Byron Tiger Sharks
Swim Team
Information Packet

Updated 2019
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MISSION STATEMENT

Byron Tiger Sharks Swim Team’s mission is to promote the teaching, development and practice of competitive swimming in the Byron and surrounding areas.

INTRODUCTION & TEAM HISTORY

The Tiger Sharks Swim Team began in the early 1990’s. The swim team was originally funded and administered as a Byron School District program, until school budgetary cuts in 2004. Fortunately, through the Byron School & Park District Intergovernmental Agreement, the swim team program became a Byron Park District administered program, and continues to serve as a foundation for the area’s High School swim teams.

Swimming is a lifetime sport full of opportunities – opportunities to meet new friends, win and lose gracefully, be part of a team, set attainable goals, learn about hard work and success, and develop positive physical traits. Swimming is a unique sport since it combines team spirit and success with individual accomplishments. Competitive swimming skills are measured by time standards. Lowering one’s times in an event makes that swimmer a winner, no matter what overall place they receive. Winning increases self-confidence and individual discipline to accomplish additional goals!

The Byron Tiger Sharks swim team under the administration of the Byron Park District strives to provide an environment for learning the values of hard work, commitment, self-discipline, leadership, sportsmanship, team spirit and self-esteem. We will try to provide all swimmers with appropriate training and qualified coaching based on age, ability and dedication. Hopefully with this information packet, you will become a knowledgeable and supportive parent of a successful Tiger Shark swimmer!
USA SWIMMING

The Tiger Sharks Age-Group swim team is affiliated with USA Swimming, which is a national governing body responsible for the conduct and administration of swimming in the United States. USA Swimming formulates the rules, implements the policies and procedures, conducts the national championships, disseminates safety and sports medicine information and selects athletes to represent the United States in international competition. USA Swimming is organized into an international division, national division, zones, and local swimming committees. Tiger Sharks is in the central zone and its local swimming committee is Illinois Swimming, Inc.

- **Swim Seasons**: USA Swimming divides the swim year into two seasons. The winter or “short course” season runs from early October to late March. The meets are typically held in a 25-yard pool. The summer or “long course” season runs from early April to mid-August. These meets are generally held in 50 meter pools (Olympic size).

BTS PROGRAM SESSIONS

The Byron Park District breaks the USA Swimming season into four sessions, as outlined below. Swimmers may join the team at any time, but the beginning of a session is the most ideal time to begin. The Byron Park District also offers the opportunity for your potential swimmer to attend a week of practices for **FREE** prior to joining the team. The only requirement is to sign a liability waiver (Free Trial Week Postcard) and give this form to the head coach.

- **Fall Session**: September – November
- **Spring Session**: April & May
- **Winter Session**: December – February
- **Summer Session**: June & July

BTS ABILITY GROUPS & PRACTICES

The Byron Tiger Sharks swim team is divided into several training groups based on ability and age. The first group is intended to bridge swimmers from swim lessons into competitive swimming and participation in swim meets is optional. The four competitive swim strokes are introduced along with racing starts and turns. As swimmers progress to the other groups, more emphasis is placed on stroke development, technique, endurance and competitive skills.

Practice length and amount of practices held each week varies on each training group and ranges from one hour three times a week to one and a half hours five times a week and double practices during the summer and winter break. Dryland exercises and weight training are incorporated into workouts for some of the training groups or offered as an additional practice.

**PRACTICE CALENDAR**: A **Tiger Shark Practice & Meet calendar that lists practice dates & times, swim meet dates and swim meet registration deadlines is available for each session. This calendar can be found online or picked-up at the bpd registration office.**
PRACTICE CANCELLATIONS: From time to time, it may become necessary to cancel a daily practice due to weather, illness of the coach, etc. Whenever this becomes necessary, parents will be contacted in at least one of the following ways: E-mail blast, Call Multiplier Phone Calls, Facebook posting or Team Unify Website Posting.

BASIC COMPETITIVE SWIMMING INFORMATION

Competitive Events: The four competitive strokes are freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke and butterfly. Events are held in all of the competitive strokes at varying distances depending on the age group of the swimmer. In addition, the individual medley (IM) events require the competitor to swim all four strokes in the following order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle.

Relays: Other swimming events include relays, which are a group of four swimmers who either all swim freestyle (freestyle relay) or each swim one of the competitive strokes in the order of backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and freestyle (medley relay). All relays are decided by the coaching staff including relay orders and participants.

Age Classifications: The typical age group classifications recognized by USA Swimming are 8-Under, 10-Under, 11-12, 13-14, and Senior. In addition, many swim meets offer Open events, where any age swimmer can swim in the event. Not all age group classifications are offered at every swim meet. The swimmer’s age on the first day of a meet will govern the swimmers age for the entire meet.

Levels of Achievement: Within each age group there are different nationally recognized levels of achievement based on times. All swimmers begin as “C” swimmers. As they improve, they advance from “C”, to “BB”, “B”, “A”, “AA”, “AAA”, and ultimately “AAAA”. The times required for each ability level are published each year by USA Swimming (www.usaswimming.org). This permits fair, yet challenging, competition on all levels.

In addition, Illinois Swimming has its own set of time standards, including ISI Regional Championship, ISI Age Group Championship (JO) and ISI Senior Championship time standards, which can be found on Illinois Swimming, Inc. website. (www.ilswim.org) In some cases, a swimmer may be in a different class in each stroke. An example: a “C” breaststroke time, a “B” freestyle time, and an “AA” backstroke time.

TYPES OF SWIM MEETS

There are several different categories of meets that Tiger Shark participants can attend, which are listed below. Previous meet locations have included the following: Byron, Morrison, Sterling, Freeport, Moline, Rock Island, Rockford, and various Chicago Suburbs. Some Championship meets are further away.

1. USS Sanctioned Meets – These are the most typical types of meets. They are sanctioned (approved) through US/IL Swimming and times are recorded in the USS database. Usually these meets offer each one of the competitive strokes in the two distances offered for each age group. Each swimmer is usually allowed to enter from 3-5 events per day.
2. **Conference Meets** – These sanctioned meets are held twice a year, typically at the end of January and mid-July. Only the teams in our swim conference participate in this meet. Stateline conference teams include Byron, Sterling, Freeport, Morrison and Rockford. Typically, all swimmers on the team will compete in Conference meets.

3. **Fun Meets** - Occasionally, Tiger Sharks will compete with one other team in a fun dual meet. These meets are typically unsanctioned and times are not recorded with Illinois Swimming. We have offered these types of meets in the summer against Rochelle and Genoa. They provide a great opportunity for swimmers in the beginner group to compete in a meet without being concerned about time standards or qualifications.

4. **USS Qualification Meets** - These sanctioned meets have some type of qualification time standard(s) that a swimmer must meet in order to enter the meet.

5. **Championship Meets** – These meets are sanctioned qualification meets, in which IL/US Swimming set the qualifying time standards. They are offered at the end of both long and short seasons (July/Aug & Feb/Mar). Championship meets include Regionals, Age Group Championships (JO’s), Senior Championships, Central Zones, Sectionals, and Nationals.

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**BTS MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS**

For a swimmer to become a member of the Byron Tiger Sharks (BTS) swim team, the following requirements must be met:

- Swimmers must meet minimum swimming requirements as set forth by the coaching staff.
- Swimmers and parent/guardians (if athlete is under age 18) must register and pay applicable registration fees for each swim session through the Byron Park District.
- Swimmers must be registered for the current year with USA Swimming. This membership is optional for the Shark Pups training group and only required for this group if the swimmer will compete in meets. Swimmers transferring from another club within Illinois must pay a transfer fee. **Please note that these fees also are payable to the Byron Park District.**
- Swimmers and parent/guardians must have a signed copy of the Code of Conduct form on file at the Byron Park District. New signatures will be required at a swimmers’ initial registration on the team and yearly at the beginning of each Fall Session.
- All members and their parents/guardians are expected to help fundraise/volunteer at hosted swim meets and other fundraising events during the year.
- Members shall keep current on payment of all fees and register for swim meets by the stated deadlines. Swimmers will not be allowed in the water with outstanding balances unless all past and present fees are paid or prior arrangements have been made through the Byron Park District’s Superintendent of Recreation.
BTS PROGRAM FEES

There are several different fees that must be paid before your child(ren) can participate in Tiger Sharks. These fees are listed below. **Please note that all fees are paid to the Byron Park District.**

**Registration Fees:** Registration fees must be paid for each session for your child to participate.

**USS Insurance Fee:** This fee must be paid each *calendar* year. Please note that if your child is registering for the first time in the fall, the fee covers Sept. 1st through December 31st of the following year. The USS fee registers the swimmer in the Illinois and United States Swimming Associations, which is mandatory for swimmers to participate in sanctioned meets. It also serves as insurance for swimmers when they are participating in swim meets and at practices.

**Meet Fees & Sign-up Procedures:** Meet registration is now entered on the Team Unify website, [www.byrontigersharks.org](http://www.byrontigersharks.org). This program allows one to select preferred events and leave notes for the coach. Please note that the coach has the final decision in event selection including relays.

Once swim meet entries have been sent to the host team, charges will be placed on each family's park district account and an email notifying the person of the charges will be sent. Payments should be made in a timely manner and will not be refunded if you cannot attend the swim meet.

A description of swim meet fees charged per swimmer is highlighted below:

a. **Swimmer Individual Event Fees:** This fee is determined by the host swim team and typically ranges from $3.50 - $5.00. Swimmers are charged for each event they are entered. Most host teams set a maximum amount of individual events a swimmer can enter each day (usually 3 – 5 events).

b. **Swimmer Surcharge “Splash Fee”:** This fee is charged by Illinois Swimming or other LSC (Iowa, WI, etc.) and is typically $2.00 per swimmer per swim meet.

c. **Facility Fee:** Some host teams also charge a facility fee for each swimmer or team.

d. **Coach/Relay Travel Surcharge:** A $5.00 surcharge will also be added per swimmer for swim meets that are 60 miles away or less. A $10.00 surcharge will be added per swimmer for swim meets that are over 60 miles away.

Therefore, let’s say that your swimmer is going to a Rockford swim meet that charges $5.00 per event and is entered into 5 events. You would be charged $32.00 ($5 x 5 + $2 + $5)

**EQUIPMENT**

**Suits:** Swimmers can wear any suit to practices. Please note that females shall wear one piece suits, not two piece suits. The team will also have a designated team suit. It is recommended that swimmers purchase an official team swimsuit and those suits should only be worn for swim meets and not during practice.

**Caps and Goggles:** Goggles are required for all swimmers at both practice and meets. Caps are recommended for girls and preferable for boys. BTS team caps will be available for purchase at the bpd office or through the team store on the Team Unify website, [www.byrontigersharks.org](http://www.byrontigersharks.org). In addition, personalized caps can be ordered.
**Other:** The Byron Park District has some training equipment that swimmers may borrow; however, it is highly encouraged that swimmers purchase their own equipment, such as fins, snorkels, paddles, etc. This equipment along with a variety of team spirit wear is available to purchase through the team store on the Team Unify website, [www.byrontigersharks.org](http://www.byrontigersharks.org).

**Lockers:** During practice, the lockers in the HS Swimming pool locker room may be utilized. Please have your child lock his/her belongings in a locker to prevent against theft. Locks shall be removed at the end of each practice. The Byron Park District is not responsible for any lost or stolen items in the locker room or pool area.

**MEDICAL INFORMATION**

**QUESTIONNAIRE:** In an effort to keep coaching staff well informed of athlete health history and/or conditions, Illinois Swimming has created a medical questionnaire. This form is available on the Illinois Swimming website, [www.ilswim.org](http://www.ilswim.org). Please complete a questionnaire when initially registering your child for the swim team and give it to the Head Coach. Please keep this information updated with any new history or health condition.

**ACCIDENTS/INJURIES:** The coaching staff is trained in First Aid, CPR/AED, and either Lifeguarding or Safety for Swim Coaches. If an accident or injury occurs during practice or swim meets, staff will provide appropriate care. Please note that the Byron Park District does not carry medical accident insurance for injuries sustained in its programs. All program participants or legal guardians must sign a Liability Waiver and Release Form at the time of registration.

**EMERGENCY ACTION SAFETY PLAN**

The Emergency Action Safety Plan highlighted in the *Appendix* will be in effect during all Tiger Sharks swim practices and meets. Please note that when a lifeguard is not present, the coaching staff takes on the responsibility of a lifeguard.

**TRANSPORTATION**

Parents and/or guardians are responsible for the transportation to and from all practices & swim meets. If parents and/or guardians wish to stay, they are also responsible for lodging fees while attending swim meets. Please refer to the Team Travel Policy in the *Appendix* for policy details.

**BTS ELECTRONIC & SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS**

Electronic communication includes but is not limited to the following: e-mails, texts, Facebook, Twitter and similar sites, blogs, and instant messaging. Currently, the Byron Park District has both a website, [www.byronparks.org](http://www.byronparks.org) and a Facebook page. In addition, Byron Tiger Sharks has their own website, [www.byrontigersharks.org](http://www.byrontigersharks.org) and their own Facebook page.

The Byron Park District and its’ coaching staff will communicate with parents at various times via e-mail blasts. E-mail blasts and all team communication will be done through the Team Unify website. **Therefore, you MUST register your swimmer on the Team Unify website, [www.byrontigersharks.org](http://www.byrontigersharks.org) to receive these important team communication e-mails!**

Please refer to the detailed Electronic Communication Policy in the *Appendix.*
BULLYING & CODE OF CONDUCT
The Byron Tiger Sharks and Byron Park District is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all of our members. Therefore, we abide by the USA Swimming anti-bullying policy and have our own Code of Conduct. *(See Appendix).*

PARENT COMMUNICATION & EDUCATION
Communication and education between swimmers, parents, coaches, and the Byron Park District is very important. Informational e-mails will be sent to parents via the Team Unify website. In addition, Parent Meetings will be held approximately every other month. Plus, a lot of swimming knowledge can be gained via our team’s website, www.byrontigersharks.org; in the Parent’s section of USA Swimming website, www.usaswimming.org; and at the Illinois Swimming website, www.ilswim.org. In addition, check out all of the information in our appendix!

If you would like to speak with a coach, please e-mail the coach or set-up a time to discuss matters with the coach before or after practice. Please do not try to communicate with the coach during practice time or any time after 9 pm – The coach has family and other commitments too!

BTS ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE
If you have a question, problem or complaint, please follow the organizational structure hierarchy listed below.

BTS Coach Aides (HS Staff)
BTS Assistant Coaches
BTS Head Coach
Byron Park District Superintendent of Recreation

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES
Swim clubs rely heavily on volunteers, especially to host swim meets. All parents/families are expected to volunteer whenever BTS hosts a swim meet. These swim meets serve as a major fundraiser for the swim team and require a lot of volunteers to run successfully. A list of volunteer positions for home swim meets are listed in the Appendix.

Moreover, it is very important to cultivate swim officials within in a club. Swim meets are unable to be held without swim officials. There are many types of swim officials, including Starter, Stroke & Turn, Administrative, and Referee. Training to become an official is provided through USA and IL Swimming and will be reimbursed by the Byron Park District, as long as you officiate any home swim meets we host. More information on swim officials can be found on the USA & IL Swimming websites, www.usaswimming.org & www.ilswim.org.
Appendix 1

Byron Park District
Swimming Pool Emergency Action Plan

DROWNING, NEAR DROWNING, OR SPINAL INJURY

Lifeguard notices emergency situation
Lifeguard signals three short whistle blows
Lifeguard notifies other lifeguard or patrons to clear the water
Lifeguard enters the water and makes appropriate rescue
Lifeguard brings the victim to safety

No Life Threatening Conditions
- Complete Secondary Survey
- Apply First Aid as Needed using Gloves
- Contact Parents of Minor
- Complete Accident/Incident Form

Life Threatening Conditions
- Lifeguard or patron calls 911 and notifies PD office or PE Center of emergency situation

Spinal Injury
- If one LG is on duty—continue stabilizing the head and spine, and perform rescue breathing as needed until EMS arrives
- Have someone else call 911 and notify PD office or PE Center of emergency
- If another LG is on duty, stabilize the victim on a backboard and remove from H2O

- Lifeguard uses gloves & resuscitation mask to perform CPR, rescue breathing, etc. until EMS arrives & takes over
- Chain of Command Notified Immediately
- Interview Witnesses
- Complete Accident/Incident Form
- Aquatic Supervisor notifies victim’s family, handles the media, schedules staff discussion, and takes corrective action as needed

OTHER EMERGENCIES OR INCIDENTS

Medical Emergencies (on Land)
(Heart Attack, Stroke, Allergic Reaction, Broken Bones, Severe Bleeding, etc.)
- Lifeguard performs First Aid & CPR (until EMS arrives)
- Lifeguard calls or has a patron call 911
- Lifeguard or patron notifies the PD office or PE center of emergency
- Chain of Command Notified
- Lifeguard completes an accident/incident form

FIRE
- Lifeguard evacuates swimming pool and locker rooms
- Lifeguard calls or has a patron call 911
- Lifeguard or patron notifies the PD office or PE center of emergency
- Chain of Command Notified

Loss of Electricity
- Lifeguard clears the pool and checks the bottom of the pool
- If the electricity is not restored within 10 minutes and emergency lights in the pool and locker rooms are not sufficient, contact the PD office, PE Center or Carrie

Weather Emergencies
- Thunderstorm: Pool will still be open unless we lose electricity (see above)
- Tornado: Move patrons to locker rooms until safe

Violence (Physical or Verbal)
Fighting and Other Inappropriate Behavior
- Notify patrons that behavior is unacceptable
- If it continues, have patrons sit-out of pool for 10-15 minutes
- If it still continues, notify PD office or PE Center and call patron’s parents (if minor)
- Notify patron that they are suspended from the pool for 2 wks & complete an Incident Form

Threat, Lost Item or Lost Child
- Help the patron or contact others (PD office or PE Center) to help the patron look for lost item or child. (Call Police if can’t find child within 15 minutes)
- Interview witnesses to learn more information
- Notify Aquatic Supervisor of Incident on Daily Sheet

Bodily Fluids on Pool Deck or in Pool
- Clear the pool or deck area of patrons
- Contact Custodian on Duty or have PD office or PE Center notify a custodian
- Notify Aquatic Supervisor of Incident (Daily Sheet)
Appendix 2

Team Travel Policy for Byron Tiger Sharks

a. Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an athlete (unless the coach is a parent, guardian, sibling, or spouse of that particular athlete). (Article 305.5.A)

b. Team managers and chaperones must be members of USA Swimming and have successfully passed a USA Swimming administered criminal background check. (Article 305.5.B)

c. When only one athlete and one coach travel to a competition, the athlete must have his/her parents’ (or legal guardian’s) written permission in advance to travel alone with the coach. (Article 305.5.C). Athletes should not ride in a coach’s vehicle without another adult present who is the same gender as the athlete, unless prior parental permission is obtained.

d. Club travel policies must be signed and agreed to by all athletes, parents, coaches and other adults traveling with the club (Article 305.5.D).

e. During team travel, when conducting room checks and attending team meetings and/or other activities, two-deep leadership and open and observable environments should be maintained.

f. During overnight team travel, if athletes room with other athletes, they should be of the same gender and should be of similar age. Where athletes are age 13 & over, chaperones and/or team managers should stay in nearby rooms. When athletes are age 12 & under, chaperones and/or team managers may stay with athletes. Where chaperones/team managers are staying in a room with athletes, they should be the same gender as the athlete and written consent should be given by athlete’s parents (or legal guardian).

g. To ensure the propriety of the athletes and to protect the staff, there should be no male athletes in female athlete’s rooms and no female athletes in male athlete’s rooms (unless the other athlete is a sibling or spouse or that particular athlete).

h. Curfews shall be established by the team each day of the trip.

i. Team members and staff traveling with the team will attend all team functions, including meetings, practices, meals, meet sessions, etc. unless otherwise excused or instructed by the head coach or his/her designee.

j. Swimmers are expected to remain with the team at all times during the trip. Swimmers are not to leave the competition venue, the hotel, a restaurant or any other place at which the team has gathered without the permission of the coach or chaperone.

k. When visiting public places such as shopping malls, movie theatres, etc., swimmers will stay in groups of no less than three persons. 12 & under athletes will be accompanied by a chaperone.

l. The directions and decisions of coaches/chaperones are final. The head coach or his/her designee shall make a written report of travel policy or code of conduct violations to the Byron Park District and the parent or legal guardian of any affected minor athlete.

m. The head coach or team manager should obtain a signed liability release and/or indemnification form for each athlete and should carry a signed medical consent or authorization to treat form for each athlete.
Appendix 3

Electronic Communication Policy for BTS

The Byron Park District recognizes the prevalence of electronic communication and social media in today's world. Many of our swimmers use these means as their primary method of communication. While the Byron Park District acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, the Byron Park District also realizes that there are associated risks that must be considered when adults use these methods to communicate with minors.

GENERAL CONTENT: All communications between a coach or other adult and an athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. The content and intent of all electronic communications must adhere to the USA Swimming Code of Conduct.

For example, as with any communication with an athlete, electronic communication should not contain references or relate to any of the following: drug or alcohol use; sexually oriented conversation, sexually explicit language and/or sexual activity; the adult's personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues or personal problems; and or inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures.

Whether one is an athlete, coach, board member or parent, the guiding principle to always use in communication is to ask: “Is this communication something that someone else would find appropriate or acceptable in a face-to-face meeting?” or “Is this something you would be comfortable saying out loud to the intended recipient of your communication in front of the intended recipient’s parents, the coaching staff, the board, or other athletes?”

With respect to electronic communications, a simple test that can be used in most cases is whether the electronic communication with swimmers is Transparent, Accessible and Professional.

- **Transparent**: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be transparent. Your communication should not only be clear and direct, but also free of hidden meanings, innuendo and expectations.
- **Accessible**: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be considered a matter of record and part of the Club’s records. Whenever possible, include another coach or parent in the communication so that there is no question regarding accessibility.
- **Professional**: All electronic communication between a coach and an athlete should be conducted professionally as a representative of the Club. This includes word choices, tone, grammar, and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a staff member.

If your communication meets all three of the T.A.P. criteria, then it is likely your method of communication with athletes will be appropriate.

FACEBOOK, MYSPACE, BLOGS, AND SIMILAR SITES: Coaches may have personal Facebook (or other social media site) pages, but they are not permitted to have any athlete member of the Club join their personal page as a “friend.” A coach should not accept any “friend” request from an athlete. In addition, the coach should remind the athlete that this is not permitted. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “private message” each other through Facebook. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “instant message” each other through Facebook chat or other IM method. Coaches are encouraged to set their pages to “private” to prevent athletes from accessing the coach’s personal information.

Both the Byron Park District and the Byron Tiger Sharks have an official Facebook page that athletes and their parents can “friend” for information and updates on team-related matters.
TEXTING: Subject to the general guidelines mentioned above, texting is allowed between coaches and athletes during the hours from 7am until 9pm. Texting only shall be used for the purpose of communicating information directly related to team activities.

EMAIL: Athletes and coaches may use email to communicate between the hours of 7am and 9pm. When communicating with an athlete through email, a parent, another coach, or a board member must also be copied.

USE OF CELL PHONES AND OTHER MOBILE RECORDING DEVICES: Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone camera, is not allowed in changing areas, rest rooms or locker rooms (Article 305.3)

REQUEST TO DISCONTINUE ALL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS: The parents or guardians of an athlete may request in writing that their child not be contacted by coaches through any form of electronic communication
Appendix 4

**Anti-Bullying Policy & Action Plan for Byron Tiger Sharks to Address Bullying**

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Byron Park District/Byron Tiger Sharks and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. The Club is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all of our members. If bullying does occur, all athletes and parents should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a coach, board member or athlete/mentor.

**Objectives of the Club’s Bullying Policy and Action Plan:**
1. To make it clear that the Club will not tolerate bullying in any form.
2. To define bullying and give all board members, coaches, parents and swimmers a good understanding of what bullying is.
3. To make it known to all parents, swimmers and coaching staff that there is a policy and protocol should any bullying issues arise.
4. To make how to report bullying clear and understandable.
5. To spread the word that (Name of Club) takes bullying seriously and that all swimmers and parents can be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

**WHAT IS BULLYING?:** The USA Swimming Code of Conduct prohibits bullying. Generally, bullying is the use of aggression, whether intentional or not, which hurts another person. Bullying results in pain and distress.

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct defines bullying in 304.3.7. Bullying is the severe or repeated use by one or more USA Swimming members of oral, written, electronic or other technological expression, image, sound, data or intelligence of any nature (regardless of the method of transmission), or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at any other member that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of: causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member’s property; placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property; creating a hostile environment for the other member at any USA Swimming activity; infringing on the rights of the other member at any USA Swimming activity; or materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any USA Swimming activity (which for the purposes of this section shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts and other events of a member club or LSC).

**REPORTING PROCEDURE:** An athlete who feels that he or she has been bullied is asked to do one or more of the following things: Talk to your parents; Talk to a Club Coach, Board Member, or other designated individual; Write a letter or email to the Club Coach, Board Member, or other designated individual; make a report to the USA Swimming Safe Sport staff.

There is no express time limit for initiating a complaint under this procedure, but every effort should be made to bring the complaint to the attention of the appropriate club leadership as soon as possible to make sure that memories are fresh and behavior can be accurately recalled and the bullying behavior can be stopped as soon as possible.
**HOW WE HANDLE BULLYING:** If bullying is occurring during team-related activities, we STOP BULLYING ON THE SPOT using the following steps:

1. Intervene immediately. It is ok to get another adult to help.
2. Separate the kids involved.
3. Make sure everyone is safe.
4. Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
5. Stay calm. Reassure the kids involved, including bystanders.
6. Model respectful behavior when you intervene.

If bullying is occurring at our club or it is reported to be occurring at our club, we address the bullying by FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED and SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED using the following approach:

1. First, we get the facts.
   a. Keep all the involved children separate.
   b. Get the story from several sources, both adults and kids.
   c. Listen without blaming.
   d. Don’t call the act “bullying” while you are trying to understand what happened.
   e. It may be difficult to get the whole story, especially if multiple athletes are involved or the bullying involves social bullying or cyber bullying. Collect all available information.

2. Then, we determine if it's bullying. There are many behaviors that look like bullying but require different approaches. It is important to determine whether the situation is bullying or something else.
   a. Review the USA Swimming definition of bullying;
   b. To determine if the behavior is bullying or something else, consider the following questions: *
      * What is the history between the kids involved?
      * Have there been past conflicts?
      * Is there a power imbalance? Remember that a power imbalance is not limited to physical strength. It is sometimes not easily recognized. If the targeted child feels like there is a power imbalance, there probably is.
      * Has this happened before? Is the child worried it will happen again?
   c. Remember that it may not matter “who started it.” Some kids who are bullied may be seen as annoying or provoking, but this does not excuse the bullying behavior.
   d. Once you have determined if the situation is bullying, support all of the kids involved.

3. Support the kids who are being bullied
   a. Listen and focus on the child. Learn what’s been going on and show you want to help. Assure the child that bullying is not their fault.
   b. Work together to resolve the situation and protect the bullied child. The child, parents, and fellow team members and coaches may all have valuable input. It may help to:
      i. Ask the child being bullied what can be done to make him or her feel safe. Remember that changes to routine should be minimized. He or she is not at fault and should not be singled out. For example, consider rearranging lane assignments for everyone. If bigger moves are necessary, such as switching practice groups, the child who is bullied should not be forced to change.
      ii. Develop a game plan. Maintain open communication between the Club and parents.
         Discuss the steps that will be taken and how bullying will be addressed going forward.
   c. Be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight. Commit to making it stop and consistently support the bullied child.
4. Address bullying behavior
   a. Make sure the child knows what the problem behavior is. Young people who bully must learn their behavior is wrong and harms others.
   b. Show kids that bullying is taken seriously. Calmly tell the child that bullying will not be tolerated. Model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.
   c. Work with the child to understand some of the reasons he or she bullied. For example: Sometimes children bully to fit in or just to make fun of someone is a little different from them. In other words, there may be some insecurity involved. Other times kids act out because something else—issues at home, abuse, stress—is going on in their lives. They also may have been bullied. These kids may be in need of additional support.
   d. Involve the kid who bullied in making amends or repairing the situation. The goal is to help them see how their actions affect others. For example, the child can:
      * Write a letter apologizing to the athlete who was bullied.
      * Do a good deed for the person who was bullied, for the Club, or for others in your community.
      * Clean up, repair, or pay for any property they damaged.
   e. Avoid strategies that don't work or have negative consequences:
      i. Zero tolerance or “three strikes, you’re out” strategies don’t work. Suspending or removing from the team swimmers who bully does not reduce bullying behavior. Swimmers may be less likely to report and address bullying if suspension or getting kicked off the team is the consequence.
      ii. Conflict resolution and peer mediation don’t work for bullying. Bullying is not a conflict between people of equal power who share equal blame. Facing those who have bullied may further upset kids who have been bullied.
   f. Follow-up. After the bullying issue is resolved, continue finding ways to help the child who bullied to understand how what they do affects other people. For example, praise acts of kindness or talk about what it means to be a good teammate.

5. Support bystanders who witness bullying. Every day, kids witness bullying. They want to help, but don’t know how. Fortunately, there are a few simple, safe ways that athletes can help stop bullying when they see it happening.
   a. Be a friend to the person being bullied;
   b. Tell a trusted adult – your parent, coach, or club board member;
   c. Help the kid being bullied get away from the situation. Create a distraction, focus the attention on something else, or offer a way for the target to get out of the situation. “Let’s go, practice is about to start.”
   d. Set a good example by not bullying others.
   e. Don't give the bully an audience. Bullies are encouraged by the attention they get from bystanders. If you do nothing else, just walk away.
In the interest of creating and maintaining a positive atmosphere for the Tiger Sharks swim team, the Byron Park District has implemented the following team rules and disciplinary code and procedures.

**Swimmer Expectations**

- Adhere to all USA Swimming and Illinois Swimming policies as detailed on their websites, as well as Byron Park District, Byron School District and Byron Tiger Sharks specific policies.

- Become members of USA Swimming’s local branch – Illinois Swimming within the first week of joining the team. (Register for the yearly USS fee/membership through the Byron Park District).

- Be respectful to others and their belongings. This includes but is not limited to coaches, teammates, fellow competitors, officials, Byron Park District staff, swim meet volunteers, swim team parents, and other patrons at the swimming pool.
  - Treat others, as you would like to be treated.
  - Cooperate with your coach, teammates and opponents.
  - No talking when others are talking; listen; answer respectfully when spoken to; follow directions/instructions.
  - Do not use inappropriate language or gestures.
  - Do not tamper with or hide other swimmer’s personal belongings.
  - Take good care of swimming pool equipment and property.
  - Follow the rules of a host pool when the team is at an away meet.

- Always be supportive and encourage your teammates through positive comments and through cheering for them during races.
  - Avoid any derogatory remarks concerning teammates, competitors, coaches, parents, etc. and avoid use of derogatory language based on gender, race or impairment.
  - Refrain from any/all hurtful behaviors, including but not limited to pinching, scratching, hitting, kicking, fighting, pushing, teasing, name calling or ignoring.
  - Never interfere with the progress of another swimmer during practice or meets.
  - Experienced swimmers shall help less experienced and younger swimmers at meets.

- Exhibit the generally recognized attributes of good sportsmanship towards teammates, competitors, and officials.
  - The decisions of officials are not to be questioned. If you disagree, have your coach approach the official in an appropriate manner.
  - Understand and exhibit proper lane etiquette during practice and meets (Circle swim, let faster swimmers go ahead of you, etc.).
  - Acknowledge all “good swims” whether it’s a teammate’s or a competitor’s
  - Be prepared to lose sometimes. Everyone wins and loses. Be a fair winner and good loser.
  - Swim for the “Fun of it” and not just to please parents and/or coaches.
  - Understand that swimmers are grouped in practice lanes based on individual speed, age, ability, number of other swimmers in the lane and coach’s decision. Lane assignment is not a status symbol. All individuals learn and progress at different speeds; are good at certain things
and struggle at others. Encourage and support your teammates; congratulate them on their achievements.

- Do not engage in bullying in any way. Bullying refers to chronic, systematic acts of aggression inflicted with the intent of causing physical hurt or psychological distress to another when a real or perceived imbalance of power exists. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose. The four types of bullying are: verbal, social or relational, physical and cyber.
  - Swimmers should report any bullying behavior they experience or witness to their coach immediately

- Arrive to all practices and meets on time and be prepared to work hard. Attend as many practices as your schedule permits.
  - Bring all necessary equipment/supplies, wear appropriate swimwear and be responsible for your belongings.

- Represent the Byron Park District and Byron Tiger Sharks swim team positively by behaving respectfully at all team functions. Promote the Byron Tiger Sharks swim team by wearing BTS shirts, suits and caps.

- Do not use a cell phone, camera, or any other video device in locker rooms. Change into and out of swimwear only in the locker room or designated area.

- Abide by the BTS/IL/USA Swimming electronic and social media policies.

- Do not illegally consume or purchase alcohol, tobacco products or any illegal drugs or substances of any kind, or share prescribed medications while participating in activities as a registered member of Byron Tiger Sharks.

- Any inappropriate sexual conduct or advance or other inappropriate oral, written, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature will not be tolerated.

**Parent/Guardian Expectations**

- Help your swimmer(s) understand and adhere to the Athlete Code of Conduct

- Keep informed by regularly checking email, the BTS website page and bulletin boards for Byron Park District/Byron Tiger Sharks news and information.

- Register your swimmer(s) by the stated deadline for swim sessions and meets. Bring your swimmer(s) to practices and meets at the time specified and notify the coach if your swimmer(s) can no longer attend a meet.

- Keep current on payment of all fees

- Be an active part of the Byron Tiger Sharks Swim Team by volunteering at BTS sponsored meets, participating in other fundraising for the team, and attending any scheduled parent meetings.
  - Please refer to the Fundraising information packet for more information.

- Act in a sportsmanlike and respectful manner towards members of the team, their family members, fellow competitors, coaches, Park District staff, meet volunteers, and officials.
  - Do not use inappropriate language or gestures
  - Avoid the use of derogatory language based on gender, race or impairment
  - Refrain from any/all hurtful behaviors including name calling, criticism, exclusion, teasing, ignoring, etc.
- Be supportive of all swimmers and their achievements. Acknowledge “good swims” whether it’s your swimmer’s, a teammate’s or a competitor’s.
- Do not criticize your swimmer(s) in front of others, but reserve constructive criticism for more private moments.

- Experienced swim family members shall help less experienced/new swim families understand the sport of swimming.
- Set a good example by your own conduct, behavior, manners and attire. Children learn best by example.
- Support and promote the team by wearing BTS team apparel at team functions.
- Encourage your swimmer(s) to participate and perform to the best of their ability. Do not force them to participate if they are not interested. Remember that children are involved in a sport for their enjoyment, not yours.
- Communicate with coaching staff only at an appropriate time, not during practice. Express any concerns or frustrations in an appropriate manner that does not cause a scene in front of the swimmers. If you feel that your concern is not addressed by a coach, please contact the Byron Park District Aquatics Manager, then the Park District’s Executive Director, and finally the Byron Park District Board of Commissioners.
- Do not use a cell phone, camera, or any other video device in locker rooms.
- Abide by the BTS/IL/USA Swimming electronic and social media policies.
- Follow the USA Swimming rule that states, “No parents are allowed on pool deck at any time during practices or meets, unless it is in an official/swim meet volunteer capacity.”
- Any inappropriate sexual conduct or advance or other inappropriate oral, written, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature will not be tolerated.

**Disciplinary Procedures**
If a swimmer or parent/guardian is in violation with the above Code of Conduct, discipline will be handled in the following manner. Each disciplinary step is determined by the specific infraction and therefore is on a case-by-case scenario.

**First Offense** – Warning to swimmer(s) or parent/guardian about their behavior and explanation of WHY behavior is unacceptable. Recommended discipline will be determined by the coaching staff. Possible discipline includes but not limited to: sincere apology, push-ups, extra laps, clean-up duties, and/or time out of practice.

**Second Offense** – A second warning will be given to the swimmer(s) or parent/guardian. Recommended discipline will be determined by the coaching staff and could include parent/guardian notification (if swimmer), Byron Park District administrative staff notification, and/or immediate removal from current practice, meet or swimming area.

**Third Offense** – The coach will notify Byron Park District staff and discipline will be determined by the coaching staff and Byron Park District administrative staff. Possible discipline could include suspension from practices or meets for a length of time as warranted by the situation. No refunds for time missed will be issued.

**Additional Offenses** – Additional offenses will be discussed between the coaching staff and the Byron Park District administrative staff. Discipline could include a formal investigation into the matter,
additional suspension from practices or meets, and/or dismissal from the team for the remainder of the season or indefinitely, if merited. No refunds will be issued.

**NOTE:** There is a sign-off sheet acknowledging that you have read and agree to abide by this code of conduct. In order for swimmers to participate in any BTS activities, including practice, this sheet MUST be signed by both swimmer and parent/guardian and returned to the bpd office at a swimmer’s initial registration on the swim team and each year at the beginning of the spring session (April).
Appendix 6

BTS Host Swim Meet Volunteer Positions

**Admissions & Heat Sheet** – This individual is responsible for taking admission money and selling/distributing heat sheets each session. Admission is not charged for swimmers participating in the swim meet, individuals working/volunteering at the swim meet that current session or anyone under the age of 8 yrs. Only one individual is required for this position each meet session.

**Announcer** – This individual is responsible for announcing the events, swimmers in the events, and any other important announcements during the swim meet. Only one individual is required for this position each meet session. “On Deck Position”

**Awards** – This individual is responsible for applying labels to awards and placing awards in the appropriate team’s bag. Only one individual is required for this position each meet session. “On Deck”

**Heat Awards** – This individual is responsible for giving out a heat prize to the 1st place individual in every heat of an event. Only one individual is required for this position each meet session. “On Deck Position”

**Concessions Donations** – Food, drink, condiments, and table settings are needed to be donated to sell at swim meets. We typically ask parents to donate around $15 worth of items to “stock” concessions.

**Concession Organizer** – This individual is responsible for making sure we have enough donated food and other items and have enough concession workers. They are also responsible for creating menu signs and prices. Moreover, they must make sure that individuals working concessions are familiar with concession procedures, including but not limited to sanitary food preparation and distribution and money handling techniques. This individual must regularly check food supply and obtain additional supplies as needed. Ideally, one individual will be responsible for this position for the entire swim meet, not a different individual each session.

**Concession Workers** – Individuals are needed to sell concession items, collect money and distribute/“cook” food. Two or three individuals are required for this position each meet session.

**Lane Timers** – Timers are responsible for tracking swim event times in each lane utilizing the automatic timing system in addition to a stop watch. Two timers per lane are needed each swim session. In addition, a Head timer, responsible for all other timers is required. “On Deck Position”

**Runners** – Runners are responsible for getting event time slips from the timers to the timing desk, posting event results and distributing award labels to the award table. They are also responsible for other errands as needed, such as giving DQ slips to coaches, copying heat sheets, etc. One to two runners are needed each session. An additional job of a Runner during 8 and under events, is being in charge of the “bullpen”. The bullpen is a holding area for the 8 and under swimmers where they are lined up in proper lane order and walked to their lane assignments when their event is called. “On Deck Position”

**Timing Table (Administrative Judge)** – This is a newly created swim meet official position that also requires training through IL/USS Swimming. One individual is responsible for the operation of the automatic timing system during the swim meet (does not currently need to be certified). The other individual is responsible for entering the times into the Meet Manager computer system and printing meet event results. Both of these positions must be filled each meet session. “On Deck Position”
Appendix 7

Frequently Asked Questions about Swim Meets

Q: Is my child required to swim in meets?
A: Since competition and swim meets are part of being on a competitive swim team, the Byron Park District strongly recommends that your child attend at least one swim meet each session. For Shark Pups, we suggest competing in the Turkey Shoot meet (November), a non-sanctioned meet or a dual meet. Mako & Thresher group swimmers are required to compete in the Turkey Shoot meet, Conference Swim Meets, any Championship meet he/she qualifies, and an average of one meet per month.

Q: How do I know if my child is ready to compete in swim meets?
A: The swim coach will try to have every child ready to compete in any suggested swim meets. The coach will notify parents if he/she feels that your child is NOT ready for the above meets. If you or your child has concerns about competing, please speak with the swim coach.

Q: Does my child have to swim every day of the meet?
A: No, you can select which day(s) your child attends a swim meet when registering for the meet.

Q: Will my child be competing against swimmers of the same age?
A: Typically meet events are divided into the following age groups: 8 and under; 10 and under; 11-12; 13-14; and senior or open. Age is based on your child’s age on the first day of the swim meet.

Q: My child is young and new to swimming. Will he/she have to swim long distances in swim meets?
A: Event lengths are typically 25, 50, 100, 200, 400, 500, and 1 mile (1650 yds). Not all lengths are offered at each meet for each stroke. Usually, 8 and 10 and under events are shorter (25, 50, 100).

Q: What is an IM event?
A: IM stands for individual medley, in which the swimmer swims all four competitive strokes. The swimmer begins with the butterfly, then changes after one-fourth of the race to backstroke, then breaststroke and finally freestyle.

Q: How do I find out more information about a particular swim meet?
A: Look for the appropriate meet packet on the Tiger Sharks website, www.tigersharks.org

Q: How do I register for swim meets?
A: You register for swim meets through the Tiger Sharks Team Unify website, www.tigersharks.org. You can select the events that you would like your child to swim; however, the coach ultimately determines these events. You can also leave notes to the coach regarding your child’s attendance or suggested events.

Once the registration deadline has passed, the coach will select events for each swimmer who indicated that they will attend the meet and submit these entries to both the host team and to the Byron Park District. The Byron Park District will then invoice each family for swim meet fees and cut a check to the host team for team entries. Payment of meet fees must be paid prior to participation in the applicable swim meet.
Q: What does the Park District charge for participation in swim meets?
A: The Park District charges participants the individual event fees (typically $3-$5 per event), plus IL Swimming Splash Fees (Typically $2/swimmer) and additional facility surcharge fees when applicable. In addition, we add a $5 or $10 surcharge fee for each swimmer. This surcharge helps cover relay fees and coach’s travel expenses. Please refer to the more detailed version of swim meet fees on page 8.

Q: I forgot to register for a swim meet and it’s after the deadline. Can my child still swim in the meet?
A: If entries have not been sent and paid to the host team, the Park District can still accept registrations.

Q: I registered for a swim meet and now my child cannot attend the meet. What should I do?
A: If it is still before the meet registration deadline, you can contact the Park District and receive a credit for the meet. If it’s after the meet deadline and entries have been submitted to the host team, you will have to forfeit any money paid for the swim meet. Remember to notify the coach that your child cannot attend the meet, so the coach will not be expecting you to attend.

Q: Do I have to fill-out the entry form at the end of the meet packet?
A: No, meet packets are posted on our website for information only. The entry registration form at the end of the meet packet is completed by the Byron Park District for the entire team and sent to the host team with our entry fees.

Q: Why are the meet deadlines set so early in comparison to the meet date?
A: Lots of procedures go into registering for a meet. Typically, the host team accepts entries from other teams within a three-week window: One month prior to the meet to one week before the meet. Some meets fill-up, so outside teams want to get their entries into the host team as soon as possible. Moreover, a week before the meet is held, the host team e-mails Illinois swimming and they make sure everyone swimming in the meet is registered as a USA swimming member.

Q: Does the team take a bus to swim meets?
A: No, parents are responsible for all travel expenses to attend a swim meet. Sometimes, families will car pool. Speak with other parents at practice about carpooling.

Q: What does my child need to bring to a swim meet?
A: Him/Herself, a positive attitude, swimsuit, goggles and towel. Swimmers usually have quite a bit of waiting time between events, so an extra towel, sweatshirt, etc. is helpful to stay warm. An extra set of goggles are always helpful, just in case. Also bring plenty of snacks, drinks and something to keep your child entertained between events. Most swim meets offer concessions where food and drink can be purchased. Lastly, bring a sharpie marker – see next question.

Q: What should my child and I be doing when we arrive at a swim meet?
A: The first thing you should do is find the positive check-in sheet. This sheet lists all of the registered swimmer’s names by team. Your child should highlight his/her name indicating that they are present. If you do not highlight your child’s name before the host team closes positive check-in (usually 20 minutes after warm-ups begin), your child will be scratched from all events and not allowed to swim. Next, you should find your child’s coach. Lastly, sometime before the meet begins, your child should have the events and their corresponding event number written on their arms or legs with a sharpie. Heat and lane information should be added once that information is available.
Parents can help their child with the above procedures. Usually, host teams charge admission for parents and other members of the audience, so make sure you bring money. Moreover, once positive check-in is complete, the host team will print out heat or “psyche” sheets. There is usually a small fee for a copy of these sheets also.

Q: How can I find the exact time my child swam in his/her event?
A: Results are usually posted somewhere in the facility once all heats have been completed. Some facilities will also have “Meet Mobile” App available for smart phones.

Q: My child keeps getting disqualified (DQ) in the events he/she swims, why?
A: DQs are usually a result of technical rules violations. They include but are not limited to:
- **Freestyle**: Walking on the bottom, pulling on the lane rope, not touching the wall on a turn, or not completing the distance.
- **Backstroke**: Pulling or kicking into the wall once a swimmer has turned passed the vertical onto the breast. Turning onto the breast before touching the wall with the hand at the finish of the race.
- **Breaststroke**: An illegal kick such as flutter (freestyle), dolphin (butterfly), or scissors (side stroke); not on the breast; alternating movements of the arms; taking two arm strokes or two leg kicks while the head is under water; touching with only one hand at the turns or finish.
- **Butterfly**: Alternating movements of the arms or legs; pushing the arms forward under instead of over the water surface (underwater recovery); a breaststroke style of kick; touching with only one hand at the turns or finish.

Q: My child swam really well at a meet and won many awards. When do we receive the awards?
A: Awards are usually gathered for a team and given to the coach at the end of the meet. The coach will give the awards to the swimmers at a later time.

Q: What is my child’s USA Swimming ID?
A: Your child’s ID is what Illinois and USA Swimming uses to track individuals’ meet entries and times. It is created by your child’s birthdate (MM/DD/YY) followed by the first three letters of their legal first name, their middle initial and first four letters of their last name.

Q: How can I keep track of my child’s swim times?
A: Log onto [www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org) and sign-up for a “DECK PASS”.

Q: Where do I find the championship meet qualification times?

Q: I already pay a lot for my child to participate on the team, why do I need to volunteer & fundraise too?
A: Operating a club swim team involves lots of expenses, including coach salary, coach travel expenses, assistant or aide wages, coach memberships and training fees, Illinois swimming fees, USA Swimming fees, and equipment fees to name a few. Unfortunately, the registration/participation fees do not cover all of the expenses, so parents are also required to volunteer and fundraise.
Byron Tiger Sharks
Swim Team

Code of Conduct
Signature Form

Swimmer: I, __________________________ have received a copy of Byron Tiger Sharks’ Code of Conduct. I have read and agree to act in accordance with the Code of Conduct expectations and guidelines. I understand the consequences of not following the Code of Conduct.

_____________________________________________ Date: __________________

Parent/Guardian(s): I/we ___________________________ have received a copy of Byron Tiger Sharks’ Code of Conduct. I have read and agree to act in accordance with the Code of Conduct expectations and guidelines. I understand the consequences that will occur as a result of my child or myself/ourselves not following the Code of Conduct.

_____________________________________________ Date: __________________

_____________________________________________ Date: __________________

Byron Park District office Use Only

Date received Signature Form: _______________ Staff Initials: ________