
- Any other pertinent information concerning the alleged abuse or neglect.

In no way is any provision in this policy meant to discourage any staff member or volunteer from *personally* reporting a suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate law enforcement agencies, but it is important that the Recreation Director and Executive Pastor of Ministries know to ensure a safe environment in the Sports Ministry as well as confirm the appropriate report is made to law enforcement agencies or Child Protective Services.

Staff members and volunteers are to verbally report an incident to the supervisory staff mentioned above as soon as possible after the incident. After receiving a report from a staff member or volunteer the Recreation Director or the Executive Pastor of Ministries will speak with the person or volunteer to whom the child spoke to get detailed information about the entire conversation. If the incident occurred at church or church sponsored activity, the Executive Pastor of Ministries will

enlist the help of the Abuse Response Team. The Abuse Response Team will consist of 3-5 members who are trained to respond to reports of abuse.

If appropriate, the Recreation Director or the Executive Pastor of Ministries will inform the appropriate law enforcement agencies or Child Protective Services.

RESPONSE TO REPORT OF ABUSE

When a report of abuse or neglect occurs, Liberty Leadership will take necessary and appropriate action to ensure a safe environment for the person(s) at risk.

Liberty's Abuse Prevention Team

ABUSE PREVENTION TEAM

Recognizing the importance of providing and maintaining a safe environment for minors Liberty will appoint and maintain an Abuse Prevention Team, which will meet at least twice a year.

MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Prevention Team is to enable Liberty Sports to carry out appropriate ministry activities while safeguarding program participants against emotional, physical, or sexual abuse.

COMPOSITION

The Abuse Prevention Team will be comprised of the following members:

1. Executive Pastor of Ministries,
2. Next Gen Pastor,
3. Recreation Director, and
4. Other team members as desired.

MEETINGS

The Executive Pastor of Ministries will chair the meeting of the Abuse Prevention Team at least twice a year to discuss risk management practices and updates. The Abuse Prevention Team will also meet on an emergency basis upon the recommendation of a member or following the report of any incident or allegation.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Abuse Prevention Team will be charged with the following duties:

1. Applying existing Liberty policies and procedures related to Kids and Student's safety and risk management issues.
2. Monitoring all Kids and Student Ministry programs for ongoing compliance with safety policies.
3. Making recommendations to Liberty's Executive Team regarding safety issues.

Liberty Sports Staff Monitoring Plan

Monitoring of staff members and volunteers will include regular (announced and unannounced) visits in each program to provide supervisors the opportunity to observe staff member and volunteer interaction with children.

1. Local Ministry Supervisors conduct an unscheduled observation at least once each month for programs that occur weekly.
2. Next Gen Pastor will be responsible for their ministry to conduct an annual abuse prevention training set by the Abuse Prevention Team.
3. Local Campus Pastors and/or Central Ministry Supervisors conducts an unscheduled observation of a Kids and Student Ministry program at least once each quarter.
4. The Executive Pastor of Ministries meets with the Abuse Prevention Team at least twice a year to discuss Kids and Student Ministry, including safety training and procedures

Prohibited Substances and Activities

Intoxicants

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drug while in any church facility, while traveling with minors, or while working with or supervising minors during any Liberty program or activity.

Tobacco Use And Vaping

Liberty requires staff members and volunteers to abstain from the use or possession of tobacco and vaping products in church facilities, while in the presence of minors or their parents, or during Liberty activities or programs. Liberty is a tobacco and vape free facility.

Medication

A staff member or volunteer may not administer medication while serving in Liberty's Sports Ministry. Exceptions will be made as it relates to an EpiPen since the medication has to be administered in emergency situations. Parents/guardians must provide written instructions to church staff regarding method and timing of the administration of an EpiPen.

Nudity

Staff members and volunteers serving in Liberty Sports should never be nude in the presence of minors in their care. In the event there is a situation that may call for or contemplate the possibility of nudity (i.e. changing clothes during a pool party, weekend or overnight retreat, etc.), the staff member or volunteer leading the event will submit a plan to the Recreation Director concerning arrangements for showering or changing clothes.

Sexually Oriented Conversations

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with minors and are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating, or sexual activities with any child in the program.

Sexually Oriented Materials

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from possessing (or transmitting to a minor) any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, images, videos, films, etc.) on church property or in the presence of children in their care. Staff members and volunteers should check with parents and use good judgement regarding movies and video games.

Physical Contact with Athletes

APPROPRIATE PHYSICAL CONTACT

Liberty Sports, and organizations and individuals affiliated with Liberty acknowledge and adhere to the following principles and guidelines regarding physical contact with minor athletes.

Common Criteria for Appropriate Physical Contact

Physical contact with minor athletes – for safety, consolation, and celebration – has multiple criteria that make it both safe and appropriate. These include:

1. The physical contact takes place in public;
2. There is no potential for (or actual) physical or sexual intimacies during the physical contact;
3. The physical contact is for the benefit of the athlete, not to meet an emotional or other need of an adult.

Safety

The safety of minor athletes is paramount, and in many instances the athletic activity is made safer through appropriate physical contact. Examples include:

1. Spotting an athlete so that he or she will not be injured by a fall or piece of equipment;
2. Positioning an athlete's body so that he or she more quickly acquires an athletic skill, gets a better sense of where his or her body is in space, or improves balance and coordination;
3. Making athletes aware that he or she may be in harm's way due to other practicing athletes, or equipment use.

Celebration

Sports are physical by definition. Liberty recognizes that participants often express a joy of participation, competition, achievement, and victory through physical acts. Liberty encourages these public expressions of celebration, which include:

1. Greeting gestures such as high-fives, fist bumps, and brief side hugs;
2. Congratulatory gestures such as celebratory brief side hugs, "jump-arounds" and pats on the back for any form of athletic or personal accomplishment.

Consolation

It may be appropriate to console an emotionally distressed athlete (e.g., an athlete who has been injured

or has just lost a competition). Appropriate consolation includes, publicly putting an arm around an athlete while verbally engaging them to calm them down (“side hugs”).

PROHIBITED PHYSICAL CONTACT

Prohibited forms of physical contact include, without limitation:

1. Asking or having a minor athlete sit in the lap of a coach or volunteer;
2. Lingering or repeated embrace of a minor athlete that goes beyond the criteria set forth for acceptable physical contact;
3. Slapping, hitting, punching, kicking or any other physical contact meant to discipline, punish or achieve compliance from a minor athlete;
4. “Cuddling” or maintaining prolonged physical contact of a minor athlete during any aspect of training;
5. Playful, yet inappropriate contact that is not a part of regular training, (e.g., butt-pats, tickling or wrestling-type “horseplay”);
6. Continued physical contact that makes a minor athlete obviously uncomfortable, whether expressed or not;
7. Any contact that is contrary to a previously expressed personal desire by the minor athlete for decreased or no physical contact, where such decreased contact is feasible in a competitive training environment.

The above physical contact is prohibited between adult and minor athlete AND between minor athletes. Coaches and volunteers must model the behavior expected from minor athletes. The above forms of Prohibited Physical Contact will be immediately reported to a team official or other designated Liberty Sports representative.

Some forms of physical contact may constitute physical or sexual abuse that **must be reported to appropriate law enforcement authorities**. When appropriate, the Prohibited Physical Contact will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement authority.

Misconduct

BULLYING

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at any Liberty activity and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to the victim. Liberty is committed to providing a safe, caring, and friendly environment for all participants. If bullying does occur, incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Any minor athlete who is aware of bullying behavior is expected to tell the Recreation Director or Campus Pastor.

Objectives of Liberty’s Bullying Policy and Action Plan:

1. To clearly communicate that Liberty will not tolerate bullying in any form.
2. To define bullying and give minor athletes, coaches, volunteers and parents a suitable understanding of those behaviors that constitute ‘bullying’.
3. To make it known to minor athletes, coaches, and volunteers that a policy and protocol exist should bullying issues arise.
4. To clearly communicate how to report bullying behavior.

5. To communicate to minor athletes, coaches, volunteers, and parents that Liberty takes bullying seriously, and will immediately investigate and address all reports of bullying.

Bullying is defined by Stopbullying.gov as unwanted, aggressive behavior among children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance by seeking to harm, intimidate or coerce another individual. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

To be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- **An Imbalance of Power:** Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- **Repetition:** Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Types of Bullying

There are three types of bullying:

1. **Verbal bullying** is saying or writing mean things. Examples may include teasing, name-calling, inappropriate sexual comments, taunting and/or threatening to cause harm.
2. **Social bullying**, sometimes referred to as relational bullying, involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. Examples may include leaving someone out on purpose, telling other children not to be friends with someone, spreading rumors about someone, embarrassing someone in public.
3. **Physical bullying** involves hurting a person's body or possessions. Examples may include hitting/kicking/pinching, spitting, tripping/pushing, taking, or breaking someone's things, making mean or rude hand gestures.

HARASSMENT

Harassment is the repeated pattern of physical and/or non-physical behaviors that

1. Are intended to cause fear, humiliation, or annoyance;
2. Offend or degrade;
3. Create a hostile environment;
4. Reflect discriminatory bias to establish dominance, superiority, or power over an individual athlete or group based on gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion or mental or physical disability; or
5. Any act or conduct described as harassment under federal or state law.

Examples of harassment prohibited in Liberty activities include, without limitation:

Physical offenses. Behaviors that include

1. Hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, choking, or slapping a minor athlete or participant;
2. Throwing at or hitting a minor athlete with objects including sporting equipment.

Non-physical offenses. Behaviors that include

1. Making negative or disparaging comments about an athlete's disability, religion, skin color, or ethnic traits;
2. Displaying offensive materials, gestures, or symbols; and
3. Withholding or reducing playing time to an athlete based on his or her disability, religion, skin color, or ethnic traits.

HAZING

Hazing is defined as coercing, requiring, forcing, or willfully tolerating any humiliating, unwelcome, or dangerous activity that serves as a condition for

1. An athlete joining a group;
2. An athlete being socially accepted by a group's members; or
3. Any act or conduct described as hazing under federal or state law.

Hazing does not include group or team activities that are meant to establish normative team behaviors or promote team cohesion.

Examples of hazing prohibited in Liberty activities include, without limitation:

1. Requiring, forcing or otherwise requiring an athlete to consume 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; and
7. Excessive training requirements directed at a particular athlete or a group of athletes.

Activities that fit the definition of hazing are hazing regardless of an athlete's willingness to cooperate or participate.

PRANKING

Pranking or playing a practical joke on another person can lead to injury, inappropriate behavior, or acts of retaliation that can be detrimental to minors.

Activities that fit the definition of pranking are not allowed, regardless of a minor's willingness to cooperate or participate.

WILLFULLY TOLERATING MISCONDUCT

It is a violation of this Code of Conduct if a coach, volunteer, or participant knows of misconduct, but takes no action to intervene on behalf of the minor athlete(s). All forms of misconduct should be

reported to the Recreation Director, Campus Pastor, or Executive Pastor of Ministries.

PEER-TO-PEER SEXUAL ABUSE

Approximately 1/3 of all reported sexual abuse occurs at the hands of other minors. Coaches and volunteers have an obligation to report peer-to-peer sexual abuse in accord with state mandatory reporting requirements. Whether sexual interaction between athletes constitutes ‘sexual abuse’ depends on the existence of an aggressor and whether there is an imbalance of power between the parties (e.g., an age difference between the athletes, disparity in size, or the existence of a physical or intellectual disability). **If you have concern that an interaction between minor athletes may constitute sexual abuse, report the interaction to the Recreation Director, Campus Pastor or Executive Pastor of Ministries.**

Peer-to Peer sexual abuse risk is highest:

1. Any location that is less easily seen; or
2. Any time minor athletes are unclothed or changing clothes, for any reason.

Due to this risk, coaches and volunteers will be aware of locations and facilities that are less easily seen or supervised. These locations and facilities vary per team and activity, and can include practice and competition locations, restrooms, and changing areas. These areas will be supervised regularly by coaches and volunteers, where possible and appropriate.

Electronic Communications & Social Media

All electronic communications between a staff member or coach and a minor athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about program activities.

As with any communication, the content of any electronic communication should be readily available to share with the athlete’s family. At the request of a parent or guardian, any email, electronic text, social media, or similar communication will copy or include the athlete’s parents or guardians.

FACEBOOK, MYSPACE, BLOGS, AND SIMILAR SITES

Coaches or volunteers can communicate with minor athletes through sites like Facebook, but all communication needs to be in group form and public (no private communication). If a Facebook page is used, all staff members and parents must be included. Coaches may not have athletes join a personal social media page. All posts, messages, texts, or media of any kind shared among athletes or between staff member/coach and athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities or for team-oriented motivational purposes.

TWITTER, INSTANT MESSAGING AND SIMILAR MEDIA

All communication is to be public in nature. Staff members/Coaches and minor athletes may “follow” each other. Staff members/Coaches cannot “re-tweet” an athlete’s inappropriate message posts. Staff members/Coaches are not permitted to “direct message” minor athletes through Twitter (or similar media). Coaches and volunteers are not permitted to post inappropriate off-color content or comment on inappropriate off-color posts. If there is doubt, treat the content as inappropriate.

EMAIL AND SIMILAR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

Staff members/Coaches may use email to communicate if the athlete is at least 14 years of age with a parent or another staff member being copied. All email content between coach and athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about program activities. Where possible, the minor athlete's parent should be copied on e-mail communications. Email communication between coaches and minor athletes is allowed during the hours of 7 a.m. and 10 p.m.

TEXTING AND SIMILAR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

Below are policies that relate to texting:

1. Texting is allowed between a Staff Member/Coach and a minor athlete if the student is at least 14 years of age.
2. Staff Members/Coaches should have written permission from a parent or guardian to text a student – “Dear parent, is it ok if I occasionally reach out to your student via text to let them know I’m praying for them, to remind them of team events, and encourage them?”
3. Texting, especially one-on-one should be professional, have a point and be as brief as possible. Texting is not to be used for small talk. Appropriate messaging would include:
 - Information or reminders about team or team schedule.
 - Quick words of encouragement such as “I prayed for you today,” “here is a verse I read this morning...”, or good luck with your test/game/performance today.”
 - Midweek follow-up such as “We missed you at practice” or “How are your workouts going.”
 - Exchanging information for items such as extracurricular and group activities.
4. Staff Member/Coaches are encouraged to use group text when possible—including another student, volunteer, a parent, or another staff member.
5. No texting the opposite gender one on one is allowed.
6. No texting is allowed between a Staff Member/Coach and a student before 7 a.m. or after 10 p.m., unless there is a specific ministry activity that requires a text communication.

The use of Snapchat, Instagram (and similar apps) with a student is not permitted.

ELECTRONIC IMAGERY

From time to time, digital photos, videos of practice or competition, and other publicly obtainable images of the minor athlete – individually or in groups – may be taken. These photos and/or videos may be used for athlete instruction (i.e. practice and game films), team videos, team websites, or offered to the athletes’ families. The use of photos/videos is permissible if the athlete or athletes are in public view and such imagery is both appropriate and in the best interest of the athlete and the program. Photo or video imagery must not be contrary to any rules or guidance outlined in this Code of Conduct.

REQUEST TO DISCONTINUE

The parent or guardian of a minor athlete may request in writing that their athlete not be contacted by coaches through any electronic communication; that request must be honored. Additionally, a parent or guardian of a minor athlete may request in writing that photographs or videography of their athlete not be posted on program or team websites, understanding that group photography or videography may render this impracticable; to the extent this request is practicable, it should be honored.

MISCONDUCT

Social media and electronic communication cannot be used inappropriately. (e.g., emotional abuse, sexual abuse, bullying, harassment, and hazing). Such communication by coaches, volunteers, officials, administrators, parents, or other athletes will not be tolerated.

Electronic communication should not contain or relate to any of the following:

1. Drugs or alcohol use;
2. Sexually oriented conversation, sexually explicit language, or sexual activity;
3. An adult's personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues, or personal problems; and
4. Inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures.

Any communication concerning a minor athlete's personal life, social activities, relationships, family issues or personal problems must be transparent, accessible, and professional.

Parental Contact and Involvement

PARENTAL CONTACT

Parents of minor athletes will be contacted if their athlete becomes ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem while participating in a Liberty Sports Activity.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents have an open invitation to observe, with supervision, all programs, and activities in which their minor is involved. However, parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with their minor's program will be required to complete Liberty's volunteer application and screening process.

Policies and Procedures

Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement

I have received and read a copy of Liberty's Sports Policies and Procedures Manual and understand the importance of the matters set forth within the manual. I agree to follow and abide by these guidelines during my service at Liberty.

Further, I understand that the manual may be modified at any time, and that any guidelines may be amended, revised, or eliminated at any time by Liberty.

I also acknowledge that I have reviewed and agree to fulfill the duties listed in the Manual. While, ideally, I will serve in this ministry for the agreed term, I understand that I may choose to end this relationship at any time. If possible, I will provide two weeks' notice to my supervisor/director.

I further acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this manual in no way express or imply a contractual employment relationship between Liberty and me. If I am applying as a volunteer, I acknowledge and agree that I will receive no compensation for hours worked.

Finally, I understand that it is my responsibility to review new guidelines that are created and distributed, as well as manual guidelines that are changed or deleted.

By digitally signing, I hereby acknowledge receipt of Liberty's policies and procedures manual.