

Ethics and Sport Psychology Consulting: Finding Guidelines that Work in the Sport Context

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Recently, ethics within applied sport psychology consulting have emerged as a topic of much interest. Currently, the Association for the Advancement of Applied Sport Psychology (AAASP) (2005) offers ethical guidelines for practitioners in the field. These guidelines are modeled after the ethical standards of the American Psychological Association (APA) and have been adapted to consider ethics within applied sport and exercise settings. However, review of the current literature in the area of sport psychology and ethics reveals that practitioners encounter several challenges in applying ethical standards within the sport context (Anderson, Raalte, & Brewer, 2001; Moore, 2003). These challenges tend to pertain to such areas as practice settings (i.e., locations of sessions), dual role, confidentiality, and supervision. These reoccurring challenges beg the question, have we applied ethical standards that are too stringent for the context of sport? Moore (2003) claims that similar to psychologists practicing in rural, military, and other nontraditional settings, the AAASP ethical guidelines do not accurately represent clients' needs, and the environmental demands in which sport psychology practitioners work and deliver services. Ethical standards will vary from person to person and even from culture to culture (Singer, 1995). In the field of applied sport psychology, practitioners emerge from different academic backgrounds such as sport science and clinical or counseling psychology. Whereas AAASP has sought to provide a common reference point from which to guide practice, perhaps the focus has been too narrow (Anshel, 1992). Drawing from a comparative ethics framework and the ethical challenges arising within the field, this colloquium will present different ethical frameworks guiding practice within applied settings such as coaching, teaching, and non traditional psychologist settings. After this review, opportunity will be provided to discuss ethical guidelines best suited to guide sport psychology practice within the context of sport.