

SOCIAL & ELECTRONIC MEDIA - ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Introduction

The Patriots Youth Hockey Association (PYHA) recognizes that access to technology gives our youth opportunities to learn, engage, communicate, and develop skills that will prepare them for work, life, and citizenship. Similar opportunities present themselves for parents, coaches, club leadership, and family members to be connected to the hockey season.

This philosophy reflects the mission of the PYHA to promote hockey and create an environment safe for skill development, team play, and lifelong community responsibility. In accordance, we are committed to helping our youth develop 21st-century technology and communication skills.

The PYHA follows the USA Hockey social & electronic media Safe Sport guidelines – see Appendix below. We have also created some additional clarity around our club expectations. This **Acceptable Use Policy** outlines the guidelines and behaviors that members and family are expected to follow when using personally owned devices during the hockey season.

- Players, parents, and coaches are expected to follow the same rules for good behavior and respectful conduct online as is outlined in USA Hockey SafeSport and the PYHA Code of Conduct.
- Misuse of social and electronic media can result in disciplinary action including player game suspension(s) and even expulsion from the club without financial reimbursement.
- The PYHA makes a reasonable effort to ensure member's safety on and off the ice with training, facility access, conduct clarity, and team resources such as a manager, Age Group Liaisons Director (ALD), Age Group Liaison (AGL), On Ice Committee (OIC), and Board members. We will not be held accountable for any harm or damages that result from misuse of social or electronic media technologies.

We encourage coaches, players, family members, and other club leadership to use social networking/media (Twitter, Facebook, etc.) as ways to connect with others, share educational resources, create and curate sports and training content, and positively enhance the youth hockey experience. While social networking is fun and valuable, there are some risks you should keep in mind when using these tools. In the social media world, the lines are blurred between what is public or private as well as personal or professional.

We have created these social networking/media guidelines for you to follow when representing the youth hockey club in the virtual world.

Please do the following:

Use good judgment:

- We expect you to use good judgment in all situations.
- You must know and follow the PYHA Code of Conduct and Handbook.
- Regardless of your privacy settings, assume that all the information you have shared on your social network is public information.

Be respectful:

- Always treat others in a respectful, positive, and considerate manner.

Be responsible and ethical:

- If you are approved to represent the PYHA, unless you are specifically authorized to speak on behalf of the club as a spokesperson, you should state that the views expressed in your postings, etc. are your own. Stick with discussing club-related matters that are within your area of responsibility.
- Be open about your affiliation with the Patriots and the role/position you hold.
- If you are a coach or club leader, please know that your words have a higher level of impact on readers, because of your position. Be mindful not to make a situation worse with inflammatory remarks that could reflect poorly upon the club.

Be a good listener:

- Keep in mind that one of the biggest benefits of social media is that it gives others another way to talk to you, ask questions directly, and to share feedback.
- Be responsive to others when conversing online: provide answers, thank people for their comments, and ask for further feedback, etc.
- Always do at least as much listening and responding as you do "talking."

Do not share confidential information:

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- Do not publish, post, or release information that is considered confidential or not public. If it seems confidential, it probably is. Online "conversations" are never private. Do not use your birth date, address, and cell phone number on any public website.

Do not share private and personal information:

- To ensure your safety, be careful about the type and amount of personal information you provide. Avoid talking about personal schedules or situations.
- NEVER give out or transmit personal information of players or members.
- Do not take information you may receive through social networking (such as e-mail addresses, customer names or telephone numbers) and assume it's the most up-to-date or correct.
- Always respect the privacy of the hockey club members.

Please be cautious with respect to images:

- Respect brand, trademark, copyright information and/or images of the club.
- You may use photos and video (products, etc.) that are available on the club's website.
- It is generally not acceptable to post pictures of players without the expressed written consent of their parents.
- Do not post pictures of others (members, etc.) without their permission.

Be cautious of other sites:

- A significant part of the interaction on blogs, Twitter, Facebook, and other social networks involves passing on interesting content or linking to helpful resources.
- When using Twitter, Facebook, and other tools, be sure to follow their printed terms and conditions.

And if you do not get it right...

- Be sure to correct any mistake immediately, and make it clear what you have done to fix it.
- Apologize for the mistake if the situation warrants it.
- If it is a MAJOR mistake (e.g., exposing private information or reporting confidential information), please let someone know immediately so the club can take the proper steps to help minimize the impact it may have.

Netiquette

Users should also remember **not to post anything online that they would not want parents, family members, teachers, or future colleges or employers to see**. Once something is online, it can be shared and spread in ways you never intended.

Personal Safety

If you see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes you concerned for your personal safety, bring it to the attention of a trusted leader within the club (coach, parent or AGL if it is PYHA related) immediately.

- Users should never share personal information, including phone number, address, social security number, birthday, or financial information, over the Internet without adult permission.
- Users should recognize that communicating over the Internet brings anonymity and associated risks and should carefully safeguard the personal information of themselves and others.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Harassing, dissing, flaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding, and cyberstalking are all examples of cyberbullying. Do not be mean. Do not send emails or post comments with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating someone else.

Engaging in these behaviors, or any online or electronic media activities with the intention to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in severe disciplinary action and even expulsion from the PYHA. In some cases, cyberbullying can be a crime, and may be reported to the proper authorities. Remember that your activities are monitored and retained by others.

Examples of Acceptable Use

I will:

- Follow the same guidelines for respectful and responsible behavior online that I am expected to follow offline – Code of Conduct and USA Hockey Safe Sport.
- Treat social media carefully, and alert club leadership if there is concern.
- Encourage positive, constructive discussion if allowed to use communicative or collaborative technologies.
- Alert a club leadership member if I see threatening/bullying, inappropriate, or harmful content (images, messages, posts) online.

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- Be cautious to protect the safety of myself and others.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Users should use their best judgment when using social media.

Examples of Unacceptable Use

I will not:

- Use social media in a way that could be personally or physically harmful to myself or others.
- Engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct toward others. including skaters, parents, coaches, referees, etc.
- Use language online that would be unacceptable on the ice or in locker rooms.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Users should use their own best judgment when using social media.

Limitation of Liability

The Patriots Youth Hockey Association will not be responsible for damage or harm to persons, files, data, or hardware.

Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy

Violations of this policy may have disciplinary repercussions, including:

- Convening of PYHA Parent Review Committee and Board Discussion
- Player game suspension(s)
- Removal from positions of leadership within the PYHA
- Removal of player/family/coach from the PYHA for the remainder of the season and/or club indefinitely
- Additional consequences determined by club leadership

