C&A Athletes Strong for Mental Health

Mindurance

Athletes and Social Media

Direct Messaging

The invention and advancement of the internet and cellphones has put the world at our fingertips. The creation of social media has made communication simple, fast and fun. Where does this tool fit into the world of an athlete, and how can it be used to improve their communication, morale and sportsmanship?

Utilizing Direct Messages

All social media apps provide a form of direct messaging, or DMs. Similar to text messages or chat rooms, users can share private content or messages with each other individually or as a group. A positive use of this would be an athlete sharing a post from their team regarding game day information with friends or family, or sending good luck wishes to players on their team or another athletic team. A negative example would be sending hurtful messages to opposing team members or even their own teammates. Should an athlete receive hurtful or threatening messages from another athlete or anyone online, the athlete should evaluate how seriously to take the message and alert parents or coaches if appropriate.

Managing Messages

Because direct messages are private and not shared with a user's followers, it can be difficult for guardians and coaches to monitor- which gives users a sense on anonymity. One of the limitations of DMs is communicating tone of voice. In the world of sports there is a fine line between playful and hurtful taunting. This can mean a playful, "I schooled you today on the court", even when said to a friend, can be construed as something hurtful. Before sending any message, especially one that's meant in jest, it is important to consider how the message may read to someone outside of the personal relationship or in a different tone of voice.



Information provided by Dr. Steve Graef, PhD. , a sports psychologist and performance coach based in Columbus. He is the owner of Mindurance - services to help athletes, performers and professionals. For more information, visit www.mindurance.org

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Helpful, Neutral or Hurtful?

While posting anything on social media, a person should keep in mind the intentions of their post and try to anticipate the effects it will have on others. When an athlete posts about their games, teammates, coaches or the fans in the stands it is important for them to ask themselves is this post helpful, neutral or harmful?

Social Media Reveals Character

It's been said many times- social media is forever. Even if a post is deleted there may be pictures, screen shots or screen recordings of posts and interactions made online. As an athlete considers their future i, they might also consider what a coach, teammate or boss -current or future- could learn about them from their social media. What effect might it have on as they could influence present and future decisions regarding their athletic and personal career?.





Social Media in Schools

As a student-athlete, it is important to review their school's social media policies. Using social media improperly can not only have social consequences but it could result in disciplinary action from their school. This could mean removal from practices, games or even their athletic team. If an athlete has questions regarding their team or school social media policy they can reach out to their coach, athletic director or principal.

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