

Electronic Communication Policy and Procedures for Flames of Nebraska

Electronic Communication Procedures will include but not be limited to Texting, Email, Social Networks and Instant messaging which are means of electronic communications between two or more parties. Electronic Communication is considered a confidential conversation however those private conversations can also be transferable to others making them public accessible. The Flames of Nebraska is choosing to have adults share softball information with youth which can range from 7 to 19 years of age via electronic communication. Adults and coaches have responsibility to insure that all electronic communication sent and received have appropriate purposes for the Flames of Nebraska. Safety and well being of all parties should be maintained at all times.

The following “content” communications are legitimate electronic communication communiqués.

1. General softball communications about organizational activities
2. Travel and time arrangements for practices and games
3. Checking on whereabouts for pre-game and tournaments.
4. Congratulations for well played games etc.
5. Means of communicating important information to parents
6. Passing on information to other players that don't have electronic communication options
7. Communications that are relative to the Flame of Nebraska softball

The contexts in which electronic communication should be used by coaches are:

1. Coach speak about softball information
2. Safety/protection contacts (whereabouts etc.)
3. Imparting encouragement
4. Seeking other player's contacts and information sharing

Inappropriate contexts include:

1. Personal conversations about each other's lives outside of softball
2. Relational electronic communications that describe or discuss youth-adult friendships, girl-boy, friend relationships-past or present,
3. Counseling youth on personal or family troubles or matters.
4. Sexual talk of any kind like sexual preferences or experiences of youth or adults
5. Sexual joking, text flirting, or secret use of abbreviations or symbols
6. Sharing of any sexual media (music, movies, pictures etc.).
7. Anything outside of softball, electronic communications is not the place for a coach or any other adult to converse about other subjects.

Procedures:

- A. All parents should be notified that electronic communications will be one way of communicating with players and parents (if they text) and what the content and context of the electronic communications should be. See above for content and context.
- B. Electronic communications to players should be done as a group message sent to many players to share organizational information.
- C. If electronic communications is to be one on one with a player then it must be approved with those parents.
- D. Electronic communications one player cannot include relational or personal conversations. It must focus on softball information including dates and other related data.

- E. Sharing responses from youth with a spouse or another coach is advisable. There is safety in numbers and it is more professional.
- F. Coaches and adults will report to organizational owner, manager or compliance officer any youth attempts to engage in personal conversations towards any coach or adult. The text should be saved for review.
- G. All youth within organization that have electronic communications options will need to be informed of this policy/procedure especially the content and context pieces. They need to be instructed to report any coach or adult text that is inappropriate or uncomfortable to their parents and to others in organization. They should save the text for review.
- H. Sharing any pictures via texting should not be done unless it is decent pictures or video of softball. This is a very bad habit to get into as this is a primary way of grooming and sexting to take place.
- I. It is advised for coaches and adults to use electronic communications for information sharing but to stop electronic communications if attachments and personal sharing results. There is great personal and professional risk if allegations result from breaking the procedures.
- J. It is advised that coaches and players sign a form acknowledging they have read, heard or been trained in the policy and procedures and agree to practice the procedures described.