U.S. CENTER FOR SAFESPORT

CHAMPION RESPECT. END ABUSE.

PARENT AND GUARDIAN'S HANDBOOK FOR SAFER SPORT

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The U.S. Center for SafeSport is a nonprofit organization created to respond to and prevent sexual, physical, and emotional abuse in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement, from which it is independent. The Center also trains and educates people and organizations at all levels to support sport and recreation settings across America that protect athlete well-being.

This handbook references types of conduct prohibited by the SafeSport Code, which applies to all Participants in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement. If you or your organization are affiliated with the Movement, be aware of your organization's policies, procedures, and penalties related to abuse and misconduct, as well as relevant federal and state law.

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PREVENT

Prioritizing athlete safety and well-being is an essential factor in preventing misconduct. In this section, you'll learn proactive ways to work with coaches, administrators, and other adults to prevent abuse and misconduct, including:

- Building a positive sport environment
- Creating a strong relationship with your child's coach
- Strengthening your child's sense of safe relationships
- Understanding how the policies of your child's sport organization address abuse and misconduct

Positive Sport Environments: How You Can Foster Them

In positive sport environments, kids feel safe and free to be themselves. They are better able to focus on training, practice, and competition. It takes the intentional and collaborative effort of coaches, athletes, administrators, and parents or guardians to build and maintain positive sport environments.

One key aspect of positive sport environments is that they consider differences in kids' own social-emotional development—how they develop their sense of self, and how they interact with others. Every child develops socially and emotionally in their own way, on their own timeline. Positive sport environments consider the development and age of child athletes and foster opportunities for their growth and development.

Below are some elements common to positive sport environments. This list can help you know what to look for and how you can contribute to it.

1. **Behavior expectations for athletes, coaches, and other adults are clearly and consistently communicated.**
   You can: Remind your child to include others when you notice a teammate being left out.
2. **Athlete growth and well-being matters more than winning.**
   You can: Point out your child's positive plays or improvements in technique, even after a loss.
3. **Adults intervene appropriately when they witness misconduct and encourage youth athletes to do so.** (You'll learn about Bystander Intervention later in this section.)
   You can: Be direct with your child's coach if they unfairly criticize a player.
4. **Coaches and administrators prioritize emotional safety and create a supportive environment.**
   You can: Model an empathetic mindset toward kids who face challenges, visible or invisible.
5. **Everyone's physical needs are respected and met.**
   You can: Make sure that hydration, energy, and injury needs of all players are met by adults around the team.

6. **Parents or guardians and coaches talk privately and calmly if there are concerns.**

   You can: Be sure that when you approach the coach, you are calm and ready to listen to their perspective.

7. **Coaches set appropriate age and developmental expectations for your child and their team.**

   You can: Remind your child how far they've come when they feel down about their performance.

8. **Adults consistently respond to and report misconduct or abuse, no matter who is involved.**

   You can: Familiarize yourself with steps for responding to misconduct in your organization. Be willing to take needed actions even if it means hurting the team's chances.

9. **Administrators and coaches intentionally create safe and inclusive environments.**

   You can: Support athletes and families from marginalized communities (e.g., people with disabilities, those who are LGBTQ+, people of color, immigrants, athletes in foster care or with an incarcerated family member).

Parents and Coaches Working Together

A positive parent-coach relationship is built on trust and respect for one another's expertise and care. You each bring strengths to the equation. Your child's coach has expertise in the sport and the care it takes to develop your young athlete's skills. You have expertise in your child's personal development and well-being.

Tips for creating a positive relationship with your child's coach:

- Keep lines of communication open and clear.
- Stay engaged without overstepping boundaries.
- Reinforce team rules and expectations.
- Model good sportsmanship in practice, competition, and conversation.
- Respect the coach's responsibility to balance the needs of everyone on the team.

It is also important for you to be involved in your child's relationship with their coach. The coach-athlete relationship typically involves differences in power. That can be used to help your child learn and grow—or be exploited to harm your child. Creating a healthy, professional, and positive coach-parent-athlete relationship helps moderate the power dynamics. It also can improve your child's self-esteem, performance, satisfaction with sport, and overall well-being.

Bystander Intervention

Bystander intervention means choosing to act when you notice something concerning or harmful. It is a great way to stop inappropriate behaviors from escalating. It also helps reinforce expectations about acceptable behavior and deter future abusive behavior.[1] For example, telling another parent to stop yelling at an official may stop the behavior in that moment. It also may discourage others from doing it in the future.

While intervening during a conflict may sound intimidating, your actions do not have to be dramatic. There is no one best action to take and you may make different choices than someone else. In deciding how to respond, it can be helpful to think of the 5 Ds: [2]

- **Distract:** Create a diversion, like asking what time it is, changing the subject, or asking one of the people involved to help you with a task.
- **Delegate**: Get someone else in authority to address the concern, such as another parent, coach, or administrator.
- **Document:** Record the date, time, location, information about people involved, and a summary of what happened. Give the information to someone with more power to act on it or follow up.
- **Delay:** If you fear for your own safety, buy yourself time until it is safer to intervene. Wait until you can have a private conversation with the individual acting inappropriately about your concerns.
- **Be Direct:** If you feel safe, say something in the moment. You can tell someone to stop their harmful behavior, that their inappropriate joke is not funny, or ask the person being harmed if they want to leave.

SCENARIO

A parent from your child's soccer team is making rude comments about another child's skills during a game.

- **Distract:** Ask the parent if they will help you get halftime snacks from your car.
- **Delegate:** Let one of the assistant coaches know about the parent's behavior.
- **Be Direct:** Approach the parent and let them know what they're doing is inappropriate.

In addition to using your power to disrupt inappropriate behavior, you can also teach your child bystander intervention. Remind them that their safety is most important and that they can always talk with you if they are not sure what to do.

Strengthening Your Child's Sense of Safety in Relationships

Effective abuse prevention includes adults teaching and modeling essentials of safe and healthy relationships to kids. Positive coaches will do this in varied ways based on your child's stage of athletic and social-emotional development.

You can encourage this work at home by helping your child: [3–11]

- **Develop a positive sense of self and self-esteem:** Doing so sets the stage for a child to communicate who they are to those around them: their likes and dislikes, their ability to do things for themselves, and their ability to speak up for themselves and others when they feel uncomfortable or sense a boundary being pushed.

  You can do this by: Allowing your child to decide which sports they want to play.

- **Set and maintain boundaries while also respecting others' boundaries:** Kids can set their own personal boundaries with adults and peers and respect the boundaries of others. This way everyone has more control over their bodies and the types of experiences they feel comfortable having.

  You can do this by: Respecting when your child says "no" or feels uncomfortable.

- **Learn to trust their gut instincts about people and situations:** By doing so, you give your child a powerful prevention tool that will help them not only in sports but throughout life—in friendships, romantic relationships, and more.

  You can do this by: Validating their feelings about a person or situation if they feel unsure or unsafe.

- **Teach your child empathy for others' experiences**: When your child knows what to do when they hurt someone else's feelings, how to include others, and how someone else might feel in those situations, they can better respect others' boundaries.

  You can do this by: Talking about how they might feel in a similar situation.

- **Gain comfort in sharing their concerns with you and other trusted adults:** When you give your child the tools and skills to talk about their experiences with you and other trusted adults, you help them trust you as a resource for working through uncomfortable situations.

  You can do this by: Listening for when your child talks about how they feel about someone or an experience they had.

Policies to Prevent Abuse and Misconduct

Sport organizations can help prevent and address misconduct by having clear policies in place to protect athletes. The policies should define prohibited behaviors, limit one-on-one contact between adults and kids, and set requirements for abuse prevention training.

KEY ASPECTS OF AN ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY

All sport organizations should:

- Have a code of conduct or other policies that explicitly prohibit emotional, physical, and sexual misconduct.
- Define types of misconduct and outline behaviors that violate the policy.
- Identify mandatory reporters and provide them with clear guidelines on how to report misconduct.
- Specify how athletes and parents can report policy violations and other concerns.
- Outline consequences for policy violations.

Your child's sport organization policies should limit one-on-one contact between adults and kids because child sexual abuse often happens in isolated situations. They also should specify background check requirements and abuse prevention training requirements for adults with regular contact or authority over young athletes and make abuse prevention training available to parents and kids.

The U.S. Center for SafeSport has developed policies of this nature, and organizations in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement—which includes more than 11 million members in 50+ Olympic and Paralympic sports—must adhere to them. The Center's Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP) limit one-on-one adult/minor interactions and set standards for training and sport settings that prevent abuse and misconduct. U.S. Olympic and Paralympic organizations are also required to follow the SafeSport Code, which defines prohibited behaviors and the process for receiving and resolving reports of abuse and misconduct in the Movement.

We encourage all youth sport organizations to use the MAAPP as a basis for their own prevention policies. The U.S. Center for SafeSport offers more than a dozen abuse prevention courses, including the SafeSport® Trained Core course required within the Movement, and courses tailored for parents and youth.

Your Role

You should know your organization's abuse and misconduct policies and be able to explain them to your child. This will make it easier for your child to tell you if something concerning happens, and to know what behaviors you expect of them.

Key Points

- **All kids deserve a safe sport environment.**
- **You play an important role in helping your child develop a positive sense of self, establish and respect boundaries, and learn to "trust their gut."**
- **All adults in your child's sport environment—including coaches, administrators, parents, and guardians—should model appropriate behavior and maintain a safe environment through clear roles, rules, policies, and prevention efforts.**
- **All sport organizations should have policies that prevent and address abuse and misconduct. They should also offer trainings that help individuals in sport settings prevent, recognize, and respond to abuse.**

RECOGNIZE

In this section, you'll learn about key types of emotional, physical, and sexual misconduct that may happen in your child's sport environment. You'll also learn to recognize signs of unsafe environments and common dynamics of abuse and misconduct.

The SafeSport Code applies to anyone who participates in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement, including kids. You should read the SafeSport Code so you can help your kids understand what kind of behavior is not allowed in their sport. The information will also help you identify concerning situations that you can report to law enforcement, the Center, or your child's sport organization. If your kids participate in sport outside the Movement, you should consult your organization's policies for specific definitions of prohibited conduct.

Signs of a Potentially Unsafe Sport Environment

Just as a positive sport environment can help prevent abuse and misconduct, a negative environment can help it persist. Environments can turn negative, even unsafe, when athlete safety and well-being are not prioritized. Their effects can easily filter down to athletes, affecting how they are treated and treat each other.[12, 13]

Pay attention to these signs of potentially unsafe sport environments:

- Behavioral expectations are unclear, inconsistently applied, or not in place.
- Policies to prevent abuse and misconduct are ignored or downplayed by coaches and staff and minimized to athletes and families.
- Not everyone is held to the same standards, including when responding to potential misconduct.
- Appropriate age and developmental expectations for youth athletes are not factored into coaching and behavioral expectations.
- LGBTQ+ athletes, athletes with disabilities, athletes of color, and overweight or underweight athletes are regularly disrespected or excluded.
- Disrespect for sport officials, opponents, spectators, and facility staff is tolerated.
- Athlete safety, growth, and well-being are sacrificed for the sake of winning.
- Injury prevention and response protocols are not followed, including the use of safety equipment.
- Dangerous or unsafe behavior between athletes is encouraged or overlooked in training or competition.

What Factors Can Lead to Abuse and Misconduct?

Research suggests that abuse and misconduct are often based on power differences in sport environments or in society, such as:[12, 14]

- Adult coaches having more power than youth athletes because of age and authority
- Youth athletes in prestige roles (such as captains, stars, and starters) having more influence than other team athletes
- Differences in development giving some youth power over others because of greater athletic skill, more developed social skills, or size and strength advantage
- Athletes participating at an elite level
- Power dynamics based on ethnicity, race, religion, disability, sexuality, gender identity, socioeconomic class, education, or immigration status

Child Abuse

Child Abuse is the physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or exploitation, or negligent treatment of a child. It includes any conduct defined as child abuse under state or federal law.

EXAMPLES

A parent intentionally withholding food and neglecting their child	***Coercing a teen to participate in sexually explicit videos or photos***

Types of Abuse and Misconduct

Emotional, physical, and sexual abuse and misconduct have no place in any sport setting. This section introduces you to definitions of common types of abuse and misconduct, along with how it can look in sport environments, sample scenarios, and ways to counteract situations with positive behaviors.

Two important notes before we dive in:

- Types of misconduct often overlap categories. For example, an athlete may commit Emotional Misconduct by repeatedly and excessively calling a teammate hurtful names, but if it evolves into a physical fight, it could also be classified as Physical Misconduct. It is most important for you to recognize concerning behavior—even if you're not sure how to label it.
- This section references types of conduct prohibited by the SafeSport Code, which applies to all Participants in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement. Certain terms are purposefully capitalized because they have a specific definition in the Code. If you or your organization are not part of the Movement, be aware of your organization's policies, procedures, and penalties related to abuse and misconduct, as well as relevant federal and state law.

Emotional Misconduct

Emotional Misconduct is the most common form of misconduct youth athletes experience and is often considered a foundation of other types of abuse or misconduct,[2] including physical and sexual. Approximately 75% of youth athletes indicated they experienced at least one emotionally harmful behavior in sport, most often inflicted by peers.[12]

Coaches and other adults can sometimes create an unsafe emotional environment for child athletes. The risk of Emotional Misconduct by coaches increases as athletes move into more selective and competitive levels.[13, 14] Some people tolerate inappropriate coaching due to cultural perceptions that great coaches are "tough." You may have experienced a harsh coach who crossed a line by wanting to "get the most out of" athletes they trained. These perceptions and experiences can stop us from recognizing emotional misconduct by coaches.[14]

DEFINITION

Emotional Misconduct includes:

- **Verbal acts:** repeated and excessive verbal attacks, such as name-calling, body-shaming, or ridiculing someone
- **Physical acts:** being repeatedly or severely physically aggressive, such as throwing equipment at someone or punching walls near them
- **Acts that deny attention or support:** such as ignoring or isolating someone for long time periods, or routinely excluding them from activities or coaching guidance for no productive reason
- **Stalking:** intentional and repeated behaviors (in person or using technology) that would reasonably make someone feel scared (for themselves or others) or very upset, such as following, monitoring, observing, threatening, or excessively messaging them
- **Criminal conduct:** any behavior described as emotional abuse or misconduct under federal or state law, such as child abuse or child neglect

Someone's conduct can be considered Emotional Misconduct regardless of whether they caused (or meant to cause) harm.

Emotional Misconduct does not include conduct reasonably accepted as part of sport. For example, a coach may talk with a wrestler about strategies for making weight but may not ridicule or fat-shame them.

EXAMPLES OF EMOTIONAL MISCONDUCT

Repeatedly shaming or humiliating a child for how they performed	***Following a child home after every practice to scare them***

Comparing Emotional Misconduct with Appropriate Coaching

Use this chart to recognize differences between coaching actions that reflect Emotional Misconduct and those that appropriately motivate and support young athletes.

EMOTIONAL MISCONDUCT	APPROPRIATE COACHING
Repeatedly and excessively using words or severe behaviors that negatively control, intimidate, demean, or harm athletes, damaging their self-esteem and causing them emotional distress.	*Talking to athletes in ways that increase their self-esteem, build trust and camaraderie, and encourage athletes to reach their full potential.*
Intimidation: Using fear and punishment to get results. (This can harm athletes, even if it may occasionally lead to a "result" the coach seeks.) **Denying Attention or Support:** Preventing athletes from fully participating in regular team activities or routinely withholding coaching guidance given to other athletes. (This kind of isolation can be physically, emotionally, and socially damaging to youth athletes.) **Demeaning Language:** Using hurtful words or nicknames to reduce athlete self-esteem. (This can cause lasting emotional harm and does not increase overall performance.)	**Encouragement:** Giving clear direction in training to help athletes improve technique. (This increases athlete self-esteem and motivation.) **Fair Expectations:** Setting achievable goals that encourage athletes to reach their full potential. (This motivates athletes to improve without pushing them past their limits.) **Self-Care:** Teaching athletes to listen to their bodies instead of shaming them for doing so. (This shows athletes they are valued as people and that their well-being is more important than winning.)

Physical Misconduct

Participation in sport carries some risk of physical injury. Coaches and other adult leaders have a responsibility to minimize those risks and create a physically safe sport environment. This includes making sure athletes have access to appropriate nutrition, hydration, rest, and shelter from severe weather (including extreme temperatures).[12, 15, 16]

DEFINITION

Physical Misconduct is any behavior done on purpose that causes (or could reasonably cause) physical harm to another person. It includes:

- **Contact acts:** punching, beating, slapping, or strangling someone; knowingly letting someone return to play without medical clearance after a serious injury
- **Non-contact acts:** not letting someone have water or food, illegally giving them alcohol or drugs (including nonprescribed medications), forcing someone to assume a painful stance or position for no athletic purpose
- **Criminal conduct:** any behavior described as physical abuse or misconduct under federal or state law, such as assault or child abuse

Physical Misconduct does not include conduct reasonably accepted as part of sport. For example, athletes may kick and hit each other during a karate tournament, but not during a swim meet.

EXAMPLES OF PHYSICAL MISCONDUCT

Throwing sports equipment at a child	***Keeping kids from hydrating adequately***

Comparing Misconduct with Appropriate Coaching

Use this chart to recognize differences between coaching actions that reflect Physical Misconduct and those that reflect appropriate accountability for the safety of kids.

PHYSICAL MISCONDUCT	APPROPRIATE COACHING
A coach acting intentionally to endanger or cause physical harm to an athlete, regardless of the reason or motive behind the behavior.	*A coach holding athletes accountable to program standards and practices that safely improve performances.*
Overexertion: Instructing team members to hold a painful position as punishment for poor performance or attitude. (This can cause physical harm to athletes' developing bodies, especially if they are already fatigued, temperatures are extreme, or they are already injured.) **Dehydration:** Refusing to allow water breaks. (This can cause muscle cramps, increase pulse and heart stress, and lead to faster breathing, in addition to negatively affecting performance.) **Injury:** Ordering players to re-enter games despite signs of injury or lack of medical clearance. (This can lead to reinjury and reduce athlete physical health and well-being.)	**Clear and Consistent Discipline:** Clearly explaining connections between coaching actions (e.g., removing an athlete from a starting lineup) and reasons (e.g., for violating team rules). (This helps athletes associate specific consequences with specific behaviors.) **Respect:** Requiring athletes to arrive on time for meetings and practices. (This teaches athletes to respect the time of coaches, staff, and teammates.) **Help, Not Hurt:** Encouraging athletes to learn new skills while maintaining safety. (This helps athletes improve their performance without harming their bodies.)

Bullying Behavior

People who engage in Bullying Behavior often have more social or physical power than their targets, which makes it difficult for their targets to stop the behavior. While any child can become a target of Bullying Behavior, those at greater risk include LGBTQ+ youth, overweight/underweight youth, youth with disabilities, youth of color, and youth belonging to religious minorities.[13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21]

DEFINITION

Bullying Behavior is repeated or severe aggressive behavior directed at someone under age 18. This behavior is intended or likely to hurt, control, or tear down that person emotionally, physically, or sexually. It can be:

- **Physical:** hitting, beating up, spitting at, or throwing objects at someone
- **Verbal:** ridiculing, name-calling, taunting, or threatening to harm someone
- **Social** (including cyberbullying)**:** spreading rumors or lies to harm someone's reputation, socially excluding them and asking others to do the same, or using technology to harass, frighten, intimidate, or humiliate them
- **Criminal conduct:** any conduct described as bullying under federal or state law

When done to Adults, this behavior could qualify as other violations of the SafeSport Code, such as Hazing or Harassment.

Bullying does not include petty slights, minor inconveniences, or lack of good manners, unless these behaviors are repeated or very aggressive.

EXAMPLES OF BULLYING BEHAVIOR

- ***A child repeatedly being threatened with violence unless they obey another child***
- ***Spreading rumors through social media about another child***

Hazing

Individuals engaging in Hazing may aim to bond a group together through a shared experience, but Hazing does the opposite. It promotes an unsafe environment where keeping secrets and maintaining silence around misconduct and misuse of power is expected. Some coaches or other adults are aware of or even participate in Hazing, but it can also occur without their knowledge.[13]

DEFINITION

Hazing is any conduct—either physical, mental, emotional, or psychological—that is intended or likely to abuse, degrade, intimidate, or put a person in danger to join or be socially accepted by a group. It may include:

- **Contact acts:** such as beating someone with fists or objects, or physically restraining them
- **Non-contact acts**: such as making someone play drinking games, do humiliating acts, or depriving them of sleep, food, or water
- **Criminal conduct:** any conduct described as hazing under federal or state law

Something can still be Hazing even if the person appears to give Consent.

EXAMPLES OF HAZING

- ***Pressuring teammates into a drinking contest***
- ***Making new recruits take cold showers***

Harassment

Anything that could be perceived as making an athlete "different" can also make them a target for Harassment. Harassment, like bullying, can degrade an individual or can create a hostile environment. But Harassment can also include an element of bias or discrimination. Sometimes the person harassing others is trying to establish power over them based on their characteristics, like race or gender.

DEFINITION

Harassment is repeated or severe conduct that is intended or likely to:

- **Cause fear, humiliation, or annoyance:** such as threatening to harm someone or repeatedly ridiculing them
- **Offend or degrade:** such as repeatedly using slurs or making offensive jokes to or about someone
- **Create a hostile environment:** such as repeated or severe actions that affect someone in a way that limits their ability to participate in programs or activities
- **Attempt to establish dominance, superiority, or power because of prejudice** against a person or group's age, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, national origin, or disability: such as saying someone will fail because of one of these characteristics
- **Is described as harassment under federal or state law**

Harassment does not include petty slights, minor inconveniences, or lack of good manners, unless they are repeated or severe.

Harassment based on a person's gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation is classified as a type of Sexual Misconduct in the SafeSport Code.

EXAMPLES OF HARASSMENT

Routinely threatening a teammate until they stop coming to practice	***Mocking a teammate with a disability multiple times to establish dominance***

Sexual Misconduct

Sexual Misconduct can be a difficult topic to think about—and talking with your child or their coaches about it can seem even tougher. We first introduced you to Emotional and Physical Misconduct because understanding those types of misconduct better equips you to understand and recognize Sexual Misconduct. Evidence also suggests that Emotional Misconduct by coaches or other adults can help hide Sexual Misconduct.[22]

Sexual Misconduct, like other forms of abuse and misconduct, usually involves the misuse of power.[14]

THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSENT

Sexual Misconduct includes a wide range of sexual actions that are done without Consent.

Consent is when someone knowingly, freely, and actively uses clear words or actions to let another person know they want to participate in a specific sexual activity. They can use clear actions instead of words to give Consent, but their silence by itself is not Consent. Their Consent to one activity does not mean Consent to other activities.

Someone can withdraw their Consent at any time by using clear words or actions. They cannot give Consent if they are forced, incapacitated, below the age of Consent, or when there is a Power Imbalance. Laws about Consent vary by state. The age of Consent in the SafeSport Code is 18. There is an exception when the age difference between people is within three years or less and there is no Power Imbalance.

WHAT ARE CATEGORIES OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT?

Sexual Misconduct categories include Sexual Harassment, Nonconsensual Sexual Contact or Intercourse, Sexual Exploitation, Exposing a Minor to Sexual Content/Imagery, Sexual Bullying Behavior, and Sexual Hazing. Sexual Misconduct also can include inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature that may overlap with other categories, or any type of behavior defined as Sexual Misconduct under federal or state law.

WHO TENDS TO COMMIT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT?

Sexual Misconduct most often happens by an adult or older youth who knows the child. This can include coaches, teachers, family members, youth leaders, or other adults in a position of authority.[23]

Many parents and guardians are surprised to learn that Sexual Misconduct can also occur between kids of similar age and development. This is called Peer-to-Peer Sexual Misconduct.

Grooming

Grooming occurs when someone intentionally engages in a series of behaviors so they can sexually abuse a child under the age of 18. The person often targets a child who is isolated and vulnerable, and grooms them to build trust. The person may also groom members of the child's family, community, or sport organization. Once the abuser has gained trust and compliance, they often continue to manipulate people so they can continue the abuse. Grooming can be done in person, by phone, and online.[24, 25]

The process of grooming in sport and elsewhere often follows a pattern in which an adult or older youth:

- **Engages and builds trust**: often by treating the child like an older peer and/or by offering special treatment
- **Isolates:** finding ways to be alone with and/or have unsupervised time with the child
- **Tests boundaries:** blurring the line between appropriate and inappropriate behavior
- **Sexualizes interactions:** pushing emotional and sexual boundaries, introducing sexual topics and/or actions

Those who seek to engage in sexual misconduct with a child may also seek to groom the child's environment to lay groundwork for inappropriate behavior. This helps them:[24]

- **Gain access to kids** without raising suspicion (as a "trusted" adult or authority figure)
- **Be someone others want to leave their kids with** (a "great coach," a "key to getting a child to a more competitive level")
- **Use their "appeal"** (position, power, charm, fame) to keep their actions from raising suspicion, and to keep others from believing the child

Early Warning Signs of Grooming

Being alert to grooming behaviors, especially early ones such as engaging and building trust, can help you recognize grooming before it escalates. Some behaviors to look out for in adults or older youth include:[25]

- **Being eager to spend time alone with your child** (such as babysitting, staying after practice with, providing extra training for your child)
- **Acting like a friend to your child, or being the "cool adult"**
- **Favoring your child or family** (by giving gifts, private lessons, or bestowing privileges no other child gets)
- **Encouraging your child to keep secrets,** especially about time spent with them
- **Using their position, power, or authority to spend time alone with your child**
- **Insisting on physical contact** with your child (such as hugging, touching, or tickling)
- **Talking to your child about adult relationship problems or sexual topics**
- **Frequently walking in on your child while changing/undressing**
- **Frequently changing/undressing in front of your child**

Some of these behaviors may also violate the SafeSport Code, the MAAPP, or constitute potential Child Abuse. If so, report them appropriately (see Reporting section for more detail).

Online Grooming

In our connected world, grooming and sexual misconduct often takes place online. Digital and social media are common breeding grounds for trust-building, boundary-testing, and sexualizing your child. Be aware that direct online communications from an adult to your child can have the effect of isolating the child.[26]

Online communication between your child and a coach, other adult, or older youth should be **open and transparent, professional, related to the child's participation in sport, and happen on platforms accessible to a parent.** Interactions that happen outside of these guidelines are a cause for concern and may violate policies like the MAAPP.

Additional behaviors of concern by adults or older youth toward your child include:[26]

- Offering gifts or special treatment in exchange for sexual images
- Using different online identities to contact the child
- Gaining unauthorized access to the child's online social media accounts
- Gaining power over the child by secretly recording or saving images, conversations, or texts; stealing suggestive images; or editing images to look sexual
- Using threats to humiliate the child or get them to comply with demands

Sexual Harassment

DEFINITION

Sexual Harassment is any unwelcome physical or verbal conduct or communication (written, pictorial, or visual). It is directed at someone because of their real or perceived sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Sexual Harassment may include acts of aggression, intimidation, or hostility. This means the person harassing others:

- Makes submission a term or condition of sport participation, employment, or education
- Makes employment, education, or sporting decisions based on how the person responds
- Creates a hostile environment

EXAMPLES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Repeatedly making negative comments about women and girls that reinforce sexual stereotypes	***Continually refusing to call someone by their pronouns***

Nonconsensual Sexual Contact or Intercourse

DEFINITION

Nonconsensual Sexual Contact or Nonconsensual Intercourse is engaging in Sexual Contact or Intercourse with a person without their Consent. It can include behaviors such as:

- Kissing
- Purposefully touching someone's breasts, buttocks, groin, or genitals (whether they are wearing clothes or not)
- Intentionally touching someone else with any of the above body parts
- Making someone touch themselves or someone else with or on any of the above body parts
- Penetration, however slight, of another's intimate areas with any object or body part
- Contact, however slight, between one person's mouth and another person's genitals

EXAMPLES OF NONCONSENSUAL SEXUAL CONTACT OR INTERCOURSE

A coach intentionally puts their genitals into contact with an athlete without Consent as they instruct them on a twist	***Forcing someone to have intercourse without Consent***

Sexual Exploitation

DEFINITION

Sexual Exploitation is when someone attempts, threatens, or purposely or knowingly:

- Allows someone to observe private sexual activity from a hidden location without Consent
- Watches, records, photographs, or streams sexual activity or a person's private parts without Consent
- Shows or posts that content without prior Consent
- Exposes another person to a sexually transmitted infection on purpose and without their knowledge
- Makes another person engage in sexual activity for payment or offers to pay someone for sexual activity

EXAMPLES OF OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

- *Recording athletes changing or showering in the locker room without Consent*
- *Sending nude or explicit photos of someone to others without Consent*

Exposing a Minor to Sexual Content/Imagery

DEFINITION

The SafeSport Code prohibits Adults from intentionally exposing a Minor to content or imagery of a sexual nature. This includes pornography, sexual comments, sexual gestures, or sexual situations. Similar behavior between Adults may qualify as Sexual Misconduct as defined in the SafeSport Code.

EXAMPLES OF EXPOSING A MINOR TO SEXUAL CONTENT/IMAGERY

- *An Adult showing a pornographic magazine to a child*
- *An Adult making sexual comments to a child about their body*

Sexual Bullying

DEFINITION

Sexual Bullying Behavior is repeated or severe behavior of a sexual nature that is:

- Aggressive
- Directed at someone under age 18
- Intended or likely to hurt, control, or tear down that person emotionally, physically, or sexually

It also includes bullying related to someone's actual or perceived sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, and related medical conditions), gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. This is true even if the acts do not involve conduct of a sexual nature.

When done to Adults, these behaviors could qualify as other violations of the SafeSport Code, such as Sexual Hazing or Sexual Harassment.

EXAMPLES OF SEXUAL BULLYING

- *Repeatedly teasing a teen about the size of their breasts*
- *Taking pictures of teammates changing in the locker room and posting them online*

Sexual Hazing

DEFINITION

Sexual Hazing involves conduct of a sexual nature—either physical, mental, emotional, or psychological—that may abuse, degrade, intimidate, or put a person in danger in order to join or be socially accepted by a group. Sexual Hazing also includes hazing related to gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. This is true even if the acts do not involve conduct of a sexual nature. Something can still be Sexual Hazing even if the person appears to give Consent.

EXAMPLES OF SEXUAL HAZING

- ***Forcing teammates to perform a sex act to be invited to a party***
- ***Forcing a trans athlete to wear lingerie to gain access to the boys locker room where their teammates prepare for practices and games***

Other Misconduct by Adults

- Having an intimate or romantic relationship where a Power Imbalance exists
- Intentional exposure of private body parts to someone under 18 or an Adult when there is a Power Imbalance
- Inappropriate Physical Contact when there is a Power Imbalance, including touching or slapping someone's buttocks or genitals, excessively touching or hugging them, or kissing them

Signs and Symptoms a Child Has Experienced Misconduct

Below are common physical, psychological, and behavioral signs and symptoms of abuse and misconduct.[27]

Keep in mind that everyone who experiences abuse or misconduct responds differently. Showing signs of misconduct does not necessarily mean someone has been mistreated. Some who have experienced misconduct may not show any of these signs. Instead of focusing on specific signs, look for patterns or unexplained changes in your child's health, behaviors, and attitude.

PHYSICAL SIGNS	**Changes in appearance** **Chronic pain or illness** **Stress-related symptoms (ulcers, repeated stomachaches, headaches, etc.)** **Unexplained or uncommon injuries** **Dehydration** **Pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections (especially for kids under age 14)** **Difficulty walking or sitting**
PSYCHOLOGICAL SIGNS	**Loss of enthusiasm for sport or competition** **Depression** **Anxiety** **Withdrawal** **Decreased self-esteem** **Suicidal thoughts or attempts** **New or different fears/phobias** **Trauma-related symptoms** **Sudden mood changes or emotional outbursts** **Self-harm**
BEHAVIORAL SIGNS	**Skipping or making excuses to not attend school or practice** **Performance declines in school or sport** **Self-isolation from others or avoidance of contact with a specific person** **Complaints about treatment by coach or teammates or refusal to talk about them** **Nightmares or bedwetting** **Sexual knowledge or behavior that is not age-appropriate** **Frequent unexplained absences from school or practice** **Substance use**

Misconduct can go unnoticed by parents, guardians, and coaches because it is so often done by peers in subtle or secretive ways, and because kids are hesitant to tell adults that it is happening. [12]

Recognizing the signs and symptoms is helpful, but it's more important to recognize when your child is going through something, isn't their usual self, or teachers, coaches, or other trusted adults are noticing changes. Be sure to follow up with your child and let them know you're there for them no matter what.

Trust Your "Gut"

Just as you want your child to trust their gut instincts when a situation or person doesn't feel safe, it's important to trust your gut as well. If someone or something seems too good to be true, it probably is. If a coach, volunteer, or other adult shows an amount of interest or dedication that makes you or your child feel uncomfortable, you have the right to stop the interactions. This is true even if nothing "wrong" or "criminal" has taken place. Every child deserves both to *feel* safe and *be* safe in their sport environment, and every parent and guardian deserves the same.

You can minimize the prospect of misconduct—emotional, physical, or sexual; in-person, online, or by phone—by being alert to signs, communicating openly with your child and involved adults, and keeping your child's overall well-being as the top priority.

Key Points

- **The most common form of misconduct in sport is Emotional Misconduct, often by one peer against another.**
- **While forms of abuse and misconduct often overlap multiple categories, it is more important to recognize misconduct than to properly classify it.**
- **When thinking about signs that your child may have experienced misconduct, look for patterns or unexplained changes in health, behavior, and attitude instead of focusing solely on specific signs.**
- **Check in with your child regularly on how they feel about their interactions with peers, older kids, and coaches. For teens, check in on their social media for signs of inappropriate communications.**

RESPOND

No one wants their child to experience or participate in any form of misconduct. But knowing how to respond appropriately in such scenarios is an excellent way to be a source of trust, healing, and protection for your child.

Keeping Communication Open

To be able to respond to potential misconduct affecting your child, you first need to be aware of it. While information you've absorbed in the Prevent and Recognize sections of this Handbook lays some groundwork for this, it's also essential for you to maintain open lines of communication with your child and other adults in their environment. Doing so makes it more likely that your child will trust you to bring up relevant details related to this difficult topic—one they may not fully understand or know how to talk about.

Thankfully, there are ways you and other adults can help your child and others be more comfortable discussing and reporting misconduct they see or experience.[28] See our Talking Tips for Younger Kids (5 and under), School-Age Kids (6-12) and Teenagers (13+) for in-depth developmentally-appropriate talking tips.

Responding to Disclosures

If your child chooses to disclose experiences of misconduct or abuse to you, they are putting their trust in you. While it can be scary and upsetting to hear this information, remember that they chose to talk to you for a reason. Responding to misconduct is difficult for everyone, so make sure you seek support for yourself as you also support your child.

Keep these steps in mind when a child discloses misconduct or abuse to you:

- **Listen with empathy:** Let them tell you at their own pace and give you the details they want to share. Make sure your facial expressions and body language are open and not judgmental.

  You can do this by: Putting your child's experience first. You will naturally have strong feelings about the situation (anger, desire for revenge, blame). But make sure your child feels heard and understood and doesn't feel responsible for someone else's misconduct.

- **Be supportive:** Show empathy and thank them for telling you and trusting you. Acknowledge that it was probably difficult to do.

  You can do this by: Remaining calm, especially in front of your child. This will help them begin the healing process. Be caring and gentle with them as you also advocate for them.

- **Show unconditional love:** Your child needs the love only a parent or guardian can give.

  You can do this by: Talking to your child about their feelings. Assure them that they were right to tell you about their experience, and that you're there for them. Be sure to take care of yourself by seeking support or counseling.

- **Know your role:** You may be tempted to find out more information or help the investigation along, but it's best to leave that to trained investigators.

  You can do this by: Listening to everything they say, but leaving the "who/what/where/when" questions to the professionals for their follow up. No one else can play your role.

- **Ask how you can help:** Help them access confidential support resources where they can talk to a trained advocate.

  You can do this by: Identifying and connecting your child with professional advocacy, therapy, or legal help if needed. A call to your local Children's Advocacy Center is a great place to start to learn your community's laws and processes. You can also contact the trained staff at RAINN at 1-800-656-4673 or rainn.org. Be careful about what (if anything) you share with family members, friends, and people in your child's sport environment.

- **Tell them what you will do next:** If you are a mandatory reporter, tell them you will be reporting what they told you. Talk with them about appointments you will schedule and people you will contact. Let them be involved in discussions and decision-making if it is age and developmentally appropriate.

How to Respond if Someone Reports Your Child Has Been Abused

A report or allegation of your child being abused or mistreated might come from another adult rather than from your child. It might be made directly to your child's sport organization, and you may or may not be notified beforehand.

It is normal and understandable to feel emotions such as anger, confusion, anxiety, guilt, sadness, or disbelief. You may naturally want to find out as much as possible from the reporter or your child about the allegation. Keep this information in mind if you try to learn more from the person sharing the information (who in investigations is often known as a "third-party reporter"):

- Reporters of abuse or misconduct may not have many details for you. It's best practice for reporters to leave follow-up details to trained investigators.
- In U.S. Center for SafeSport investigations:
  - Third-party reporters' identities are not disclosed unless necessary to the investigation.
  - Third-party reporters are not kept informed of the investigation process unless they are a Claimant or Respondent or a parent or guardian of a Minor Claimant.
- Remember principles we learned in the previous section about showing unconditional love and support for your child.
- Take care of yourself so you have the attention and energy to care for your child. Do things you enjoy. Get out of the house, meet with friends and family, find ways to relax, and talk with a professional for support.

How to Respond if Your Child May Be Responsible for Misconduct

Keep these suggestions in mind if you find out your child is behaving inappropriately or has violated behavior policies:[29]

- Don't put too much pressure on yourself. There is no perfect initial response.
- Try to stay calm, even if misconduct or abuse has occurred. Remember that this is a child, and that they need your support and guidance.
- Reassure your child that you care about them. It is the behavior that is unacceptable, not the child.
- Find social or professional support.
  - Contact your local Children's Advocacy Center for professional advice and guidance.
  - Consider therapy options for the child, or even family therapy.
  - You may want to consult legal help in the case of potentially illegal activity.
- In cases of peer-to-peer misconduct or abuse concerning members of the same sport club or team, let coaches and administrators know after taking appropriate legal steps. They may need to make changes in team activities or interactions during an investigation.

Making a Report

Reporting abuse and misconduct helps keep sport environments safer and enables affected young athletes to get help.

How those reports are handled will depend on the type and seriousness of the misconduct, and on the organization in question. The SafeSport Code governs the reporting and resolution process for organizations and individuals affiliated with any of the 50+ National Governing Bodies (NGBs) in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement. Some information in this section is specific to individuals connected with the Movement.

You can always report any behavior that you are concerned with to your child's sport organization. If your child or the individual responsible for the concerning behavior is involved in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement, report to the U.S. Center for SafeSport. Check with your sport organization about how they handle abuse and misconduct reports. Policies and rules will vary by organization. **If you are concerned that the suspected misconduct violates a law, do not hesitate to report it to law enforcement.**

Anyone can report directly to the U.S. Center for SafeSport:

- Online at uscenterforsafesport.org/report-a-concern
- 1-833-5US-SAFE (587-7233)

If you are an Adult Participant as defined by the SafeSport Code, you must follow applicable state or federal laws and report information about or reasonable suspicion of:

- Child Abuse, including child sexual abuse, immediately to law enforcement and the Center
- Sexual Misconduct regardless of age (including Sexual Harassment, Nonconsensual Sexual Contact or Intercourse, Sexual Exploitation, Exposing a Minor to Sexual Content or Imagery, Sexual Bullying Behavior, and Sexual Hazing) immediately (but no later than 24 hours) to the Center
- Emotional and Physical Misconduct (including Bullying, Hazing, and Harassment) to the organization you're affiliated with or the Center
- Violations of prevention policies (such as the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies) to the organization you're affiliated with or the Center

Response and Resolution at the U.S. Center for SafeSport

The Center receives and responds to all reports related to sexual misconduct and child abuse within the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement, as well as certain other violations of the SafeSport Code.

There are three primary process stages for resolving reports to the Center.

- **Reporting and Intake:** In this first phase, the Center determines:
  - If it is the appropriate organization to investigate the report
  - If it has enough information to start investigating
  - If any immediate actions must occur before the investigation starts to reduce risks for anyone involved
- **Investigation:** For reports that reach this second phase, the Center collects evidence and conducts interviews to determine whether it is more likely than not that abuse or misconduct took place.
- **Resolution:** The final phase involves:
  - Informing appropriate parties of the decision
  - Giving those found to have violated the SafeSport Code the opportunity to challenge a finding through independent arbitration
  - Determining individual sanctions or consequences based on Code violations
  - Potentially posting a sanctioned adult individual on the Center's public Centralized Disciplinary Database
- Visit our website for more information on the U.S. Center for SafeSport's Response & Resolution process.

If you or your child are not affiliated with the Movement, adults in your child's sport organization may still be required to report known or suspected child abuse to law enforcement. They must also follow any other state or federal laws and organizational policies that apply to them.

Supporting Your Child Through an Investigation

An investigation of abuse or misconduct can be difficult for your child. They may need support to help them cope with the inappropriate behavior they experienced or to help them through any changes to their routine due to the investigation.[30]

- **Listen actively and without judgmentally:** Let your child know you are there to listen and support them, and that they can decide what they talk about and when. Avoid asking "why" questions, as they may shut down further communication with your child.
- **Assure Your Child:** Let them know what happened to them is not their fault. Any fallout from the investigation is not their fault either.
- **Support Your Child:** Your child may have to participate in sport in a different place or pause competition during the investigation. They also may not be able to see some teammates and coaches they have grown close to.
- **Notice and Respond:** If you see signs of misconduct or abuse, reach out to get your child the help they need:
  - Find your local Children's Advocacy Center for professional advice and guidance.
  - Consider therapy options (including family therapy) for the child.
  - You may want to consult a lawyer in the case of illegal activity.

Retaliation

People are often afraid to report misconduct because they fear Retaliation from a coach, organization leaders, or athletes and their families. Retaliation is taking (or threatening to take) any adverse action related to an allegation, a report, or an investigation into misconduct. It can happen before, during, or after someone participates in the Center's process. It can also involve participation in the processes of other relevant organizations under the Center's jurisdiction.

Retaliation can come in different forms, including:

- Threatening, intimidating, or harassing someone
- Coercing someone to drop a complaint or refuse to cooperate with an investigation
- Punishing or withholding opportunities for those who report misconduct

The SafeSport Code prohibits Retaliation. It is a form of misconduct.

EXAMPLES OF RETALIATION

An athlete confronts a teammate about inappropriate behavior. The teammate then threatens to ruin their reputation if they report what happened.	***The day after a parent reports a coach abused their child, the coach drops the athlete from the team, saying "We don't need any snitches around here."***

Retaliation is prohibited by the SafeSport Code because it can:

- Further harm people who have experienced abuse or misconduct
- Deter witnesses or third parties with information important to a misconduct investigation
- Erode trust within the team and the larger organization
- Discourage others from reporting future misconduct
- Send the message that the behavior in question is acceptable
- Contribute to a culture that tolerates abuse and misconduct

If you or your child are not affiliated with the Movement, be aware of your child's sport organization's policies regarding retaliation.

Key Points:

- **Report any potential abuse and misconduct to your child's sport organization. If your child is involved in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement, report to the U.S. Center for SafeSport.**
- **If you are concerned that the suspected misconduct violates a law or is child abuse, report it to law enforcement immediately.**
- **An organization's response to misconduct may vary depending on the type of misconduct and its severity.**
- **Believing in your child and supporting them through the response process is one of the most helpful things you can do for them.**
- **The SafeSport Code prohibits Retaliation, and many sport organizations have similar policies.**

HANDOUTS AND ACTIVITIES

- **Talking Tips for Keeping Communication Open**: For Younger Kids (5 and under)
- **Talking Tips for Keeping Communication Open**: For School-Age Kids (6-12)
- **Talking Tips for Keeping Communication Open**: For Teenagers (13+)
- **SafeSport Listening Do's and Don'ts**: For Younger Kids (5 and under)
- **SafeSport Listening Do's and Don'ts**: For School-Age Kids (6-12)
- **SafeSport Listening Do's and Don'ts**: For Teenagers (13+)
- **Understanding Your Child's Sexual Development**
- **The Effects of Bullying**
- **Does My Child's Coach Keep Appropriate Boundaries?**
- **Responding to Potential Grooming Behavior**

ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES

American Academy of Pediatrics

aap.org

Dedicated to promoting optimal health and well-being for every child, and to ensuring Academy members practice the highest quality health care and experience professional satisfaction and personal well-being.

The American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children

apsac.org

A multidisciplinary professional society serving pediatricians, social workers, attorneys, clinicians, law enforcement, educators and other professionals serving children and families involved with child maltreatment.

Connect Safely

connectsafely.org/cyberbullying

ConnectSafely is a Silicon Valley, California-based nonprofit organization dedicated to educating users of connected technology about safety, privacy, and security. Here you'll find research-based safety tips, parents' guidebooks, advice, news, and commentary on all aspects of tech use and policy.

Crime Victim Compensation (CVC)

Provides financial support for eligible victims of crime to cover costs such as counseling, lost wages and medical care. Please note that in many CVC programs the crime must be reported to law enforcement in order to access these funds. Benefits may vary by state and county. Click to locate your local CVC program.

Healthychildren.org

healthychildren.org

HealthyChildren.org is the only parenting website backed by 66,000 pediatricians committed to the attainment of optimal physical, mental, and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents, and young adults.

iKeepSafe

ikeepsafe.org

The iKeepSafe mission is to provide a safe digital landscape for children, schools, and families by supporting the protection of student privacy, while advancing learning in a digital culture. To support this mission, they provide data privacy certifications to technology companies, educational resources to schools, and information to the community.

National Alliance For Youth Sports

nays.org

The mission of the NAYS is to educate, equip and empower youth sports leaders, volunteers, and parents so all children can enjoy the lifelong benefits of sports. The National Standards for Youth Sports serves as the blueprint for how recreational youth sports providers can meet the needs of all their participants. The National Standards for Youth Sports place in motion guidance for league and program administrators to implement to ensure the best possible youth sports experience for all.

National Center on the Sexual Behavior Of Youth

ncsby.org

The mission of NCSBY is to promote better lives, through better choices by youth, caregivers, and professionals for healthier responses to and prevention of problematic sexual behavior of youth. NCSBY provides national training and technical assistance to improve the accuracy, accessibility, and strategic use of accurate information about the nature, incidence, prevalence, prevention, treatment, and management of youth with problematic sexual behavior.

National Sexual Assault Hotline

rainn.org

This website offers information and resources for victims of sexual assault and includes a 24-hour chat and hotline.

Chat: rainn.org

Phone: 1-800-656-4673

Pacer's National Bullying Prevention Center

pacer.org/bullying

Pacer's National Bullying Prevention Center aims to lead a social change so bullying is no longer accepted as a rite of passage for children. PACER provides children, parents and educators with resources and information on bullying. Its website also contains videos, stories, news, campaigns, and other ways to get involved in anti-bullying efforts.

Project Play

aspenprojectplay.org

Launched in 2013 by the Aspen Institute Sports & Society Program, the initiative develops, shares, and applies knowledge that helps build healthy communities through sports. The Project Play Parent Checklists provide 10 simple questions that parents should ask depending on the child's age and activity level with sports.

Raliance

raliance.org

Raliance is a national collaborative committed to ending sexual violence in one generation. Comprised of the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence (NAESV), the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC), and California Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CALCASA)–Prevent Connect, Raliance was founded in 2015 through a multimillion-dollar seed investment by the National Football League. Find resources on prevention at the Raliance Sport + Prevention Center: raliance.org/sport-prevention-center

Rape Crisis Centers

Provide community-based rape crisis assistance in every state and territory. These centers exist across the United States to provide supportive services to victims of sexual abuse. While the specific resources available vary by location, services are confidential and may include advocacy, accompaniment during medical exams, law enforcement interviews, follow-up services and referrals to other resources. Rape crisis centers also provide 24/7 hotlines to support survivors and co-survivors. The National Sexual Violence Resource Center maintains a Directory of State and Territory Coalitions as well as a Directory of Victim/Survivor Support Organizations that provide services to survivors. Please contact your state or territory's coalition to find local services in your community.

Regional Children's Advocacy Centers

regionalcacs.org

Regional Children's Advocacy Centers model, champion, and support the multidisciplinary response to child abuse intervention, by providing expertise, training, and resources to improve outcomes for children and families affected by abuse.

U.S. Center for SafeSport

uscenterforsafesport.org

The U.S. Center for SafeSport is a nonprofit organization created to respond to and prevent sexual, physical, and emotional abuse in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement, from which it is independent. The Center also trains and educates people and organizations at all levels to support sport and recreation settings across America that protect athlete well-being.

You Can Play Project

youcanplayproject.org

The You Can Play Project works to ensure the safety and inclusion of everyone in sports, including LGBTQ athletes, coaches, and fans. Visit its website to learn more about its cause, partners, and how to take a stand.

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