



## Safe Environment Athlete Protection Policy

United Sports Academy is committed to creating a safe and positive environment for all coaches, staff, volunteers, athletes and parents, as well as, promoting an environment that is free of misconduct. Therefore, the following Policy has been set forth to promote a safe gymnastics environment, both solely and in partnership with other necessary parties, including staff, volunteers, parents, and athletes.

United Sports Academy has “ZERO TOLERANCE” for abuse, including inappropriate behavior and sexual misconduct, in its programs, activities and events. All Coaches, staff and volunteers shall abide by and adhere to all USA policies, standards, rules, procedures and guidelines pertaining to safe environments/athlete protection.

**Definition of Abuse:** To treat in a harmful, injurious, or offensive way including to commit sexual assault. Abuse including child abuse, is defined in various sources, such as state statutes, case law, sports organization and professional association codes of conduct and training manuals, corporate and business workplace documents and human rights commission materials. United Sports Academy has not adopted any specific definition of abuse; rather, it has chosen to defer to such general sources and definitions for reference and application, depending upon the circumstances. Nonetheless, in general the following conduct may be considered abusive:

### Physical Abuse:

1. Any physical contact with a participant that intentionally causes the participant to sustain bodily harm, including without limitation striking, hitting, kicking, biting, shaking, shoving, forcing an athlete to train or compete when injured or mandating excessive exercise as a form of punishment.
2. Any physical contact with a participant that intentionally creates a threat of immediate bodily harm or personal injury.
3. Giving alcohol or inappropriate drugs to a participant.
4. Any violation of applicable law.

Physical contact that is reasonably intended to coach, teach or demonstrate a gymnastics skill or to prevent or lesson injury (e.g., spotting, catching) does not constitute physical abuse, infrequent, non-intentional physical contact particularly that which arises out of error on the part of the gymnast or coach, does not constitute physical abuse.

### Sexual Abuse

1. Rape, incest, fondling, exhibitionism or sexual exploitation.
2. Any form of sexual contact or inappropriate touching, unwanted physical contact, unwelcome advances or requests for sexual favors.
3. Any form of wanton or obscene gesturing, lewd remarks or indecent exposure.
4. Sexual abuse of a minor includes without limitation:
  - a. Touching a minor participant for the purpose of causing sexual arousal or gratification of either person.
  - b. A minor participant touching any person, if the touching occurs at the request of or with consent of such other person, for the sexual arousal or gratification of either person.

5. Neither consent of the participant to the sexual abuse or contact, mistake as to the participants age, nor the fact that the sexual contact did not take place at a gymnastics function is a defense to a complaint of sexual abuse.
6. Sexual abuse also includes sexual misconduct described in the USA Gymnastics Code of Ethical Conduct, including:
  - a. Soliciting or engaging in sexual relations with any minor.
  - b. Engaging in any behavior that utilizes the influence of a professional member's position as coach, judge, or administrator to encourage sexual relations with an athlete.
  - c. Engaging in sexual harassment by making unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where such conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.
7. Any violation of applicable law involving sexual misconduct or child abuse, or that is specifically designed to protect minors.

### **Standards of Behavior**

To promote a safe gymnastics environment for United Sports Activities and events, and to lessen the likelihood of an abusive situation, coaches, staff and volunteers must adhere to the following Standards of Behavior, as well as, sound teaching and training.

- Children are to be supervised at all times, including:
  - Children who are dropped off early
  - Children who are not picked up immediately after class (in this case 2 instructors should be present if all others have left the building)
- United Sports Academy will never be alone with a child; two adults are required at all times.
  - This includes all travel situations, before and after classes and workouts, "Private" lessons etc. (a parent may be present)
- All interactions (practices, workouts, competitions, lessons, classes, meetings, etc.) with a child shall be observable and interruptible at all times.
- Care should be taken to ensure that such physical contact is not invasive of and sensitive of areas of the body.
- Children may only be picked up from United Sports Academy by a parent or other person designated by a parent.
- Gift-giving or providing special favors or privileges to individual athletes is prohibited.
- Lap-sitting, tickling, back rubs, wrestling and other incidents of body contact that are inconsistent with the coach-athlete relationship are prohibited.
- Provision of alcohol or inappropriate drugs to athletes is prohibited.
- Electronic and social media communications with athletes are subject to USA's Electronic Communications policy.
- Travel with and transportation of athletes are subject to USA's Team Travel Policy.

### **Reporting**

Any suspected violation of this policy or USA's other safe environment/athlete protection-related policies, standards, rules, procedures and guidelines should be reported and will be addressed pursuant to USA's Reporting Policy. Violations could result in progressive discipline up to and including immediate termination.

## Other

A copy of this policy shall be placed in conspicuous locations, restrooms, front desk reception area and employee notification area and posted on USA's website and social media pages/accounts.

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary.