



SUPERVISING COACHES WHO ARE ALSO TEENS

SHELBA WALDRON, DIRECTOR OF CLUB EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

EMILY ZORN, SAFE SPORT ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER

SAFETY CHAMPION SERIES #2



UNDERSTANDING THE ADOLESCENT WORKER

ADOLESCENT BRAIN ARCHITECTURE



PREFRONTAL CORTEX

Makes up only **17 percent** of the brain and oversees judging, analysis, organization, connecting the dots, and deciding what is valid information and what isn't

- Plays a huge role in empathy and self-awareness
- It's one of the last parts of the brain to develop and can be influenced
- Hormones and emotions easily manipulate the prefrontal cortex

Attention
Span

Impulse

Moral
Judgment

Planning

Goal
Setting

ADULTISM

The word adultism refers to behaviors and attitudes based on the assumption that adults are better than young people and entitled to act upon young people without their agreement.

- Denied control
- Denied influence over their decisions, body and space
- Most young people believe that in a disagreement with an adult, their word will not be taken over the adult's.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A TEENAGE WORKER?

-
- Most likely the first job
 - First independent responsibility
 - Job competes with school, family, friends, and other activities
 - Money earned is for spending or saving, not daily expenses
 - Seek a sense of purpose and opportunity to learn
 - Respond well to praise, rewards, perks and recognition
 - Seek opportunities to use skills others don't have nor want to do (curating social media content, planning games, teambuilding, party planning)
 - Will respond to communication through texting more than email or phone

COMMON CHALLENGES WITH NEW AND YOUNG STAFF WORKING WITH CHILDREN

- Trying to be the “nice one”
- Assertiveness
- Trying to get the children to like them
- Boundaries as they relate to giving away personal information
- Managing parents
- Saying no
- Tone, body language, and managing emotions

Managers Tip:

Pair inexperienced staff with experienced workers.



HIRING AND ONBOARDING

INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE NEW TO COACHING WILL OFTEN FOLLOW THE PHILOSOPHIES OF THE ROLE MODELS THEY HAD IN THEIR OWN CHILDHOOD OR ATHLETIC CAREER. IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO GUIDE THEM IN DEVELOPING THEIR OWN COACHING PHILOSOPHY.

CORE COMPETENCIES FOR COACHES, AFTERSCHOOL STAFF, CAMP COUNSELORS AND CHILDCARE STAFF

Professionalism

- Developing coaching philosophy
- Sport specific/job specific knowledge
- Knowledge of child development
- Critical thinking
- Respect for club philosophy and policies
- Maintains positive image both in and out of club
- Avoids a sense of entitlement
- Knows when to seek help
- Emotional Control

Safety

- Professional boundaries
- Prevention of accidents and injuries
- Basic first aid
- Crisis response
- Abuse recognition and prevention
- Safe Sport aware

Facilitation

- Lesson Planning/preparation
- Class Management
- Self-Direction
- Problem Solving/Pivoting
- Exercises fairness
- Uses variety of methods to teach
- Understands the dynamics of power and control
- Modifies lessons for the needs of the individual or group

Communication

- Cultural Awareness
- Teamwork
- Patience
- Positive attitude
- Empathetic
- Speaks up w/concerns
- Contributes ideas
- Effectively manages conflict

CONSISTENCY WITH CLUB'S HR PRACTICES

- Require formal application and interview
- Conduct pre-employment screening (personal references, past employment check)
- Orientation and training
 - Overview of job duties and scope of practice
 - Overview of professional behavior
 - Overview of policies and procedures
- Stay aware of federal statutes governing wages, job duties and scheduling

Always follow your hiring protocol regardless of age, experience, or how well you know them.

DISCOVERY QUESTIONS DURING THE INTERVIEW

What does professionalism mean to you?

What does it mean to set limits with a child?

Describe your experience being around or supervising small children.

What do you think an athlete needs from their coach?

What are some misconceptions that people have about you?

What impressions do you want people to have when they see your online posts? What would I see if I had access to pages to which you restrict access?

Can you name three things that are inappropriate for a staff member to discuss with a young participant?

Describe the nature of a power imbalance between a coach and athlete.

How would you manage the protection of club and athlete information among your peer group?

What are 3 personal and coaching strengths you have?/ What are 3 weaknesses?

TRAINING AND SUPERVISORY PLANS

Clubs that want to hire young adults in supervisory roles must have a well-thought-out plan for training and ongoing supervision. Training should go beyond simple duties to include risk management and emergency response, as well as the more difficult situations they may encounter. Training should directly relate to the core competencies required for the position.

ORIENTATION/ONBOARDING

Club Policy

- I:I interactions with participants
- Reporting/documentation
- Transportation
- Babysitting
- Injury response
- Confidentiality
- Safe Sport
- Gift policies
- Discrimination and harassment
- Parental communication
- Bathroom/locker room
- Drop off//pick up protocol
- Lesson planning

Managers Tip:

Staff should be required to sign a statement indicating they have read and understand all policies.

Code of Conduct

- Social media expectations
- Spotting and touch
- Dress code
- Interactions with peers of the same age
- Cell phone usage
- Tardiness/absenteeism
- Horseplay
- Drugs/alcohol/cigarettes

ORIENTATION/ONBOARDING



Staff to participant interactions

- Degrees of misconduct
- Spotting
- Verbal interactions
- Behavior modification protocol
- Inclusivity
- Emotional safety
- Bullying
- Conditioning protocol
- Class management

ORIENTATION/ONBOARDING

Protections from allegations of misconduct

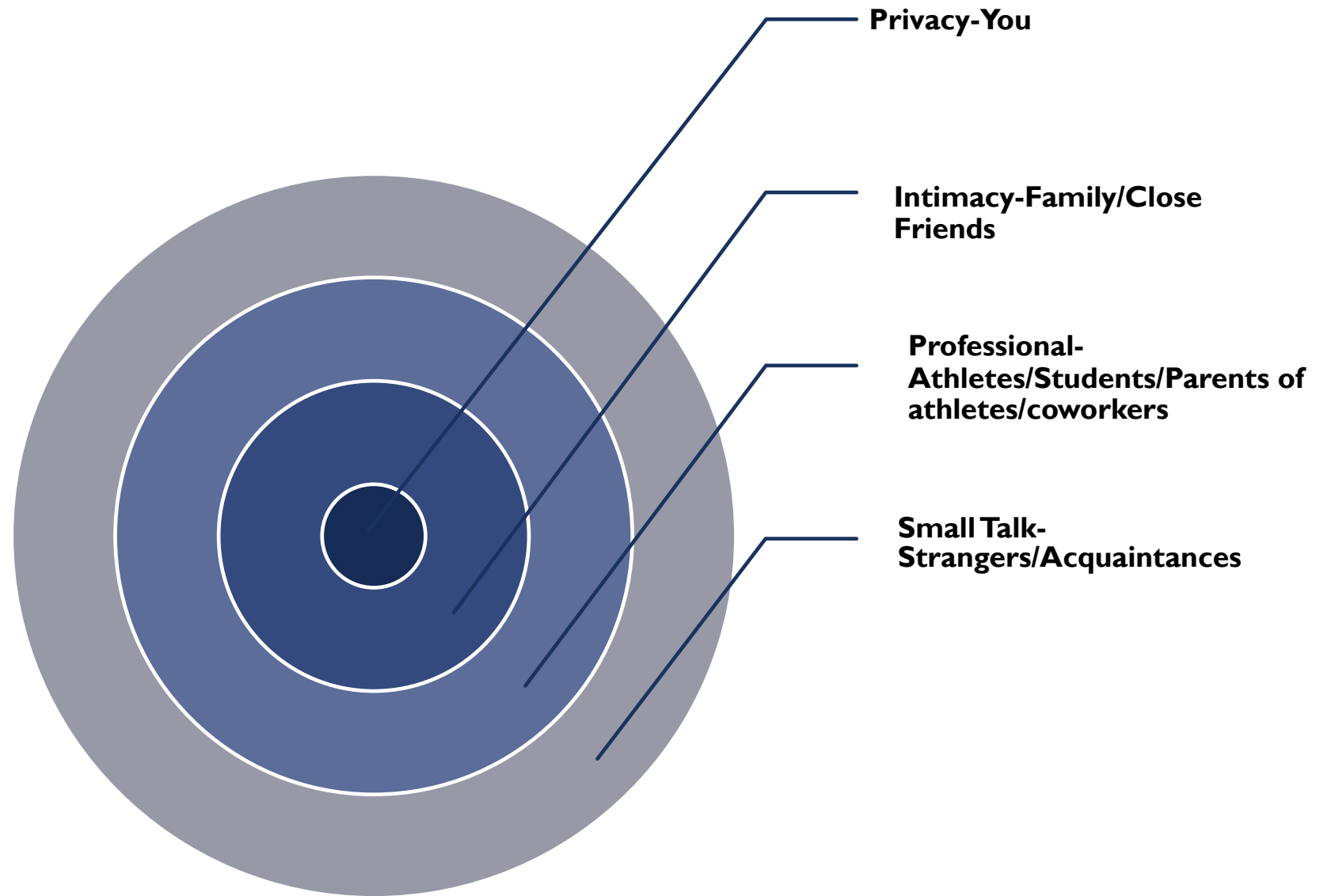
This is the most important discussion you can have with inexperienced employees!

- Have them work through scenarios that could violate the one-on-one policy
 - Bathroom protocol
 - Sharing personal stories
 - Touch
 - Exchanging phone numbers
 - Babysitting or taking on personal tasks of a family
 - Serving in any capacity not within scope of practice

Managers Tip:

Examples of common situations staff are faced with should be worked through during staff meetings and supervision.

YOUR BOUNDARY CIRCLE





- Make sure to give them the same training that other employees receive.
- Youth workers have a tendency not to speak up if an adult with power is in the wrong, even if it might feel unsafe to them, or they might not recognize it as being unsafe. Be sure to encourage confidential reporting.
- Stress the importance of everyone's responsibility to speak up about safety concerns.
- Create a buddy system, where young people are paired with experienced workers
- Be sure to discuss spotting and progressions

Workers under 25 have higher rates of injuries than others

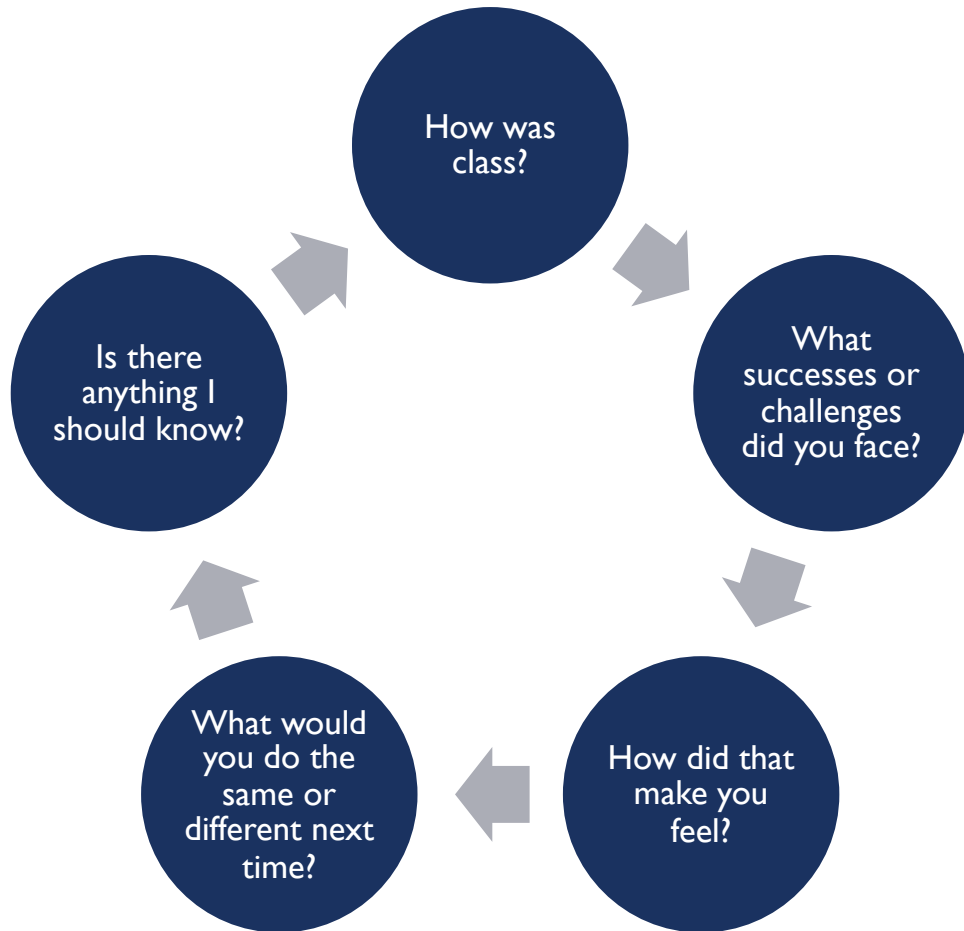


SUPERVISION

SAFE SPORT AND TEENAGE STAFF

- Minors are not required to take Safe Sport training.
 - A 17-year-old may take Safe Sport training with parental permission.
- 18- and 19-year-old coaches must take safe sport training by their 18th birthday or before contact with minors.
- Minors are not bound by the prevention policies that limit one-on-one interactions if they are close-in-age (within 4 years) of the other person. A club owner may, however, create their own policies that are more stringent.
- 18- and 19-year-old coaches are not bound by the prevention policies that limit one-on-one interactions providing they have **no authority over and within 4 years of the other person.**
- Supervisors may have one-on-one interactions with employees for the limited purposes of job-related conversations only. It is not advisable to have closed door meetings, singular text messages or other interactions with any minor employee without another staff member involved.
- All staff regardless of age are bound by the code that governs misconduct.
- USA Gymnastics does not require background checks for staff under the age of 18

SUPERVISION



- Heighten guidance
- Daily check-ins on accomplishments and challenges. Ask questions about observations, likes, dislikes, ideas, etc.
- Spot check while coaching
- Make feedback and one on one sessions a part of the organizational culture.
- Listen attentively. Listen when they talk about their thoughts, experiences, and feelings about working with children.
- Have high expectations of their potentials, and positively assess their current abilities. Never sell them short and always be prepared to lend a hand with a difficulty.
- Don't thrust them into leadership positions without guidance, training, and understanding of their scope of practices and responsibilities.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF...

SAFETY

-
- there is a serious medical emergency requiring emergency response?
 - there is an injury that requires first aid only?
 - a child is missing?
 - you need to report misconduct?
 - a child isn't picked up on time by their parent?
 - you accidentally touch a student in a private area while spotting?
 - you notice that a piece of equipment is broken?
 - An athlete wants to disregard doctor's orders?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF...

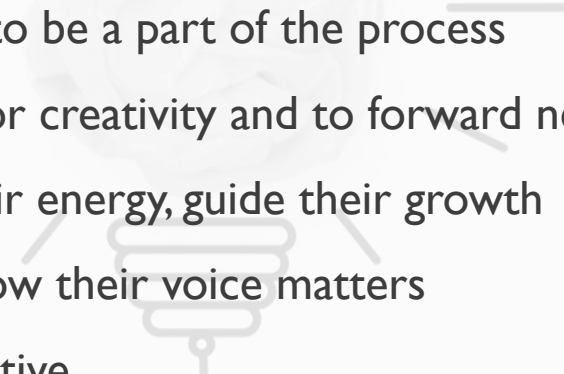
CRITICAL THINKING

-
- a parent is upset and wants to talk?
 - You are made aware of bullying?
 - a child is having a personal issue in the bathroom?
 - a friend pressures you for information about one of the other coaches?
 - A parent is coaching their child from the viewing area
 - A child is afraid to perform a skill?
 - Your class becomes unruly?
 - A child shares sensitive personal information about themselves or a family member?
 - A child says, “I need to talk to you...alone. You’re the only one I can trust.”
 - A child reaches out to you via social media.

TRAININGS WITHIN THE FIRST 60 DAYS/USA GYMNASTICS UNIVERSITY COURSES

- U100: Fundamentals of Gymnastics Instruction
- U101: Safety & Risk Management
- <https://usagym.org/pages/education/courses/U105/>
- U111: Setting Healthy Boundaries
- <https://usagym.org/pages/education/courses/U201/>
- U205: Double-Goal Coach®: Culture, Practices, and Games
- U305: Double-Goal Coach®: Developing Triple-Impact Competitors
- <https://usagym.org/pages/education/courses/W200/>
- First Aid/CPR

FINAL THOUGHTS...

- Allow them to be a part of the process
 - Give room for creativity and to forward new ideas
 - Leverage their energy, guide their growth
 - Let them know their voice matters
 - Reward initiative
 - Be understanding, not patronizing
- 

UPCOMING WEBINARS

Understanding and Managing
Bullying Between Athletes

Friday, February 25

10:00 a.m.



THANK YOU!

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO SCHEDULE A COMPLIMENTARY TRAINING:

SHELBA WALDRON

SWALDRON@USAGYM.ORG

