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Ethics Committee- Coach to Parent



Guidelines *For New Parents*

If you are a new parent involving your child in skating, you are about to enter a wonderful world which will broaden your child's horizons and help them learn many of life's lessons as they progress through the sport. As a parent, you will experience amazing events, high and low, and be bombarded with information and advice. Some will be good. Some will be bad.

Good information will come from your coach, the local skating judges, and the good books and magazines that you read. Early in your experience, you may find this information a little harder to come by, which can make you an unsuspecting victim of misinformation.

Ninety-eight percent of the parents in any rink are very good at being supportive, and following the role of a quality skating parent. They are thoughtful and careful in their conversations, and avoid advice going beyond referring back to "Ask Your Coach." Now, let's look at the other 2 percent.

Bad information generally comes from self-appointed experts who spend their time in the lobby or the stands of the rink looking for naïve parents to prey on. The "Lobby People" are a special species; different from the standard skating parent. "Lobby People" can be male or female, and come in all shapes and sizes. They are always talking. They pounce on new parents and befriend them, then twist their brains with rumor, innuendo and the power of suggestion, taking things out of sequence and creating in the new parents' mind.

"Lobby People" may have children who skate well, but they themselves are underachieving couch potatoes who wish they were

coaches or judges so that they could have more power. Their only control and power comes from splitting clubs and rink programs in half by pitting parent against parent and coach against coach. (Yes, even coaches are manipulated by the Lobby People.)

When Lobby People leave a rink, you can usually hear a sign of relief from the other parents, coaches and rink, but they shouldn't relax because the Lobby Person is now headed home to work the phones, spreading their misinformation far and wide. They get great joy out of causing chaos, confusion and disaster.

If a "Lobby Person" approaches you, avoid lengthy conversations. Attempt to politely move on. They will be persistent, first talking about the weather and the news, but eventually, almost subliminally, the "Lobby Person" will move toward how bad the rink programs are and how much your child would benefit from a coaching change. This will be done so smoothly that you may not even know it has happened. If you follow their advice, however, beware. You may find your child's skating career in ashes.

Sometimes unethical coaches allow Lobby People to recruit other coaches' students for them. This is called Third Party Soliciting and is a clear violation of the Coaches' Code of Ethics (especially when a coach is aware of this behavior).

If you believe that you are being solicited, tell your rink manager and your coach.

All new parents have the right to have their child develop as a skater free from misinformation. Perhaps we are wishing for Utopia, but at least we are forewarned. 

