



## Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

**Introductions:** Introduce Self and decide how you want workshop participants to introduce themselves.

*USA Football has partnered with Stop It Now! to support each of you, as you work with kids to provide them the safest, healthiest and most fun experience playing football.*

*This workshop is prepared to help you feel more confident about what you're supposed to do and how to do it to both keep kids safe and to respond when you are worried about their safety.*

*You can find any resources mentioned in this training at [www.stopitnow.org/usaf](http://www.stopitnow.org/usaf). In addition to the resources mentioned in this workshop, you'll also find other helpful and informative resources from Safe Sport.*



## Agenda - Objectives

- Understand the primary objectives of the Safe Sport Act
- Recognize the opportunities to take prevention steps
- Understand adults' roles in prevention
- Build your knowledge about sexual abuse
- Increase understanding of the mandatory reporting process
- Identify key policies and practices
- ❖ **Practice self-care**

### Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

*In this first module, the goals of the Safe Sport Act will be presented, and you will be introduced to a new way of thinking about prevention, highlighting the many opportunities we all have to create safe environments for kids – both on the field and off. USA Football hope you'll better understand your role in prevention and learn more about sexual abuse itself; and that you will feel prepared and ready to respond to warning signs of sexual abuse. We'll review some key policies and practices designed to protect young athletes from abuse – and that support you.*

*The overall goal is to help you feel confident, comfortable and prepared so that when there is a concern a child may not be safe, you will feel ready and able to speak up and take action. When you protect kids from sexual abuse, you don't just help them at home – you help them do their best on the field and grow into healthy adults. Your impact on a child can last far beyond your time coaching them, and we want to help you show up the best you can – you do this because you love football and care about kids.*

*USA Football's goal is also that you practice your own self care and manage your own training experience in a safe and healthy way. Talking about sex is not easy – whether you are a parent, a teacher, a coach, anyone...and when it comes to talking about child sexual abuse, well.. for many of you, this is probably the absolute last thing you want to learn about. But we do have an obligation to learn what we can if we are truly committed to children, their safety and their wellbeing.*



## Please Be Aware

- Training involving Sexual Abuse Prevention, including our responsibilities as adults to protect our children, means that we will be talking about information that involves sexual situations or uncomfortable scenarios and we may use some terminology relative to parts of the human body
- It's very possible that at least one of you, in some capacity, has personally been impacted by child sexual abuse. It's **very** important to be aware of the emotions this topic can stir up, **please** take care of yourself
- Support and resources are available:
  - **usaf@stopitnow.org**
  - **1-888-PREVENT**
- We strongly advise that children not be present for this session

## Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

*USA Football's goal is also that you practice your own self care and manage your own training experience in a safe and healthy way.*

*It's very possible that at least one of you has personally been impacted by child sexual abuse. Some of us may be survivors or know a survivor. Some of you may know someone who has perpetrated child sexual abuse, or who is at risk of perpetrating. It's important to be aware of the emotions this can stir up and to take care of yourself. Please know that there are no wrong feelings... and there are no wrong questions. Stop It Now! and USA FB are available for support, you can reach them at [usaf@stopitnow.org](mailto:usaf@stopitnow.org) – please reach out...and if not to them, please reach out to a trusted person in your life if this course brings up uncomfortable emotions or memories.*

*Mention to attendees that if they need to step out or take a break, they are always welcome to do that at any time.*

# Ground Rules

- Again, take care of yourself
- Participate to the extent you feel able and comfortable
- Use “I” statements (speak only for you)
- No such thing as a stupid question
- Stay afterwards if you want to talk privately
- Respect privacy

## Trainer’s Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

*Talking about sex is not easy – even for professionals. Talking with other adults about healthy sexuality is not easy, let alone talking about inappropriate sexual behaviors. We have found that even professionals in the field find it difficult to talk together about sex. It is also likely that there are some of us in this room that have a personal connection to this issue. For these and many other reasons, we always like to start with a few ground rules for our time together so that each of us feels able to participate in a way that feels most comfortable to them. These are ground rules that have worked for groups in the past. After we’ve gone over these, if anyone wants to comment or add one, please feel free to do so. Just raise your hand.*

### ➤ Review each bullet

- **Take care of yourself.** *It’s very possible that at least one of you has personally been impacted by child sexual abuse. Some of us may be survivors or know a survivor. Some may know someone who has perpetrated child sexual abuse, or who is at risk of perpetrating. It’s important to be aware of the emotions this can stir up and to take care of yourself. We want you to take a minute to think about who you can turn to if the presentation brings up some things for you either during this workshop or later.*
- **Full participation** - *to the extent that each of us is able or feels comfortable. We all have a lot of experience and information. Having everyone participate allows us to learn from each other, and to increase what each one of us gets out of today’s workshop.*
- **Use “I” Statements.** *Please speak for yourself, not for all parents, or for all teachers, etc.*
- **There is no such thing as a stupid question.** *We encourage any and all comments and questions, this is the way to start the prevention process, we need to start talking together and listening to each other. We all have important things to share and we want to hear from everyone.*
- **Stay afterwards.** *If you’d like to share a personal experience or don’t feel comfortable talking about a particular issue in front of the group, please feel free to stay after to talk with one of us.*
- **Respect privacy:** *we find that folks often share personal stories of their own parenting experiences, in their community and families, etc. Please hold confidence stories that are told here.*
- *Before we begin, I in now ay wish to silence someone’s story – personal stories fuel this work; we know what we know from the voices of survivors. But, I have found though that these trainings are not the most conducive environments for discussing personal victimization (or perpetration) experiences. I know that people have personal experiences relevant to this issue and I want to encourage people to practice safe boundaries and not share these personal experiences in a professional setting such as this one. Your professional experiences working with children – please share these*

### ➤ Ask – Are there any concerns? Does this make sense to everyone?



# Key Concepts For Prevention

- **HOPE**
- **ADULTS ARE RESPONSIBLE**
- Learn about sex abuse
- Plan for safety
- Promote healthy sexuality development
- Recognize and respond
- Develop confidence
- Take action - speak up
- Implement prevention focused, effective policies and procedures

## Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

*On your screen are key concepts that help and promote prevention practices.*

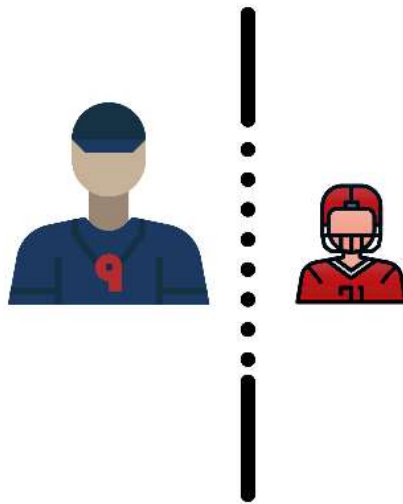
*To start... and this isn't meant to be "preachy" in any way, the first one is "hope" – hope that every adult does their part, cares about kids' safety which also includes just continuing to have hope that prevention is possible (because it is!). When we feel hopeful, it means that there is a possibility – when we hope to win the lottery, we're actually holding onto to the idea that we could win. So, by hoping that we can keep kids safe, we hold onto the idea that kids can have safe childhoods.*

*We'll talk more about adults' responsibility in a moment, but in a nutshell, the key concepts for prevention include learning as much as you can about sexual abuse so that you can better plan for safety. This also includes learning about safe and healthy sexual development. How do we know if there is something wrong, if we don't know if something is right?*

*Once we know what is healthy and what is concerning, then we are better prepared to know what to look for, and we can more confidently speak up.*

*In organizations, policies and procedures can help everyone know what behaviors will be tolerated – and which will not be – and when they implement and follow through on their policies and procedures focused on sexual safety, children can be kept safer.*

# ADULTS SETTING BOUNDARIES



## Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

*Let's talk now about the importance of adults setting boundaries in prevention. We're not just talking about adults making and enforcing the rules – which of course we need to do, but also we know that our own behaviors can create and strengthen... or erode and weaken safe environments. We can model safe behavior for kids, and model how to respond to concerning situations.*

*How we act around children, how we respond to both adults' and children's behaviors and how we talk about concerns all contribute to creating strong circles of safety around youth.*

*While we might... and should give children tools to know what is safe and what is not – the bottom line is that adults need to speak to other adults when there are warnings signs of a problem, when an adult has crossed a boundary – and before there are concerns, to describe and clearly define the rules, the expectations and set the boundaries.*

## Setting Boundaries = PREVENTION



✓ Modeling

✓ Reduces Risk

✓ Builds  
Protective  
Factors

### Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

*Take this example: (Trainer may replace with own example, make relevant to audience)*

*Imagine that you're at a community picnic with all of your players, and their families. You are sitting at a table with several children and a few of the parents and other volunteers. Imagine that there is a parent there, who we will call Mr. Green. Now, for the point of this story, Mr. Green is not a pedophile, and he is not interested in children sexually, but what he does do can influence a child's risk of being abused.*


*And what Mr. Green does is this – he talks about sex in front of children, he tells dirty jokes with sexual content, he talks about how hot his new boss is and how he'd like to "do her" and just uses really mature, sexualized language. Lots of problems with this. Of course, children are listening – and they are watching to see how the other adults respond. Yes, sometimes kids are exposed to more adult oriented conversation – it happens, but when we experience someone behaving inappropriately around children, we have an opportunity to intervene. If we don't intervene, kids can get mixed messages about what is safe. They may get the message that it is ok for adults to talk about sex with them, or that other adults won't confront some adults who are breaking the rules. Some kids might recognize that Mr. Green is doing something inappropriate – and some won't but likely they are still curious and are paying extra attention - because honestly, this day in age, there is so much sexual content around, kids tend to be curious – they want to know more.*

*So... if no adult speaks up to Mr. Green, maybe saying something like, hey... "mixed audience, kids present" or maybe pulls him aside and tells him to watch his language, then we are missing an opportunity to promote prevention.*

*We can't expect a child to speak up to Mr. Green either – tell him that he's not supposed to talk that way, right? So, kids are looking for cues from the other adults present – what are they going to do? Are they going to say something? If they don't, then a child may start to get the idea that it is ok for adults to talk about sex around kids and that rules don't really mean anything and adults can do anything they want.*

*So if is a person who is at risk of sexually abusing a child tries to scope out how vulnerable a child is by sharing a sexually mature story with that child, and this child appears unaffected and indifferent to the joke, this adult may take that as a sign that this child might be easier to abuse. If that child hasn't had adults in their life speak up when another adult crosses a boundary, then this child may just think it is ok for some random adult to talk to them about adult sexual topics. To be clear, there are adults who will and need to talk to children about sex, sexuality, and sexual development – for the child's benefit. But if any adult who is talking to a child about sex or is somehow introducing sexual content into conversations for their own purpose, this is most often inappropriate.*

*We'll talk about what you may think of as "grooming" behaviors in another module, but we want emphasize that when adults do not call out adults for what may be more minor rule infractions, including having questionable boundaries with youth, then we are creating more vulnerable environments for kids.*



What are you prepared to do  
if you see someone do or say  
something inappropriate in  
front of a child?

## Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

Speaking up when minor boundaries are crossed or ignored – like when an adult shares personal information with a kid or buys them presents without informing their parents - is key to prevention.

And when we speak up, it gives the message that we are a safe and responsible adult, and it may even give the message to any adults who may not be safe that children under our care are being protected – and this further reduces risk for these kids.

Please take a moment and think about whether you have ever seen another adult doing something in front of a child that you thought was inappropriate or unusual to you – perhaps something out of the ordinary, or even against the rules. Maybe something like talking about another person in really sexualized terms or walking out of line of sight at a game with a visiting player. Maybe something else... this could be something that isn't even sexual in nature but still something that made you have a gut feeling that something wasn't right.

What did you do? Or maybe, what did you wish you had done? Why did you speak up or do something if you did? Or, if you wished you had done something differently, what got in your way? (pause)

➤ **Ask: Would anyone like to share a situation they thought of?**

**This could be a group discussion, or class could be broken down into pairs/groups. If given virtually, ask participants to chat in.**

We invite you to ask yourself: Can you be a model for children? Can you make and set safe boundaries? What are you prepared to do if someone is crossing boundaries with children? Remember, it can even be something simple, like, "Hey – remember our 1:1 policy - it helps protect us and the kids we care for"

## Prevention Task

- Provide a safe environment
- Recognize developmentally appropriate practice and exploration
- Be a safe person
- Provide accurate information
- Teach and model consent
- Identify and model boundaries



### Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

When we think about being a model for the children we care for, this is how we can do it – through prevention tasks. The last example we shared – speaking up when an adult is telling an inappropriate joke – is an example of a prevention task. Prevention tasks are the things we do every day for kids to show them we care in our lives all the time – like asking about how their day was and making sure they get healthy meals – to the things we may do more intentionally, like helping a child think through the consequences of their actions, talking to them about safe and unsafe behaviors, answering kids questions about their body and sexuality in an age-appropriate way, teaching and modeling consent, and setting and modeling good boundaries. And of course, when we empower kids and respect them and their choices for their body, we're creating another circle of safety around them.

As you go through this and other trainings on sexual abuse, please keep these ideas in mind – and carry them over not only to your players on the field, but to whatever other kids you care for in your life.

## The Facts

**All sexual activity** between an adult and a child is sexual abuse. Sexual abuse does not have to involve penetration, force, pain, or even touching. If an adult engages in any sexual behavior (looking, showing, or touching) with a child to meet the adult's interest or sexual needs, it is sexual abuse.

Sexual touching between children can also be harmful, and in some cases abusive.

### Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tip

This may feel really uncomfortable now but as one of our key steps of prevention is to learn all that we can, it's important that you have an accurate definition for child sexual abuse.

- **Read the slide out loud:** *All sexual activity between an adult and a child is sexual abuse. Sexual abuse does not have to involve penetration, force, pain or even touching. If an adult engages in any sexual behavior (looking, showing, touching) with a child to meet the adult's interest or sexual needs, it is sexual abuse. Sexual touching between children can also be harmful, and in some cases abusive.)*

*And it is criminal.*

*It probably doesn't feel so great to hear this or to read this, but again, in order to know what we're trying to prevent, let's be clear on what it is. Perhaps you were surprised to hear that sexual abuse doesn't even have to involve touching.*

- **Ask:** *Can you think for a moment of what an example might be of sexual abuse that is non-contact, involving no physical touch?*

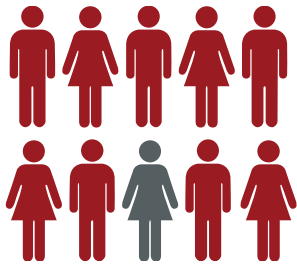
**Trainer may need to offer example, i.e. showing a child adult pornography, asking a child to undress or undressing in front of a child**

*You may have thought of things like showing pornography to a child, or someone who exposes their genitals – on purpose – to a child. Remember, it is any sexual behavior done with a child that is intended to meet the adult's sexual interest and needs.*

*It includes all sexual activity between an adult and a child, no matter if deception is involved, or if the child understands the sexual nature of the activity. Consent cannot be given. A minor cannot give consent.*

*And while we're not going to talk in detail about this in this module, sexual touching between children can be harmful and abusive as well. We'll talk about children's harmful sexual behaviors in another training module, and the importance of understanding and responding to children's sexual behaviors.*

## The Scope of Sexual Abuse



Up to 90% of sexual abuse is perpetrated by someone the child knows. **More than 50% is by a parent or another relative.**



70-77% of sexual abuse or assault is at the hands of other juveniles.

**60%**

of children who are sexually abused **do not disclose.**

### Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

*How often does this happen? You may think that this is something that happens really infrequently, that this only happens when we hear about it in high profile cases that make the news – maybe you think it happens only with girls... but it is unfortunately much more frequent, occurring primarily in children's homes and neighborhoods – and includes all genders, ages, races, abilities - and economics, religion, education, prestige also doesn't matter. Sexual abuse can happen in any home, in any community.*

*In the U.S., one in ten children is estimated to be sexually abused, often the statistics "1 in 4 girls" and "1 in 6 boys" are typically referenced but because of low disclosure rates, we don't truly know. Actually, we most often find out about abuse long after it has happened, often when the child becomes an adult and then discloses what happened. Also, kids who are in any way "different" – such as kids with disabilities, have higher rates of sexual abuse – just as kids who experience other vulnerable situations in their lives, such as homelessness, incarcerated or absent parents, or any other traumas are also more vulnerable to abuse.*

*Also disturbing but important to know is that we are not talking about strangers roaming the streets sexually abusing children. Almost 90% of cases involving sexual abuse involve someone known to the child or to their family. In over ½ of the cases the parent or another relative is perpetrating the harm.*

*Also, we are talking more and more about the sexual harm that can occur between youth themselves. Between 70 and 77% of sexual abuse cases include a youth who has caused the harm to another child.*

*And as just mentioned this, but we really don't know everything about the scope of sexual abuse because it is estimated that 60% of kids who are being abused do not disclose – at least not at the time, not when someone could intervene. They may report later – as adults – and that's how we know how many children keep their abuse to themselves.*

*These figures aren't to shock you or to scare you. But again, it is important to understand that this is happening everywhere, and way more frequently than you might have realized. This isn't an "out there" problem with people we don't know, but it affects so many people – children included – that we love and care for already.*



## What is the Safe Sport Act?

- On February 14, 2018, the **Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act** was signed into law
- This is a law which establishes protection for young athletes
- It requires youth sport organizations to develop and enforce policies, procedures, and provide training to prevent abuse and misconduct

### Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

The Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017 was created in reaction to the abuse found in various youth sports organizations

The purpose of the law is to expand existing mandated reporting laws to all youth sport organizations, as well as require training and create policy for 1:1 interactions between adults and children

A key component of the law is that organizations must offer and provide consistent training to all adult members who are in regular contact with amateur athletes regarding prevention and reporting of child abuse. This is USA Football's training to help meet that requirement.



## Safe Sport Policies

- Limit one-on-one interactions between minor athletes and adults at facilities/events that are not observable and interruptible
- All adult members in regular contact with youth athletes complete abuse awareness training and go through background checks
- All adults who interact with youth athletes are required to act as a mandated reporter, and youth sport organizations must provide a mechanism for communication **without retaliation**

### Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

*Knowing a bit more now about the expanse of sexual abuse, let's look at what sports culture is doing to help keep kids safe – to help you better understand our goals in providing this training and in the expectations of you as a responsible adult, guiding, mentoring and supervising youth.*

*In 2018, the “Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and SafeSport Authorization Act of 2017” became Federal law. The mission of the U.S. Center for Safesport is to make the athlete's well-being the keystone of sports culture. In order to create the safest environment possible for both youth and adult athletes, Safe Sport developed their recently revised minor athlete abuse prevention policies. This document informs organizations, like USA Football and your league about safe sport policies. These laws are designed to provide our athletes the right that they deserve to play and compete in sports, in football – free from any form of abuse. You may want to look at a document developed by Project Play from the Aspen Institute, Children's Rights in Sports too – it's in your online resources.*

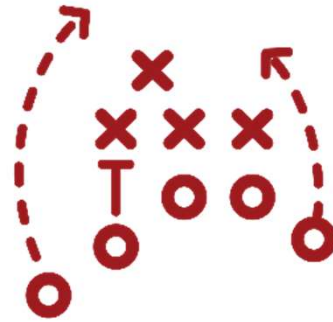
*We'll look at these policies as they apply in your league in a moment, but we want to highlight the very last thing on this slide here....that youth sport organizations must provide a mechanism for communication without retaliation. This means that adults who have concerns that a child may not be safe, must be able to speak about their concerns with the appropriate people – potentially someone who is over them, their boss or head coach – or with the authorities – without any retaliation. Anyone with a concern should be able to speak up without worrying that they will lose their job, will get into trouble, will be ostracized – or from any other negative and retaliatory actions.*

*The policies here are in direct response to what we do know about sexual abuse:*

- *It happens most often in isolated, 1 to 1 situations*
- *It can happen virtually*
- *Peer abuse occurs most often when children are unsupervised*
- *And certain environments are high risk areas for abuse in sports – locker rooms, hotels, etc.*

## Key Policies

- Responding to abuse (what to do)
- 1:1 Policy (adult : athlete)
- USA Football's Safe Sport Policy can be used as a guide



### Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

*Policies are tools to help you know and practice safe behaviors. They are also in essence a plan, a play in the playbook if you will – that is designed to achieve a goal. And the goals are to keep everyone safe – children, as well as the adults who supervise them and come into contact with them.*

*Let's go over these key policies – You can reference USA Football's Safe Sport Policy, also found in your online resources, and we strongly encourage you to learn about your league's specific policies as well.*

## Responding to Disclosures

- Stay calm
- Let the child know you believe them
- Do not investigate
- Report



### Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

*We're going to go over what to do when you become aware of a potential or actual abuse situation but first, I bet you are hoping this never happens to you – that you are never in a position where a kid discloses to you that they are being sexually abused.*

*But there may be times – whether you're expecting it or not – that you may hear a child's disclosure. This may be an accidental disclosure (think – when a child tells you about a “game” their dad played with them that they don't know is abusive) or purposeful (for example, when they share that they want to tell you a secret – and proceed to describe abuse). The fact that this child told you is important, and your reaction matters to them and their healing.*

*First, stay calm and take a deep breath – even if you're freaking out inside, try not to show it. Many kids are very good at reading emotions and being calm helps them know they're doing the right thing by telling. Let the child know you believe them and this is not their fault. Do not investigate – this is not your job to find out if the story is true, but to merely relay information that was disclosed to you. Then, follow up and make a report. We're going to talk about how to report in just a second, but it's important that we also say that if you ever hear a child disclose you should also take the time to check-in with yourself and see what you need - adults are also deeply affected and impacted by hearing about sexual abuse, so remember that your own wellbeing is also important.*

➤ **Ask if there are any questions or concerns?**

# REPORTING

- The process
- Why, When, Who
  - Childwelfare.gov
  - Childhelp (800.422.4453)
- What happens next?
  - Report to your league
  - [abuse@usafootball.com](mailto:abuse@usafootball.com)
- Proof is not needed!



## Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

*You may have heard the term “Mandated Reporter” and are wondering whether you are one. Mandated reporters are professionals or volunteers who work with children and are legally required to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to relevant authorities. Many coaches are mandatory reporters of child abuse under state or federal law, and **if you are a certified USA football coach, you are required to report any evidence or disclosure of abuse of any kind, and that includes sexual abuse**; when a child is being sexually abused or when another youth or an adult is sexually harming or abusing a child. This also includes reporting warning signs of a possible sexual abuse situation, where there is a strong suspicion or there are warning signs that a child is being abused.*

***Even if you are not in a state that requires coaches to report, as a USA Football certified coach, you are required to notify authorities of abuse.*** The authorities can mean either the local police or your local child protection authorities. You can find the number to make a report through the child welfare information gateway, or you can contact our helpline at [usaf@stopitnow.org](mailto:usaf@stopitnow.org) or call 1.888.PREVENT. You can also get this information by contacting ChildHelp at 1.800.422.4453

*Reporting is actually fairly easy. In most states, when you contact child protection services, you can ask if you can remain anonymous when reporting.*

*When you report, you want to be as specific as possible and stick to facts. Describe what you saw or heard and be prepared with identifying information – such as first and last names, ages and locations. You don't want to share any assumptions or your own impressions, just what you saw or heard.*

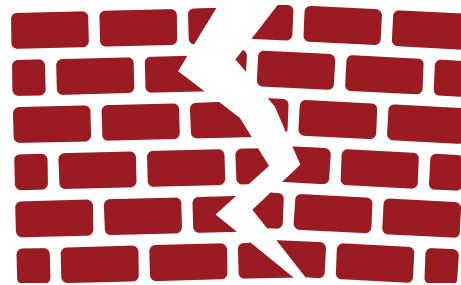
*Typically, then the reporting agency will determine whether there is enough reason to investigate the report. And even if they don't investigate when you make a report, reporting can be helpful because perhaps the next time someone makes a similar report, your information will help build a case if necessary.*

*We want to emphasize that you do not need proof or evidence. You can call your local child protection services even if you just have concerns and aren't sure whether you have enough information to report. So if a child is coming to practice, and you overhear them telling another child that their mom's new boyfriend has been showing them pornography at home and you don't know whether this is illegal, you can contact child protection services and talk out your concerns.*

*And after you've made your report, you want to follow up. Your league may have certain policies in place about next steps so do check in about that. But after you report, let your league leader know that you have made this report. Or if you are not comfortable talking to that person, contact USA Football at [abuse@usafootball.com](mailto:abuse@usafootball.com) USA Football will follow up with your league as your league follows its own investigative process.*

# Breaking Down Barriers

- Not sure what to do
- “I could be wrong”
- “Not my job”
- Cultural norms
- Fear of retaliation
- Lack of information



## Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

*It does take both courage and confidence to speak up. So let's talk about how to prepare to take action when you may encounter a situation the field, at a banquet, at an away event - where someone may be crossing a boundary, breaking a policy or putting a child at risk. Your ability to take action to keep a child safe may include talking to another adult about their behavior. There may be times when you may suspect a child is being abused, or you see another volunteer or staff member breaking a policy... I bet there may have been times in your life when you had a feeling something wasn't right, but you didn't speak up – pretty much all of us have had that experience and feeling. No shame – there is a lot that can get in the way.*

*Let's look at some of these barriers to speaking up and to even making a report. A huge barrier is just not knowing what to do – if you don't know the steps to take when someone is doing something that breaks a policy, or when you suspect abuse, that may freeze you in your tracks.*

*Many people also worry that they could be wrong – they don't want to accuse someone or potentially have someone fired, when they're not even really sure if what they saw is really true. And there is just the difficulty in believing someone you've known for a long time or someone who is highly respected and esteemed could do something like this - could be sexually abusing a child.*

*Some may think that this isn't really their job – as a coach, they're there to train and talk about football, not abuse. So there's also the culture – many times people will think that speaking up goes against "how it's normally done" – we are all most likely familiar with unfortunate situations, some in sports specifically, that involved sexual abuse where someone knew about it but never acted or said anything.*

*And then there's fear of retaliation – especially if the person you're concerned about is someone "above" you, such as a head coach, league leader, or important community leader*

*And finally... many people don't realize just how prevalent abuse is; such as the fact that boys can be sexually abused. This can be one way folks may dismiss what they're noticing.*

*Of course, there are other barriers, but these are some key ones particularly with folks in similar positions as yourself*

*So, when you're seeing something that's making you have questions, you don't need to wait for there to be abuse to take action – you don't need proof or evidence - in fact, speaking up in low-risk, seemingly minor situations, like when your colleague needs to be reminded about a policy, can help raise your confidence. And when you see something – when you're concerned about something, talk to other people – don't keep it to yourself. Share what you saw and bring it up the chain. You don't have to handle any concerning situation by yourself. Often too there are policies in place to make sure you're also protected when your doing your duty to protect kids.*

*Your confidence will increase as you learn more and feel less alone. You'll feel better prepared to say something when a situation requires you to.*



# Sexual Misconduct Policy

Types of sexual misconduct include:

1. Sexual assault
2. Sexual harassment
3. Sexual abuse
4. Any other sexual intimacies that exploit an athlete

Minors cannot consent to sexual activity with an adult, and all sexual interaction between an adult and a minor is strictly prohibited.

## Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

*Back to policies - let's dive into the sexual misconduct policy. Football staff, athletes and participants cannot engage in any forms of misconduct, including sexual misconduct. You can see up on your screen the different types of sexual misconduct, and I'll explain more how sexual misconduct is defined and (reminder that you can find and reference the USA Football Safe Sport Policy in your materials list and at [stopitnow.org/usaf](https://stopitnow.org/usaf))*

*Sexual misconduct is defined as:*

*Any touching or non-touching sexual interaction that is (a) nonconsensual or forced, that is (b) coerced or manipulated, or is (c) perpetrated in an aggressive, harassing, exploitative or threatening manner;*

*And it is any sexual interaction between an athlete and an individual with evaluative, direct or indirect authority. This could be a coach of course but could be anyone with power over the athlete. – a volunteer, a parent driving kids to a game, a ref – anyone. Really, an imbalance of power is always assumed between a coach and an athlete, similar to an employee and their boss.*

*Also, this includes any action described as sexual abuse or misconduct under federal or state law such as sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or rape.*

*Sexual misconduct includes both the legal definitions of child sexual abuse and other infractions that are inappropriate and unsafe.*

*And this policy covers the locker room, the field, buses and cars, hotels and banquet halls. Anywhere a child is, this policy is relevant.*

*We'll look at a few examples in a moment, but it's also important to understand that, as we said earlier, children cannot give consent – so any sexual activity with children is considered child sexual abuse.*



## What is Sexual Harassment?

- Sexual harassment is; sexual solicitation, physical advances, or verbal or nonverbal conduct that is sexual in nature, and
  - is unwelcome, offensive or creates a hostile environment, and the offending individual knows or is told this or
  - is sufficiently severe or intense to be harassing to a reasonable person in the context

### Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

*Note that this policy includes sexual harassment. In plain language – this refers to sexual language and behaviors that are both verbal and non-verbal, that are unwanted but continue to happen, making people uncomfortable. It can be someone who repeatedly tells sexual jokes, or who talks about their sex life. It most often creates an environment that feels uncomfortable, possibly threatening and doesn't impact just an individual but everyone in the situation.*



## Examples of Sexual Misconduct

- 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 athletes need to change together, i.e. locker rooms, and coaches should never change while with youth
- Asking or making an athlete touch another athlete sexually
- Touching an athlete’s breasts, buttocks, or genitals, or having an athlete touch a coach’s breasts, buttocks or genitals
- Sexual relations or intimacies between persons in a position of trust, authority and/or evaluative and supervisory control over athletes or other sport participants
- A coach discussing their sex life with an athlete, or asking about an athlete’s sex life
- Exposing athletes to pornographic material

### Trainer’s Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

*Here are a few examples of what sexual misconduct can look like – take a second to pause this training and read over these examples. (pause)*

*Again, some of these may make you feel uncomfortable...as they probably should – because some do cross the line and are examples of sexual abuse, such as touching children’s private parts and certainly having sex between a minor athlete and any person with authority over them...any adult.*

*Also notice the word “deliberately” – the intention of exposing a child to adult sexual material and behaviors.*

## Sexual Misconduct Policy Violations: On the Field

Coach A said to an athlete, “You looked great on the field today – and I bet your girlfriend is going to get ‘lucky’ tonight too. How far have you gotten with her? I bet she’s an easy win, if you know what I mean!”

Coach B slapped an athlete’s buttocks “in jest” after telling them to hurry up and get onto the field.

Coach C huddles the team around their phone, showing athletes “who they’re playing for today” – and what they share with the athletes is a pornographic picture of a naked adult.

### Trainer’s Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

- **Discussion:** Go over each example, asking participants if anyone can explain why this is a sexual misconduct policy violation. Allow for discussion as needed and use the following points to illustrate:

*Coach A said to an athlete, “You looked great on the field today – and I bet your girlfriend is going to get ‘lucky’ tonight too. How far have you gotten with her? I bet she’s an easy win, if you know what I mean!”*

*This coach is talking about this athlete’s sexual life, making wildly inappropriate comments about their girlfriend. This crosses the line over what any adult should say to a youth, especially when that youth is someone that they have power over. We have to remember how much youth look up to us. Being good, healthy role models for them helps them learn what safe behavior looks like.*

*Coach B slapped an athlete’s buttocks “in jest” after telling them to hurry up and get onto the field.*

*Touching an athlete’s genitals – including their butt – is inappropriate and unsafe. It doesn’t matter what the intention was – even gestures that were meant to be playful can still be misconduct if they violate another person’s boundaries or involves touching their genitals or butt, like in this example.*

*Coach C huddles the team around their phone, showing athletes “who they’re playing for today” – and what they share with the athletes is a pornographic picture of a naked adult. Coach C’s behavior not only is considered sexual misconduct but is illegal – and considered child sexual abuse. Showing a youth pornography is against the law, and this coach’s behavior should be reported to the authorities by anyone else who knows that this occurred.*

## 1:1 Policy

All coaches and volunteers are to observe the following guidelines when meeting with an athlete:

1. Any individual meeting should occur when others are present and where interactions can be easily observed
2. Where possible, an individual meeting should take place in a publicly visible and open area
3. If an individual meeting is to take place in an office, the door should remain unlocked and open
4. If a closed-door meeting is necessary, staff must inform another staff member – and ensure the door remains unlocked

### **Individual Training**

**Sessions:** An individual training session(s) with an athlete or participant may also be desired or necessary. Under these circumstances, USA Football encourages parents or guardians of a minor athlete to attend the training session.

## Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

*Now let's talk about the 1:1 policy, you can reference a 1 to 1 policy in the USA Football Safe Sport Policy example. This may already be something you're familiar with, but if not, please take a second to pause this training and read through this slide. (pause)*

*So, to be clear – 1 to 1 meetings should occur only when they can be in public, in front of others – always avoid meeting with a child behind locked doors or anywhere that is out of site, but if absolutely necessary, someone else should be informed about the meeting taking place, where and with whom – and the meeting should be easily interruptible – anyone can walk in.*

*Individual coaching and training sessions of course are often a part of sport, and under these situations, it is always encouraged that the athletes' parents or guardians be present. At the very least, again – these should be practice sessions in the open and with common knowledge – parents know and other volunteers know – it is not done in secret or isolation.*

*But why is a 1:1 policy important? It's not just to protect youth from inappropriate and abusive situations, but to protect you as well. When you're following these policies, things are out in the open and others can see and vouch for what's going on. It's also our safety plan – it helps communicate with athletes and with other coaches about the expectations – this allows everyone to be on the same page about safety. And, it makes it much easier when someone is breaking one of these rules to talk about it – by referring back to your policy. Inevitably, you'll also come into situations where you don't know what the right thing to do is, specifically involving athlete supervision – and having clearly defined policies like this make it easier to figure out the correct solution.*



## Violating the 1:1 Policy: On the Field

Coach A invited an athlete to talk about training exercises that may help them improve. They brought the athlete to their office alone and closed the door without telling another staff they're doing this.

Coach B took an athlete into the equipment room by themselves to try on equipment with the door shut.

Coach C told another staff that they needed to talk privately with an athlete, but then locked the door behind the athlete so that the athlete understood that they can both "talk freely" without worry of being overheard.

### Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

*We are almost done but first, while this 1:1 policy may seem pretty straightforward, we have some examples that may help lay out some types of situations you may encounter that violates the policy.*

- **Discussion:** Go over each example, asking participants if anyone can explain why this is a 1:1 policy violation. Allow for discussion as needed and use the following points to illustrate:

*Coach A invited an athlete to talk about training exercises that may help them improve. They brought the athlete to their office alone and closed the door without telling another staff they're doing this.*

*This example may seem simple, but if Coach A had notified another staff member, they wouldn't have broken this policy.*

*Coach B took an athlete into the equipment room by themselves to try on equipment with the door shut.*

*In this example, Coach B is taking this athlete behind a closed door which violates several parts of this policy. A coach should never bring an athlete to a secluded place and close the door like in this example.*

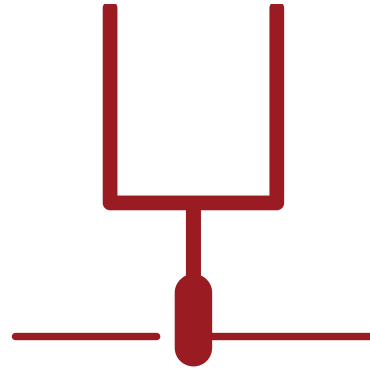
*Coach C told another staff that they needed to talk privately with an athlete, but then locked the door behind the athlete so that the athlete understood that they can both "talk freely" without worry of being overheard.*

*Though Coach C told another staff what was going on, they didn't follow the policy because they locked the door. Even if a closed-door meeting needs to happen and a staff is notified, that door needs to stay unlocked.*

*We hope these examples help illuminate this important policy.*

## Key Takeaways

- ✓ You can protect a child
- ✓ Speak Up – Respond and Report
- ✓ You don't need proof!
- ✓ Policies protect us and children



### Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tips

- **Ask for final questions**
- **Remind participants of their materials and resources.**
- **Thank all participants.**

*We are at the end of this first training module, Key Prevention Steps.*

*We hope this training has been informative and supports you in your relationships with kids – off and on the field.*

*Additional support materials and resources are available from USA Football and Stop It Now! If you would like to learn more and have a deeper engagement with prevention, please reach out to USA Football directly by visiting [usafootball.com/consultants](https://usafootball.com/consultants) to reach a USA Football representative.*

# THANK YOU!

Email

[usaf@stopitnow.org](mailto:usaf@stopitnow.org)

Visit

[stopitnow.org/usaf](http://stopitnow.org/usaf)

[facebook.com/StopItNow](https://facebook.com/StopItNow)

Call

Helpline: **1.888.PREVENT**



## **Trainer's Notes – Suggested Talking Tips**

**Thank you and please reach out to us here at Stop It Now! or USA Football with any questions or concerns. Take good care - of yourself and your athletes.**