



# AWARENESS TO ACTION

## MODULE 1: KEY PREVENTION STEPS

### TRAINING OF TRAINERS

### MANUAL



## USA Football

### Awareness to Action - Module 1: Key Prevention Steps Trainer's Manual

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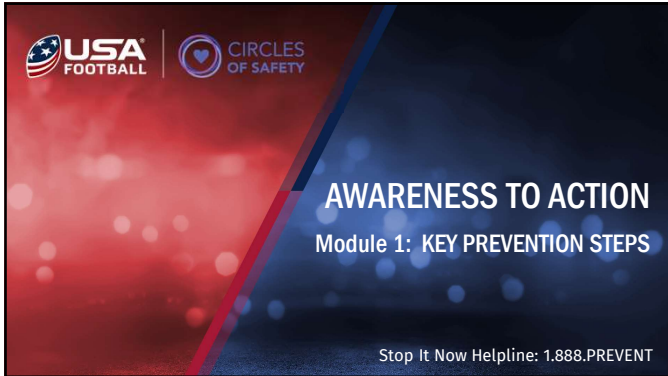
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# **Section 1**

**Awareness to Action  
Presentation Handout**



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### 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**

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### Ground Rules

- Take care of yourself
- Full participation to the extent you feel able and comfortable
- Use "I" statements
- No such thing as a stupid question
- Stay afterwards if you want to talk privately
- Respect privacy

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## Stop It Now! Overview

Focus on **primary prevention** – **before** abuse happens

- Challenge people at-risk and abusing children to stop their abusive behavior and reach out for help
- Shift prevention focus from children **to** adults and from people who have been sexually abused **to** people who sexually abuse youth

### Program Areas

1. Prevention Education
2. Technical Assistance/Training
3. Prevention Advocacy
4. Help Services



1.888.PREVENT  
helpline@stopitnow.org  
stopitnow.org/help

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## Ground Rules

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## Activity: Your Responsibility

- What is your responsibility?
- What do you do now?
- What gets in the way?

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## 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

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**WON'T  
CHILDREN  
TELL US?**

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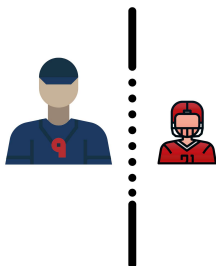
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## Adults Setting Boundaries



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## Setting Boundaries = PREVENTION



- ✓ Modeling
- ✓ Reduces Risk
- ✓ Builds Protective Factors

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## 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



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## 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.

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### U.S. CENTER FOR SAFE SPORT 2020 Athlete Culture & Climate Survey



**48%** of participants were aware of **coaches** developing **sexual relationships** with athletes.



**9%** of athlete participants experienced **inappropriate sexual contact** during their sports involvement.



**More than half** of athlete participants who indicated having unwanted sexual experiences said that some or all of those experiences happened when they were **under 18**.



**93%** of individuals who experienced sexual harassment or unwanted sexual contact **did not submit a formal report or complaint** of it.

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### The Scope of Sexual Abuse



**1 in 10** adults report having been sexually abused as a child.



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**.

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### 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**

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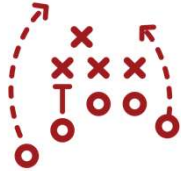
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## Key Policies

- Responding to Abuse
- USA Football Sexual Misconduct
- 1:1 Policy



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## Responding to Disclosures

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



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## Reporting

- Why, When, Who
  - Childwelfare.gov
  - Childhelp (800.422.4453)
- The process
- Proof is not needed!
- What happens next?
  - abuse@usafootball.com



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## Breaking Down Barriers

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



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## 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.

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## Sexual Misconduct Examples

- 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
- Asking or making an athlete touch another athlete sexually
- A coach discussing their sex life with an athlete, or asking about an athlete's sex life
- A coach requesting or sending a nude or partially dressed photo to athlete
- Exposing athletes to pornographic material

*Continued on the next slide*

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## Sexual Misconduct Examples

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

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## 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.

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## 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.

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### 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 needed to leave early and told the quarterback to take over and run drills for the team for the remainder of practice that day.

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.

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### Activity: What Is The Reason



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### Talking With Youth

- Affirming adults' responsibility (and USA Football's commitment to their safety)
- Affirming youth's right to safety and respect
- Identify safe people
- Invite inquiries and requests for help – doesn't have to be you!
- Follow up

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## Engaging With Parents

- Affirm shared goal of keeping youth safe
- Keep informed
- Ask how they would like to be engaged

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## Prevention Levels



	Safe, healthy, developmentally-appropriate	<b>Respond &amp; Reinforce</b>
	Concerning, inappropriate	<b>Protect &amp; Respond</b>
	Harmful, sexual abuse	<b>System Response &amp; Safety Planning</b>

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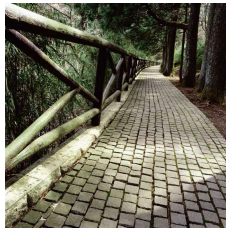
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## Observing Behaviors – Not Intent

If we only knew when someone was walking down the wrong road, we might be able to stop them in their tracks, turn them around, and get them help before they harmed a child.



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## Continuum of Adult's Behaviors



	Praise, high-fives, child-initiated hugs, pats on the back or shoulders, etc.
	Playing favorites, adult initiated hugs, patting the buttocks, sexual or suggestive comments, "dirty" jokes, asking for personal telephone or e-mail, taking individual photos, etc.
	Showing porn, watching youth undress, asking a child to touch another child sexually, any sexual activity with minor.

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## The Importance of Breaking Down Myths



- I am probably well known and liked by you and your child: a nice guy offender.
- I can be a man or a woman, married or single.
- I can be an adult, adolescent or a child.
- I can be of any race, hold any religious belief, and have any sexual orientation.
- I can be a coach, teacher, family friend, parent, step-parent, relative, clergyman, babysitter, or anyone who comes in contact with children.
- I am likely to be a stable, employed, respectable member of the community

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## Continuum of Youth Behaviors



Safe, healthy,  
developmentally-  
appropriate

Concerning,  
inappropriate

Harmful  
(Abuse)

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### Activity: Developing Protective Factors



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### Response to Warning Signs

- Protect and respond
- Take action
- Follow up
- Trust yourself
- Find an ally
- Review and follow the safety plan



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### Key Takeaways

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



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# THANK YOU!

usaf@stopitnow.org  
stopitnow.org/usaf  
Helpline: **1.888.PREVENT**



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# **Section 2**

## **Trainer's Materials**



Dear Future Prevention Trainer,

Thank you for participating in this sexual abuse prevention training experience to learn how to bring the concept and tools of sexual abuse prevention to USA Football, and to the leagues and teams you train. This manual is designed to provide you with the curriculum and tools you need to offer the following workshop:

- Circles of Safety: Awareness to Action - Module 1: Key Prevention Steps

Stop It Now! is committed to the hope, vision and mission of children growing up free from sexual harm. We invite you to consider us your ongoing resource as you speak with your training audiences about key steps of prevention. Child sexual abuse thrives when questions go answered and when we don't talk about what we can do to keep children safe or know how to speak up when there are concerns. Secrecy and isolation increase the likelihood and ongoing occurrence of sexual abuse. So please reach out to us whenever you have a question.

We ask all of our community trainers to take some time to become familiar with our website and resources ([www.stopitnow.org](http://www.stopitnow.org)). Our helpline, tip sheets, guidebooks and online help center are available to you and your program for free.

Thank you again for taking this journey, for caring about the children in your community and for speaking up to prevent child sexual abuse. Together we can keep kids safe.

Sincerely,

Jenny Coleman, MA, LMHC  
Director, Stop It Now!



## Stop It Now! and USA Football's Trainer's Manual Use Instructions and Guidelines

### Awareness to Action - Module 1: Key Prevention Steps

Manual is available to download at: <https://www.stopitnow.org/usaftot>

#### Workshop description (for use in letters, invitations, posters, etc.)

##### Awareness to Action

##### Module 1: Key Prevention Steps

This workshop presents key steps in child sexual abuse prevention in USA Football for all staff, volunteers and parents. Sharing key definitions and statistics, this workshop will build awareness of the importance of early prevention steps that include speaking up early when boundaries are crossed, and when safety policies are breached. USA Football's policies that keep children and volunteers safe will be reviewed with examples, and the barriers to taking action will be discussed; responsibilities when there is a suspicion or disclosure of abuse will be presented, helping support participants to know when and how to report. This workshop builds knowledge, confidence and skills necessary in order to protect young athletes and the adults responsible for their safety.

#### How the participant's manuals are organized

- Participant PowerPoint presentation with blank notes
- Participant handouts and resources

#### Workshop handout, resource and discussion/activity cue schedule

Note: Trainers may ask check in questions or lead discussions at any time, but these are the cues and activities detailed in the training deck

- *Slide 1: Introductions: May be simple "share your name" or a more extensive icebreaker can be used*
- *Slide 1: Resources Referenced:*
  - *Stopitnow.org/usaf*
  - *Safe Sport Resources*
- *Slide 4: Ask class if there are any questions regarding ground rules*
- *Slide 8: Option of full class or small group discussion*
- *Slide 10: Ask – Are there any examples of sexual abuse that is non-contact? Discuss*
- *Slide 13: Resource Referenced: Project Play from the Aspen Institute, Children's Rights in Sports*

- *Slide 14: Resource referenced: USA Football's Safe Sport Policy*
- *Slide 15: Ask class if there are any questions or concerns*
- *Slide 16: Resource referenced:*
  - <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/state/> - to look up state mandatory reporter requirements
  - ChildHelp (1.800.422.4453)
  - [abuse@usafootball.com](mailto:abuse@usafootball.com) – to make a report of suspected or disclosed abuse (if not comfortable talking to league leader)
- *Slide 18: Resource referenced: USA Football Safe Sport Policy*
- *Slide 21: Discuss examples on slide, asking for explanations of why each example is a policy violation*
- *Slide 23: Discuss examples on slide, asking for explanations of why each example is a policy violation*
- *Slide 24: Resource referenced: [usafootball.com/consultants](http://usafootball.com/consultants) – if participant would like to learn more about USA Football's commitment to prevention*

### How to use the Trainer's Guide

- Every slide is matched with its own recommended trainer's script, with applicable discussion questions, handouts and activities.
- Bolded comments are generally instructional notes to trainer.
- Italicized text – signifies suggested scripts
- Use of white board/flip chart isn't specifically noted but it is recommended to use one to highlight participant's responses to questions.
- Most of the discussions/activities are designed to be done in pairs or small groups. Based on size of the group and time, trainer should decide the best format. All activities are not a requirement but listed as options to deepen learning and practice.
- "Ask" and "Debrief" opportunities after activities are prompts to encourage sharing and cross learning. Look for additional opportunities to engage discussion and sharing.

### Preparation and materials required

Prepare participant training book:

- Participant PowerPoint presentation
- Participant handouts

Materials (for live trainings):

- Flip chart
- Markers
- Name tags
- Blank paper
- Pens/pencils
- Envelopes (for completed surveys)



## Trainer Agreement – USA Football

Upon completion of Circles of Safety Training of Trainers for USA Football, I understand that I am qualified to facilitate:

- **Circles of Safety: Awareness to Action - Module 1: Key Prevention Steps**

This agreement covers only this workshop.

I understand that I am responsible for facilitating this workshop in accordance with the following:

- This curriculum cannot be adapted without prior approval from both USA Football and Stop It Now!. While slides may be left out for presentation timing and presentation scripts may be personalized, the slides themselves cannot be edited and the content cannot be changed.
- Only trainers who attend both *Circles of Safety: Awareness to Action* and *Circles of Safety: TOT* are permitted to present this workshop module.
- Trainers can only facilitate *Circles of Safety* workshops while employed (includes contracted employees) by USA Football; and may only present to approved USA Football audiences.
- If ever taught as a stand-alone training, workshops are to be offered free of charge. Nominal fees to cover costs, such as handbook printings and training space are allowed.
- Stop It Now! is identified as the owner of the Circles of Safety® curriculum, and all rights are reserved. Circles of Safety is a registered trademark of Stop It Now!.
- Stop It Now! is notified whenever a workshop is offered.
- Complete and return the Trainer's Report upon workshop completion.
- Apply updates to curriculums as communicated by Stop It Now!.
- Participate in annual support booster trainings (e.g., webinars, annual MT training).
- Promote child sexual abuse prevention through education and support.

I agree to uphold these responsibilities and roles, and understand that I can reach out to Stop It Now! with any concerns or questions regarding these.

This agreement is valid for the duration of employment and/or contract with USA Football.

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Name

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Date





# **Section 3**

**Awareness to Action –  
Module 1:  
Key Prevention Steps**





## 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.*

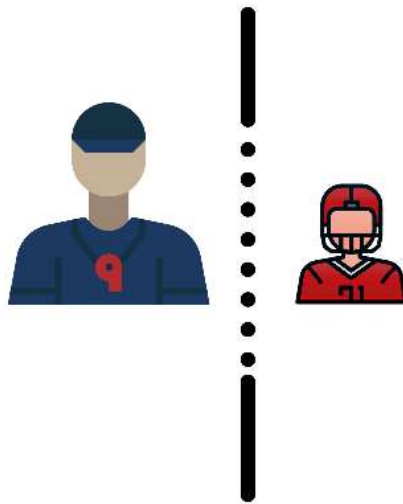
*To start... and this isn't meant to be "preachy" in any way, the first one is "hope" – hope that every adult does their part, cares about kids' safety which also includes just continuing to have hope that prevention is possible (because it is!). When we feel hopeful, it means that there is a possibility – 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.*

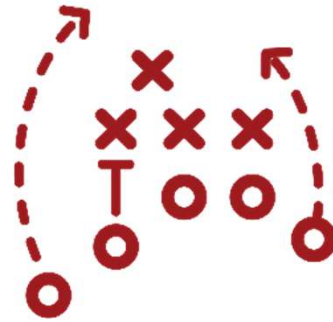
*We'll look at these policies as they apply in your league in a moment, but we want to highlight the very last thing on this slide here....that youth sport organizations must provide a mechanism for communication without retaliation. This means that adults who have concerns that a child may not be safe, 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.*

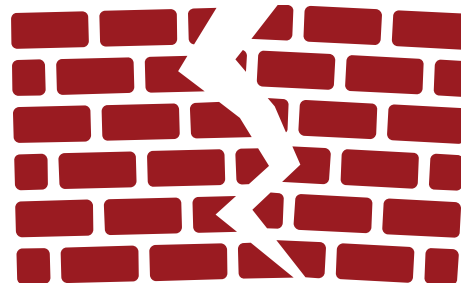
*Typically, then the reporting agency will determine whether there is enough reason to investigate the report. And even if they don't investigate when you make a report, reporting can be helpful because perhaps the next time someone makes a similar report, your information will help build a case if necessary.*

*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.*

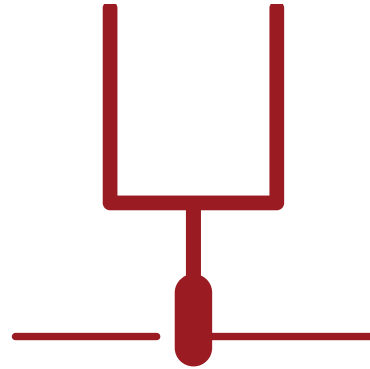
*Coach C told another staff that they needed to talk privately with an athlete, but then locked the door behind the athlete so that the athlete understood that they can both "talk freely" without worry of being overheard.*

*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](http://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.**



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### 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**

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### 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](mailto:usaf@stopitnow.org)
  - 1-888-PREVENT
- We strongly advise that children not be present for this session

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## 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

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## Key Concepts For Prevention

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

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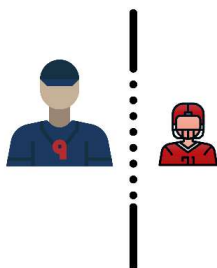
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## ADULTS SETTING BOUNDARIES



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## Setting Boundaries = PREVENTION

- ✓ Modeling
- ✓ Reduces Risk
- ✓ Builds Protective Factors

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

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## 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

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## 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.

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## The Scope of Sexual Abuse



**1 in 10** adults report having been sexually abused as a child.



**60%** of children who are sexually abused **do not disclose**.

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.

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## 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

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## 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**

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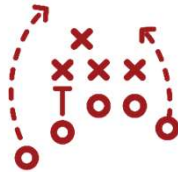
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## Key Policies

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



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## Responding to Disclosures

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



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## 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!



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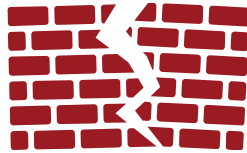
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## Breaking Down Barriers

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



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## 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.

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## 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

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## 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

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## 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.

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## 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.

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## 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.

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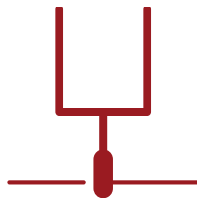
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## Key Takeaways

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



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# THANK YOU!

Email  
usaf@stopitnow.org

Visit  
stopitnow.org/usaf  
facebook.com/StopItNow

Call  
Helpline: **1.888.PREVENT**

USA  
FOOTBALL

CIRCLES  
OF SAFETY

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# **Section 4**

## **Resources**

## **USA FOOTBALL SAFE SPORT POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

There are many reasons to play football. It encourages a healthy lifestyle, builds self-confidence, and teaches important life lessons about teamwork and discipline. Football players, and athletes in general, also do better off the field. They learn goal-setting, teamwork and time management skills; they are less likely to use cigarettes, drugs and alcohol; they have higher graduation rates and are more likely to attend college.

Unfortunately, youth sports (including football) can also be a high-risk environment for misconduct, including child physical and sexual abuse.

**USA Football is committed to protecting and improving the development and safety of athletes and participants involved in football.**

USA Football publishes this USA Football Safe Sport Policy (the “Policy”) as a resource to guide the development, implementation and internal review of effective athlete safety and misconduct prevention strategies for USA Football programs and events, and as a model for youth and amateur football organizations. This Policy applies to USA Football staff members, volunteers, contractors, and National Team coaches (collectively, “USAFB Staff”) as well as to athletes and participants.

Misconduct may damage an athlete’s psychological well-being. Athletes who have been mistreated experience social embarrassment, emotional turmoil, psychological scars, loss of self-esteem and negative impacts on family, friends and the sport. Misconduct often hurts an athlete’s competitive performance and may cause him or her to stop participating in sports entirely.

This Policy identifies 6 primary types of misconduct:

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Hazing
- Emotional Misconduct
- Physical Misconduct
- Sexual Misconduct, including Child Sexual Abuse

**All forms of misconduct are intolerable and in direct conflict with USA Football’s ideals.**

## WHAT'S IN THE POLICY?

USA Football has adopted six strategies recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to recognize, reduce and respond to child physical and sexual abuse and other types of misconduct in sport.<sup>1</sup> These strategies include:

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<sup>1</sup> See Saul J, Audage NC. *Preventing Child Sexual Abuse Within Youth-serving Organizations: Getting Started on Policies and Procedures*. Atlanta (GA): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control; 2007.

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## **Strategy 1: Defining Misconduct**

### **Overview**

In the event that any USAFB Staff, athletes, or participants observe inappropriate behaviors, suspected physical or sexual abuse, or misconduct, it is the personal responsibility of the individual to immediately report his or her observations to an immediate supervisor or a USA Football senior executive (e.g., Executive Director, Senior Director or General Counsel).

**Do not attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of child physical or sexual abuse allegations as a condition for reporting to appropriate law enforcement authorities.** Instead, immediately report suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse to an immediate supervisor or a USA Football senior executive (e.g., Executive Director, Senior Director or General Counsel).

USA Football recognizes that the process for training and motivating athletes will vary with each coach and athlete, but it is nevertheless important for everyone involved in sport to support the use of motivational and training methods that avoid misconduct.

USAFB Staff, athletes and participants shall refrain from all forms of misconduct, which include:

- 1) Sexual misconduct, including child sexual abuse
- 2) Physical misconduct
- 3) Emotional misconduct
- 4) Bullying
- 5) Harassment
- 6) Hazing

### **Definitions**

#### **Sexual Misconduct**

Sexual misconduct is defined as:

- 1) Any touching or non-touching sexual interaction that is (a) nonconsensual or forced, (b) coerced or manipulated, or (c) perpetrated in an aggressive, harassing, exploitative or threatening manner;
- 2) Any sexual interaction between an athlete and an individual with evaluative, direct or indirect authority. Such relationships involve an imbalance of power and are likely to impair judgment or be exploitative; or
- 3) Any act or conduct described as sexual abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, rape).

**Note: An imbalance of power is always assumed between a coach and an athlete or a staff member and their supervisor.**

### *Types of Sexual Misconduct*

Types of sexual misconduct include:

- 1) sexual assault,
- 2) sexual harassment,
- 3) sexual abuse, or
- 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.

### *Exceptions*

None

### *Examples*

Examples of sexual misconduct prohibited under this Policy include, without limitation:

- 1) Touching offenses.

Behaviors that include:

- (a) fondling an athlete's breasts or buttocks
- (b) exchange of reward in sport (e.g., team placement, scores, feedback) for sexual favors
- (c) genital contact
- (d) sexual relations or intimacies between persons in a position of trust, authority and/or evaluative and supervisory control over athletes or other sport participants.

- 2) Non-touching offenses.

Behaviors that include:

- (a) a coach discussing his or her sex life with an athlete
- (b) a coach asking an athlete about his or her sex life
- (c) coach requesting or sending a nude or partial-dress photo to athlete
- (d) exposing athletes to pornographic material
- (e) sending athletes sexually explicit or suggestive electronic or written messages or photos (e.g. "sexting")
- (f) deliberately exposing an athlete to sexual acts
- (g) deliberately exposing an athlete to nudity (except in situations where locker rooms and changing areas are shared)
- (h) sexual harassment; specifically, the sexual solicitation, physical advances, or verbal or nonverbal conduct that is sexual in nature, and (i) is unwelcome, offensive or creates a hostile environment, and the offending individual knows or is told this or (ii) is sufficiently severe or intense to be harassing to a reasonable person in the context.

### *Comments*

- 1) Authority and Trust. Once the unique coach-athlete relationship is established, the authority and trust on the part of the coach over the athlete shall be assumed, regardless of age. Accordingly, sexual interaction

or intimacies between a coach and an athlete or other participant are prohibited, regardless of age, both during coaching and during that period following coaching if an imbalance in power could jeopardize effective decision-making.

- 2) Exception. This section does not apply to a pre-existing relationship between two spouses or domestic partners.

### Child Sexual Abuse

Child sexual abuse is defined as:

- 1) Any sexual activity with a child where consent is not or cannot legally be given. This includes sexual contact with a child that is accomplished by deception, manipulation, force or threat of force, regardless of the age of the participants, **and all sexual interactions between an adult and a child**, regardless of whether there is deception or the child understands the sexual nature of the activity.

**Note concerning peer-to-peer child sexual abuse:** Sexual contact between minors also can be abusive. Whether or not a sexual interaction between children constitutes child sexual abuse turns on the existence of an aggressor, the age difference between the children, and/or whether there is an imbalance of power and/or intellectual capabilities.

- 2) Any act or conduct described as child sexual abuse under federal or state law.

#### *Exceptions*

None

#### *Examples*

Sexually abusive acts may include sexual penetration, sexual touching or non-contact sexual acts such as verbal acts, sexually suggestive electronic or written communications, exposure or voyeurism.

### Physical Misconduct

Physical misconduct is defined as:

- 1) Conduct that results in, or reasonably threatens to result in, physical harm to an individual; or
- 2) Any act or conduct described as physical abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. child abuse, child neglect, assault).

#### *Exceptions*

Physical misconduct does not include professionally-accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline or improving athlete performance. For example, hitting, punching, and kicking are well-regulated forms of contact in combat sports, but have no place in swimming.

#### *Examples*

Examples of physical misconduct prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation:

- 1) Contact offenses.

Behaviors that include:

- (a) punching, beating, biting, striking, choking or slapping an athlete;
- (b) intentionally hitting an athlete with objects or sporting equipment;
- (c) providing alcohol to an athlete under the legal drinking age (under U.S. law);
- (d) providing illegal drugs or non-prescribed medications to any athlete;
- (e) encouraging or permitting an athlete to return to play pre-maturely following a serious injury (e.g., a concussion) and without the clearance of a medical professional; and
- (f) prescribing dieting or other weight-control methods (e.g., weigh-ins, caliper tests) without regard for the nutritional well-being and health of athlete.

2) Non-contact offenses.

Behaviors that include:

- (a) isolating an athlete in a confined space (e.g., locking an athlete in a small space);
- (b) forcing an athlete to assume a painful stance or position for no athletic purpose (e.g. requiring an athlete to kneel on a harmful surface); and
- (c) withholding, recommending against or denying adequate hydration, nutrition, medical attention or sleep.

**Note: Bullying, harassment and hazing, defined below, often involve some form of physical misconduct.**

Emotional Misconduct

Emotional misconduct is defined as:

- 1) A pattern of deliberate, non-contact behavior that has the potential to cause emotional or psychological harm to an athlete. Non-contact behaviors include verbal acts, physical acts, and acts that deny attention or support.
- 2) Any act or conduct described as emotional abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. child abuse, child neglect).

*Exception*

Emotional misconduct does not include professionally-accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, discipline or improving athletic performance.

*Examples*

Examples of emotional misconduct prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation:

- 1) Verbal Acts. A pattern of verbal behaviors that (a) attack an athlete personally (e.g., calling them worthless, fat or disgusting) or (b) repeatedly and excessively yelling at a particular participant or participants in a manner that serves no productive training or motivational purpose.
- 2) Physical Acts. A pattern of physically aggressive behaviors, such as (a) throwing sport equipment, water bottles or chairs at, or in the presence of, participants; or (b) punching walls, windows or other objects.
- 3) Acts that Deny Attention and Support. A pattern of (a) ignoring an athlete for extended periods of time or (b) routinely or arbitrarily excluding participants from practice.



***Note: Bullying, harassment, and hazing (defined below) often involve some form of emotional misconduct.***

### Bullying

Bullying is defined as:

- 1) An intentional, persistent and repeated pattern of committing or willfully tolerating physical and non-physical behaviors that are intended, or have the reasonable potential, to cause fear, humiliation or physical harm in an attempt to socially exclude, diminish or isolate the targeted athlete(s), as a condition of membership
- 2) Any act or conduct described as bullying under federal or state law

#### *Exceptions*

Bullying does not include group or team behaviors that (a) are meant to establish normative team behaviors, or (b) promote team cohesion. For example, bullying does not include verbal admonitions to encourage team members to train harder and to push through a difficult training regimen.

#### *Examples*

Examples of bullying prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation:

- 1) Physical behaviors. Behaviors that include (a) hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, choking, or slapping an athlete; (b) throwing at, or hitting an athlete with, objects such as sporting equipment.
- 2) Verbal and emotional behaviors. Behaviors that include (a) excessive teasing, ridiculing, or intimidating; (b) spreading rumors or making false statements; or (c) using electronic communications, social media, or other technology to harass, frighten, intimidate or humiliate (“cyber bullying”).

### Harassment

Harassment is defined as:

- 1) A repeated pattern of physical and/or non-physical behaviors that (a) are intended to cause fear, humiliation or annoyance, (b) offend or degrade, (c) create a hostile environment or (d) reflect discriminatory bias in an attempt to establish dominance, superiority or power over an individual athlete or group based on gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression or mental or physical disability; or
- 2) Any act or conduct described as harassment under federal or state law

#### *Exceptions*

None

#### *Examples*

Examples of harassment prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation:

- 1) Physical offenses. Behaviors that include (a) hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, choking or slapping an athlete or participant; (b) throwing at or hitting an athlete with objects including sporting equipment.
- 2) Non-physical offenses. Behaviors that include (a) making negative or disparaging comments about an athlete's sexual orientation, gender expression, disability, religion, skin color, or ethnic traits; (b) displaying offensive materials, gestures, or symbols; (c) withholding or reducing playing time to an athlete based on his or her sexual orientation.

### Hazing

Hazing is defined as:

- 1) Coercing, requiring, forcing or willfully tolerating any humiliating, unwelcome or dangerous activity that serves as a condition for (a) joining a group or (b) being socially accepted by a group's members; or
- 2) Any act or conduct described as hazing under federal or state law

#### *Exception*

Hazing does not include group or team activities that (a) are meant to establish normative team behaviors or (b) promote team cohesion.

#### *Examples*

Examples of hazing prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation:

- 1) Requiring or forcing the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs
- 2) tying, taping or otherwise physically restraining an athlete
- 3) sexual simulations or sexual acts of any nature
- 4) sleep deprivation, otherwise unnecessary schedule disruption or the withholding of water and/or food
- 5) social actions (e.g. grossly inappropriate or provocative clothing) or public displays (e.g. public nudity) that are illegal or meant to draw ridicule
- 6) beating, paddling or other forms of physical assault
- 7) excessive training requirements focused on individuals on a team

#### *Comment*

Activities that fit the definition of hazing are considered to be hazing regardless of an athlete's willingness to cooperate or participate.

### Willfully Tolerating Misconduct

Willfully tolerating misconduct is defined as USAFB Staff knowing of misconduct, but taking no action to intervene on behalf of the athlete(s), participant(s), or USAFB Staff subjected to the misconduct.

#### *Exception*

None

## **Reporting**

Although this Policy is designed to reduce child sexual abuse and other misconduct, it can still occur. USAFB Staff and participants of USA Football shall follow the reporting procedures set forth in USA Football's Reporting Policy.

**USA Football does not investigate suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse, or attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of such allegations, as a condition of reporting suspicions or allegations to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.**

## **Violations**

Violations of this Policy shall be reported pursuant to USA Football's Reporting Policy and will be addressed under USA Football's Disciplinary Rules and Procedure.

## **Strategy 2: Screening Staff, Volunteers and Contractors**

USA Football conducts a criminal background check on its employees, and certain independent contractors, volunteers and temporary workers. USAFB uses a criminal background check to gather information about an applicant's prior criminal history. The information revealed by the criminal background check may disqualify an applicant from serving as USAFB Staff. Making a reasonable effort to obtain past criminal behaviors reduces the chance that USAFB Staff, athletes and other participants will come in contact with potentially dangerous individuals.

### **Persons Required to Submit to a Criminal Background Check**

The following individuals shall be required to consent to and undergo a criminal back prior to performing services for USA Football at an interval not exceeding two years:

- 1) All employees
- 2) All volunteers, temporary workers and independent contractors if the volunteer, temporary worker or independent contractor:
  - (a) Is working or volunteering *for* USA Football (e.g., we hired, recruited or retained the person; it is USA Football's volunteer, not another group's volunteer);
  - (b) May not always be directly supervised by a USA Football employee (e.g., the volunteer recording player heights and weights does not need a background check); and
  - (c) (i) Has more contact with youth players than the general public (e.g., access to the playing field or locker rooms, and/or has physical contact with players); or (ii) Has access to confidential personal or financial information or USA Football trade secrets.

AND

- 3) All adult participants in a USA Football event or USA Football program where such adults are supervising minors or staying in accommodations paid for by USA Football

### **Duty of Full Disclosure**

Each applicant has the affirmative duty to disclose his or her criminal history. Failing to disclose or intentionally misrepresenting an arrest plea or conviction history in an application or any other information provided by an applicant during the screening process is grounds for privilege revocation or restriction, regardless of when the offense is discovered. The duty to disclose is relevant in the following situations:

- 1) If an applicant (1) is arrested, (2) pleas or (3) is convicted of a crime other than a traffic offense during the screening process, the applicant is required to disclose such information immediately.
- 2) As allowed by applicable law, in the event a person is serving as USAFB Staff and (1) is arrested, (2) pleas or (3) is convicted after the completion of the screening process, he or she has an affirmative duty to disclose such information immediately to his or her supervisor or USA Football senior executive (e.g., Executive Director, General Counsel). Breach of this affirmative duty is grounds for termination.
- 3) Any applicant who has been banned by another sport or youth organization, as temporarily or permanently ineligible, must self-disclose this information. A failure to disclose is a basis for disqualification for potential applicants or termination for existing employees/volunteers.

## Criminal Background Check Process

- 1) All applicants who qualify under the section titled “Persons Required to Submit to a Criminal Background Check” above will be asked to undergo a criminal background check with USA Football’s approved third party vendor for USAFB Staff background checks that complies with the Fair Credit Reporting Act before providing services for USA Football. Through this criminal background check process, USA Football’s vendor will utilize reasonable efforts to ascertain past criminal history of an applicant. An applicant must receive a green light score (described below) from the background check vendor or otherwise be authorized by USA Football before he or she may perform services for USA Football.
- 2) USA Football’s criminal background check vendor will, at a minimum and without limitation:
  - (a) Perform a national search of state criminal repositories for evidence of criterion offenses (listed in Appendix A);
  - (b) Perform a search of state sexual offender registries; and
  - (c) Verify a person’s identification against his or her social security number or other personal identifier.

USA Football’s criminal background check vendor may also check motor vehicle records of employees and contractors who will operate motor vehicles as part of their job responsibilities.

USA Football will review its disqualifying criterion offenses every two years or as otherwise required or modified by law.

- 3) USA Football’s criminal background check vendor will return a “red light” or “green light” determination.
  - (a) A green light determination means that the background check vendor located no records that would disqualify the applicant. A green light determination, however, is not a certification of safety or permission to bypass/ignore other screening efforts. Other disqualifying factors may exist, and can be revealed through an interview, reference checks and a completed application.

**Note: A green light determination does not mean that an individual is safe to work with children. Instead a green light determination indicates that no criminal history was found that would disqualify the individual from working with children.**
  - (b) A red light determination means the criminal background check revealed criminal records which suggest the applicant “does not meet the criteria” and is not suitable for organization employment or volunteer assignment. Individuals who may be subject to disqualification under a red light determination may challenge the accuracy of the reported information reported by the criminal background check vendor.
  - (c) Appeal. Any disqualified individual has the right to dispute the findings of the criminal background check directly with USA Football’s approved criminal background check vendor. A disqualified individual may not appeal the automatic disqualification or the results of the findings of the criminal background check vendor to USA Football. USA Football will accept the findings of the approved criminal background check vendor.

- 4) Notice of findings will be provided to:
  - (a) USA Football legal counsel;
  - (b) Where relevant, USA Football Human Resources and the Executive Director; and
  - (c) Other designated individuals, where necessary to protect the safety of minors. Whenever possible, all that will be communicated is that the applicant is or is not eligible to participate in USA Football activities.
- 5) USA Football Action. If any USAFB Staff receives a red light determination, USA Football will make an individualized determination looking at the facts and circumstances of the previous offense(s) in light of the current or prospective USAFB Staff's responsibilities at USA Football before taking action.
- 6) Confidentiality. Unless a red light determination is issued, USA Football is not privy to any information submitted by an employee or prospective employee to the background check provider or any information found by the provider. When a red light determination is issued, the background check provider will send USA Football information supporting the basis for its red light decision and USA Football will engage in the individualized determination. All materials sent to USA Football under these circumstances shall be kept confidential among USA Football's legal team, human resources team, and the Executive Director.

### **Strategy 3: Sex Abuse Prevention and Other Misconduct Training and Education**

It is USA Football's policy that USAFB Staff are required to report abuse and misconduct. To do so, USAFB Staff should have a basic understanding of sexual abusers, as well as "grooming," the most common strategy offenders use to seduce their victims. Using a combination of attention, affection and gifts, offenders select a child, win the child's trust (and the trust of the child's parent or guardian), manipulate the child into sexual activity, and keep the child from disclosing abuse.

Upon joining USA Football, all USAFB Staff must promptly complete an awareness training concerning misconduct in sport.

An abuse awareness training course includes the following elements:

- 1) Provides definitions for, and effects of, child physical and sexual abuse
- 2) Identifies risk opportunities for child physical and sexual abuse
- 3) Addresses common myths about offenders
- 4) Outlines patterns, behaviors and methods of operation of sexual predators
- 5) Requires testing consistent with existing standards of care and legislation, where applicable

#### **Persons Required to Complete a Sexual Abuse Prevention Course**

- 1) All employees shall take a sexual abuse prevention course that includes the elements discussed above and pass a certification quiz before performing services for USA Football. The course must be repeated and the certification or a recertification quiz must be passed at least every two years.
- 2) All volunteers, temporary workers, contractors and adult participants shall take an approved sex abuse prevention course and pass an examination before performing services for USA Football and at an interval not exceeding two years when the volunteer, temporary worker or independent contractor:
  - (a) Has routine contact with or supervision over minor athletes and participants.

OR

- (b) (i) USA Football is paying for his/her accommodation and (ii) such accommodation is at the same facility where USA Football is responsible for any minor participant(s).

## **Strategy 4: Supervision of Athletes and Participants**

During training and competition, USA Football strives to create two-deep leadership and minimize one-on-one interactions to create a safe training environment and to protect athletes and participants.

### **One-On-One Interactions**

#### **Appropriate One-On-One Interactions**

##### *Individual Meetings*

An individual meeting may be necessary to address an athlete's concerns, training program, or competition schedule. Under these circumstances USAFB Staff are to observe the following guidelines:

- 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, USAFB Staff must inform another USA Football 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.

#### **Prohibited One-On-One Interactions**

Except as set forth above, minor athletes and participants will not be left unattended or unsupervised during USA Football activities and USAFB Staff are prohibited from being alone with an individual athlete or participant in any room or building.

### **Physical Contact with Athletes**

Appropriate physical contact between athletes and USAFB Staff, particularly coaches, is a productive and inevitable part of football. Athletes are more likely to acquire advanced physical skills through appropriate physical contact. However, guidelines for appropriate physical contact reduce the potential for misconduct.

USA Football adheres to the following principles and guidelines in regards to physical contact with athletes:

#### **Common Criteria for Appropriate Physical Contact**

Physical contact with athletes – for safety, consolation and celebration – has multiple criteria in common which make them both safe and appropriate. These include:

- 1) the physical contact takes place in public
- 2) there is no potential for, or actual, physical or sexual intimacies during the physical contact; and
- 3) the physical contact is for the benefit of the athlete, not to meet an emotional or other need of an adult.



## Prohibited Physical Contact

Prohibited forms of physical contact, which ***shall be reported immediately*** under the USA Football Reporting Policy include, without limitation:

- 1) asking or having an athlete sit in the lap of any USAFB Staff
- 2) lingering or repeated embraces of athletes that go beyond the criteria set forth above for acceptable physical contact
- 3) slapping, hitting, punching, kicking or any other physical contact meant to discipline, punish or achieve compliance from an athlete
- 4) “cuddling” or maintaining prolonged physical contact during any aspect of training, travel or overnight stay
- 5) playful, yet inappropriate contact that is not a part of regular training, (e.g., tickling or “horseplay” wrestling)
- 6) continued physical contact that makes an athlete obviously uncomfortable, whether expressed or not
- 7) any contact that is contrary to a previously expressed personal desire for decreased or no physical contact, where such decreased contact is feasible in a competitive training environment.

## Violations

Violations of this policy ***must be reported*** to a supervisor or USA Football senior executive (e.g., Executive Director or General Counsel).

**Some forms of physical contact may constitute child physical or sexual abuse that *must be reported* to appropriate law enforcement authorities.**

## **Electronic Communications and Social Media Policy**

As part of USA Football’s emphasis on athlete safety, all electronic communications between USAFB Staff and athletes must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about football activities.

**As with any communication, the content of any electronic communication should be readily available to share with an athlete’s family. At the request of a parent or guardian, any email, electronic text, social media or similar communication will copy or include the athlete’s parents or guardians.**

## Facebook, Twitter, Blogs and Similar Sites

USAFB Staff may not have current USA Football athletes join a personal social media page. It is encouraged that all communications and football development staff create a USA Football “alter ego” social media account (e.g., “John Doe – USA Football National Teams Coordinator”). This account will be subject to inspections by USA Football and must be used for any communication with current USA Football athletes or their parents. The account will be associated with the USAFB staff members @USAFootball.com email address.

Athletes and parents or guardians may friend the official USA Football page and USAFB Staff’s USA Football alter ego accounts. USAFB Staff may “follow” each other. USAFB Staff may communicate with athletes solely through official USA Football social media sites or through their USA Football alter ego accounts.

### Email, Texts, Instant Messaging, and Similar Electronic Communications

Athletes and USAFB Staff may use social media posts, messages, email and texts to communicate. All content between USAFB Staff and athletes must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about USA Football activities. Email from USAFB Staff to any athlete should come from USA Football's email system whenever possible (the return email address will contain "@USAFootball.com").

### Electronic Imagery

From time to time, digital photos, videos of practice or competition, and other publicly obtainable images of athletes – individually or in groups – may be taken. These photos and/or videos may be submitted to local, state or national publications, used in marketing or promotional videos, posted on USAFootball.com or USA Football-associated websites or social media, or offered to families seasonally in an electronic form. It is the default policy of USA Football to allow the capture of such imagery as long as the athlete or athletes are in public view and such imagery is both appropriate and in the best interest of the athlete and USA Football.

### Request to Discontinue All Electronic Communications or Imagery

The parents or guardians of a minor athlete may request in writing that their child or ward not be contacted by any form of electronic communication by USAFB Staff and/or not appear in any imagery captured and used by USA Football.

### Misconduct

Social media and electronic communications can also be used to commit misconduct (e.g., emotional, sexual, bullying, harassment, and hazing). Such communications by coaches, staff, volunteers, administrators, officials, parents or athletes will not be tolerated and are considered violations of this Policy.

### Violations

Violations of USA Football's Electronic Communications and Social Media Policy should be reported to your immediate supervisor or a USA Football senior executive (e.g., Executive Director or General Counsel) for evaluation. Complaints and allegations will be addressed under USA Football's Disciplinary Rules and Procedure.

### **Locker Rooms and Changing Areas**

USA Football is concerned with (1) locker room activities between minors, (2) locker room activities between minors and adults, (3) adults being alone with individual minors in locker rooms and changing areas, (4) non-official or non-related adults having unsupervised access to minor participants, and (5) inappropriate behavior among adults in locker rooms.

### Monitoring

USA Football has predictable and limited use of locker rooms and changing areas (e.g., immediately before and following practices and competitions). This allows for direct and regular monitoring of locker room areas. While constant monitoring inside of locker rooms and changing areas might be the most effective way to prevent problems, we understand this would likely make athletes uncomfortable and may even place our staff at risk for unwarranted suspicion.

When USA Football has staggered practices, with different groups arriving and departing throughout the day, it may not be practical to constantly monitor locker rooms and changing areas over this extended course of time. While we do not continuously post staff members inside or at the doors of the locker rooms and changing areas, we do make occasional sweeps of these areas. USAFB Staff conduct these sweeps, with women checking on female-designated areas, and men checking on male-designated areas.

Coaches and staff make every effort to recognize when an athlete goes to the locker room or changing area during practice and competition and, if they do not return in a timely fashion, we will check on the athlete's whereabouts.

We discourage parents from entering locker rooms and changing areas unless it is truly necessary. In those instances, it is only a same-sex parent. If this is necessary, parents should let USAFB Staff know about this in advance. If an athlete needs assistance with his or her uniform or gear (for example, a child under the age of eight), or an athlete's disability warrants assistance, then we ask that parents let the coach or a USAFB Staff know beforehand that he or she will be helping the athlete.

### Mixed-Gender Teams

If a team consists of both male and female athletes, both female and male privacy rights must be given consideration and appropriate arrangements made. Where possible, USA Football has the male and female players dress/undress in separate locker rooms and then convene in a single dressing room before the game or team meeting. Once the game is finished, the players may come to one locker room and then the male and female players proceed to their separate dressing rooms to undress and shower, if available. If separate locker rooms are not available, then the athletes will take turns using the locker room to change making sure that male and female athletes do not occupy the locker room simultaneously.

### Use of Cell Phones and Other Mobile Recording Devices

Cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras, increase the risk for different forms of misconduct in locker rooms and changing areas. As a result, **THERE IS TO BE NO USE OF A DEVICE'S RECORDING CAPABILITIES IN THE LOCKER ROOMS OR CHANGING AREAS.**

Violations of this policy will be addressed under USA Football's Disciplinary Rules and Procedures and may result in the sanctions as set forth therein, including temporary suspension from competition.

### **Travel**

USA Football has established policies to guide our travel, minimize one-on-one interactions and reduce the risk of misconduct. Adherence to these travel guidelines will increase athlete safety and improve the competitive experience while keeping travel a fun and enjoyable experience.

We distinguish between travel to training, practice and local competition ("local travel"), and team travel involving overnight travel to an activity that is planned and supervised by USA Football ("team travel").

### Local Travel

Local travel occurs when USA Football does not sponsor, coordinate, or arrange for travel. For local travel, athletes or their parents/guardians (for minor athletes) are responsible for making all travel arrangements. In these instances it is the responsibility of the athlete or his/her parents/guardians (for minor athletes) to ensure the person transporting the athlete maintains all safety and legal requirements, including, but not limited to, a valid driver's license, proper insurance, well maintained vehicle, and compliance with all state laws.

In an effort to minimize one-on-one interactions, USAFB Staff, who are not also acting as a parent, should not drive alone with an unrelated athlete and should only drive with at least two other athletes or another adult at all times, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the athlete's parent or guardian in advance of travel. In any case where USAFB Staff is involved in the athlete's local travel, a parental release is required in advance. Efforts must be made to ensure that USAFB Staff are not alone with an athlete or participant (e.g., picking the athletes up in groups).

USAFB Staff who are also an athlete's guardian may provide shared transportation for any athlete(s). We encourage guardians to pick up their athlete first and drop off their athlete last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement. We also recommend completing a shared travel declaration form signed by the parents/guardians of any minor athlete who is being transported as part of such a carpool arrangement.

### Team Travel

Team travel is overnight travel that occurs when USA Football sponsors, coordinates or arranges for travel so that teams can compete locally, regionally, nationally or internationally. Because of the greater distances, USAFB Staff will often travel with the athletes. However, no USAFB Staff will engage in team travel without the proper safety requirements in place, including valid drivers' licenses, proper insurance, well-maintained vehicles and compliance with all state laws.

USA Football makes efforts to provide adequate supervision through coaches and other adult chaperones. Appropriate adult-to-athlete ratios will depend on the age of athletes and other participants. USA Football evaluates its programs to determine its supervisory needs.

For team travel, hotels and air travel will be booked in advance by USA Football. Athletes may share rooms, with 2 to 4 athletes assigned per room depending on accommodations. USA Football will notify hotel management should any special arrangements be warranted. For instance, USA Football will ask hotels to block pay per view channels and, when practical, will request an additional large room or suite so that athletes may socialize as a group. Team meetings will occur in public areas in the hotel. When practical, USA Football will reserve a separate space for adults and athletes to conduct meetings and socialize.

USA Football encourages family members who wish to stay in the team hotel to do so. If family members do not stay in the team hotel, we encourage all athletes to call parents and guardians regularly and allow for any unscheduled calls by either the athlete or parent/guardian.

### Travel Notification

When possible, USA Football will provide reasonable advance notice before team travel. Notice will include the dates, location and duration of competition. Travel notice will also include designated team hotels for overnight stays as well as a contact person within USA Football. This individual will be the point of contact to confirm your intention to travel and to help with travel details.

USA Football will post specific travel itineraries when they become available. These will include a more detailed itinerary as well as contact information for team travel chaperones.

### Mixed-Gender and Mixed-Age Travel

USA Football is made up of male and female athletes across various ages. Athletes will only share a room with other athletes of the same sex and age group. Athletes will also be grouped by age and sex for the purposes of assigning an appropriate chaperone. USA Football often relies on parents or coaches to serve as chaperones.

Regardless of gender, USAFB Staff shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an athlete (unless the coach or USAFB Staff is the parent, guardian, sibling or spouse of that particular athlete). Where an adult is registered both as a coach and an athlete of USA Football, and is functioning primarily as a coach, he or she may only share sleeping arrangements with another registered coach.

#### USAFB Staff Transportation Responsibilities

If USAFB Staff transports an athlete or other individuals in their private car for team travel, a copy of the USAFB Staff's valid driver's license is required.

#### **Other USAFB Staff Responsibilities**

When not practicing, training, competing, or preparing for competition, USAFB Staff will monitor the activities of athletes and fellow coaches and USAFB Staff during team travel. USAFB Staff will:

- 1) prepare athletes for team travel and make athletes aware of all expectations. Supplemental information will be given to parents/guardians of athletes who are considered inexperienced travelers, new or relatively new to team travel, or who are under the age of 14;
- 2) familiarize themselves with all travel itineraries and schedules before the initiation of team travel;
- 3) conform to, and monitor for others' adherence, the Policy and all policies during team travel;
- 4) encourage minor athletes to participate in regular, at least daily, scheduled communications with their parents/guardians;
- 5) help athletes be on time for all team commitments (as possible);
- 6) assist with team travel logistical needs (as possible);
- 7) support chaperones and/or participate in the monitoring of athletes for adherence to curfew restrictions set based on age and competition schedule as listed in travel itinerary;
- 8) ensure athletes are complying with hotel room restrictions based on gender or age bracket requirements;
- 9) make certain that athletes are not alone in a hotel room with any adult apart from a family member; this includes coaches, USAFB Staff and chaperones;
- 10) not use drugs or alcohol in the presence of minors or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing their coaching or other duties;
- 11) immediately report any concerns about physical or sexual abuse, misconduct, or policy violations; and
- 12) notify parents before taking any disciplinary action against a minor athlete if the athlete is traveling without his or her parents.

#### **Chaperone Responsibilities**

When present chaperones help ensure that the athletes, coaches, staff, and volunteers adhere to this Policy. Chaperones may not be in attendance at all events.

If a chaperone has not undergone a criminal background check and USA Football's awareness training, the chaperone will not be permitted to have any one-on-one interactions with athletes or other youth participants. If a chaperone has undergone a criminal background check and awareness training, he or she may have appropriate one-on-one interactions as outlined in this Policy.

If a chaperone will be operating a private car for team travel, a copy of the chaperone's valid driver's license is required.

If attending an event, chaperones help monitor the activities of all coaches, staff members, volunteers and athletes during team travel. Specifically, chaperones will:

- 1) familiarize themselves with all travel itineraries and schedules before team travel;
- 2) monitor for adherences to USA Football policies during team travel;
- 3) encourage minor athletes to participate in regular, at least daily, scheduled communications with their parents/guardians;
- 4) help athletes be on time for all team commitments (as possible);
- 5) assist coaches, staff and other volunteers with team travel logistical needs (as possible);
- 6) monitor athletes for adherence to curfew restrictions set based on age and competition schedule as listed in travel itinerary;
- 7) ensure athletes comply with hotel room restrictions based on gender or age bracket requirements;
- 8) not use drugs or alcohol in the presence of minors or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing their chaperone duties;
- 9) make certain that athletes are not alone in a hotel room with any adult apart from a family member; this includes coaches, staff and chaperones; and
- 10) immediately report any concerns about sexual and physical abuse, misconduct or policy violations to a USA Football supervisor or senior executive (e.g., Executive Director, General Counsel).

## **Strategy 5: Responding to Abuse, Misconduct and Policy Violations**

### **Reporting Policy**

USAFB Staff must report:

- 1) misconduct as defined in this Policy, and
- 2) suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse.

**As a matter of policy, USA Football does not investigate suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse or attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of such allegations as a condition for reporting to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.**

### **Reporting Child Physical or Sexual Abuse**

#### **Child Physical or Sexual Abuse**

USAFB Staff are required to report suspicions or allegations of child sexual abuse by a colleague or co-worker, to:

- 1) their immediate supervisor,
- 2) a USA Football senior executive (e.g., Executive Director, General Counsel), and
- 3) where applicable, **appropriate law enforcement authorities.**

#### **Grooming**

Because sexual abusers “groom” children for abuse – the process used by offenders to select a child, to win the child’s trust (and the trust of the child’s parent or guardian), to manipulate the child into sexual activity and to keep the child from disclosing abuse – it is possible that USAFB Staff may witness behavior intended to groom a child for sexual abuse. All questions or concerns related to inappropriate, suspicious or suspected grooming behavior should be directed to an immediate supervisor or a USA Football senior executive (e.g., Executive Director, General Counsel).

#### **Peer-to-Peer Sexual Abuse**

Approximately one-third of all child sexual abuse occurs at the hands of other children and the obligation to report extends to peer-to-peer child sexual abuse. Whether or not a sexual interaction between children constitutes child sexual abuse turns on the existence of an aggressor, the age difference between the children, and/or whether there is an imbalance of power or intellectual capabilities. **If you have any concerns that an interaction between children may constitute sexual abuse, report it to the appropriate law enforcement authorities and your immediate supervisor, or a USA Football senior executive (e.g., Executive Director, General Counsel) immediately.**

### **Reporting Misconduct and Policy Violations**

If USAFB Staff receives an allegation or observes misconduct or other inappropriate behavior, such as grooming, that is not reportable to law enforcement authorities, it is the responsibility of the USAFB Staff to report their observations to:

- 1) his or her immediate supervisor, or
- 2) a USA Football senior executive (e.g., Executive Director, General Counsel).

Parents, athletes and other participants may communicate concerns to USAFB Staff. Upon receipt of a reported concern, USA Football will take appropriate action. Where applicable, parents should also report to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

## **Reporting Procedure**

### To Whom to Report

USAFB Staff may report to any supervisor or USA Football senior executive (e.g., Executive Director, General Counsel) with whom they are comfortable sharing concerns regarding actual or suspected violations of this Policy. Further, USAFB Staff may, and in many cases must, report any allegation of child physical or sexual abuse to relevant law enforcement authorities.

### How to Report

USA Football will take a report in the way that is most comfortable for the person initiating a report including an anonymous, in-person, verbal or written report. Regardless of how you choose to report, it is helpful to USA Football for individuals to provide, at a minimum, (1) the name of the complainant(s); (2) the type of misconduct alleged; and (3) the name(s) of the individual(s) alleged to have committed the misconduct.

### Reporting Form

Individuals reporting child physical or sexual abuse or other misconduct may complete an Incident Report Form included as Appendix B.

USA Football will withhold the complainant's name on request, to the extent permitted by law.

## **Confidentiality, Anonymous Reporting and Bad Faith Allegations**

### Confidentiality

To the extent permitted by law, and as appropriate, USA Football will keep confidential the complainant's name on request, not make public the names of potential victims, the accused perpetrator or the people who made a report of child physical and sexual abuse to the authorities.

### Anonymous Reporting

USA Football recognizes it can be difficult for an athlete, teammate, friend or family member to report an allegation of misconduct and strives to remove as many barriers to reporting as possible. **Anonymous reports may be made without the formality of completing an Incident Report Form:**

- 1) by completing the Reporting Form without including their name; or
- 2) by otherwise anonymously expressing concerns to USAFB Staff.

**However, anonymous reporting may make it difficult for USA Football to investigate or properly address allegations.**

All suspicions of child physical or sexual abuse will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.



### “Whistleblower” Protection

Regardless of outcome, USA Football will support the complainant(s) and his or her right to express concerns in good faith. USA Football will not encourage, allow or tolerate attempts from any individual to retaliate, punish, or in any way harm any individual(s) who report a concern in good faith nor will USA Football tolerate a failure by USAFB Staff to report violations of this subsection. Such actions against a complainant will be considered a violation of this Policy and grounds for disciplinary action.

### Bad-Faith Allegations

A report of abuse, misconduct or policy violations that is malicious, frivolous or made in bad faith is prohibited. Such reports will be considered a violation of this Policy and grounds for disciplinary action. Depending on the nature of the allegation, a person making a malicious, frivolous or bad-faith report may also be subject to civil or criminal proceedings.

## **How Reports Are Handled**

### Suspicious or Allegations of Child Physical or Sexual Abuse

#### *Reporting to Law Enforcement and/or Child Protective Services*

An independent investigation can harm youth and/or interfere with the legal investigative process. USA Football and USAFB Staff **do not attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of child physical or sexual abuse as a condition of reporting to appropriate law enforcement authorities**. As necessary, however, USA Football may ask a few clarifying questions of the minor or person making the report to adequately report the suspicion or allegation to law enforcement authorities.

For mandatory reporting laws, visit [www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov).

#### *Immediate Suspension or Termination*

When an allegation of child physical or sexual abuse is made against USAFB Staff, USA Football may immediately remove that individual from contact with any children until the allegation has been investigated by an official agency. As necessary, USA Football may suspend or change the assignment of any individual.

USAFB Staff's failure to report suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse to a supervisor or a USA Football senior executive (e.g., Executive Director, General Counsel) is a violation of this Policy and is grounds for termination of the failing individual.

### Misconduct and Policy Violations

USA Football investigates and addresses internally alleged policy violations and misconduct – bullying, harassment, hazing, emotional, physical and sexual – that are not reportable under relevant state or federal law. USAFB Staff must report policy violations and misconduct to an immediate supervisor or USA Football senior executive (e.g., Executive Director, General Counsel).

USA Football may also investigate allegations of child physical or sexual abuse that are reportable, if such investigation does not interfere with any ongoing criminal investigation or prosecution for abuse. Such allegations may include:

- 1) Emotional abuse;

- 2) Abuse reported outside the relevant statutes of limitation; or
- 3) Allegations of abuse that were reported to authorities, but: (a) legal authorities did not press criminal charges; (b) criminal charges were filed, but not pursued to trial; or (c) the alleged offender was acquitted at trial.

### Notification

Following USA Football's notice of a credible allegation against USAFB Staff that results in the removal of an individual, USA Football may consider the circumstances in which it will notify other parents of athletes with whom the accused individual may have had contact. In USA Football's discretion, as appropriate, and after consultation with legal counsel, USA Football may notify other USAFB Staff, parents, and/or athletes of any allegation of child physical or sexual abuse or other criminal behavior that (1) law enforcement authorities are actively investigating; or (2) that USA Football is investigating internally. Advising others of an allegation may lead to additional reports of child physical or sexual abuse and other misconduct.

### **Disciplinary Rules and Procedures**

While USA Football endeavors to provide support and guidance to participants on a day-to-day basis, it is also important for USA Football to have a formal procedure for disciplinary action to address alleged violations of its policies and other inappropriate behaviors.

### Application

This Policy is used to address the following allegations against USAFB Staff, athletes, and/or other participants:

- 1) Violations of USA Football's policies
- 2) Child abuse (physical or sexual), where USA Football's actions will not undermine an ongoing legal investigation or criminal prosecution

**USA Football will not enter into an investigation that undermines a pending legal investigation or criminal prosecution.**

### Disciplinary Rules

On receipt of an allegation, USA Football will determine in its discretion the appropriate steps to address the conduct based on several factors, including (i) the age of the complainant or victim, (ii) the age of the accused and (iii) the nature, scope and extent of the allegations.

USA Football will address allegations against USAFB Staff under relevant organizational policies (e.g., Employment Policies and Procedures, Bylaws).

USA Football's disciplinary response will depend on the nature and seriousness of the incident, and in extreme cases, misconduct may result in summary dismissal. USA Football may undertake a formal investigation and hearing at its discretion. Before taking any disciplinary action, however, USA Football will offer the accused an opportunity to respond.

If the accused individual is a minor, USA Football will contact his or her parents or guardians.

### Disciplinary Action

Sanctions for violations of this Policy will be proportionate and reasonable under the circumstances. In addition to day-to-day guidance, USA Football may take the following disciplinary actions, without limitation:

- 1) Inform the individual's direct-line supervisor or in the case of a minor, the minor's parent or guardian
- 2) Provide the individual with guidance, redirection and instruction
- 3) Temporary suspension from competition
- 4) File a formal incident report
- 5) Issue a verbal warning
- 6) Issue a written and/or final written warning
- 7) Implement a limited access agreement (e.g., limiting an individual's access to certain buildings or to youth)
- 8) Provide informed supervision, where at least one staff member is informed of the allegation and is instructed to supervised vigilantly the accused individual in his or her interactions with the program and/or organization
- 9) Engage in restorative practices (i.e., creation of a respectful and safe dialogue when a misunderstanding or harm has occurred)
- 10) Suspend or terminating employment or membership

### On-Going Employment and/or Participation

On receipt of a credible and specific allegation of child abuse or other serious misconduct (e.g., physical and sexual abuse as defined in this Policy), USA Football may immediately suspend or terminate the accused individual to ensure participant safety.

### **Media Policy**

The Executive Director is the official spokesperson for USA Football. The Director of Communications serves as the sole media contact. All media contact and response should be through the Director of Communications.

Individuals' rights to privacy and confidentiality will be respected for all persons involved in any allegations of misconduct. USA Football respects each individual's right to his or her good reputation and will not proactively identify individuals accused of misconduct unless an allegation has been made in the public forum or a law enforcement agency or court has determined there is sufficient reason to believe the accusation is valid, and/or USA Football has taken action to punish or remove the alleged offender.

## **Strategy 6: Monitoring USA Football's Policy**

By monitoring the interactions among USAFB Staff, athletes, and others, USA Football works to prevent, recognize and respond to inappropriate and harmful behaviors as set forth in this Policy, while reinforcing appropriate behaviors.

### **Monitoring Compliance with Policies and Procedures**

USA Football monitors for compliance with its policies and procedures, including without limitation its Awareness Training, Travel, Locker Room and Changing Areas, and Physical Contact Policies.

### **Monitoring Methods**

USA Football utilizes multiple monitoring methods to observe how individuals are interacting, including without limitation (1) formal supervision, including regular evaluations; (2) informal supervision, including regular and random observation (e.g., roving and checking interactions throughout practices), and (3) maintaining frequent contact with staff members, volunteer and athletes who interact off-site.

### **Responding to Interactions**

**While USA Football has a formal reporting policy, USAFB Staff should be prepared to respond immediately to inappropriate or harmful behavior, potential risk situations and potential boundary violations.**

USAFB Staff will redirect inappropriate behaviors to promote positive behaviors, confront inappropriate or harmful behaviors, and report behaviors if necessary.

### **Reporting**

USAFB Staff are required to report policy violations, misconduct and physical and sexual abuse consistent with USA Football's Reporting Policy. **USA Football does not investigate suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse or attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of such allegations as a condition for reporting to appropriate law enforcement authorities.**

## **Appendix A: USA Football's Background Check Criterion Offenses**

### **A. Criterion Offenses for USA Football Employees**

Reportable convictions, registrations or pending dispositions, or disclosures of convictions, registrations or pending dispositions for any of the following criminal offenses or registrations will prompt a determination that an applicant 'does not meet' the criminal background screening criteria and a red light determination will be issued.

Criminal offenses are defined on the basis of exposure to the offense for which the defendant was convicted, pled guilty or pled *nolo contendere* or, if pled down, then the crime to which the defendant ultimately pled. Felony offenses are defined as all crimes punishable by greater than one year in jail or prison, regardless of how characterized by jurisdiction and regardless of the actual sentence imposed, or if range, alternate sentencing, or indeterminate sentencing is applicable, the outer range is greater than one year.

#### **R1. Offenses:**

(a) Any felony of violence regardless of the amount of time since the offense,

OR

(b) One (1) non-violent felony within the past ten years, or more than one (1) non-violent felony regardless of the amount of time since the offenses.

R2. Any lesser crime involving force or threat of force against a person within the past ten years or more than one (1) regardless of the amount of time since the offenses.

R3. Any crime (felony or lesser) of a sexual nature or classified as a sex offense including but not limited to "victimless" crimes of a sexual nature such as prostitution, pornography, indecent exposure; and crimes in which sexual relations is an element regardless of the amount of time since the offense.

R4. Any lesser crime involving controlled substances (not paraphernalia or alcohol) within the past ten years or more than one (1) regardless of the amount of time since the offenses.

R5. Any crime (felony or lesser) involving cruelty to animals regardless of the amount of time since the offenses.

R6. Any sex offender registrant.

R7. Any crime (felony or lesser) involving harm to a minor regardless of the amount of time since the offense.

R8. Any lesser crime involving financial misappropriation or theft, including but not limited to embezzlement, fraud, and extortion within the past ten years, or more than one (1) regardless of the amount of time since the offenses.

R9. Any combination of two (2) or more offenses defined in R1(b), R2, R4, or R8 regardless of the amount of time since the offenses.

Criminal offenses include “Attempted Crimes” in the above classifications.

**B. Criterion Offenses for USA Football Events and Heads Up Football**

Reportable convictions, registrations or pending dispositions, or disclosures of convictions, registrations or pending dispositions for any of the following criminal offenses or registrations will prompt a determination that an applicant ‘does not meet’ the criminal background screening criteria and a red light determination will be issued.

Criminal offenses are defined on the basis of exposure to the offense for which the defendant was convicted, pled guilty or pled *nolo contendere* or, if pled down, then the crime to which the defendant ultimately pled. Felony offenses are defined as all crimes punishable by greater than one year in jail or prison, regardless of how characterized by jurisdiction and regardless of the actual sentence imposed, or if range, alternate sentencing, or indeterminate sentencing is applicable, the outer range is greater than one year.

**R1. Offenses:**

(a) Any felony of violence regardless of the amount of time since the offense,

OR

(b) one (1) non-violent felony within the past ten years, or more than one (1) non-violent felony regardless of the amount of time since the offenses.

R2. Any lesser crime involving force or threat of force against a person within the past ten years or more than one (1) regardless of the amount of time since the offenses.

R3. Any crime (felony or lesser) of a sexual nature or classified as a sex offense including but not limited to “victimless” crimes of a sexual nature such as prostitution, pornography, indecent exposure; and crimes in which sexual relations is an element regardless of the amount of time since the offense.

R4. Any lesser crime involving controlled substances (not paraphernalia or alcohol) within the past ten years or more than one (1) regardless of the amount of time since the offenses.

R5. Any crime (felony or lesser) involving cruelty to animals regardless of the amount of time since the offenses.

R6. Any sex offender registrant.

R7. Any crime (felony or lesser) involving harm to a minor regardless of the amount of time since the offense.

R8. Any combination of two (2) or more offenses defined in R1(b), R2, or R4, regardless of the amount of time since the offenses.

Criminal offenses include “Attempted Crimes” in the above classifications.

### **Other Potentially Disqualifying Factors**

Even if an applicant passes a criminal background check, other factors may disqualify an applicant. An individual may be disqualified and prohibited from providing services for USA Football if the individual has:

- 1) Been held liable for civil penalties or damages involving sexual or physical abuse of a minor
- 2) Been subject to any court order involving any sexual or physical abuse of a minor, including but not limited to domestic order or protection
- 3) A history with another organization (employment, volunteer, etc.) of complaints of sexual or physical abuse of minors
- 4) Resigned, been terminated or been asked to resign from a position - paid or unpaid – due to complaint(s) of sexual or physical abuse of minors
- 5) A history of other behavior that indicates they may be a danger to USA Football participants.

## **Appendix B: Incident Report Form**

USA Football strongly encourages the reporting of misconduct. USA Football appreciates your willingness to report inappropriate behavior. Please provide as much information as possible.

1. Name of the individual you are reporting (first and last):

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Age: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

4. Address: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Position(s) this individual holds or held:

- ☐ Head coach  
☐ Assistant coach  
☐ Employee  
☐ Volunteer  
☐ Official  
☐ Other/Not sure

6. Team/Organization where individual works and/or volunteers or worked/volunteered previously: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Type of offense (i.e., what happened?): \_\_\_\_\_

8. Where did the incident or incidents take place (city, state, and any other available location information): \_\_\_\_\_

9. Please describe what happened (who, what when, where): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Victim's Information:** If you are the victim and wish to remain anonymous, you may do so. In that case, please enter only your age, city, state and team affiliation.

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Age: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Team/Organization affiliation (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

4. Contact phone number(s) (note, if the victim is under age 18, please provide contact information for his parent/guardian): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



5. Contact email address(es) (note, if the victim is under age 18, please provide contact information for his parent/guardian): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

**Reporter's Information:** You may remain anonymous if you wish. However, providing your information is vastly helpful to a swift and effective investigation. A person reporting alleged misconduct should not be fear retribution and/or consequence when filing a report he or she believes to be true.

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Team/Organization affiliation (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

5. Relationship to victim (if any):

- ☐ Self
- ☐ Parent/Guardian
- ☐ Other family member
- ☐ Friend or acquaintance
- ☐ Team member, coach or volunteer
- ☐ Other or prefer not to say

**Appendix C: Incident Investigation Report Form**

<b>Incident:</b>	
<b>Reported By:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Individuals (s) Involved:</b>	

<b>Investigated By:</b>	
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<b>Location of Incident:</b>	
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<b>Summary of Complaint:</b>	
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Incident Investigation Report Form (Page 2)

<b>Statements Provided By:</b>	
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<b>Conclusion:</b>	
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<b>Recommendation:</b>	
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**ACTION TAKEN:**

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# Stop It Now!®

## Important Contacts

### USA Football Contacts

- [USA Football](#)
  - Email [abuse@usafootball.com](mailto:abuse@usafootball.com) to make a report of suspected or disclosed abuse (if not comfortable talking to league leader)
  - Their [Consultants](#) page helps you learn more about USA Football's commitment to prevention

### Information on Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting Child Abuse

- [Stop It Now!](#) (**1.888.PREVENT**): A child sexual abuse prevention organization that works to mobilize adults to take steps to prevent the sexual harm and abuse of children. Their helpline is confidential, and you can reach out via chat or email through their [Get Immediate Help](#) page.
  - Their [Reporting](#) resource guide helps answer commonly asked questions about the reporting process, and provides the most commonly used reporting agencies' contact information.
- [ChildHelp](#) (**1.800.4A.CHILD**): Provides 24/7 assistance in 170 languages to adults, children and youth with information and questions regarding child abuse (physical, sexual, emotional and neglect). All calls are anonymous and confidential.
- [Child Welfare Information Gateway](#)
  - Their [Child Protective Services Numbers by State](#) helps you locate the correct number to call if you suspect, see evidence of, or a child discloses abuse.

### Crisis Resources and Helplines for Youth

- [Your Life Your Voice](#) (**1.800.448.3000**): Crisis helpline open 24/7 for youth who are struggling with a variety of topics. Text **VOICE** to **20121**; email also available through their website.
- [Trevor Project](#) (**1.866.488.7386**): Provides 24/7 crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth. Text **START** to **678-678**; chat also available through their website.
- [Love is Respect](#) (**1.866.331.9474**): Peer advocates available 24/7 to support teens with concerns about dating violence. Chat available thru their website, or text **LOVEIS** to **22522**.
- [National Runaway Safeline](#) (**1.800.RUNAWAY**): Crisis line available for youth 24/7 who are thinking about running away, for youth already on the run, and for adults worried about a runaway.
- [Whats OK?](#) (**1.888.PREVENT**): Helpline for youth ages 14-24 who have questions about safe sexual boundaries, relationships and online behavior. Text **WHATSOK** to **1.888.532.0550**; chat also available through their website.