Mission Statement

The Childhelp Speak Up Be Safe for Athletes prevention education initiative exists to promote the safe physical, emotional, educational and spiritual development of youth athletes. The program is also designed to aid coaches, educators and parents in providing a secure environment where children can reach their ultimate potential.
DEFINING CHILD ABUSE

Neglect
Physical Abuse
Sexual Abuse
Emotional Abuse
Spiritual Abuse
The most common type of child abuse (about 60%) involves neglect: the failure to give due care or attention to a child’s needs. Neglect results in about 35% of all fatalities.

- **Physical neglect** – The failure to provide for a child’s physical needs, abandonment or inadequate supervision. Includes failure to thrive, malnutrition, unsanitary conditions or injuries from lack of supervision.

- **Educational neglect** – Includes not enrolling a child in school or allowing a child to engage in chronic truancy.

- **Emotional neglect** – Withholding affection or attention, failure to provide psychological care or ignoring the child’s emotional needs.

- **Medical neglect** – Delay or denial of dental or healthcare. Some states will not prosecute withholding of health care due to religious beliefs, but court orders are occasionally obtained to save a child’s life.
PHYSICAL ABUSE

Any non-accidental injury resulting in physical harm to a child such as punching, beating, kicking, biting, burning, breaking bones, hair pulling and shaking a baby. Approximately 11% of all child abuse cases are the result of physical abuse.
Any misuse of a child for sexual pleasure or gratification. It is the involvement of children in sexual activities that they do not fully comprehend and that violate societal taboos and laws. Nearly 8% of all child abuse cases are the result of sexual abuse.
A pattern of behavior that interferes with a child’s positive development, psyche and self concept. About 4% of all child abuse cases are the result of emotional abuse. Emotional abuse is hard to identify due to lack of physical evidence.
Typically thought of as a form of emotional abuse, spiritual abuse has its own indicators and therefore is identified separately. It is significant because it affects a child's core beliefs, which can interfere with healthy psychological development.
WHO ABUSES CHILDREN?

The perpetrator is usually someone the child knows. He or she may be a family member, friend, neighbor, or even an older child or sibling in a blended family (this type of abuse is rarely reported and may be dismissed as sibling rivalry). 80% of victims are abused by a parent. The perpetrator also can be a person in whose care the child is placed such as a daycare worker, babysitter, teacher, school counselor, coach or camp counselor.
Perpetrators are experts at knowing how to choose victims. They often slowly groom the victim prior to the abuse by giving gifts, spending “special time” together, playing games, going to movies, etc. This can be confusing to the child.
Child abuse honors no boundaries. It occurs at every socioeconomic level, across ethnic and cultural lines, within all religions and at all levels of education.
WHY DON'T SOME CHILDREN REVEAL THEIR PERPETRATORS?

Victims may be confused by the actions of those who abuse them. Perpetrators may say of the abuse, “It is our little secret.”
Victims are likely to be told no one will believe their stories or that it is the victim’s fault. At times, victims, their pets, or their families are threatened with injury or death if they tell. Victims may be scared into silent.
It is extremely rare that a perpetrator has only one victim and children often suffer more than just one type of abuse.
CHILD ABUSE IN SPORTS: THE FACTS

- Coaches are second only to teachers in their frequency of sexual misconduct.

- Coaches who perpetrate are often highly qualified and well respected in their sport, allowing them to offend under the radar.

- There has been no correlation made between manual handling (such as gymnastic spotting or physical redirection) and increased likelihood of sexual abuse.

- Athletes are responsible for more sexual harassment of their peers than coaches.

- 8% of coaches acknowledged encouraging their athletes to hurt opponents, 33% yelled at players for making mistakes and 20% made fun of a team member with limited skills.

- 4% of young athletes reported that a coach had hit, kicked or slapped them.
The nature of youth sport, with close ties athletes have with coaches, peers, and even bus drivers increases the opportunities for child abuse to occur if the right conditions are in place.

~ Lois Baron & Margery Holman
R.E.F.: REPORT. EDUCATE. FIGHT.

» What do I do if I suspect a child is being abused?
» What are the signs of abuse?
» How can I keep children safe in my community?
Who Must Report: Arizona Mandatory Reporting Requirements Regarding Children

- Physicians, physician's assistants, optometrists, dentists, osteopaths, chiropractors, podiatrists, behavioral health professionals, nurses, psychologists, counselors and social workers who develop the reasonable belief in the course of treating a patient.

- Peace officers.

- Members of the clergy, priests and Christian Science Practitioners (unless they gained this information by a confidential communication or confession).

- Parents, stepparents and guardians of a minor.

- School personnel or domestic violence victim advocates who develop the reasonable belief in the course of their employment.

- Any other person who has responsibility for the care or treatment of a minor.

- Anyone who fails to make a required report is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor, except if the failure to report involves certain specific offenses listed in the statute, the person is guilty of a Class 6 felony.

• If you hear of or suspect abuse call the Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453). Blow the Whistle!

• Should a child describe scenarios that strike you as odd or leave you feeling uncomfortable, REPORT (This could range from excessive or prolonged touching to a coach/assistant showering with students to provocative language).

• If a coach/assistant targets a child for secret extracurricular visits, practices, phone calls, sleepovers or other one-on-one activities, REPORT (this may be part of the grooming process and there is no reason contact should be private or secretive).

• When you think something might be wrong but you are worried to “cause a scene” or think “what if I’m mistaken,” REPORT (too many children are injured while well-meaning bystanders deliberate over making a phone call).

• To report with maximum efficiency, thoroughly document the event, time and place it occurred and any other relevant details.
Blow the Whistle

- If a child discloses abuse to you, carefully listen and do not push him/her to say more than is comfortable. Remain calm!
- Assure the child that you believe him/her and that what has happened is not his/her fault. The child is not bad.
Blow the Whistle

• Reassure the child. Let him/her know that telling was the right thing to do and you appreciate that you were trusted.

• Do what you can to make him/her feel safe. Let the child know you will report the abuse and get help.
Blow the Whistle

- Although the child’s disclosure may make you angry or disgusted, do not attempt to take matters into your own hands. The situation requires professionals. Your interference can make matters worse.

- If you suspect the child has been sexually assaulted, do not change his/her clothes or wash the child. Go immediately to the emergency room.
**Blow the Whistle**

- Make a report by calling your local child protective services hotline, police or sheriff's department. Remain calm.

- If you are unsure who to call, contact the 24-hour Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-4-A-CHILD for that information. All calls are anonymous and confidential.
Blow the Whistle

Disclosure and Reporting Role-playing:

One person will play a child disclosing abuse and the other will be the responsible adult.
If a child discloses abuse to you, carefully listen and do not push him/her to say more than is comfortable. Remain calm! Blow the Whistle.

Assure the child that you believe him/her and that what has happened is not his/her fault. The child is not bad.

Reassure the child. Let him/her know that telling was the right thing to do and you appreciate that you were trusted.

Do what you can to make him/her feel safe. Let the child know you will report the abuse and get help.

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Physical Indicators of Physical Abuse

- Unexplained bruises and welts
  - On torso, back, buttocks, thighs or face
  - Identifiable shape of object used to inflict injury (belt, electrical cord, etc.)

- Unexplained burns
  - On soles of feet, palms, back, buttocks, or head
  - Hot water/immersion burns (glove-like, sock-like, or doughnut-shaped burn on buttocks or genitals)

- Unexplained fractures or dislocations

- Bald patches on scalp
Behavioral Indicators of Physical Abuse

- Child states he/she deserves punishment
- Fearful when others cry
- Behavioral extremes
  - Aggressive
  - Withdrawn
- Frightened of parents or caretakers
- Afraid to go home
- Child reports injury by parents or caretaker
- Manipulative behaviors to get attention
- Inappropriate/immature acting out
- Needy for affection
- Wary of adult contact
- Tendency toward superficial relationships
- Unable to focus-daydreaming
- Self-abuse behavior or lack of concern for personal safety
Physical Indicators of Physical Neglect

- Not meeting basic needs
  - Food, shelter, clothing
- Failure to thrive
  - Underweight, small for age
- Persistent hunger
- Poor hygiene
- Inappropriate dress for season or weather
- Consistent lack of supervision
- Unattended physical problems or medical needs
- Abandonment
Behavioral Indicators of Physical Neglect

- Begging or stealing food
- Early arrival or late departure from school
- Frequent visits to the school nurse
- Difficulty with vision or hearing
- Poor coordination
- Often tired or falling asleep in class
- Takes on adult roles and responsibilities
- Child verbalizes a lack of care-taking
- Substance abuse
- Acting out behavior
Physical Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Torn, stained or bloody undergarments
- Pain, swelling, or itching in genital area
- Vaginal or penile discharge
- Sexually transmitted diseases
  - Herpes, crabs, vaginal warts
  - Gonorrhea, syphilis
  - HIV, AIDS
- Excessive masturbation
Behavioral Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Unwilling to change for gym or participate in physical education activities
- Sexual behavior or knowledge inappropriate for the child's age
- Sexual acting out on younger children
- Poor peer relations
- Delinquent or runaway behavior
- Report of sexual assault
- Drastic change in school performance

- Sleep disorders/nightmares
- Eating disorders
- Aggression
- Withdrawal, fantasy, infantile behavior
- Self-abusive behavior or lack of concern for personal safety
- Substance abuse
- Repetitive behaviors
- Hand-washing, pacing, rocking
Physical Indicators of Emotional Abuse and Neglect

- Speech disorders
- Stuttering
- Baby talk
- Unresponsiveness
- Failure to thrive
- Hyperactivity
- Underweight, small for age
Behavioral Indicators of Emotional Abuse and Neglect

- Learning disabilities
- Habitual sucking, biting, rocking
- Sleep disorders
- Poor social skills
- Extreme reactions to common events
- Unusually fearful
- Overly compliant behaviors

- Unable to set limits
- Suicidal thoughts or actions; self-abusive
- Difficulty following rules or directions
- Child expects to fail so doesn’t try
Blow The Whistle

- Demand prevention education. Childhelp “Speak Up, Be Safe!” is an example of a curriculum available in schools across the country and it offers lifesaving tools to keep children free from harm.

- Call or write to your elected officials and ask what they are doing to prevent child abuse in your community.

- USA.gov has a simple site that provides all the contact information for representatives in your area: http://www.usa.gov/Contact/Elected.shtml

- Childhelp’s legislative website: www.childhelp.org/ContactCongress lists child-centered laws and initiatives you can support today!
Learn to recognize:

• The warning signs of child abuse.

• The signs of an abusive person, whether a child, teen or adult.

• Your own negative feelings and behaviors. Acquire positive parenting skills and get help when you need it.
Teach the child:

- What is appropriate behavior from another person and what is not.
- The difference between good and bad secrets.
- The difference between good and bad touches; unless a health issue is being checked by a nurse, doctor or appropriately concerned adult, touching parts of the body a bathing suit covers is not appropriate.
Blow The Whistle

Be sure the child knows that you are always there to support and listen; then make sure you are consistent. Unfortunately, many children tell a parent or someone they trust about being abused and are not believed. Be aware that young children are likely to speak the truth in these matters.
Blow The Whistle

• Never discipline children when your anger is out of control.

• Listen when a child tells you he/she does not want to be with someone; find out why.

• Be aware of changes in a child’s behavior or attitude; ask questions.

• Be alert for any talk that reveals premature sexual understanding or knowledge.

• Pay attention when someone shows greater than normal interest in the child.
SAFETY SIGNALS
**Touch Boundaries**

**Appropriate touch**: Instructive (demonstrating a sports skill set or spotting), public, respectful of boundaries and encouraging (a quick hug/high five/pat on the back)

**Inappropriate touch**: Seductive (fondling or sexual in nature), private, disrespectful of boundaries and uncomfortable (kissing/stroking/manipulative)
Physical Boundaries

**Appropriate intervention:** Breaking up a fight, hands-on safety redirection (grabbing players before they fall/pushing players out of the way of a swinging bat), sport-specific direction (such as huddling)

**Inappropriate intervention:** Deliberate actions causing physical injury (punching/slapping/kicking/hair pulling), deliberate physical intimidation (pushing/poking/pinching/shaking), encouraging action that could result in injury (forcing a child to play while injured or in pain)
Bullying

**Appropriate Competitive Conduct**: Bonding humor (good natured “hey batter batter” chatter), firm verbal safety instructions, voices raised in crisis or concern (“Watch out!”), team-building pep talks that inspire rather than insult.

**Bullying**: Isolating players, hazing, not intervening when teammates bully, threatening actions (stomping a foot in a child’s direction/using power to intimidate), imparting damaging messages (“You are a worthless catcher!”) and verbal insults degrading race, religion (spiritual abuse), gender, disability or any other aspect of an individual’s identity.
EXCESSIVE CONTACT:

Emotional Boundaries

**Appropriate interaction:** Consistent and balanced exchanges with all team members, including parents/proper authorities in decision-making, encouraging mentorship, supporting a nurturing environment

**Inappropriate interaction:** Actions/statements that interfere with a child’s positive development and self-esteem, withholding attention/instruction, excessive contact/preferential treatment, creating a peer relationship rather than coach and player understanding, secretive interactions via phone/email/in person
Neglect

**Appropriate supervision:** Attending to medical/health needs, engaging ideas/input from all team members, maintaining safety equipment, establishing clear safety rules/regulations, being mindful of team members’ psychological wellbeing.

**Neglect:** Not treating/reporting injuries, lack of supervision, inadequate safety equipment, disregard for player security, ignoring psychological warning signs (drug abuse/suicidal talk/despondency/aggression/mental health disclosures).
Creating Secure Environments

**Appropriate Security:** Implementing a child abuse prevention education plan (such as Childhelp Blow the Whistle on Child Abuse), identifying vetted “safe adults” in the community (police officers/teachers/doctors), reviewing strategies/choices to fight abuse, making a hotline number available for parents/children to get help (1-800-4-A-CHLD).

**High Risk Zone:** A failure to implement abuse education, lack of a clear abuse reporting protocol, no resources available for help.
Rule of the Game #1:

It's My Body!

A-OK: High-fives, safety spotting, teaching touch (how to hold the bat or shoot the ball), a quick hug in front of other people to say “great job!”

NO WAY: Touch in any places a bathing suit covers, secret or private touching, any touch that makes you uncomfortable.
RULE OF THE GAME #1:

It's My Body

CHEER:

A high-five is A-OK (High five your neighbor)
But bad touch makes me run away (Run in place super fast!)
A high-five means I'm doing well (High five your neighbor)
But bad touch makes me run and tell (Run in place super fast!)
RULE OF THE GAME #2:

No Bullying!

A-OK: Being kind, helping others, setting a good example, making everyone feel like a special part of the team.

NO WAY: Being mean, hitting, yelling, pinching, pushing, ignoring, stealing, kicking, hurting someone’s feelings, talking about people behind their backs, calling people bad names, making fun of someone because of their race, religion, gender, disability or any other reason.
No Bullying

CHEER:

Playing sports is our dream (Stretch and reach for the clouds!)
Bullies can't be on our team (Shake your head no! Touch your toes)
They yell and hurt and fight and hit (Stomp your feet in place)
Coach calls time-out and makes them sit (Everyone sit down)
Tell a Safe Adult

A-OK: There are many people to talk to when you are hurt: a parent, doctor, police officer, teacher, counselor, religious leader, family friend or anyone in your life who will listen and believe you. Call 1-800-4-A-CHILD to get help.

NO WAY: It is always bad when an adult or child hurts you and says “don’t tell.” Never keep secrets!
Tell a Safe Adult

**CHEER:**

Safe adults are in the bleachers (Open arms wide)
Police, family, friends and teachers (Give yourself a big hug)
When I can’t tell anyone at all (Hand over head, stretch to the right)
1-800-4-A-CHILD is who I call (hand over head, stretch to the left)
I Have Choices

A-OK: Ignore and stay away from people that make you uncomfortable. When someone tries to hurt you, you have choices: run, escape, yell and tell. Use the buddy system and stay with friends and teammates.

NO WAY: Do not talk to strangers, never leave practice with a stranger, never get into a car with a stranger, and if someone you know is hurting you, tell a safe adult.
RULE OF THE GAME #4:

I Have Choices

CHEER:

You can’t hurt me because I have a choice (5 jumping jacks)
I can run (Run in place) escape (Run one lap) and use my voice (Scream NO!)
I can ignore (5 steps forward) stay away (5 steps back) or tell (yell HELP!)
When all else fails, I can run and yell (Run a lap and scream No!)
RULE OF THE GAME #5:

It's Never My Fault

A-OK: You deserve to be safe, happy and secure. When someone hurts you it is not your fault.

NO WAY: Don’t take the blame for abuse and never feel ashamed!
It's Never My Fault

**CHEER:**

It is not **my fault when adults are bad** (Shake your head no from side to side)

Knowing I'm strong makes me **glad** (Drop down for 5 push ups)

Blowing the whistle when I'm unsure (Crouch all the way down)

Keeps me safe, happy and secure! (Jump as high as you can)
**CHILDHELP CHEER:**

**RULE OF THE GAME:**

A high-five is A-OK (high five your neighbor)
But bad touch makes me run away (run in place super fast!)
A high-five means I’m doing well (high five your neighbor)
But bad touch makes me run and tell (run in place super fast!)

You can’t hurt me because I have a choice (5 jumping jacks)
I can run (run in place) escape (run one lap) and use my voice (scream NO!)
I can ignore (5 steps forward) stay away (5 steps back) or tell (yell HELP!)
When all else fails, I can run and yell (run a lap and scream No!)

Playing sports is our dream (stretch and reach for the clouds!)
Bullies can’t be on our team (shake your head no! Touch your toes)
They yell and hurt and fight and hit (stomp your feet in place)
Coach calls time-out and makes them sit (everyone sit down)

It is not my fault when adults are bad (shake your head no from side to side)
Knowing I’m strong makes me glad (drop down for 5 push ups)
Blowing the whistle when I’m unsure (crouch all the way down)
Keeps me safe, happy and secure! (jump as high as you can)

Safe adults are in the bleachers (open arms wide)
Police, family, friends and teachers (give yourself a big hug)
When I can’t tell anyone at all (hand over head, stretch to the right)
1-800-4-A-CHILD is who I call (hand over head, stretch to the left)