

Social Media and Online Safety Guidelines

Resource Code GTSC-SMOSG1

Introduction and purpose

These guidelines are effective for Gisborne Thunder Swimming Club Inc (GTSC) to help promote, inform and support the Club and its swimmers to safely use social media and for online safety. Social media and online content includes any form of on-line or web-based publication, forum or presence that allows interactive communication, including, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, blogs, YouTube, forums, texting/SMS, email, blogs, forums and other social networking tools or content/photo sharing sites used by people to whom these guidelines apply.

Who is bound by these guidelines

People bound by these guidelines include swimmers, coaches, employees, volunteers, their relatives and all others interacting within the GTSC community.

General Guidelines

- Be aware of Swimming Australia's standards, rules and policies. See the Swimming Australia - National Integrity Framework.
- Be aware of GTSC's constitution, bylaws, policies and codes of conduct. See our Rules and Policies published on our website
- Do not take to social media platforms to post remarks that can be deemed as hurtful or derogatory to another member of the Club, its coaches, staff, committee, fellow swimmers, officials and members of the wider swimming community
- Cyber bullying via social media outlets will not be tolerated under any circumstances and any breach will be treated accordingly.
- Respect the rights and opinions of others.

Social Media Use

- Postings (written, photos, videos or audio) should be family-friendly and feature positive Club news and events. Always be aware that content posted may potentially be shared with strangers.
- No personal information about members should be disclosed. No statements should be made that are misleading, hurtful, false or likely to injure a person's reputation.
- No statements should be made that might bring the Club or any member into disrepute.
- Abusive, discriminatory, intimidating or offensive statements are not tolerated. Before posting photos or videos of another child or teammate, please be sure



that you gain permission from the other child's/team mates' parent/guardian prior to uploading or posting.

- Do not post photos of children from other clubs without their parent's/guardian's written consent.
- Always be aware that social media is a legal method of communication which is bound by laws and rules like any other written communication.

Cyberbullying

Cyber bullying is a form of bullying, which takes place online through email, chat rooms, web pages and other online forums. Cyber bullying can occur 24/7 and children can be targeted while at home which makes it invasive and hard to escape. Cyber bullying can involve distressing and harmful material for children as users aren't always aware of the consequences, which makes them behave in more extreme ways. Under certain circumstances, cyber bullying is a criminal offence that can be reported to the police.

There are several things that you can do if you or a child is subject to cyber bullying.

- Discuss the incident and assure your child you are able to help them.
- Encourage your child to disengage from the online forum where the bullying is occurring.
- Report the incident to the Club committee immediately at president@gisbornethunder.org.
- Alternatively, you can report the incident to the Club's Risk Management Officer at safety@gisbornethunder.org.
- Educate your child about cyber safety.
- Work with your child to implement strategies to reduce the risk of online harassment or bullying.
- Remember that all members of Swimming Australia are bound by Swimming Australia's National Integrity Framework and that the law is on your side.

ThinkUKnow is an internet safety program endorsed by the Australian Federal Police. You may wish to visit ThinkUKnow for more information.

Breach of guidelines

All those bound by these guidelines must take responsibility for their own actions online and accept the consequences of breaching these guidelines. The consequences of breaching these guidelines or other relevant Club policies may include:

- Counselling the individual or group about the expectations of the Club and where they have breached these guidelines.
- Meeting with the swimmer and/or their parents in order to discuss the breach of these guidelines and to prevent recurrences of the behaviour.



- A verbal or written warning.
- Direction that the individual make a verbal or written apology.
- Demotion or transfer to another squad.
- Suspension from the Club.
- Expulsion from the Club.

If at any time you feel that there has been a breach of these guidelines or feel as though content uploaded to any social media or any online use is inappropriate or could cause damage to GTSC or any of its members, please contact:

- the president at president@gisbornethunder.org or confidentially the Risk Management Officer at safety@gisbornethunder.org

Last Reviewed: Dec 2024

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