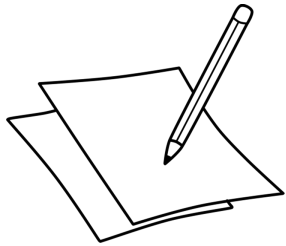


Coaching Consent and Boundaries

Time: 1 hour and 30 minutes

- Goals:**
1. Expand coaches' understanding of the role of consent and boundaries in healthy relationships.
 2. Apply the F.R.I.E.S framework to determine the presence of consent in a scenario.



Worksheets Included:

1. F.R.I.E.S Guide
2. F.R.I.E.S in Practice
3. Do's and Don'ts of Communicating About Consent

For training demos and additional guidance on delivering Advanced Coaches Clinic materials, check out our Learning Collaborative recordings at:

<https://www.coachescorner.org/healthy-relationships-advocates/#collab>



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Section

1

Warm Up and Reflection

 10 minutes

DIRECTIONS: Read the background out loud to coaches.
Then, discuss both reflection questions.

Introduction to Section 1: Warm Up and Reflection

Healthy communication is a vital part of any relationship. As a coach, you most likely teach your athletes about healthy communication every day, encouraging them to build each other up rather than tear each other down, or maybe giving pointers on how they can have clearer communication during play.

During this training, we're going to be focusing on two elements of healthy communication: consent and boundaries. Diving deeper on these topics will improve your CBIM facilitation for all training cards, but will be especially relevant for Trainings 6 (Understanding Consent) and 10 (Communicating Boundaries).

Warm Up Questions:

- 1. Reflect on your previous season of CBIM. What can you remember about the day you did Training 6, "Understanding Consent?" If you didn't implement last year, think about the last time you had a conversation about consent.**
 - How did it feel to talk about consent with your athletes or someone else?
 - What went well?
 - What could have gone better or what would you have changed? Why?
 - Did they have any responses or ask any questions that stumped you? What were they?
- 2. When talking about consent, is there any knowledge you wish you had or something you wish you understood better?**

Section

2

Defining Key Terminology: Boundary, Consent

 10 minutes

DIRECTIONS: Begin by asking coaches if they know what each word means. Invite them to define it in their own words. If possible, write them down for all to see and “workshop” it together (if need be). After, ask the two discussion questions.

A **boundary** is something that indicates or fixes a limit or extent.

Consent is permission for something to happen or an agreement to do something.

Discussion Questions:

How are boundaries communicated in sports? How might personal boundaries be communicated in relationships with your athletes or peers?

- Wherever your sport is played, boundaries are obvious—a chalk line, a line painted on the court or mat, a string of buoys—while personal boundaries may be less apparent.
- It can be helpful to think of personal boundaries as invisible lines—on one side of the line is comfort and on the other is discomfort.
- Since everyone’s lines are unique to them, healthy and clear communication is key to navigating boundaries in relationships.

In what situations do we communicate boundaries and practice consent? Who do we communicate them with?

- Personal boundaries apply to our bodies, emotions, technology, communication, and time (and more!).
- Consent is not exclusive to sex or sexual activities—asking for and giving consent happens in other everyday interactions. (agreeing to give someone your number, knocking before entering someone’s home, telling someone you’re open for a pass, etc.)
- We can set boundaries with friends, teammates, coaches, romantic partners, and anyone else.



DIRECTIONS: Read the introduction out loud to coaches. Then, as a group, complete the F.R.I.E.S. in practice activity by identifying whether consent is present in each scenario. Complete the debrief questions after the activity.

Introduction to Section 3: The F.R.I.E.S. Framework



When speaking with your athletes about consent, remember: **F.R.I.E.S.**

F.R.I.E.S. is an acronym developed by Planned Parenthood to break away from the “no means no” and “yes means yes” binary that many of us were taught. It’s a framework used by sexual and relationship health educators far and wide and helps young people (and adults!) better analyze situations and potential “gray areas” to determine if consent is present.

Consent is...

Freely Given - Consenting is a choice you make without pressure, manipulation, or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Reversible - Anyone can change their mind about what they feel like doing, anytime. Even if you’ve done it before, and even if you’re both naked in bed.

Informed - You can only consent to something if you have the full story. For example, if someone says they’ll use a condom and then they don’t, there isn’t full consent.

Enthusiastic - When it comes to sex, you should only do stuff you WANT to do, not things that you feel you’re expected to do.

Specific - Saying yes to one thing (like going to the bedroom to make out) doesn’t mean you’ve said yes to others (like having sex).

You're walking down the hall at school and overhear one of your athletes asking someone out. The person replies "um...sure" and you notice hesitation in their voice.



**Not consent;
Enthusiastic**

One of your athletes asks, "But Coach, what if we're both drunk?"



**Not consent;
Freely Given**

You notice your athletes crowded around one player in the locker room, all looking at his phone. As you get closer, you see he's showing them explicit photos that someone texted him.



**Not consent;
Informed**

One of your athletes has been the butt of a joke on the team recently because that previous weekend at a party he went into a bedroom with someone he'd been talking to—only to reemerge a few minutes later. Some of your athletes are making fun of him for it, to which he defends, "They changed their mind. It's no big deal."



**Consent;
Reversible**

An athlete shares with you: "I met my girlfriend's parents for the first time last night! We hold hands and kiss and stuff in front of our friends, but I'm glad I asked her about that kind of stuff in front of her family. Her dad's kind of strict."



**Consent;
Specific**

You overhear your athletes talking one afternoon during stretches. One says, "Dude, I don't know what you're so nervous about. You see what she wears to school every day—she's definitely down."



**Not consent;
Specific**

Debrief Questions:

- *When it comes to consent, where do you think the 'gray areas' are?*
- *What questions do you think your athletes have about consent?*
- *Where do you see consent issues arising on your team or among athletes?*
- *How will you use F.R.I.E.S. moving forward?*

Section

4

Communicating About Consent

 20 minutes

DIRECTIONS: Read the introduction out loud to coaches. Ask coaches to take turns reading from the do's and don't's guide to speaking about consent. Then read the conclusion.

Introduction to Section 4: Communicating About Consent

As a CBIM Coach, you've taken the pledge to mentor and inspire your athletes to be the best young men they can be. Consent is more than "no means no" and respecting it is about more than "not getting in trouble." Consent is about communicating in a healthy way and listening to partners, friends, and teammates when they express them; it's about taking responsibility and championing the autonomy, feelings, and boundaries of another person. Through CBIM, you're teaching athletes that unhealthy and abusive behaviors are unacceptable, and that survivors are to be believed and centered in these conversations.

If you find consent to be a tricky (or even uncomfortable) topic, you're not alone! Being willing to have conversation is a huge step in the right direction, but framing can make all the difference. Use the tips below to take your conversations about consent to the next level:

When speaking about consent-

Don't:

- Teach your athletes only the legal definition of consent
- Approach conversations about consent from a risk-reduction standpoint ("don't do 'x' to avoid consequences")
- Focus on what will happen to their team or an individual athlete if someone does not respect consent
- Use pro-athletes who have been accused or convicted of abuse or sexual assault to exemplify what can happen to someone's career or future if they "get caught"

Do:

- Recognize the difficulty that boys and men have in understanding and setting their own boundaries (especially when it comes to sex)
- Empower athletes to set boundaries with teammates, friends, partners, and coaches themselves—and validate those who feel their boundaries haven't been respected
- Talk about healthy communication, boundaries, and consent as essential parts of healthy relationships that establishes mutual respect and trust
- Encourage athletes to hold one another accountable and intervene (safely) when they witness disrespect
- Center the experience of survivors or the person whose boundaries were not respected as opposed to the impact it has on the perpetrator

Conclusion

Male athletes often have social capital on campus and among their peers. This boosts their leadership potential and ability to drive change in their community; it also means they need to be aware of power dynamics in their interactions with others and how that may impact somebody's ability to consent. Consent is freely given when someone makes the decision without pressure, force, manipulation, or while under the influence. Pressure doesn't always come directly from the source; social pressure can influence someone's decision, too.

Challenge your athletes to think about their situation critically:

- *Are they a senior asking a freshman to hook up?*
- *Are they the captain of the varsity team asking a JV player to carry their bag?*
- *Are there other factors at play that may make someone feel like they can't say no?*

Even if they don't feel powerful or intimidating, encourage them to see the situation from the other person's perspective. (And, when in doubt, remember F.R.I.E.S.)





15 minutes

DIRECTIONS (IN-PERSON): Place visible signs on either side of a room, one reading “Well-intentioned Coach” and the other “CBIM Coach.” Invite coaches to stand if they are able.

Explain that when you read a statement, coaches are to decide if it was said by a well-intentioned coach or a CBIM coach and move to the side of the room that best aligns with their answer. If they’re unsure or if they think it could be somewhere in the middle, they can place themselves anywhere between the signs. Read aloud the statements below, one at a time, pausing for coaches to make their move.

Try to hear from at least one person on each side of the spectrum and one in the middle on why they placed themselves where they did. Debrief as a group.

DIRECTIONS (VIRTUAL): Use the polling feature on Zoom (or similar platform), and create the selections “Well-intentioned Coach,” “CBIM Coach,” “In the middle/unsure.” Proceed with the directions above, inviting coaches to use the chat or turn on their mics and respond.

"If you don't ask for consent, even in a hook up situation, you could be hurting somebody."

"When you're out at a party or whatever, look out for your boys. Make sure they don't do something they're going to regret."

"Look what happened with x- he got caught up in a bad situation and now his career is over."

"Some of you may remember a few years ago, there was a student at this school that accused someone of sexual assault. She ended up taking her story back because she was getting bad-mouthed and threatened by that person's teammates."

"A lot of people think because we're guys and we're physically strong that we don't have boundaries when it comes to sex. But you're allowed to say no, too."

"If something goes wrong and you're suddenly accused of something, you'll be off this team for the rest of the season. Don't let your teammates down like that."



10 minutes

DIRECTIONS: Discuss the following teachable moment scenarios with coaches.

Teachable Moment: Markus is a senior on the Varsity basketball team. You notice that every time it's Markus' turn to clean up the court after practice, he asks a sophomore player, Joey, to do it for him. You know Joey's been trying really hard during practice, hoping to make the Varsity team, and will do anything that might give him a better shot.

How might you talk to Markus about this interaction?

Teachable Moment: One day after practice, you observe one of your senior players, Ashton, talking to a freshman on the girls' team. He asks her to go to a party with him that weekend and you notice hesitation in her voice when she answers, "um...okay."

How might you talk to Ashton about this interaction?

F.R.I.E.S Guide

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