



Read this:

You've been a part of your team for a few years, and a bunch of new swimmers just joined the team this fall. At first, they seemed really nice, but over the past few weeks, the team has become very clique-y. Some of the new swimmers don't know the rules and are taking snaps in the locker room and telling dirty jokes. A few of your old teammates have joined in. You used to think that your team was a really positive one, but now you're not so sure.

Discussion Questions:

What's going on in this situation?

>Safe Sport says: This seems like a team culture issue. "Culture" is the way the team interacts, the values it has, and the way the team goes about its business. When the new swimmers joined the team, perhaps they didn't pick up on the culture of the team or weren't told what the rules and expectations are.

>Taking photos in the locker room is against the rules!

What do you do?

>Safe Sport says: Be a force for the positive things about your team! Be the kind of teammate you want to have and use phrases like "We don't do that here or treat each other that way," and "You know that's against the rules."

Do you have to tell your coach?

>Safe Sport says: Yes, you should tell your coach what's going on. He/She probably knows that something isn't right but tell your coach how your teammates are making you feel about being a part of the team and coming to practice.

Wrap It Up:

What are some good ideas to build up a positive team culture?

>Safe Sport says: First, talk about it! Talk about the team you want to be. Encourage your teammates during practice, make a new friend on the team, and say "thanks" to teammates who do the right thing.

***For Coaches: You've worked hard to develop a good culture on your team! Talk about it with your swimmers and encourage kindness and positivity from warm-up through the end of the practice. Address the issue of taking pictures in the locker room according to your team policy. For more resources, visit www.usaswimming.org/toolkit or contact Safe Sport at (719) 866-4578 or safesport@usaswimming.org.**