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**U.S. Center for SafeSport Releases Results of
Inaugural Athlete Culture & Climate Survey**

First-Ever Sampling Provides Insight Into Abuse and Misconduct
in U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Sports

Includes Responses from Nearly 4,000 Athletes in More Than 50 Sports

DENVER – The U.S. Center for SafeSport (the Center) today released the results of its first Athlete Culture & Climate Survey, which assessed the experiences and perspectives of athletes in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement related to abuse and misconduct.

With responses from nearly 4,000 adult athletes in more than 50 sports—including 151 Olympians and Paralympians, and 56 medalists—the survey provides the most in-depth look to date at the landscape of sexual, physical, and emotional abuse of athletes in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement over many years, including those preceding the Center’s 2017 formation. The survey begins the process of filling important data and information gaps related to abuse in U.S. athletics.

“We are grateful to the athletes who participated in the survey and shared their experiences,” said Ju’Riese Colón, the Center’s Chief Executive Officer. “Their input helps us better understand the scope of these issues, but gathering this information is merely a starting point for us. The data shows us far too many athletes are not reporting abuse, and we aim to change that. We want every athlete to know they have a trusted resource in the Center.”

The survey establishes data baselines to help the Center develop benchmark goals, against which progress will be measured in future athlete culture surveys—the next of which will be conducted in 2023, for 2024 release.

Key findings from athlete participant responses (rounded to nearest percentage):

- 9% experienced inappropriate sexual contact during their sports involvement.
- While 28% believe sexual, emotional, or physical misconduct is a problem in their sport, 48% are aware of coaches developing sexual relationships with athletes.
- 93% who experienced sexual harassment or unwanted contact did not submit a formal report/complaint of it.
- Nearly 18% having unwanted sexual experiences also indicated they were retaliated against.
- More than half who indicated having unwanted sexual experiences said that some or all of those experiences happened when they were under 18.
- Approximately 65% indicated experiencing at least one of 18 indicators of psychological harm or neglect.
- Approximately 22% indicated being physically harmed.

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The Center partnered with the Institute to Promote Athlete Health & Wellness at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro to develop, administer, and produce the 2020 Athlete Culture & Climate Survey and research report. A digital Survey Dashboard at <https://uscenterforsafesport.org/survey-results/> features the [research report](#) and easy-to-navigate visual highlights of key findings and data, organized by category.

“This survey is a tremendous step forward in better understanding the experiences of current and former athletes,” said Jeff Milroy, PhD, Associate Director of the Institute to Promote Athlete Health & Wellness. “Data was collected from almost 4,000 athletes, but that number represents only a fraction of the total number of American athletes and does not necessarily represent the experiences of the more than 11 million athletes under the Center’s purview.”

As a result of the findings from this survey, the Center will do the following to help increase athlete safety and well-being:

- Develop additional educational resources focused on retaliation, power imbalances, and reporting abuse.
- Establish a web resource connecting athletes with available mental health resources.
- Develop a feedback mechanism to inform the Center’s Response and Resolution process.
- Release an annual Public Impact report, starting in 2022, to provide insights on what we learn from athletes and updates on our progress.
- Release new video resources to better guide individuals through the Center’s Response and Resolution process.
- Evaluate the 2022 Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP) implementation and impact, with feedback informing MAAPP updates planned for 2025.
- Publish annual SafeSport audits of each NGB.

About the U.S. Center for SafeSport

Headquartered in Denver, Colorado, the U.S. Center for SafeSport is an independent, nonprofit 501(c)(3) responsible for responding to and preventing emotional, physical, and sexual misconduct and abuse in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement. The Center’s mission is to make athlete well-being the centerpiece of our nation’s sports culture through abuse prevention, education, and accountability.

Under the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017, the Center serves as the exclusive authority to respond to reports of abuse and misconduct in the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC) and their recognized National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and Paralympic Sport Organizations (PSOs).

The Center also serves as an educational resource for sports organizations at all levels, from grassroots amateur sports organizations to professional leagues. For more information about the Center, visit uscenterforsafesport.org.

Media contact: media@safesport.org