

MAINTAINING BOUNDARIES

‘Maintaining boundaries’ means respecting the personal space of others. Maintaining boundaries protects young athletes as well as adults. Certain ways of expressing affection are more appropriate than others; as coaches, we need to be aware of the differences and to maintain appropriate boundaries at all times.



APPROPRIATE

- Side or shoulder-to-shoulder hugs
- Handshakes
- “High Fives”
- Verbal praise
- Pats on the shoulder, back or head (where culturally appropriate)

INAPPROPRIATE

- Lengthy embraces; kisses
- Comments about physique or physical development
- Showing affection while in isolated areas
- Holding children over the age of 5 on your lap
- Massages; tickling; wrestling; piggy back rides

SETTING THE TONE

It is the responsibility of the coach to exhibit professional behavior in all interactions with players, parents, other coaches, referees, and fans. Be mindful of your attitude during practices and games. You are a Catholic role model and are responsible for your behavior as well as the behavior of your players, their parents, and fans.

COMMUNICATION TIPS

Coaches should take care when communicating with players. Remember that words, as well as actions, can easily be misinterpreted. Be sure to write as if you expect everyone to read it and to maintain appropriate boundaries in all written communications.

DO...

- ⇒ Copy parents on all written and electronic communications
- ⇒ Communicate to all team members rather than individuals (e.g., send group emails)
- ⇒ Keep communications team-focused
- ⇒ Contact your supervisor (the pastor, principal, or CYO league president) if you receive any inappropriate correspondence
- ⇒ Consider the age of the players when deciding upon which communication method to use



DO NOT...

- ⇒ Send text messages to individual players
- ⇒ “Friend” students on Facebook
- ⇒ Share details about your personal life with players