



## BULLYING

### How to Recognize, Reduce and Respond to Bullying

#### What you need to know to protect athletes

One of the greatest lessons athletes take away from sport is the experience of being on a team where coaches and individuals support one another. Actions that demean or intimidate athletes, either physically or emotionally, can affect performance and team cohesion. Since bullying often occurs among peers, coaches can set an example with a zero-tolerance policy and emphasize teamwork and mutual support. Giving athletes a way to report behavior without fear of reprisal is also important.

#### Definition

Bullying is an intentional, persistent and repeated pattern of committing or willfully tolerating physical and non-physical behavior that is intended, or has the reasonable potential, to cause fear, humiliation or physical harm in an attempt to socially exclude, diminish or isolate the targeted athlete(s) as a condition of membership. It includes any act or conduct described as bullying under federal or state law.

#### Exceptions

Bullying does not include group or team behavior designed to establish normative team behavior or promote team cohesion. For example, bullying does not include verbal admonitions to encourage team members to train harder and push through a difficult training regimen.

#### Examples of Bullying

##### *Physical behavior*

- Hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, choking or slapping an athlete
- Throwing at or hitting an athlete with objects such as sporting equipment

##### *Verbal and emotional behavior*

- Teasing, ridiculing, intimidating
- Spreading rumors or making false statements
- Using electronic communications, social media, or other technology to harass, frighten, intimidate or humiliate (“cyber bullying”)



## HARASSMENT

### How to Recognize, Reduce and Respond to Harassment

#### What you need to know to protect athletes

Sport is an incredibly constructive outlet for individuals, in part because athletes are judged solely on their abilities and performance. In this environment, hard work, persistence and improvement are defining characteristics. Harassment based on race, gender or sexual orientation affects team cohesion, performance and an individual's ability to focus on building skills and enjoy competition. As with bullying and hazing, coaches and staff can create a supportive environment for sport by setting a zero-tolerance policy.

#### Definition

Harassment is a repeated pattern of physical and/or non-physical behavior intended to cause fear, humiliation or annoyance, offend or degrade, create a hostile environment; or reflect discriminatory bias in an attempt to establish dominance, superiority or power over an individual athlete or group based on gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression or mental or physical disability. It includes any act or conduct described as harassment under federal or state law.

#### Examples of Harassment

##### *Physical offenses*

- Hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, choking or slapping an athlete or participant
- Throwing at, or hitting an athlete with objects, including sporting equipment

##### *Non-physical offenses*

- Making negative or disparaging comments about an athlete's sexual orientation, gender expression, disability, religion, skin color or ethnic traits
- Displaying offensive materials, gestures, or symbols
- Withholding or reducing an athlete's playing time based on his or her sexual orientation



## HAZING

### How to Recognize, Reduce and Respond to Hazing

#### What you need to know to protect athletes

Being a team member shouldn't come with additional requirements that get in the way of enjoying sport. Hazing often begins as seemingly benign behavior but can become an issue if allowed to continue. Since hazing often occurs among peers, coaches and staff can send a strong anti-hazing message by creating an environment that encourages individuals to raise concerns or share information. In addition, most states have enacted legislation to discourage hazing and hold those who participate accountable; and these laws can provide additional support for anti-hazing efforts.

#### Definition

Hazing involves coercing, requiring, forcing or willfully tolerating any humiliating, unwelcome or dangerous activity that serves as a condition for joining a group or being socially accepted by a group's members. It includes any act or conduct described as hazing under federal or state law. Activities that fit the definition of hazing are considered to be hazing regardless of an athlete's willingness to cooperate or participate.

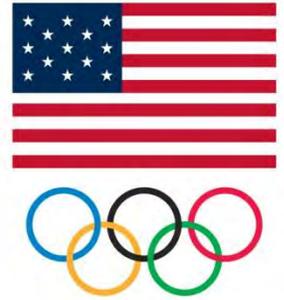
#### Exceptions

Hazing does not include group or team activities that are meant to establish normative team behavior or promote team cohesion. Examples include:

- Allowing junior athletes to carry senior athletes' equipment into the locker room after practice
- Encouraging junior athletes to arrive early and set up training equipment
- Giving senior athletes first preference in team assignments, responsibilities, accommodations, facilities or equipment

#### Examples of Hazing

- Requiring, forcing or otherwise requiring the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Tying, taping or otherwise physically restraining an athlete
- Sexual simulations or sexual acts of any nature
- Sleep deprivation, unnecessary schedule disruption or the withholding of water and/or food
- Social actions (e.g. grossly inappropriate or provocative clothing) or public displays (e.g., public nudity) that are illegal or meant to draw ridicule
- Beating, paddling or other forms of physical assault
- Excessive training requirements that single out individuals on a team



## EMOTIONAL MISCONDUCT

### How to Recognize, Reduce and Respond to Emotional Misconduct

#### What you need to know to protect athletes

Sport can help individuals build skills, making them stronger and better able to deal with challenges. The wide range of emotions athletes experience in practice and competition are a normal, healthy component of sport. However, a repeated pattern of behavior by either coaches or teammates that can inflict psychological or emotional harm has no place in sport. By gaining a complete understanding of the actions that qualify as emotional misconduct, participants can be in a stronger position to take action.

#### Definition

Emotional misconduct involves a pattern of deliberate, non-contact behavior that has the potential to cause emotional or psychological harm to an athlete. Non-contact behavior includes verbal and physical acts, as well as actions that deny attention or support. It also includes any act or conduct (e.g., child abuse and child neglect) described as emotional abuse or misconduct under federal or state law.

#### Exceptions

Emotional misconduct does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, discipline or improving athletic performance.

#### Examples of Emotional Misconduct

##### *Verbal acts*

- Verbally attacking an athlete personally (e.g., calling them worthless, fat or disgusting)
- Repeatedly and excessively yelling at participants in a manner that serves no productive training or motivational purpose

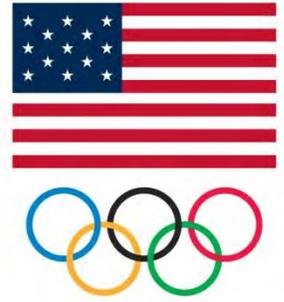
##### *Physical acts*

- Throwing sport equipment, water bottles or chairs at, or in the presence of, participants
- Punching walls, windows or other objects

##### *Acts that deny attention and support*

- Ignoring an athlete for extended periods of time
- Routinely or arbitrarily excluding participants from practice

## PHYSICAL MISCONDUCT



### How to Recognize, Reduce and Respond to Physical Misconduct

#### What you need to know to protect athletes

Almost all sport involves strenuous physical activity; in practices and competition, athletes regularly push themselves to the point of exhaustion. However, any activity that physically harms an athlete—such as direct contact with coaches or teammates, disciplinary actions, or punishment—is unacceptable. Physical misconduct can extend to seemingly unrelated areas including inadequate recovery times for injuries and diet. Two of the best ways to promote safe conditions are to set clear boundaries and take a team approach to monitoring athletes.

#### Definition

Physical misconduct involves contact or non-contact behavior that can cause physical harm to an athlete or other sport participants. It also includes any act or conduct described as physical abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g., child abuse, child neglect and assault).

#### Exceptions

Physical misconduct does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline or improving athlete performance.

#### Examples of Physical Misconduct

##### *Contact offenses*

- Punching, beating, biting, striking, choking or slapping an athlete
- Intentionally hitting an athlete with objects or sporting equipment
- Providing alcohol to an athlete under the legal drinking age (under U.S. law)
- Providing illegal drugs or non-prescribed medications to any athlete
- Encouraging or permitting an athlete to return to play prematurely or without the clearance of a medical professional, following a serious injury (e.g., a concussion)
- Prescribed dieting or other weight-control methods (e.g., weigh-ins, caliper tests) without regard for the nutritional well-being and health of athlete

##### *Non-contact offenses*

- Isolating an athlete in a confined space (e.g., locking an athlete in a small space)
- Forcing an athlete to assume a painful stance or position for no athletic purpose (e.g. requiring an athlete to kneel on a harmful surface)
- Withholding, recommending against or denying adequate hydration, nutrition, medical attention or sleep.



## SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

### How to Recognize, Reduce and Respond to Sexual Misconduct

#### What you need to know to protect athletes

Sport can teach lessons that reach beyond the field of play, but its ability to do so depends on maintaining the bonds of trust, mentorship and mutual respect among teammates. These elements are undermined when sexual misconduct occurs in sport settings. Sexual misconduct includes sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and rape. Every member of the sport community, especially adult staff in positions of authority, can contribute to a sport environment free from sexual misconduct by working together and being informed.

#### Definition

Sexual misconduct involves any touching or non-touching sexual interaction that is nonconsensual or forced, coerced or manipulated, or perpetrated in an aggressive, harassing, exploitative or threatening manner. It also includes any sexual interaction between an athlete and an individual with evaluative, direct or indirect authority. Last, any act or conduct described as sexual abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g., sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, rape) qualifies as sexual misconduct.

#### Notes

- An imbalance of power is always assumed between a coach and an athlete.
- Minors cannot consent to sexual activity with an adult; and all sexual interaction between an adult and a minor is strictly prohibited.

#### Examples of Sexual Misconduct

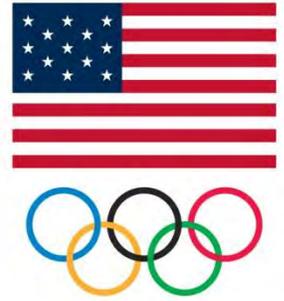
##### *Touching offenses*

- Fondling an athlete's breasts or buttocks
- Exchange of reward in sport (e.g., team placement, scores, feedback) for sexual favors
- Genital contact
- Sexual relations or intimacies between participants in a position of trust, authority and/or evaluative and supervisory control over athletes or other sport participants

##### *Non-touching offenses*

- Sexually-oriented comments, jokes or innuendo made to or about an athlete, or other sexually harassing behavior
- A coach discussing his or her sex life with an athlete
- A coach asking an athlete about his or her sex life
- A coach requesting or sending a nude or partial-dress photo to athlete
- Exposing athletes to pornographic material

- Sending athletes sexually-explicit or suggestive electronic or written messages or photos (e.g., “sexting”)
- Deliberately exposing an athlete to sexual acts
- Deliberately exposing an athlete to nudity (except in situations where locker rooms and changing areas are shared)
- Sexual harassment; specifically, the sexual solicitation, physical advances, or verbal or nonverbal conduct that is sexual in nature



### **Exception**

These guidelines do not apply to a preexisting relationship between two spouses or life partners.

### **Reporting Sexual Misconduct**

It's critical for clubs, coaches, staff members, volunteers and parents to report suspicions or allegations of sexual misconduct to the proper officials and appropriate law enforcement authorities.

By working together, we can create safe conditions for sport and protect athletes.



## Grooming Behaviors

We can recognize sexual predators through an observable pattern of behaviors, known as grooming behaviors. Alone, many of these behaviors or similar behaviors may occur without these behaviors being part of a grooming process. While we want to closely examine any behaviors that may constitute grooming, it does not necessarily mean that the individual is a sexual predator. Nonetheless, here are a few things to look for.

- #1** - The individual buys expensive gifts for the athlete or provides them with money.
- #2** - The individual separates the athlete from his or her peers.
- #3** - The individual treats a particular athlete differently from their teammates, perhaps giving the athlete far more attention than teammates.
- #4** - The individual tries to find ways to be alone with the athlete. For example, the individual may offer to take the athlete to and from practice, help them with homework or take them on unsupervised trips outside of the program.
- #5** - The individual tells the athlete that they “need” him or her to succeed in sport.
- #6** - The individual pushes boundaries in public and doesn’t follow policies. For example, this individual may have athletes sit on their laps in public, even if against club policy.
- #7** - The individual manipulates the athlete emotionally, praising them one day and degrading them the next.
- #8** - The individual spends an unusual amount of time with the athlete’s parents outside of the program, trying to win their trust.
- #9** - Your athlete tells you that the coach doesn’t want them talking about what they do when they’re together.
- #10** - The individual attempts to control a particular athlete, on and off the field.



## CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

### How to Recognize, Reduce and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse

#### What you need to know to protect athletes

Youth sport programs in the United States are incredibly successful at enriching the lives of athletes and their communities. However, high levels of participation and engagement also increase the risk of child sexual abuse. The same activities and relationships that help athletes develop and progress are also the ones that can allow offenders to have direct contact with their targets. Since the stakes are so high, every member of the sport community must make addressing child sexual abuse a top priority.

#### Definition

Child sexual abuse involves any sexual activity with a child where consent is not or cannot be given. This includes sexual contact with a child accomplished by deception, manipulation, force or threat of force, regardless of the age of the participants. It also includes all sexual interactions between an adult and a child, regardless of whether there is deception or the child understands the sexual nature of the activity.

#### Peer-to-Peer Child Sexual Abuse

Approximately one-third of all child sexual abuse occurs at the hands of other children. Sexual contact between minors can also be abusive. Whether or not a sexual interaction between children constitutes child sexual abuse turns on the existence of an aggressor, the age difference between the children, and/or whether there is an imbalance of power and/or intellectual capabilities.

#### Examples of Child Sexual Abuse

- Sexual penetration
- Sexual touching
- Non-contact sexual acts (e.g., verbal acts, sexually suggestive electronic or written communications, exposure or voyeurism)

#### Reporting Child Sexual Abuse

It's critical for clubs, coaches, staff members, volunteers and parents to report suspicions or allegations of child sexual abuse, including actions between children that may constitute sexual abuse, to the proper officials and appropriate law enforcement authorities.

By working together, we can create safe conditions for sport and protect athletes.

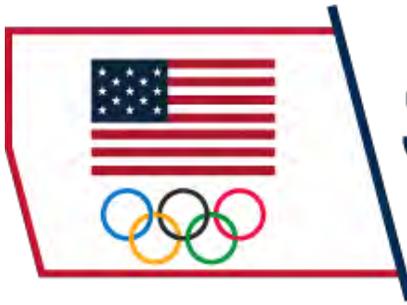




## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Athletes rarely speak up about child sexual abuse. Instead, we often need to rely on other indicators that something might be going on in sport. One indicator of child sexual abuse includes sudden behavioral changes related to the training and competition.

- #1 - Losing enthusiasm for sport, even for competition
- #2 - Not wanting to practice
- #3 - Wanting to avoid contact with a particular individual – such as a coach, assistant coach, or athletic trainer
- #4 - Having a sudden mood change, such as a violent emotional outburst
- #5 - Wanting to change teams, even though his or her friends are on their current team



# SAFESPORT

Where your game plan starts

## Federal and State Reporting Laws

Reporting laws reflect our community's paramount obligation to protect children from maltreatment. While the requirements listed below are the legal minimums, we encourage you to take immediate action if you believe the health or welfare of a child is at stake. If you have any questions concerning reporting, you should also speak with your legal team immediately.

### Federal Law

Federal legislation – the Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) (42 U.S.C.A. § 5106g), as amended by the CAPTA Reauthorization Act of 2010 – sets minimum standards for defining child abuse and neglect for those States that accept federal funding. Under federal law, the minimum acts or behaviors constituting child abuse and neglect by parents and other caregivers are:

- “Any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation”; or
- “An act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm.”

### State Law

As noted, whether to report child abuse and neglect under state law turns on several factors:

#### **What is “child abuse and neglect”?**

Although federal legislation sets minimum standards for defining child abuse and neglect, the definitions of child abuse and neglect vary by State. It is thus critical that you work with your attorney to determine (1) what law governs your reporting obligations; and (2) what the law was when the alleged child maltreatment occurred.

#### **Who is required to report?**

Many States identify **professionals** who are required to report child maltreatment (“mandatory reporters”) – e.g., social workers and teachers. An increasing number of states have included coaches as mandatory reporters. Note, however, that who constitutes a mandatory reporter varies by state. In addition, several states also require **any person** who suspects child abuse or neglect to report, regardless of profession.

#### **Who is permitted to report?**

Your legal obligations may vary with your ethical obligations. For those states that do not require all persons to report suspected abuse or neglect, any person is *permitted* to report (“permissive reporters”). Be aware that certain professions also have their own professional codes of conduct that they must follow and that may affect how and when an individual may report.

### **What is the standard for reporting?**

The circumstances under which a mandatory reporter is required to report vary by State. The DHHS summarizes two typical reporting standards, for both mandatory and permissive reporters: (1) “the reporter, in his or her official capacity, *suspects* or *has reasons to believe* that a child has been abused or neglected”; and (2) the reporter has knowledge of, or observes a child being subjected to, conditions that would reasonably result in harm to the child.” Again, work with your attorney to determine when you are required to or should make a report to a state agency.

### **Is the communication privileged?**

Some States identify when a communication is privileged, i.e., there is a right to maintain a confidential communication between a professional and their client or patient. However, this privilege is greatly restricted for mandatory reporters. For instance, States commonly provide that the physician-patient privilege is superseded by the requirement to report child abuse.

### **Will the report be anonymous?**

Most States permit anonymous reports.

### **Will the reporter’s identity be disclosed?**

If a reporter does disclose his/her identity, many states protect the identity of the reporter from disclosure to the alleged perpetrator. In some cases, however, a reporter’s identity may be released (i.e., by court order or by waiver and/or consent).

We also encourage the community to read more about abuse and neglect, familiarize themselves with the resources available to report abuse, and learn about the counseling and referral services that are available.

- To read more about **mandatory reporting**, with a summary of **state reporting laws**, visit: [http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws\\_policies/statutes/manda.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/manda.cfm)
- For **state (toll-free) child abuse reporting numbers**, visit: [http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/reslist/rl\\_dsp.cfm?rs\\_id=5&rate\\_chno=W-00082](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/reslist/rl_dsp.cfm?rs_id=5&rate_chno=W-00082)
- To search the **definitions** of child maltreatment by state, visit: [https://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws\\_policies/statutes/define.cfm](https://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/define.cfm)
- For **crisis assistance, counseling, and referral services**:  
Childhelp is a national organization that provides crisis assistance and other counseling and referral services. The Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with professional crisis counselors. **All calls are anonymous.** Contact them at 1.800.4.A.CHILD (1.800.422.4453), or visit <http://www.childhelp.org/>.