



Read this:

There's an official who works a lot of the meets your team attends, and he's become friendly with your teammate. It makes you uncomfortable when the official gives your teammate congratulatory hugs or snacks from the officials' hospitality room. He doesn't do this with any other swimmers.

Discussion Questions:

Is this kind of behavior by the official okay?

>Safe Sport says: While this kind of behavior is not against the rules, the apparent favoritism raises red flags. It's a good thing to have friendly officials but singling out your teammate is going too far.

What do you do?

>Safe Sport says: You can ask your friend if it makes him/her uncomfortable. Talk with your coach and let him/her know how it makes you feel to see the official give your teammate this special attention.

What if the official is a parent or long-time family friend of your teammate?

>Safe Sport says: Even if the official is a family member or family friend, officials should practice professionalism and refrain from showing favoritism to a swimmer.

What are the different roles an official serves during a meet?

>Safe Sport says: Officials can be starters, watch strokes and turns, and serve as meet marshals. Ask your coach to explain what each of these roles involve so you know what to expect from the people in white shirts!

Wrap It Up:

What are good ways to show appreciation to officials volunteering their time?

>Safe Sport says: We couldn't have meets without officials! Respect their space and their judgments on the competition. If you see an official taking their break, feel free to say THANKS for volunteering their time at your meet!

*For Coaches: The official is exhibiting grooming behaviors. Talk with your swimmer about what's going on and call Safe Sport to discuss if anything needs to happen.

Talk with your swimmers about the different roles of everyone on deck at a meet: officials, meet marshals, timers, and other coaches. Let them know what to expect from these individuals and where to bring concerns should they arise. For more resources, visit www.usaswimming.org/protect or contact Safe Sport at safesport@usaswimming.org.