

USA Swimming's top priority continues to be keeping our athletes safe. No form of abuse, including child sexual abuse, has a place in our sport.

USA Swimming is committed to reducing the risk of abuse in swimming and increasing awareness of red flag behavior through its Safe Sport program.

USA Swimming's comprehensive abuse prevention program takes a multi-layered approach to keeping kids safe. These measures are informed by experts in the field of child safety and are among the strongest safeguards found in youth-serving organizations and include:

- Required policies and best practice guidelines;
- Mandatory screening, including criminal background checks and employment screening;
- Training and education;
- Monitoring and supervision; and
- Mandatory reporting.

Many perpetrators who sexually abuse children are in positions of trust. CDC research reports 91% of child sexual abuse is perpetrated by someone the child or child's family knows.

(Source: [CDC.gov/violenceprevention/childsexualabuse/fastfact.html](https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childsexualabuse/fastfact.html))

At USA Swimming, all adults working with athletes are responsible for creating an abuse-free environment. This includes educating parents about what they should expect from clubs and coaches while their child participates in our sport.

RESOURCES

To report child sexual abuse that occurred in participation with USA Swimming, contact the U.S. Center for SafeSport at

uscenterforsafesport.org/report-a-concern.

For information about mandatory reporting requirements in your state go to

childwelfare.gov/topics/responding/reporting/how.

Survivor resources are available at

usaswimming.org/safe-sport/swimassist

If you have questions or concerns about preventing abuse, contact USA Swimming Safe Sport Staff at safesport@usaswimming.org.

Additional resources to involve athletes and families can be found at

usaswimming.org/ssclubtool



The Capitol Sea Devils is a Safe Sport recognized club

Have a Safe Sport concern?

You can find more information at:



<http://seadevils.org/safe-sport>



SAFE SPORT

**A GUIDE TO USA SWIMMING'S
ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION
PROGRAM FOR FAMILIES**





Join us in providing a healthy and positive environment free from abuse.

1 GET EDUCATED

Education is an important tool for identifying and preventing misconduct. USA Swimming provides athletes and parents the tools to recognize inappropriate behavior and boundary violations. USA Swimming also aims to equip you with information on how to respond and report if you suspect your child's, or any child's, safety is at risk. You can access USA Swimming's Safe Sport for Parents website at usaswimming.org/ssparents

2 CREATE HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

It is important to establish healthy boundaries between athletes and coaches, and to have clear expectations about the coach's role. A coach can often serve as a teacher, a mentor or a role model for a young person. A coach is not an athlete's friend, peer or romantic partner. USA Swimming member clubs should identify and communicate prohibited coach behaviors to ensure strong and safe boundaries between adults and athletes. Be empowered to ask your club what these are.

3 RECOGNIZE AND ADDRESS HIGH RISK AREAS

Abusers rely on access, privacy and control to perpetuate misconduct and abuse. One way to reduce the risk of abuse is to implement policies designed to limit one-on-one interactions between adults and minor athletes. The USA Swimming Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy is designed to limit one-on-one interactions such as electronic communication and travel. For more information on this policy, visit usaswimming.org/maapp.

4 SPEAK UP AND REPORT MISCONDUCT

If you recognize questionable behavior - say something! Trust your gut and report any instances of known or suspected sexual misconduct or abuse to local law enforcement, the U.S. Center for SafeSport (uscenterforsafesport.org/report-a-concern) and to USA Swimming (usaswimming.org/report). DO NOT talk yourself out of your instincts. You know your child better than anyone.

5 TALK TO YOUR KID(S)

Physical, emotional and sexual misconduct can be difficult to talk about with your children but having these conversations is extremely important. Ongoing and open communication with children about their bodies and appropriate boundaries will make it easier for them to talk to you if anyone makes them feel uncomfortable. When they do talk with you, LISTEN. If your child shares something difficult with you, remain calm while you let them continue to talk. Comfort them, let them know that you are proud of them for telling you and that you are there for them no matter what.

USA Swimming encourages you to be involved and to ask questions of club leadership to determine your club's commitment to athlete abuse prevention. Some suggested areas to explore include:

- Is our club a USA Swimming Safe Sport Recognized Program? This is a voluntary program through which a club can demonstrate its commitment to creating a healthy and positive environment free from abuse for all its members through the development and implementation of club governance measures, Safe Sport policies and reporting mechanisms, Safe Sport best practices and training to athletes and parents. You can find more information at usaswimming.org/ssrp.
- How does our club screen and select coaches and staff before they are hired?
- How are our coaches and staff evaluated for addressing concerns besides "in-pool" performance?
- What Safe Sport education and training does our club offer to athlete and parents? Free parent and athlete training can be found at learn.usaswimming.org