



## **Irish Water Safety**

### **Social Media Policy**

Social Media sites such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Flickr, LinkedIn, YouTube, as well as Forums and Blogs are exciting new avenues expressing creativity and sharing interests and knowledge.

Participation in these online communities is therefore supported. However it's also important to be aware that online discussions and posting of online content can cause distress to individuals or groups of members and can detract from the integrity and enjoyment of IWS activities. The IWS social media policy is guided by its key principles outlined in the National Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children involved in water safety activities are:

- IWS wishes to operate in an environment where people show respect for others and their property. Respect is defined as consideration for another's physical and emotional well being and possessions, to ensure no damage or deprivation is caused to either.
- IWS wishes to operate in an environment that is free from harassment. Harassment is defined as any action directed at an individual or group that creates a hostile, intimidating or offensive environment.
- IWS wishes to operate in a non-discriminatory environment. Respect the right, dignity and worth of every human being - within the context of the activity; treat everyone equally regardless of gender, ethnic origin or religion.

Persons to whom this Code applies, acknowledge and agree to comply with the disciplinary and grievance procedures promulgated by IWS. If any disciplinary action is taken, persons directly affected shall be given the opportunity to participate in those proceedings and the right to appeal against any decision against them. IWS promotes responsible use of social media and requires its members, when posting about the IWS and its members or its WSAC's, who promote or conduct events or activities, to observe the following guidelines for responsible social media use.

1. IWS requires members to take responsibility for their own words and for the comments allowed on their sites or forums. IWS members will not post unacceptable content, and will delete comments that contain it. Unacceptable content is defined as that which is:

- a. used to abuse, harass, stalk or threaten others
- b. defamatory, knowingly false, or misrepresents another person,
- c. infringing upon a copyright or trademark
- d. violating an obligation of confidentiality
- e. violating the privacy of others
- f. breach of the Data Protection Act

2. IWS members shall not post anything online that they wouldn't say in person.

3. IWS members shall connect privately before they respond publicly. When members encounter conflicts and misrepresentation in social networking sites, they make every effort to talk privately and directly to the person(s) involved—or find an intermediary who can do so—before publishing any posts or comments about the issue.

4. IWS Social Media shall not be used for personal attacks.

5. Each WSAC shall appoint an Administrator who shall be responsible for all social media under the control of the WSAC for compliance with this policy and who shall be entitled to remove any material deemed by him/her to be in breach of this policy.

6. IWS prefers members not to respond to nasty comments about them, their group, event or site. If posts veer into abuse or libel, IWS supports the use of disciplinary and grievance procedures to resolve issues. IWS encourages all members to “think before posting”. Members should recognize that even if posting to a private section of a social networking site comments can appear in public areas through a variety of means and can easily be found. Members should avoid posting something they will regret now or later.