

Covid-19 Special Circumstances

Due to the infectious nature of the Coronavirus (Covid-19), we recognize that some leniency on sick days and other attendance policies will be required. No child will be required to come to the gym when feeling ill while we are under health advisement from local, state and federal government. CDC recommendations and other mandated restrictions for our business may supercede some of the enclosed policies.

We ask that you attempt to follow the attendance policies included in this packet to the best of your ability. You can help us by providing a healthy diet for your athlete, making sure they get plenty of rest, and assisting them in practicing safe, preventative health measures at home and in public.

This will ensure that ALL participants can achieve a successful season. We sincerely thank you for your cooperation.

It is the responsibility of the parent to review the following rules and regulations with their athlete(s) prior to signing an agreement to participate on any competitive team representing GymTyme Illinois. All athletes will be held to the highest of standards and are expected to commit fully to their teammates and coaches. To that end, parent cooperation is an integral part of supporting all athletes and teams in meeting these commitments. Together with staff, this attitude of accountability will ensure a successful season for all involved. We thank you for choosing GymTyme Illinois for your All Star experience and we look forward to a phenomenal year!

General Code of Conduct

- No profanity or rude language
- Punctuality is a must. Make it a habit to arrive at least 10 minutes early.
- Anyone threatening to quit will be asked to leave immediately and the drop fee will be processed.
- We are a family values company. All athletes, parents and fans represent the GymTyme name and are expected to behave in a respectful manner toward staff, event producers, judges, other teams/gyms, and especially our own members at all times. Inappropriate behavior (physical/verbal abuse, bullying, threats, gossip, public intoxication, etc.) can result in expulsion from practice or immediate dismissal without refund.
- Negative comments (in person or online) regarding other athletes/teams, routines, choreography, athlete placement, competition results, etc., are considered unsportsmanlike and contribute to a hostile atmosphere that diminishes the experience of other customers.
- Illegal drug, tobacco or alcohol use by athletes on our premises or at events is strictly prohibited. Any depiction of an athlete engaged in this type of activity on social media is also forbidden. Reports or suspicion of abuse will result in the immediate removal from practice or the event and an athlete/parent meeting will be scheduled to discuss disciplinary action.

Visiting Our Facility

- The gym, dance studio and fitness room are reserved for USASF certified staff with a background check and enrolled participants (practices, classes and open gym). Anyone entering these areas **MUST** have a waiver of participation on file. Parents, friends and relatives must remain in the viewing area unless specifically invited in by staff. This is a ZERO TOLERANCE policy. Anyone entering restricted areas without express permission will be subject to:
 - 1st offense:** \$50 insurance fee will be charged to the family account (athlete cannot return until paid)
 - 2nd offense:** Offender will not be allowed to enter the building (dropoff/pickup only)
 - 3rd offense:** Athlete/family will be dismissed from the program without refund
- Young children cannot be left unattended in any of our public areas. Please monitor your children at all times.
- We strive to maintain a clean and welcoming establishment. Please do not leave trash on or under tables and chairs. We ask that you immediately notify the front desk if you discover a maintenance issue.
- No animals in the building.
- Staff room is intended for staff only.
- Please do not enter the deli or take products from the deli.
- No food or drinks allowed in the gym/studio except water.
- There is no smoking inside our facility or within 50 feet of any entryway.
- Vandalism, destruction of property or theft are grounds for immediate dismissal and/or legal action.

Communication / Social Media for Parents

- It is the responsibility of the parent to stay informed. Please check email, team Facebook pages and/or team communication apps regularly. If you are not receiving emails, contact the gym right away.
- We follow the 24-hour rule. Oftentimes, our emotions lead us to react rather than respond. Please allow 24 hours to reflect on a given situation before approaching a staff member. This provides everyone the opportunity to process events and prepare for a productive conversation. Under no circumstances will we engage a parent who is escalated beyond rational discussion.
- All formally scheduled meetings with parents will have at least two staff members present.
- Official communication apps will be selected and monitored by GTIL staff and are reserved for sharing events, schedules, updates and other information related to practices, competitions and community events. They are not a forum to express grievances. Parents and athletes are discouraged from forming private groups that exclude members/staff in order to discuss GymTyme activities.
- Do not use social media (commenting, posting, messaging) to make inquiries via our public channels or staff member's personal accounts. The best way to get answers is through email or calling the front desk. We at GymTyme Illinois are committed to providing exceptional customer service, however we cannot be available 24 hours a day. This is especially true when texting a coach directly. Please be respectful of your coaches personal time outside of the gym.
- We reserve the right to request you remove from your personal accounts any negative content that is harmful to our program and/or ban you from engaging on our public accounts. This includes content that depicts unsafe cheer or dance technique (fails) and/or aims to ridicule the industry.
- Unofficial accounts using the GymTyme, GTIL or any team names require permission from the general manager. "Anon" accounts are strictly forbidden.
- We will assign a "team parent" volunteer to help share information throughout the season and to be a point person at competitions. Team parents will need to sign an additional agreement promising to adhere to their specific role and responsibilities.
- Specific rules for direct communication from adults to minor athletes is outlined in the Electronic Communication Policy (ECP) on pages 6 & 7

Team Placement

- Rosters will be comprised of members whose talents provide the best chances for success at competition.
- Team placement is based on age and overall abilities across all skill sets. In some cases, an athlete may not have the required minimum tumbling skills to make a certain level team, but possesses other skills that would be beneficial to a certain team.
- All team placements, routine positions and stunt spots are at the discretion of the coaches, and can be changed at any time.
- Skills demonstrated at tryouts must be maintained or advanced throughout the season. If an athlete regresses during the season, a placement meeting may be scheduled and the athlete may be moved to a more appropriate level team.
- Athletes are not allowed to compete with any other cheerleading/dance program at the same time. You may participate on a school squad as long as it is not a competitive team and it does not interfere with your GymTyme practices.

Athlete Drop Policy

- Athletes have a period of 14 days from placement to drop the program. Any payments submitted prior to dropping are non-refundable. After the above deadline, any athlete who elects to drop from the program for reasons other than a season- or career-ending injury (doctor's note must be submitted), will be charged a \$500 drop fee. This includes attempting to opt out of post season events. Athletes who are asked to leave the program due to a parent or athlete breach of contract will also be considered an elective drop. Breach of contract includes, but is not limited to:
 - Three no-show, no-call practices (may or may not be consecutive)
 - Physical abuse, or the threat of physical violence (in person or online)
 - Abuse of illegal substances or depicting such abuse on social media; public intoxication
 - Threatening to quit

Practices

- Parents should not interrupt practices. If you have a question or concern, please request a meeting with your coach or management. Please refer to our 24-hour rule explained in the communication section.
- Practice schedules can change. We may add or extend practices before any competition and attendance is mandatory.
- Coaches/management reserve the right to close practices at any time.
- Approved cheer/dance shoes must be worn at all times.
- Proper clothing or assigned practice wear / bow must be worn.
- Hair should be styled away from the face in a high ponytail, french braid or similar style.
- Cell phones are not allowed on practice surfaces and should be stored safely in your bag, with a parent or in your car. Staff may use personal devices for taking attendance or training purposes.
- Bags should be left in the designated storage cubbies. No overnight storage.
- Leave your valuables at home; we are not responsible for lost or stolen items.
- No jewelry; this is a USASF safety rule and we follow it in our gym.

Competitions

- Each athlete is required to have a suitable chaperone at all competitions and appearances.
- Information regarding arrival time, performance time, etc., is emailed out as soon as the information becomes available. This is typically sent on Wednesday just prior to the event.
- Athletes will arrive on time and **ready to compete** based on the master schedule. Check in with your team parent and stay with your team until a coach arrives. *Team parents are not responsible for hair, make-up, etc.*
- No jewelry of any kind may be worn at competition. Remove any piercings prior to arrival. Jewelry cannot be taped as it is against USASF rules. Remove hair bands from your wrist as they are grounds for a deduction.
- When the entire team has checked in and is competition ready, the coaches will then take them to warmups. This may be earlier than listed on the master schedule if all athletes are ready.
- Parents are not allowed in the warmup room at any competition for any reason.
- After your performance, staff or the team parent will provide a meeting time and location for awards. All athletes must attend their awards ceremony at every competition. Athletes should wear their full uniform/costume. This includes cheer/dance shoes and competition bow.
- Athletes are required to be in GymTyme apparel at all competitions/events. Bare midribs must be covered at all times except when reporting to warmups/performances.
- Parents and athletes may not contact the competition companies. All questions or concerns must be directed to GymTyme Illinois.
- Hotels are chosen by staff and every athlete is encouraged to stay at these designated hotels (exception, Stay-to-Play events).
- In the event that you are unable to compete (illness, injury, family emergency, program dismissal) you forfeit any competition or travel fees associated with your participation.
- Athletes are responsible for paying the competition/coaches fees for any alternate that fills their spot.
- We accept At Large and Paid bids to Worlds and the Summit. We may also accept bids to The One and US Finals. Post-season competitions are part of the program and are not elective, however we reserve the right to designate alternates and/or replace athletes for lack of performance or disciplinary reasons.

Athlete Disciplinary Procedures

- Code of conduct and other policy issues will be addressed directly with the athlete first. Depending on athlete maturity, we may or may not involve the parent. If issues do not resolve, we will then involve a parent/guardian, a meeting will be scheduled and a plan of action will be discussed.

Team Parties/Gifts

We encourage celebrations for birthdays and accomplishments. For the safety and consideration of all of our customers, the following guidelines must be followed:

- You must reserve your party with the front desk. A \$25 non-refundable facility fee is due before we will hold the party space on your selected date. Please ensure festivities do not interfere with practices.
- Athlete birthdays may be celebrated without fee in our lounge when sharing small wrapped “take-away” treats.
- A team apparel fee will be collected by the gym and is due Aug. 15. This will cover one gym-selected athlete outfit (top and bottom) and a day-2 zero-deduction hair accessory.
- Additional gifts and/or party supplies are strictly volunteer and should be provided as a donation. Any individual that attempts to make a profit from hosting a party or purchasing/producing gift items will be dismissed from our program without refund. Please discuss your plans with the gym.
- You cannot create or sell your own GymTyme clothing, bows or other accessories. The GymTyme name, all team names, the logomark (GT star) and logotype are property of the gym. Production and/or sale of unauthorized merchandise will be subject to legal action and/or a \$500 fine.

Attendance

- Attendance is crucial to the success of the team. All missed practices must be documented in writing. Failure to notify the gym is considered a no call/no show and is subject to a disciplinary meeting before an athlete may return to practice.
- Athletes are allowed a designated number of absences per season. Please see your program’s absence policy below for details.
- All absences should be reported sooner than later. Please notify the gym of any absence by:
 - 1) Email your athlete’s name, date of absence and reason for absence — with attached doctor/teacher note if applicable — to joe@gymtymeil.com
 - 2) If less than 4 hours notice, please send an email AND call the gym as soon as possible prior to your practice.
 - 3) Please discuss any vacation plans with the all star director by June 15 (summer) or 90 days prior (fall/winter). Alternates/fill-ins will be discussed if the vacation is in conflict with a camp or competition.
 - 3) We understand that traffic or other unforeseen circumstances may cause tardiness. If you are going to arrive late to practice, please call the gym. Any tardiness over 30 minutes may be considered an unexcused absence.
- DO NOT report absences on social media, via team apps, or by text or the absence will be considered unexcused. This is a private matter between your athlete and staff.
- Athletes are required to attend their assigned level tumbling class if included in your program. This ensures top scores at competition and is a preventative measure against “losing skills” and mental blocks. Excessive absence from team tumbling may result in program dismissal.
- All competitions are required for all athletes unless otherwise specified.

Injury/Illness

- If an athlete becomes ill or gets injured, whether at practice/class or outside the gym, they may “sit out” for one practice. Any additional practices without participation will require a doctor’s note that includes reason for non-activity and expected recovery/return date.
- Athletes are still expected to attend practice when they are injured or experiencing a non-contagious illness. In most cases, coaches will either modify expected activities or have the athlete observe.
- It is recommended that you seek the opinion of an orthopedic doctor (sports specialty preferred) when assessing an injury. Be sure to get a specific therapy or recovery plan. Elite Athlete Chiropractic is also available for injury assessment.
- An athlete on “injury leave” requires a doctor’s medical release letter to return.
- If a substitute is needed to cover your spot while injured, it is the discretion of the team coaches when to allow you to return to the team. (IE., if your release date is 3 days before a big nationals, you may have to wait it out until you can get enough practice time in before competing.)

Absence Policy

Excused Absences:

- Graded school event. A note from the teacher in advance expressing the event is graded and mandatory, plus a follow up of the grade received from the event is required to excuse the absence.
- Contagious illness. A doctors note stating the athlete is contagious is required to excuse the absence. Athletes are expected to be at practice and sit out or participate in a limited capacity when sick but not contagious.
- Death of a family member (sibling, parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, cousin)

Unexcused Absences:

- Non-contagious illness, non-graded school events, too much homework, too tired, birthdays or family gatherings, couldn't get a ride, participation in other sports, withholding practice as a form of parental discipline. College visits and college testing (ACT/SAT) are also considered unexcused. Please schedule these events on days when your athlete does not practice/compete.

ALL STAR NOVICE AND PREP

- **Summer Attendance (June 15 — Sept. 6):** 4 vacation absences allowed. Dates must be submitted by June 15 to be considered excused. All choreography and camp dates must be attended. Please plan your vacations during the 4th of July break when possible to avoid absences. Athletes with poor attendance may be moved from the competition team program to the class program.
- **In-Season Attendance (Sept 7 — March 31):** 6 unexcused absences allowed, however any unexcused absences may affect routine spots. This is up to the discretion of the coaches to make the best decision for the team.
- **Mandatory Competition Practices:** no absences allowed 7 days before an event
Failure to follow this policy will result in one of the following:
 - ineligibility to compete (without refund)
 - allowed to compete, but removal from all group sections of the routine such as stunts (only considered if the absence follows the guidelines for excused absences and this scenario does not negatively impact the team)

ALL STAR ELITE (LEVEL 1-6)

- **Summer Attendance (June 15 — Sept. 6):** 4 vacation absences allowed. Dates must be submitted by July 1 to be considered excused. All choreography and camp dates must be attended. Exceeding the allotted absences or missing mandatory events will count towards your in-season unexcused absences and may result in:
 - being moved to a different team or into an alternate position
 - being replaced for Worlds/Summit at a later date
 - removal from the competitive team program
- **In-Season Attendance (Sept. 7 — March 31):** 4 unexcused absences allowed, however any unexcused absences may affect routine spots. This is up to the discretion of the coaches to make the best decision for the team.
- **Mandatory Competition Practice:** no unexcused absences allowed 14 days before an event. No absences (excused or unexcused) allowed 7 days before an event. This includes any extra practices that may be called so please be flexible during these weeks. Failure to follow this policy will result in one of the following:
 - ineligibility to compete (without refund)
 - allowed to compete, but removal from all group sections of the routine such as stunts (only considered if the absence follows the guidelines for excused absences and does not negatively impact the team)
 - being replaced for summit/worlds at a later date
- **Worlds/Summit Attendance(April 1- end of season):** Only excused absences with proper documentation are permitted beginning April 1. Worlds and Summit teams do not take practice off for spring break. No absences allowed 7 days before the event (exception, crossovers competing at both Worlds and Summit).

Adult to Minor Athlete Electronic Communication Policy (ECP)

The USASF requires that all member organizations adopt a clear and concise policy regarding Electronic Communication (ECP). The policy is designed specifically for the protection of athletes, recognizing that today's use of social media and text messaging yields the opportunity for an adult with inappropriate intentions to breach an athlete's rights of privacy and their physical and emotional safety.

Per the USASF, an adult affiliated with the program is considered any person 18 years of age or older that has a professional role within the program or any adult 18 years of age or older that is a current adult/athlete member of the program. This includes, but is not limited to, program owners, coaches, trainers, choreographers, photographers, team parents, adult age athletes and employees of the program.

Intent

Electronic communication through email, text and social media is often the principal form of communication for young athletes. This electronic communication must be utilized appropriately and responsibly by our staff when communicating with minors. In partnership with parents, our goal is to ensure that this communication is an approved and convenient way of sharing information. The policy set forth attempts to provide clear guidelines for content and conduct of both adult and child.

GymTyme Illinois respects the parent/athlete relationship and expects that devices and social media accounts held by minors are monitored by a parent/guardian. We believe that a parent knows their child best and will discern if a child is mature enough to engage in the use of electronic communication. It is recommended that every parent discuss this policy with your child to help them understand and manage successful and safe communication with our program.

Parents or guardians may at any time submit a written request that adults associated with the program not contact their child through electronic communication. This request should be submitted in hard copy form to the general manager or it can be emailed to andrea@gymtymeil.com.

Overview

An adult affiliated with a program must only communicate with an athlete in a professional manner and specifically to provide information regarding practices, events and other team related activities. All content must adhere to the USASF Code of Conduct and the Professional Responsibility Code regarding the protection of athletes. Any non-compliance is subject to a disciplinary hearing and potential penalties.

The following four points are defined as definitively inappropriate conduct. Any communication with an athlete, either verbal or electronic may not involve or relate to any of the following:

1. Inappropriate or sexually explicit photos
2. Sexual innuendos, sexual conversation, explicit language or sexual activity
3. Drug or alcohol use
4. The adult should not relay information about their personal life or social life outside of the professional environment or discuss relationships or personal problems

An adult must ask him/herself whether the electronic communication with the athlete is appropriate for all to read, understand and determine as professional in nature. Regardless of the adult's role in the relationship to the athlete, it is the responsibility for the adult to maintain these guiding principles when communicating electronically.

1. Does the conversation pertain to the team/program/gym and its related activities?
2. Is the content of the electronic conversation something that any parent, boss or other adult would agree is professional in nature?
3. Is the electronic communication accessible to others at any time?
4. Can the information conveyed to the athlete be used as a permanent part of the athlete's record?

Communication Guidelines

An adult affiliated with a program may have a **personal social media account(s)** (Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat, etc) with the following restrictions regarding athletes:

- Adults may not invite a minor athlete to “friend” or join their personal social media site or similar online community.
- Adults may accept minor athlete requests to “friend” or join a personal social media site or online community provided the athlete is at least 13 years of age. For the purpose of full disclosure, it is recommended that the adult invite the minor’s parent/guardian to “friend”/join their page/site.
- Online interaction (comments, likes, posts) with athletes must be accessible to others in the online community
- Adults may not “private” or “instant” message athletes without express consent of a parent/guardian
- Adults may post photos/videos of minor athletes who are engaged in program activities for the sole purpose of marketing the program unless a parent/guardian expressly prohibits the use of their child’s image. (Parents should inform themselves whether the adult account is public or private.)
- Adults may not list personal information (last name, age, hometown, school, etc) or “tag” a minor athlete without the express consent of a parent/guardian.

An adult affiliated with a program may have a **personal Twitter account** with the following restrictions regarding athletes:

- Adults and athletes may follow each other
- Adults may not “direct message” an athlete without the express consent of a parent/guardian
- Adults may not retweet the contents of an athlete direct message post
- No subtweeting is allowed (typically a post that refers to a particular user without directly mentioning them, typically as a form of negative commentary or criticism.)

An adult affiliated with a program may have a **private group messaging app/page** with the following restrictions regarding athletes:

- All athletes will be included in the group; a parent may be invited in the case of athletes 12 and younger
- A minimum of two adults (coach/owner/manager/team parent) must be in the group
- All messages/posts must be accessible to others in the group
- Adults may not “direct message” an athlete within these groups
- Content is confidential to the group and should be limited to team/program information and activities

Texting is permitted between adults associated with the program and athletes from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., and only to exchange information directly related to team/program activities.

Email is permitted between adults associated with the program and athletes from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. A parent, owner, general manager or director(s) must also be copied on an email to an athlete. It is recommended that an athlete copy a parent, owner, general manager or director(s) when emailing an adult in the program.

GymTyme Illinois owns the following official and public social media accounts that athletes and parents may join or access for team updates and information.

- Facebook: [facebook.com/gymtyme.il](https://www.facebook.com/gymtyme.il)
- Twitter: [@GymTymeIL](https://twitter.com/GymTymeIL)
- Instagram: [gymtymeil](https://www.instagram.com/gymtymeil)
- YouTube: [GymTyme Illinois](https://www.youtube.com/GymTymeIllinois)

Private messages posted to an official GTIL account are considered confidential. All message streams are monitored by the owner, the general manager, program directors and other appointed media staff. The content of private messages will never be reposted (copied and pasted) on our public pages or any adult’s private page unless such a request is specifically made. For example, “Here’s a video of my athlete. I thought this would be great marketing for the program.”

Bullying

Sources: *USASF.net*, *USA Swimming Safe Sport Program*, and *Stopbullying.gov*.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at GymTyme Illinois and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. GTIL is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all of our members. If bullying does occur, all athletes and parents should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a coach, program owner or athlete/mentor.

What is bullying? The U.S. All Star Federation Professional Responsibility Code prohibits bullying. Generally, bullying is the use of aggression, whether intentional or not, which hurts another person. Bullying results in pain and distress.

The U.S. All Star Federation Professional Responsibility Code defines bullying in section 2A. Bullying is the severe or repeated use by one or more U.S. All Star Federation members of oral, written, electronic or other technological expression, image, sound, data or intelligence of any nature (regardless of the method of transmission), or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at any other member that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of:

- causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member's property.
- placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property.
- creating a hostile environment for the other member at any U.S. All Star Federation activity.
- infringing on the rights of the other member at any U.S. All Star Federation activity.
- materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any U.S. All Star Federation activity (which for the purposes of this section shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts and other events of a member program or event producer).

Reporting Procedure

An athlete who feels that he or she has been bullied is asked to do one or more of the following things:

- Talk to your parents.
- Talk to a team coach, gym owner, or other trusted staff member.
- Write a letter or email to a team coach, gym owner, or other trusted staff member.

There is no express time limit for initiating a complaint under this procedure, but every effort should be made to bring the complaint to the attention of the appropriate program leadership as soon as possible to make sure that memories are fresh and behavior can be accurately recalled and the bullying behavior can be stopped as soon as possible.

How We Handle Bullying

If bullying is occurring during team-related activities, we stop bullying on the spot using the following steps:

1. Intervene immediately seeking the assistance of other adults if needed.
2. Separate the individuals involved.
3. Make sure everyone is safe.
4. Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
5. Stay calm. Reassure the kids involved, including bystanders.
6. Model respectful behavior during intervention.

If bullying is occurring in our program or is reported to be occurring in our program (on or offsite, including social media), we address the bullying by following the USASF recommended approach of "finding out what happened" and "supporting the kids involved."

Finding Out What Happened

First, get the facts.

- a. Keep all the involved children separate.
- b. Get the story from several sources, both adults and kids.
- c. Listen without blaming.
- d. Don't call the act "bullying" while trying to understand what happened.
- e. It may be difficult to get the whole story, especially if multiple athletes are involved or the bullying involves social bullying or cyber bullying. We will collect all available information.

Determine if it's bullying. There are many behaviors that look like bullying but require different approaches. It is important to determine whether the situation is bullying or something else.

- a. Review the U.S. All Star Federation definition of bullying.
- b. Consider the following questions:
 - What is the history between the kids involved?
 - Have there been past conflicts?
 - Is there a power imbalance? A power imbalance is not limited to physical strength. It is sometimes not easily recognized. If the targeted child feels like there is a power imbalance, there probably is.
 - Has this happened before? Is the child worried it will happen again?
- c. Remember that it does not matter "who started it." Some kids who are bullied may be seen as annoying or provoking, but this does not excuse the bullying behavior.
- d. If the situation is determined to be bullying, then support is provided to all of the kids involved.

Supporting The Kids Involved

The child(ren) who are being bullied

- a. Listen and focus on the child. Learn what's been going on and show we want to help. Assure the child that bullying is not their fault.
- b. Work together to resolve the situation and protect the bullied child. The child, parents, and fellow team members and coaches may all have valuable input. We will:
 - Ask the child what can be done to make him or her feel safe remembering that changes to routine should be minimized. He or she is not at fault and should not be singled out. If drastic moves are necessary, such as switching classes, the child who is bullied will not be forced to change.
 - Develop a game plan maintaining open communication between the director/coach/owner and parents. Discuss the steps that will be taken and how bullying will be addressed going forward.
- c. Understand that bullying may not end overnight. We will commit to making it stop and consistently support the bullied child.

The child(ren) exhibiting bullying behavior

- a. Make sure the child knows what the problem behavior is. Young people who bully must learn their behavior is wrong and harms others.
- b. Bullying is taken seriously. We will calmly remind the child that bullying will not be tolerated and model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.
- c. Work with the child to understand some of the reasons he or she bullied. For example:
 - Sometimes children bully to fit in or just to make fun of someone is a little different from them. In other words, there may be some insecurity involved.
 - Other times kids act out because something else—issues at home, abuse, stress—is going on in their lives. They also may have been bullied. These kids may be in need of additional support.

- d. Involve the child who bullied in making amends or repairing the situation. The goal is to help them see how their actions affect others. For example, the child can:
 - Write a letter apologizing to the athlete who was bullied.
 - Do a good deed for the person who was bullied, for the program, or for others in your community.
 - Clean up, repair, or pay for any property they damaged.
- e. Strive to avoid strategies that don't work or have negative consequences:
 - Harsh punishment does not typically reduce bullying behavior. Consequences, such as suspension or dismissal from the program, will only be implemented in the case of physical abuse or extreme threats of violence.
 - Requests for conflict resolution or peer mediation meetings will not be honored. Bullying is not a conflict between people of equal power who share equal blame. Facing those who have bullied, or their parents, may further upset the child who has been bullied.
- f. Follow-up. After the bullying issue is resolved, continue finding ways to help the child who bullied to understand how what they do affects other people. For example, praise acts of kindness or talk about what it means to be a good teammate.

The bystanders who witness bullying. Every day, kids witness bullying. They want to help, but don't know how. Fortunately, there are a few simple, safe ways that athletes can help stop bullying when they see it happening.

- a. Be a friend to the person being bullied
- b. Tell a trusted adult – your parent, coach, or owner
- c. Help the kid being bullied get away from the situation. Create a distraction, focus the attention on something else, or offer a way for the target to get out of the situation. "Let's go, practice is about to start."
- d. Set a good example by not bullying others.
- e. Don't give the bully an audience. Bullies are encouraged by the attention they get from bystanders. If you do nothing else, just walk away.

Sexual Abuse Prevention

(Positive Coaching Alliance/USASF Policy) as mandated by the USASF

The safety and welfare of the all star athlete must be at the forefront of all programming considerations. All star programs must have clear, written guidelines that prohibit adults who have contact with minors from engaging in conduct that is either inappropriate and/or illegal.

Protecting Youth Athletes From Sexual Abuse: Parents And Coaches

Select employees who work directly with athletes are required to obtain a background check and pass the SafeSport training as part of their USASF membership and certification. Please check with our general manager for a current list of GTIL personnel who meet this criteria.

The “Youth Sexual Abuse Prevention Policies & Procedures” is posted at the front desk and is available to both coaches and parents at gymtymeil.com/policies. These policies are also shared with families at parent orientation at the start of each season.

An abuse prevention orientation packet is distributed to all coaches in May of each year or at hire date. The contents of that packet are also included in our annual staff training. Links for the materials included in the packet are available at gymtymeil.com/policies.

Parents are encouraged to review these source materials to learn the common warning signs of athlete abuse, and to talk to their athlete about what to do if they experience inappropriate behavior from any adult (or mature teen) associated with our program. The three most common behaviors (called grooming) are as follows:

1. Giving individual players special gifts
2. Spending extra time (by phone/email/text/in person) with individuals outside of official practices/games
3. Keeping secrets or telling players not to share their conversations or activities with their parents

GymTyme Illinois will abide by the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (325 ILCS 5/), the **mandated reporter** law of Illinois.

A mandated reporter is someone required by law to report if they suspect or know that child abuse is occurring. Each state has their own legal requirements and agencies for reporting. It is the responsibility of the program administrator and/or owner to:

1. Know the laws that are specific for their state
2. Post the legal requirements and specific reporting procedures for their state for all coaches and adult staff to reference (located in the staff office).
3. Conduct an annual staff meeting that includes training on the legal requirements and reporting procedures for their state.

We reserve the right to add and/or update these rules and regulations at any time during the season. All families will receive an email notification of any changes to the policies outlined in this agreement. © GymTyme Illinois 05.01.19
