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Social Media Policy for Youth Sports Organization

Purpose: The purpose of this Social Media Policy is to guide the appropriate and responsible use of social media platforms by coaches, athletes, staff, parents, and volunteers involved in the West Bridgewater Youth Athletic Organization. Social media can be a powerful tool for communication, promotion, and community building. However, it is important that all users of social media associated with the organization follow these guidelines to ensure a safe, respectful, and positive environment for everyone involved.

Scope: This policy applies to all members of the West Bridgewater Youth Athletic Organization, including but not limited to coaches, athletes, parents, volunteers, and staff. It covers all forms of social media, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, LinkedIn, and any other social media platforms used to communicate, share content, or promote the organization.

1. General Guidelines:

- **Respect and Professionalism:** All posts and interactions on social media should reflect the values of respect, responsibility, and sportsmanship. Avoid sharing or engaging in any content that could be seen as discriminatory, offensive, or inappropriate.
- **Confidentiality:** Respect the privacy of athletes, families, and staff. Do not post personal or confidential information about individuals without their consent.
- **Safety:** Do not share or tag photos or videos that compromise the safety or privacy of minors. Always seek permission from parents/guardians before sharing images or videos of youth athletes.
- **No Bullying or Harassment:** Social media should never be used for bullying, harassment, or any form of negative behavior. This includes, but is not limited to, mocking, threatening, or targeting individuals or groups based on race, gender, religion, or any other personal characteristic.

2. Coaches and Staff:

- **Professional Conduct:** Coaches and staff should maintain a professional presence online. Personal and professional accounts should be kept separate when possible. When interacting with athletes on social media, ensure that all communication is appropriate and constructive.
- **Communication with Athletes:** Coaches should refrain from direct messaging athletes on social media unless it is necessary for team communication. Use official team channels (e.g., team email or team management platforms) for private or sensitive communication.
- **Monitoring:** Coaches and staff should monitor the content posted by athletes, particularly when athletes are under 18 years old, to ensure compliance with the organization's guidelines and to maintain a positive environment.

3. Athletes:

- **Responsible Posting:** Athletes are encouraged to share positive moments related to their sports experience but must remember to be respectful of teammates, opponents, and coaches. Negative or inappropriate comments regarding games, referees, or other teams should never be posted.
- **Cyberbullying:** Athletes must refrain from engaging in cyberbullying or participating in any online behavior that targets individuals or groups. Violations will be taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action.
- **Parent Permission:** Athletes under the age of 18 should seek parental permission before posting images, videos, or other content related to their involvement in the program.

4. Parents and Guardians:

- **Supportive Behavior:** Parents and guardians are encouraged to use social media to share and celebrate their child's involvement in sports. Posts should be positive, supportive, and in line with the organization's values.
- **Respecting Other Families:** Parents should be mindful of the privacy and comfort of other families. Avoid posting images or comments about other children without consent from their parents or guardians.
- **Engagement in Conversations:** Parents should engage in social media discussions with respect, especially when it comes to game results, coaching decisions, or other participants. Negative or critical comments about the organization, coaches, players, or volunteers should be addressed through proper channels rather than on social media.

5. Content Sharing and Promotion:

- **Approval of Official Content:** Any social media content officially representing the West Bridgewater Youth Athletic Organization (e.g., logos, announcements, event promotions) must be approved by the designated communications team before being posted on any platform.
- **Tagging and Mentions:** When posting photos, videos, or content related to the program, consider tagging the official West Bridgewater Youth Athletic Organization social media accounts to increase visibility. Always seek permission to tag individuals or groups in photos or videos.

6. Disciplinary Actions:

- Violations of this social media policy may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to:
 - A formal warning
 - Temporary suspension from participation in social media-related activities or team events
 - Removal from the team or organization in cases of severe or repeated violations

7. Guidance for Posting:

- When posting on social media, consider the following:
 - Is it respectful to others?
 - Does it reflect well on the West Bridgewater Youth Athletic Organization?
 - Will it contribute to a positive environment?
 - Am I adhering to privacy laws, including respecting the rights of minors and obtaining consent when necessary?

Acknowledgment:

By participating in West Bridgewater Youth Athletic Organization, all members—coaches, athletes, staff, and parents—acknowledge that they have read, understood, and agree to comply with this Social Media Policy. Any questions or concerns should be directed to the Program Director or the Communications Team.

Print Name

Signature