

CHILD ABUSE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Effective 3/1/16

The increasing incidence of reported child abuse is a special concern for the sport of swimming and the BCW Barracudas swim team. It is the duty of all BCW Barracudas coaches, volunteers, and parents to recognize and report child abuse and neglect. Child abuse is damage to a child for which there is no “reasonable” explanation. Child abuse includes non-accidental physical injury, neglect, sexual molestation, and emotional abuse. More information about recognizing, reporting, and preventing child abuse is available on the USA Swimming Safe Sport website (click [here](#)).

The following guidelines have been adopted as our team’s official policy.

Staff Recruitment, Training, and Supervision

1. Reference checks on all prospective coaches will be conducted, documented, and filed prior to employment.
2. The Lead Volunteers will secure license checks, or otherwise conduct criminal record checks (18&over), of coaches who work directly with youth and youth development education programs and their associated events. Youth employed in programs such as child care and camping are included in the screening process.
3. Coaches working directly with children will be provided training link below for information about identifying signs of possible child abuse. Material is available on USA Swimming Safe Sport <http://www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=1955&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en>
4. Administrative staff responsible for the supervision of programs involving the care of children will make unannounced visits to each program site to assure that standards, policies, program quality, and performance of staff are being maintained.

Staff Relationships with Children

5. In order to protect individuals, coaches, and volunteers, BCW Barracudas coaches and volunteers are encouraged to avoid, when possible, being alone with a single child.
6. Coaches and volunteers are encouraged not to socialize with program participants under the age of 18 outside of organizational activities without prior parent approval.
7. Coaches and volunteers will not, under any circumstances, discipline children by use of physical punishment or by failing to provide the necessities of care such as food or shelter.
8. Coaches and volunteers should be alert to the physical and emotional state of all children each time they report for a program. Signs of injury or suspected child abuse should be reported to the Lead Volunteers.

Responsibilities to Parents

9. Parents will be informed about their child’s program participation and may visit programs at any time.

Reporting Procedures

10. When there is suspicion of child abuse, coaches or volunteers to whom it has been reported will immediately inform the Lead Volunteers. The reporting of suspected child abuse situations is a personal obligation as well as a professional and legal one.
11. The designated Lead Volunteer receiving the initial report is responsible for investigating the facts reported and the condition of the child. This should be done as soon as the report is received.

12. Volunteers, coaches, or parents who suspect any child abuse should report the information to the Lead Volunteers.
13. In the event the reported incident involves a BCW Barracudas coach, volunteer, or parent, this individual will be relieved from all activities involving children until cleared.
14. Regardless of where or under what circumstances the alleged incident takes place, if a BCW Barracudas coach is involved, appropriate action will be taken according to the BCW Barracudas policy.
15. BCW Barracudas coaches and volunteers should be sensitive to the need for confidentiality in the handling of information concerning child abuse. Coaches, parents, and volunteers will discuss matters pertaining to abuse and suspected abuse only with the Lead Volunteers.