

Responsible Coaching Movement Rule of 2

Rule of Two

The goal of the Rule of Two is to ensure all interactions and communications are open, observable, and justifiable. Its purpose is to protect participants (especially minors) and coaches in potentially vulnerable situations by ensuring more than one adult is present. There may be exceptions in emergency situations.

Good practices to implement the Rule of Two

- Ensure a coach is never alone and out of sight with a participant without another screened coach or screened adult (parent or volunteer) present.
- Allow the training environment to be open to observation.
- Ensure a participant rides in a coach's vehicle with another adult present.
- Consider the gender of the participant(s) when selecting the screened coaches and volunteers present.
- Eliminate one-to-one electronic messaging. Ensure that all communications are sent to the group and/or include parents.

Applying the Rule of Two in a Virtual Setting

- The Rule of Two should continue to apply to all minor athletes in the virtual environment during the COVID-19 pandemic (additionally, for those athletes under age 16, a parent or guardian should be present during the session where possible)
- We recommend applying the Rule of Two to non-minor athletes, as well, in the current circumstances
- For every session, the Rule of Two would require two adult coaches be present, or one coach and one adult (parent, guardian, volunteer, club administrator) – one-on-one sessions should be prohibited

- A clear statement of professional standards expected of the coach during calls should be communicated – (i.e., sessions are not social engagements, and should be focused on training/coaching)
- Parents/guardians should be fully informed beforehand about the activities undertaken during the sessions, as well as the process of the virtual session
- Parents/guardians should be required to consent to virtual sessions prior to each session, if irregularly scheduled, or prior to the first session if there is a series of regularly scheduled sessions
- Communication during each session should be in an open and observable environment (i.e., avoid bedrooms) in the athlete's home (athlete's parents'/guardians' home), and the coach must initiate the session from an appropriate location (i.e., avoid bedrooms or "overly personal"/unprofessional settings)
- It is recommended to record sessions where that capacity exists
- Prohibit one-on-one texting, emailing or online contact between coach and athlete – any texting, emailing or online contact should be limited to group text/email that includes at least 2 adults (2 coaches or 1 coach and 1 adult (parent, guardian, volunteer, club administrator), and limited to coaching (non-social) matters, and parents of minor athletes should be provided the opportunity to receive these texts/emails
- Social media contact by coach to athlete should be prohibited (including the sharing of memes, non-training video, etc.);
- Encourage parents/guardians to debrief with U-16 athletes about virtual training on a weekly basis.

In addition, care should also be taken to ensure that appropriate security settings have been set for virtual, videoconferencing arrangements, including password protected videoconference invitations.

Additional Resources

Visit the Canadian Centre for Child Protection for more [emerging online safety considerations during the COVID-19 pandemic](#).

Background Screening

Background screening ensures that coaches meet the important requirements to coach athletes. Screening tools include comprehensive job postings, criminal record checks, interviews, and reference checks. Coaches can complete their criminal record check screening with their local police department or by visiting [Sterling Talent Solutions](#).

Note: If you opt to do your criminal record check screening with Sterling Talent Solutions, you will have to take your Vulnerable Sector Screening through your local police department.

Ethics Training

Ethics training prepares coaches to effectively handle situations that arise from ethical dilemmas or even legal challenges that concern individuals, teams, and their sports organizations.

Ethics training includes the [NCCP Make Ethical Decisions \(MED\)](#) module within the [National Coaching Certification Program](#) (NCCP), as well as training in abuse and harassment prevention, such as [Respect in Sport](#), which coaches can take before and during their coaching career.

Successfully completing the NCCP Make Ethical Decisions (MED) training equips coaches to handle ethical situations with confidence and surety. NCCP Make Ethical Decisions training helps coaches identify the legal, ethical, and moral implications of difficult situations that present themselves in the world of team and individual sport.

[Respect in Sport](#) training empowers coaches and parents to recognize and prevent bullying, abuse, harassment and discrimination (BAHD).

There are two ways to complete ethics training:

1. **In-class workshop:** To participate in an in-class NCCP Make Ethical Decisions module, please contact your local [Provincial/Territorial Coaching Representative](#).

2. **Home study:** Some provinces and territories offer the NCCP Make Ethical Decisions module through home study. Please contact your local [Provincial/Territorial Coaching Representative](#) for more information. [Respect in Sport](#), and [Commit to Kids](#) training is also delivered through interactive, online home-study.

APPLYING THE RULE OF TWO IN A VIRTUAL SETTING

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For every session, the Rule of Two would require two adult coaches be present, or one coach and one adult (parent, guardian, volunteer, club administrator) – one-on-one sessions should be prohibited.

Parents/guardians should be fully informed beforehand about the activities undertaken during the sessions, as well as the process of the virtual session.

Parents/guardians should be required to consent to virtual sessions prior to each session, if irregularly scheduled, or prior to the first session if there is a series of regularly scheduled sessions.

A clear statement of professional standards expected of the coach during calls should be communicated – (i.e., sessions are not social engagements, and should be focused on training/coaching).

It is recommended to record sessions where that capacity exists.

Encourage parents/guardians to debrief with U-16 athletes about virtual training on a weekly basis.

Communication during each session should be in an open and observable environment (i.e., avoid bedrooms) in the athlete's home (athlete's parents'/guardians' home), and the coach must initiate the session from an appropriate location (i.e., avoid bedrooms or "overly personal"/unprofessional settings).

Prohibit one-on-one texting, emailing or online contact between coach and athlete – any texting, emailing or online contact should be limited to group text/email that includes at least 2 adults (2 coaches or 1 coach and 1 adult (parent, guardian, volunteer, club administrator), and limited to coaching (non-social) matters, and parents of minor athletes should be provided the opportunity to receive these texts/emails. Social media contact by coach to athlete should be prohibited (including the sharing of memes, non-training video, etc.)



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GOOD RULE OF TWO IMPLEMENTATION PRACTICES

- The coach is never alone and out of sight with a participant without another screened coach or screened adult (parent or volunteer) present.
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- Consider the gender of the participant(s) when selecting the screened coaches and volunteers who are present.
- Eliminate one-to-one electronic messaging. Ensure that all communications are sent to the group and/or include parents.

Learn more: coach.ca/responsiblecoaching

