



# The Coaches Code of Conduct

## Coaches Council

A Position Paper from The National Association for Sport and Physical Education

### Introduction

The effect that a sport coach has on young athletes is apparent in the way the athletes conduct themselves. Although that influence is not always a positive one, the coach-athlete relationship provides an opportunity to help maximize the development of the athlete physically, mentally and social/emotionally.

Sport is such an integral part of our culture yet coaching is not always seen as a true profession. This attitude is gradually changing. Coaching can no longer be perceived as simply a hobby or informal second job; coaching is a profession. It may be necessary for a coach to work as a teacher or in business or other occupations. But this need not and must not diminish the professional responsibilities for executing the coaching role as a professional.

If we are to continue to enhance the cultural perceptions of coaching, then we must strive toward maintaining minimum expectations. At minimum, the role of the coach should include the knowledge and awareness of the competencies within the following eight domains from the *National Standards for Athletic Coaches*:

- ❑ Injury: Prevention, Care and Management
- ❑ Risk Management
- ❑ Growth, Development and Learning
- ❑ Training, Conditioning and Nutrition
- ❑ Social/Psychological Aspects of Coaching
- ❑ Skills, Tactics and Strategies
- ❑ Teaching and Administration
- ❑ Professional Preparation

The Coaches Council of the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) has established the following **Code of Conduct** to which coaches at all levels should be held accountable.

- Coaches have the knowledge and preparation to lead their teams within the parameters outlined in the National Standards for Athletic Coaches (NASPE, 1995).
- Coaches are responsible to ensure that the health, well-being and development of athletes take precedence over the win/loss record.
- Coaches accept that they do serve as role models and there must be congruency between their actions and words.



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- Coaches provide a physically and emotionally safe environment for practices and competition.
- Coaches exemplify honesty, integrity, fair play, and sportsmanship regardless of the impact that might have upon the outcome of the competition.
- Coaches maintain a professional demeanor in their relationships with athletes, officials, colleagues, administrators and the public and treat them with respect and dignity.
- Coaches maintain confidentiality when appropriate and avoid situations that would potentially create a conflict of interest or exploit the athlete.
- Coaches are committed to the education of their athletes and should encourage academic achievement.
- Coaches are committed to the safety and well-being of each athlete and promote healthy lifestyles by their actions
- Coaches discourage the use of performance enhancing substances and dietary supplements
- Coaches prohibit the use of any illegal or recreational drugs
- Coaches educate athletes about nutrition, safe and healthy weight loss or gain, and healthy eating behaviors
- Coaches follow current safe training and conditioning techniques
- Coaches exhibit sound injury and risk management practices
- Coaches demonstrate an understanding of growth and developmental stages of their athletes
- Coaches encourage athletes to adopt a physically active lifestyle.
- Coaches place the athlete's needs and interests before their own.
- Coaches remember that competition should be healthy and enjoyable for all.