Tough Stuff: How coaches can support athletes out of the water
Agenda

• Experiences and best practices
• Talking about the tough stuff
• Safe Sport implications
• Q&A
Why kids come to you

• Mentor
• Outside the rest of their life
• Objective viewpoint
• Kids spend a lot of time at swimming
Things kids will talk about

- Family
- Weight or body image
- School
- Peer pressure
- Mental health
Best Practices

• Open communication
• Diverse coaching staff
• Know the when and where
  • Follow up
Tough Stuff

- Suicide
- Self-harm
- Threats of violence/harm to others
- Abuse in the home or elsewhere
- Eating disorder
- Drug or alcohol abuse
Then what?

Don’t
• Judge
• Promise that it will be ok
• Promise to keep it a secret
• Investigate

Do
• Listen
• Offer support
• Help them get help
• Report
Team Boundaries

- No expectation that any child is primary
- Who’s doing the talking is important
- Document as needed
- 2-deep leadership and open & observable environments
Questions?

www.usaswimming.org/protect

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