

# WhatsApp: good practice guidance for using the app

February 2017



ENGLAND  
HOCKEY



WhatsApp

## WHAT IS WHATSAPP?

WhatsApp is a popular instant messaging app, which lets you send messages, images and videos to friends. You can have 1-1 conversations as well as group chats.

The app is being increasingly used within hockey as a useful communication tool. This guidance recognises good practice for using the app and highlights some risks when using it with u18's.

## DO'S AND DON'TS OF USING WHATSAPP

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have a coach set the group up (allowing admin rights)</li><li>• Ensure the group has at least 2 adults</li><li>• Tell athletes what the app is/isn't to be used for</li><li>• Inform parents of its intended use</li><li>• Get the team to agree how the app is to be used i.e. only hockey orientated content</li><li>• Keep language appropriate</li><li>• Ensure members have a mechanism to report inappropriate content</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assume everyone is on WhatsApp</li><li>• Use the app for private messaging</li><li>• Use the app to replace formal feedback</li></ul>

## CONCERNS FOR USING WHATSAPP

**Individuals having access to everyone's number.** In some environments this may allow individuals to contact each other in a negative way e.g. bullying in a performance environment.

**Individuals not using WhatsApp.** If a member of the team doesn't use the app, will they miss out on important information?

This guidance should be applied to all equivalent social media/group communication apps.

