

Code of Ethics

Definitions

- **ADHD coaching** is a specialty skill set that empowers clients to manage their attention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity.
- **An ADHD Client** is someone who could benefit from ADHD coaching, including persons who feel, think they may, or know they have ADHD or ADHD-like qualities. Others who may benefit from ADHD coaching are persons who are related or connected to someone with ADHD.
- **A PAAC Certified School** is an ADHD program whose curriculum has been approved by PAAC as adhering to the PAAC competencies.
- **A School** is any coach training program.
- **A Mentor Coach** is a PAAC certified member coach who prepares another coach for the process of certification.
- **A Mentor** is a coach who coaches other coaches.
- **A PAAC Member** is an up-to-date, dues-paying member of PAAC.
- **A PAAC Certified Coach** is a coach who has successfully completed all aspects of the PAAC certification process.

Spirit and Intent

PAAC Coaches conduct their coaching practices and all their undertakings in accordance with the highest ethical standards. These ethical standards are to be adhered to in spirit as well as in deed.

All PAAC certified and member coaches act from integrity and treat their clients with respect, dignity, and appreciation of the issues which the ADHD client confronts daily. PAAC coaches maintain awareness of the ADHD client's strengths and encourage the client to call upon those strengths to achieve his/her goals in coaching.

PAAC Coaches are encouraged to grow in their awareness of ethics and in their ethical practice and to supplement and add to this code in their commitment to maintaining an ethical professional practice.

PAAC Coaches conduct their professional practices with integrity, dignity, and respect for all.

The PAAC Standards of Ethical Conduct

The ethical standards that comprise the PAAC Code of Ethics are as follows:

1. Ethics and Other Governing Bodies

- 1.1. PAAC Ethics are not a substitute for the law and are not meant to address legal issues or legal requirements for any type of coaching or for working with ADHD clients and their families.
- 1.2. When there is incongruence between The Civil, State, and/or Federal Laws where a coach practices and the PAAC Code of Ethics, the Civil, State and/or Federal Laws will take precedence over PAAC ethics.
- 1.3. PAAC Coaches consider client interest first in making decisions regarding the coaching relationship.
- 1.4. PAAC Coaches strive to remain unbiased in selecting to serve or when serving any client population.

2. Scope of Practice and Disclosure

- 2.1. PAAC Coaches are specifically trained by a school and/or mentor coach to work with the ADHD client(s) and those in relationship with that client. PAAC Coaches work in a variety of specializations and settings.
- 2.2. While PAAC Coaches work on the issues that the ADHD client and those in relationship with that client bring to the session, the coach does not have to label the client as having ADHD in order to coach him/her. PAAC Coaches are doing ADHD coaching as long as they are dealing with the issues that come up for an ADHD person or a person affected by ADHD traits.
- 2.3. PAAC Coaches do not recommend medications or give medical advice. In the event that a PAAC coach feels that a client would benefit from medication, the coach will communicate that need to the client and refer the client out to an appropriate health professional.
- 2.4. PAAC Coaches make referrals to other professionals when appropriate and in the best interests of the client.
- 2.5. PAAC Coaches provide coaching for clients for only as long as they believe that the clients are benefiting from such coaching and discuss termination of coaching at the earliest moment at which it is in the client's best interest for such discussion to take place.
- 2.6. PAAC Coaches fully disclose and discuss with clients their own training, experience, and other qualifications.
- 2.7. PAAC Coaches practice within the bounds of their expertise and do not exaggerate any aspects of their training, experience, or qualifications.
- 2.8. PAAC Coaches do not give prospective clients or individuals connected to their clients, information or advice they know or believe to be deceptive or untrue.

3. Public Ads and Statements

- 3.1. PAAC Coaches who advertise or have others make statements to promote their services ensure that all brochures, articles, speeches, resumes, bios, and other materials that are related to the coach's practice are true and not misleading.

4. Confidentiality

- 4.1. PAAC Coaches actively protect the privacy of their clients in all oral, written, and electronic communications.
- 4.2. PAAC Coaches do not share confidential information that could lead to the identification of a client with whom they have a confidential relationship without written or recorded permission of that client or, except as required by law.
- 4.3. PAAC Coaches establish clear agreements about how coaching information will be exchanged among coach, client, and sponsor.
- 4.4. PAAC Coaches discuss with client and/or sponsor situations in which confidential information may be requested or disclosed and come to agreement about that.
- 4.5. PAAC Coaches must disclose certain confidential information as required by law or if the confidential information would put the client or others at risk of harm or compromise their well-being.
- 4.6. When possible, PAAC Coaches inform clients about the disclosure of confidential information before the disclosure is made.

5. The Coaching Agreement

- 5.1. PAAC Coaches discuss and put in writing for new clients all relevant information regarding fees, payment procedures, and the coach's policy with regard to cancelled or missed appointments.
- 5.2. PAAC Coaches may barter for services, goods, or other non-monetary payment only when it will not harm the coaching relationship.
- 5.3. PAAC Coaches have clear agreements with clients and sponsor(s) and honour all coaching agreements made in the coaching relationship.
- 5.4. PAAC Coaches communicate with their clients in a timely manner.
- 5.5. PAAC Coaches communicate with the client and sponsor at the first opportunity in the event that the coach determines that the engagement goal(s) is not likely to be achieved.
- 5.6. PAAC Coaches always obtain the written consent of parents or guardians before beginning coaching of any individual who has not reached the legal age of consent.

6. Boundaries

- 6.1. PAAC Coaches set clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries and do not exploit clients, relatives, or close friends of current clients emotionally, sexually, or financially.

- 6.2. PAAC Coaches attend to their own psychological and emotional needs, and make every effort to effectively address any psychological or emotional problems, so as to prevent any interference with the quality of coaching services provided.
- 6.3. PAAC Coaches who are involved in research projects do not exert any pressure for clients to participate in said projects or engage in any behaviour that would convey to the clients the feeling or impression that the coaching that they will receive is related to their decision whether or not to participate in said research project.
- 6.4. PAAC Coaches disclose any potential or known conflicts of interest with coaching clients/sponsors.
- 6.5. PAAC Coaches maintain all records and notes pertaining to clients in a safe and secure place.
- 6.6. PAAC Coaches respect the opinions and viewpoints of other ADHD and medical professionals with whom they might disagree.
- 6.7. PAAC Coaches make known to a client and client's sponsor all likely compensation from third parties that the PAAC coach may obtain or give out for referrals of that client.
- 6.8. PAAC Coaches work with issues that the ADHD client presents as well as with the co-existing conditions. However, PAAC Coaches are not trained to assess or diagnose any brain disorders or any mental health issue.
- 6.9. PAAC Coaches should not engage in any illegal activities including, but not limited to, copyright, intellectual property rights, or patent violations.
- 6.10. PAAC Coaches take responsibility and credit only for work they have actually performed or to which they have substantially contributed.
- 6.11. PAAC Coaches guard against misuse of their influence in the areas of finance, personal issues, social issues, organizational, or political issues with the awareness that their professional opinions and actions may adversely affect or impact the lives of their clients.
- 6.12. PAAC Coaches obtain permission from the client before recording a coaching session that will be shared with the coach's mentor or with any other party.
- 6.13. PAAC Coaches inform clients that they may use client contact information, upon permission granted by the client, for the purpose of pursuing or maintaining a coach certification.

7. Coach as Trainer

- 7.1. PAAC Coaches who are actively training student coaches clarify confidentiality policies with the students.
- 7.2. PAAC Coaches who are training student coaches do their best to provide students with a program that is well planned out so that the trainees are provided with the information, knowledge, and materials that they are seeking.
- 7.3. PAAC Coaches who train other coaches do not mislead others about the training they offer.
- 7.4. PAAC Coaches who train student coaches will present and abide by the PAAC Code of Ethics.

7.5. PAAC Coaches appreciate their own limitations in training other coaches in specific areas or techniques and refer the trainee to another coach or training program when appropriate.

8. Complaints

- 8.1. The actions of a PAAC Coach may be reviewed under the PAAC Code of Ethics only if the conduct reviewed is part of the coaching practice.
- 8.2. Individuals who have complaints against PAAC Coaches may contact the PAAC Ethics Committee to request a complaint form or download the form from the PAAC web site. The form will request the complainant to provide all relevant details of the situation generating the complaint. All complaints are investigated as thoroughly and as quickly as possible. PAAC Coaches named in a formal complaint are given the opportunity to answer the complaint. If complaint appears to have validity, parties may be invited into a mediation process. Barring a successful mediation process, a determination will be made. If a determination of unethical conduct is made by PAAC, there may be specific actions (such as requiring that the person work with a mentor coach, take a specific course or additional training, perform voluntary community service, or lose PAAC membership) that the PAAC Board will take which may include revocation of PAAC certification. It is to be noted that this process does not preclude any other actions the complainant may choose to pursue.
- 8.3. The PAAC Ethics complaint process is (will be) available on the PAAC web site and can be referenced for understanding the process, timelines, requirements, etc.

The PAAC Pledge of Ethics

As a PAAC Professional Coach, I acknowledge and agree to honour my ethical and legal obligations to my coaching clients and sponsors, colleagues, and to the public at large. I pledge to comply with the PAAC Code of Ethics, and to practice these standards with those with whom I coach.

If I breach this Pledge of Ethics or any part of the PAAC Code of Ethics, I agree that PAAC in its sole discretion may hold me accountable for so doing. I further agree that my accountability to PAAC for any breach may include sanctions, such as loss of my PAAC membership and/or my PAAC credentials.

Coach

Date

Approved by the PAAC Board of Directors on _____