



Presenter:

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SAFESPORT 

Mission and Purpose:

- Created by the United States Olympic Committee (USOC)
- SafeSport is the Olympic community's initiative to recognize, reduce and respond to misconduct in sport.
- We all play a role in creating a healthy environment for our skaters to participate
- Raising awareness about the different types of misconduct, providing tools for education and training, implementing policies and guidelines for athlete protection, offer clear reporting process

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USOC Minimum Standards Policy for Athlete Protection

It shall be the policy of the United States Olympic Committee that each National Governing Body adopt an athlete safety program by December 31, 2013.

The athlete safety program shall include, at a minimum, the following components:

1. Prohibited Conduct - A policy which prohibits and defines the six types of misconduct
2. Criminal Background Checks
3. Education and Training
4. Reporting
5. Enforcement



U.S. Figure Skating SafeSport Program



U.S. Figure Skating Harassment Policy

Adopted in 2000

1. Definition of Harassment

- Behavior: Any improper or inappropriate comment, action, or gesture directed toward a person or group that is related to race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or other personal characteristics.
- Environment: Creation of an environment through behavior or course of conduct that is insulting, intimidating, humiliating, demeaning, or offensive.

2. Definition of Child Abuse

3. Procedures for reporting

- Mandatory reporters
- Other observers

4. Violation of the Harassment and Abuse Policy

5. Retaliations or Threats of Reprisal

6. Condemnation or Groundless Allegations



U.S. Figure Skating Rules Pertaining to SafeSport

- GR 1.01 - Member Code of Ethics
- GR 1.02 – Member Code of Conduct
- GR 1.03 – Mandatory Reporting Requirement/Reporting Procedures
- Article XXV section 3, A and B – Grievance and Disciplinary Proceedings
- MR 5.11 – Coach Compliance
- ECR 2.00 – Ethics Committee
- GCR 2.00 – Grievance Committee



6 Steps Your Club Should Do

1. Join the USOC “Make the Commitment” campaign
2. Appoint a SafeSport Compliance Chair to the club board
3. Adopt and implement the SafeSport policies found within the SafeSport Handbook as applicable to your club
4. Select at least three persons within the club to complete the USOC SafeSport Video Training
5. Communicate and educate your members on the definitions of abuse and misconduct – ask everyone to help monitor and govern areas where potential abuse and misconduct could occur
6. When in doubt, report!



SafeSport Webpage

- www.usfigureskating.org/safesport
- Complete SafeSport Handbook
- Policies and Guidelines for Athlete Protection
- Codes of Conduct for skaters, parents, coaches, and board members
- Link to USOC SafeSport Video Training
- Club SafeSport Compliance Chair job description
- How to Make a Report – link to state laws



SafeSport Handbook Contents

Download at www.usfigureskating.org/safesport

- Section I – SafeSport Policies and Definitions
- Section II – Athlete Protection Policies and Guidelines
- Section III – SafeSport Awareness Training
- Section IV – Screening and Background Check Program
- Section V – U.S. Figure Skating Policy on Harassment and Abuse
- Section VI – Reporting Abuse, Misconduct and Policy Violations
- Section VII – Monitoring and Supervision of the SafeSport Program

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Six Primary Types of Misconduct Addressed in SafeSport Program

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Hazing
- Emotional Abuse and Misconduct
- Physical Abuse and Misconduct
- Sexual Abuse and Misconduct

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Bullying

Definition: Bullying is the use of coercion to obtain control over another person or to be habitually cruel to another person. Bullying involves an intentional, persistent or repeated pattern of committing or willfully tolerating physical and non-physical behaviors that are intended to cause fear, humiliation, or physical harm in an attempt to socially exclude, diminish, or isolate another person.

Examples: Persistently spreading hurtful rumors about a skater; posting messages, photos, videos and comments about a skater on a social network site with the aim of embarrassing or humiliating the skater.

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Harassment

Definition: Environment: Creation of an environment through behavior or course of conduct that is insulting, intimidating, humiliating, demeaning or offensive. Harassment usually occurs when one person engages in abusive behavior or asserts unwarranted power or authority over another, whether intended or not.

Examples: Harassment, generally: any derogatory comment to a person based upon gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression, or mental or physical disability; sexual harassment: making sexual jokes or comments that make others uncomfortable.



Hazing

Definition: Hazing includes any conduct which is intimidating, humiliating, offensive, or physically harmful. The hazing conduct is typically an activity that serves as a condition for joining a group or being socially accepted by a group's members.

Example: Making skaters participate in harmful (e.g., drinking alcohol) or embarrassing (e.g., removing clothes in front of a group of people) behavior to be part of a club or team.



Emotional Abuse and Misconduct

Definition: Emotional abuse involves a pattern of deliberate, non-contact behavior that has the potential to cause emotional or psychological harm to a participant. These behaviors may include verbal acts, physical acts or acts that deny attention or support.

Examples: Coach telling a skater he/she is not ever going to be good enough, is fat, is ugly, can't skate as well as (competitor); weighing skaters in a public setting and making derogatory comments.



Physical Abuse and Misconduct

Definition: Physical abuse means physical contact with a participant that intentionally causes or has the potential to cause the participant to sustain bodily harm or personal injury, intentionally creates a threat of immediate bodily harm or personal injury, intentionally hitting or threatening to hit an athlete with objects.

Examples: Hitting a skater with skate guards; shaking a skater; aggressively placing a skater in a correct position for a jump or spin; grabbing, slapping or otherwise hitting a skater; threatening to hurt the skater.



Sexual Abuse and Misconduct

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 which is considered an imbalance of power. An imbalance of power is always assumed between an athlete, regardless of age, and an adult in a position of authority

Examples: Any sexual interaction between an athlete and a person in a position of authority (coach, judge, mentor); any unwanted sexual behavior (including hugging, kissing, touching) between minors; sexual texts, instant messages, photos or videos taken of/ sent to/ showed to a minor.



Boundary-Violating Behaviors

- Behaviors that are not necessarily criminal, but can still be harmful to minors and may lead to abuse
- Examples: Patting a child on the rear end; hugging and kissing; holding hands; helping the skater with placement of a "butt pad"; letting the minor sit on your lap
- Behaviors to avoid: Spending time alone with a minor; becoming the minor's friend (as opposed to an authority figure); hanging out, IMing/ texting/ sharing photos, etc.; touching the minor in any way not directly related to achieving a skill



Grooming Process

Definition: Offenders typically control their victims through a systematic process called "grooming" or seduction. Many offenders exploit a child's vulnerabilities using a combination of tactics to gain the victim's trust, lower inhibitions, and gain cooperation and "consent."

1. Targeting the victim – An offender will identify a child and determine his or her vulnerabilities.
2. Gaining trust – Through watching and gathering information about the child, an offender will become acquainted with his or her needs.
3. Filling a need – Offenders will often lavish gifts, extra attention, and affection to forge a bond with their victims.
4. Isolating the child – By developing a special relationship with the child, an offender creates situations in which he or she is alone with the child.
5. Sexualizing the relationship
6. Maintaining control



Athlete Protection Policies and Guidelines for Clubs

- Proper Supervision of Athletes and Participants
- Two-Deep Leadership
- Locker Rooms and Changing Areas
- Social Media, Mobile and Electronic Communications Policy
- Travel Guidelines
- Sample Codes of Conduct
 - Member (GR 1.02)
 - Skaters
 - Coaches
 - Parents
 - Club board members



Proper Supervision

Definition: Proper supervision of members and participants during all program activities

- To minimize one-on-one non-coaching interactions off-ice
- Two-deep leadership is a preventative method to minimize one-on-one non-coaching interactions between minors and adults. Two-deep leadership means that at least two adults are present at all times with individual minors when off the ice.

Examples:

- Meetings- Any individual meeting should occur when others are present and where interactions can be easily observed, should take place in a publicly visible and open area, such as the corner of the arena.
- If an individual meeting is to take place in an office or a locker room, the door should remain unlocked and open.
- If a closed-door meeting is necessary at a test session or competition, the coach, staff member and/or volunteer should inform another coach, staff member and/or volunteer and ensure the door remains unlocked.



Locker Rooms and Changing Areas

- Athletes and participants are particularly vulnerable in locker rooms, changing areas and restrooms due to various stages of dress/undress and because they are less supervised than at many other times.
- Publish and post locker room policies specific to the facilities and distribute
- Where possible should have male and female skaters dress/undress in separate locker rooms. If separate locker rooms are not available, the skaters will take turns using the locker room to change or use the appropriate restroom within the facility.



Social Media, Mobile and Electronic Communications Policy

- All electronic communication of any kind between adults and minors, including use of social media, should be non-personal in nature and be for the purpose of communicating information about skating-related activities - appropriate, productive, and transparent.
- All content between adults and minors should be readily available to share with the public or families of the minor member.
- As a best practice to facilitate communication, an official club, program or team page may be set up and members and parents may join (i.e., "friend") the official organization or team page.



Travel Guidelines

- Athletes are most vulnerable to misconduct during travel, particularly overnight stays. This includes a high risk of athlete-to-athlete misconduct.
- Travel policies must be signed and agreed to by all members, parents, coaches and others involved.

Best practices:

- Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an athlete
- Appropriate adult-to-athlete ratios will depend on the age of athletes and other participants.
- Athletes will only share a room with other athletes of the same sex and age group.
- Chaperones should monitor the activities of all coaches, staff members, volunteers and athletes.



Codes of Conduct

- U. S. Figure Skating encourages all member clubs and programs to develop and implement codes of conduct for its members.
- Clarifies mission, values and principles, and links them with standards of conduct expected from members.
- Violations of any tenets will be addressed at the time they occur depending upon the seriousness of the offense following the procedures outlined in the conflict resolution or grievance process
- GR 1.02 Member Code of Conduct
- All coaches must agree to the “Coaches Code of Ethics, Standards and Conduct” as part of the Coach Compliance process this year



Club SafeSport Compliance Chair

Responsibilities and Duties:

1. Serve as the primary contact and oversee the implementation of effective SafeSport educational programs for all members, their parents, and coaches, as provided by U.S. Figure Skating
2. Implement club SafeSport policies
3. Verify all club coaches are compliant per U.S. Figure Skating rules
4. Understand the reporting structure for alleged incidents of abuse and refer individuals to make reports of a violation directly – see GR 1.03
5. Participate in workshops/Webinars as provided by U.S. Figure Skating and the USOC and disseminate information on best practices
6. Assist in the fulfillment of U.S. Figure Skating’s continuing efforts to foster safe, healthy and positive environments for all members



Club SafeSport Compliance Chair

IS:

- Overseeing the club’s implementation of SafeSport policies and guidelines
- Verifying coach compliance
- A resource
- Knowledgeable about the reporting process under GR 1.03

IS NOT:

- Responsible for conducting an investigation
- Unless the Safe Sport Compliance Chair is the person who witnessed abuse or suspects that abuse has occurred, the SafeSport Compliance Chair is NOT responsible for the actual reporting of incidents of abuse. The responsibility for reporting of abuse is set forth in GR 1.03



Reporting Process

Based upon the severity of the incident

1. Violation of Club Code of Conduct –file a complaint at the Club level
 - A. Follow procedures set forth in club conflict resolution policy
 - B. Report the incident to Club SafeSport Compliance Chair, if appropriate
2. Violation of SafeSport Policies – Report the incident to U.S. Figure Skating by sending a detailed description to safesport@usfigureskating.org and U.S. Figure Skating will take appropriate action by engaging the appropriate committee and process
3. If observed or suspected physical or sexual abuse may be occurring, contact your local child protective services office or law enforcement agency so the proper professionals can make an assessment - visit www.childwelfare.gov to find out where to call.
4. Mandatory Reporters – Mandatory reporter occupations include health practitioners, teachers, social workers, psychologists, clergy, firefighters, police officers, day camp administrators and youth organization and youth recreation program employees and coaches, among others, as prescribed by state law.



GR 1.03

- U. S. Figure Skating will not tolerate or condone any form of harassment (including sexual harassment), misconduct (including sexual, physical and emotional misconduct), bullying or hazing of any of its members including coaches, officials, directors, employees, parents, athletes and volunteers — or any other persons — while they are participating in or preparing for a figure skating activity or event conducted under the auspices of U.S. Figure Skating.
- Harassment of such nature between or among U. S. Figure Skating members shall be reported to the chair of the Ethics or Grievance Committee as soon as is practicably possible, per ECR 2.00 and GCR 2.00.
 - A. If any form of child abuse is observed or suspected, the observer should immediately contact either local law enforcement or a public child welfare agency and make a report.
 - B. Any person who violates this rule, who fails to appropriately report or who makes a false report or otherwise violates U. S. Figure Skating's Policy on Harassment and Abuse will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Article XXIV, Section 3, of U. S. Figure Skating bylaws.
- The U. S. Figure Skating Policy Statement on Harassment and Abuse may be found in its entirety online at www.usfigureskating.org



SafeSport Subcommittee

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SafeSport Subcommittee: Purpose

The responsibilities of the SafeSport Subcommittee are:

- To serve as a resource and provide guidance to member clubs in their implementation of the SafeSport Program;
- To provide assistance to members regarding steps that should be taken to reduce abuse and misconduct;
- To provide guidance to members and member clubs for the reporting of observed or suspected abuse and misconduct;
- To provide recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding additional initiatives that should be taken to reduce abuse and misconduct.



SafeSport Implementation Plan

- Next Webinar Thursday, August 8th
- Continuous implementation throughout the year
- Will be discussing during all upcoming VP sectional conference calls
- Will forward all monthly USOC "Make the Commitment" e-newsletters and resources to Club SafeSport Compliance Chair
- Will continue to add new resources to SafeSport webpage – check back often for new information



Join the USOC "Make the Commitment" Campaign



About the Campaign:

- Want to make sport safer? Then join *Make the Commitment: Stop Abuse in Sport*, the U.S. Olympic Committee's 12-month safe sport campaign, which runs through April 2014.
- One in four girls and one in six boys are sexually abused before the age of 18 – and with 44 million kids under the age of 18 participating in sport, we have an opportunity to change the odds.
- Through free monthly newsletters, supporting resources and webinars, learn how clubs, coaches and parents can work together stop child sexual abuse.
- Free downloads to get posters, brochures, web banners and more
- U.S. Figure Skating and the PSA have joined

Go to: <http://www.teamusa.org/StopAbuse> to join



In Conclusion:

U.S. Figure Skating is committed to providing a safe and positive environment for our members' physical, emotional and social development and ensuring we promote an environment free from abuse and misconduct. Through the U.S. Figure Skating SafeSport Program, U.S. Figure Skating is committed to providing the safest possible environment for all participants.



Contacts:

- Contact: safesport@usfigureskating.org
- Webpage: www.usfigureskating.org/safesport

Please send all questions to:
safesport@usfigureskating.org


