

## TIPS FOR PARENTS

# TRAVEL



Travel situations can also be opportunities for misconduct to occur. Here are some ways to keep travel safe, whether you're just getting your child to practice, or traveling overnight for competition.

### LOCAL TRAVEL

- ▶ Review and enforce the organization's policy on local travel.
- ▶ It is a good idea for coaches who are also parents to pick up their own child first and drop off their own child last to avoid situations where the coach is alone in a car with an unrelated athlete.
- ▶ Take full responsibility for your child's travel arrangements to practice and local competitions. Don't depend on others to make arrangements.
- ▶ Ask your administrator to create team directories to help parents develop their own car pools.
- ▶ Vary your car pool arrangements so that no one adult other than you ever becomes solely responsible for your child's local travel over an extended period of time.
- ▶ Ask your administrator to provide an early team social event so that families from the same neighborhood can meet one another and discuss travel arrangements.
- ▶ Get the organization's central phone number in case you need to notify coaches or administrators because of an emergency or other personal delay.
- ▶ Give the coach your cell phone number as well as a list of back-up contacts for alternative transportation in case practice ends early due to inclement weather, equipment problem, etc.
- ▶ Ask coaches to notify you at least two weeks prior to practice schedule changes, if possible, so that you can arrange alternative transportation if needed.
- ▶ Notify the organization if your transportation arrangements change.

## OVERNIGHT TRAVEL

- ▶ Review the policy on overnight travel and ask the administrator to share the policy with all parents, athletes, coaches, staff members and volunteers.
- ▶ Verify all coaches, staff members, volunteers and chaperones receive training on athlete misconduct prevention.
- ▶ Attend overnight travel and competitions whenever possible, either as a parent or chaperone.
- ▶ Become a trained chaperone and accompany traveling athletes to increase the chances of a safe trip.
- ▶ When booking hotels, remind your administrator to ask for blocks of rooms and a separate social area where adults and athletes can congregate. Block pay-per-view channels at the hotel to ensure there are no opportunities to expose athletes to pornography.
- ▶ Identify athletes who are inexperienced travelers and ask administrators to help them to make the experience enjoyable and safe.
- ▶ For teams with relatively few traveling athletes, ask the administrator to ensure that at least one adult chaperone is present in addition to the coach.
- ▶ For teams with boy and girl athletes, consider including both male and female chaperones.
- ▶ For teams with larger numbers of traveling athletes, ask the administrator to ensure at least one chaperone for every 5-8 athletes, and maintain this number for both boy and girl groupings.
- ▶ With athletes under 14 years of age, communicate to the administrator if you would like a chaperone to stay with athletes in the same room.
- ▶ With athletes age 14-18, communicate to the administrator if you prefer chaperones stay in a nearby room but check on the athletes regularly.
- ▶ Visit with traveling athletes in the hotel common areas rather than encouraging interactions in the hotel rooms.
- ▶ Ask the administrator to establish a curfew and conduct bed checks with adults visiting rooms in mixed-sex pairs.
- ▶ Have your child wear their team gear while traveling to ease monitoring.
- ▶ Attend team events and social gatherings while you're traveling as a parent.
- ▶ Ask your administrator to debrief overnight travel experiences with all athletes and adults to identify problems encountered and potential improvements.