SAFE SPORT  MANDATORY REPORTING
Objectives

- Why reporting child abuse is important.
- Who are mandated reporters.
- How to respond to children who disclose.
- When to report and what information to include.
- Where to report.
Reasons Reporting is Critical

• Keeps children safe!
• Prevents additional victims.
• Contributes to the safety of the community.
• Safeguards the organizations where we work.
What is Child Abuse?

• Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act
  • “Any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caregiver 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.”
What is Child Abuse?

- State Law
Who are Mandated Reporters?

- Federal
- State
  - [http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/manda.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/manda.cfm)
- Olympic and Paralympic Movements
  - Covered Individuals

SAFE SPORT
Who is a Covered Individual in USA Swimming?

- Coaches
- Athletes
- Officials
- Meet Directors
- Team Chaperones
- Participating Non-Member
- USA Swimming Board members and national committee members
- Individuals with ownership interest in a member club
Who is a Covered Individual in

USA Swimming?

• Individuals with password access to the SWIMS database
• Members of the USA Swimming House of Delegates.
• USA Swimming headquarters staff
• Employees and volunteers of USA Swimming, Zones, LSCs and member clubs who interact regularly and frequently with athletes as a regular part of their duties
What are the Types of Abuse to Report?

- Physical Abuse
- Neglect
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
When Should I Report Child Abuse?

• As soon as you suspect or have reason to believe a child is being mistreated.

• Federal Law: Report as soon as possible – within 24 hours – to the appropriate local authority.
  • State Law could be more restrictive

• Consequences for not reporting
Where do I Make a Report?

- Appropriate legal authorities ([www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov))
- U.S. Center for SafeSport ([www.safesport.org](http://www.safesport.org))
- USA Swimming ([www.usaswimming.org/report](http://www.usaswimming.org/report))
Where do I Make a Report?

- Google the appropriate jurisdiction to report
  - Criminal - where the alleged crime happened
  - Child Abuse - where the child lives
- Make the phone call
  - Criminal - law enforcement number
    - “I’m calling to report sexual misconduct/abuse between an adult and minor.”
  - Child Abuse - child abuse hotline
    - “I’m calling to report child abuse from a parent/coach.”
What do I Report?

- Your contact information
- Address of where the incident happened.
- The specific act (or failure to act).
- How is this hurting the child.
- Specific Information
  - Name & age of the child;
  - Address where the child can be located;
  - Reason for initiating the report;
  - Negative impacts on the child;
  - Name of alleged perpetrator, if known;
  - Whether the child is in imminent danger;
  and
  - Contact information for all involved.
What if I’m Not Sure?

- Child Advocacy Centers (CAC)
  - National Children’s Alliance (www.nca-online.org)
- Child Abuse Helplines
  - ChildHelp USA National Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)
  - Darkness to Light Helpline 1-866-FOR-LIGHT
- Local Community Agencies
  - Local hotline, United Way offices, rape crisis center, etc.
What Are Some Reasons People Don’t Report?

- Uncertain if what they see is actually maltreatment.
- Uncertain if what you know is enough.
- Fear of making a false accusation.
- Fear of retaliation.
- Fear others will know you made a report.
- Hesitant to get involved in a complicated system.
- Don’t know how to report.
- Assume someone else has reported.
- Don’t want to damage relationship with the accused.
- Don’t want to make matters worse for the child.
How are Mandated Reporters Protected?

- Liability
- Confidentiality
- Anonymity
- Documentation
- Joint Knowledge
How Do I Protect Myself?

- By making the report! The only consequence is for NOT reporting.
- Keep detailed written documentation of your suspicions and your report.
- Some states permit a mandatory reporter to make an anonymous report.
- Most jurisdictions permit the identity of the reporter to remain confidential.
How Should I Respond to a Disclosure of Abuse?

- Stay calm
- Listen
- Comfort
- Don’t criticize
- Report

Tip: Take detailed written notes, date the notes, keep the notes.
How Should I **NOT** Respond to a Disclosure of Abuse?

- Don’t overreact or make negative statements about the abuser.
- Don’t interrogate or investigate.
- Don’t make promises – either that you will keep the information confidential or about the future.
- Don’t confront the abuser.
What do I do if a Child is in Imminent Danger?

• Call 911.
• De-escalate the situation by stalling or delaying until law enforcement arrives.
• Report.
Scenario 1

After finishing her race, a young athlete went to the stands. She was crying, and she looked both heartbroken and terrified because of how she finished. The man she met in the stands squeezed both of her arms in his hands, and he had his face right up against hers. He screamed at her, and dragged her up off the bleachers, still squeezing her arms, shaking her violently, and then push her back up against the windows behind the walkway at the top of the steps. Still shaking her, he shoved her against the windows and continued to scream at her, his nose right against hers. She was still crying, and he continued to shake her so violently that her entire body shook.

What do you do?
**Scenario 2**

You receive a call from a parent who reports that they found numerous text messages on their child’s phone between them and the assistant coach. The texts are non-stop, go late into the night, and some of the texts are completely unprofessional. Some of the texts are:

- “I liked the outfit you wore to practice today. Is that new?”
- “If you need to talk through your break-up, just let me know. I’m a great listener.
- “When you are 18 I will treat you the right way. I can’t wait till that day.”

*What do you do?*
Scenario 3

After an end of the week practice, one of your teams best athletes asks if he can talk with you for a minute. You can tell that he is nervous and acting out of character. When all the other kids leave, he proceeds to tell you that the assistant coach has been acting “weird” towards him. He shares that the coach started by wanting to just hang out with him. It turned into drinking together, and when that happens the assistant coach touches him. The athlete said that he feels really conflicted about this because he likes the coach but wants the touching to stop.

What do you do?
Resources

- Darkness to Light
- Praesidium
- U.S. Center for SafeSport
- KidPower of Colorado
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