



**SET.  
DIRECT.  
PROTECT.**

## Safe Sport for Athletes

Course Facilitator Guide

GET READY.

Safe Sport for Athletes is designed for athletes ages 12 and older to start the conversation about Safe Sport environments, professional boundaries, and what to do with information about misconduct and abuse.

Use this guide to create meaningful conversations about Safe Sport with your swimmer or team.

## **BEFORE STARTING THE COURSE**

First things first. Introduce Safe Sport and the topics you are going to cover during the training: positive team culture, personal boundaries, and what to do if someone is crossing your personal boundaries.

**ASK:** Does anyone know what Safe Sport at USA Swimming is or does?

Take answers and then clarify that Safe Sport is USA Swimming's abuse prevention program. Safe Sport exists to keep athletes safe in the relationships they form through swimming by establishing and protecting good boundaries.

***Start the course and show chapters 1 and 2.***

## Pause after Chapter 2: Let's talk about BOUNDARIES

Discussion questions:

- I. What are the three types of boundaries?
  - a. Physical – who can touch you, where they can touch you, and how often they can touch you. This is your personal bubble.
  - b. Emotional – how close you feel to someone, how much time you spend with them, and what information you feel comfortable sharing. This is intimacy.
  - c. Behavioral – what you will or won't do, and the behaviors you're comfortable with.
  
- II. Discuss the boundaries on your team by answering the questions asked in the chapter.
  - a. Brainstorm: What kind of physical touch is normal on our team? High-5s? Hugs?
  - b. How can you tell when someone doesn't want to be touched?
    - i. Ex. Body language, facial expressions, prior experience with that person, verbal confirmation.
  - c. How involved are my teammates and coaches in other parts of my life? If I really needed to vent or get advice, who would I go to?
    - i. This is getting at the emotional boundaries. Discuss why we feel close to our teammates and coaches and what sorts of things we share with one another.
  - d. Do I ever feel pressure to do something I'm uncomfortable with or wouldn't normally do just to fit in or win approval?
    - i. This is the behavioral boundary. Discuss the expectations for interactions and how to respectfully decline a request to do something they're not comfortable with.

*Continue to Chapter 3.*

### **Pause after Chapter 3: How to speak up**

Say: Nothing is more important than your safety and well-being. If someone is ever crossing your boundaries or making you feel uncomfortable, you have a right to make it stop. Tell a teammate, coach, parent, or USA Swimming Safe Sport.

Discussion question:

- I. Brainstorm: who are 5 people in my life whom I trust and could talk to about someone who is trying to cross my boundaries?
  - a. These could include parents, teachers, coaches, mentors, or other trusted friends and adults. Having five people in your circle of trust helps ensure that you will always have someone to help you.
  - b. If someone is trying to separate you from your trusted five, that's a red flag! Go tell someone right away.

Coaches and volunteers in USA Swimming are mandated reporters of child abuse and misconduct in our sport. USA Swimming takes that seriously! If you feel comfortable, you can talk to a USA Swimming member to get help.

\*Find more information about Safe Sport and reporting at [www.usaswimming.org/report](http://www.usaswimming.org/report) or by emailing [safesport@usaswimming.org](mailto:safesport@usaswimming.org).

*Continue to Chapter 4.*

## Pause after Chapter 4: Set, Direct, Protect

Creating a Safe Sport environment takes three steps: Set, Direct, Protect. Let's brainstorm how to do this on our team.

### I. Set

- a. What words describe our team culture?
  - i. Team culture is how you treat each other, what you expect from your teammates and coaches, and what you stand for.
- b. How can our team culture improve?
- c. What's my role in making our team culture better? What can I do?

### II. Direct

- a. Who else on my team can I ask to help improve and strengthen our team culture?
- b. How can I talk about Safe Sport, good boundaries, and team culture with my team and coaches?
  - i. Find times when the team is together, such as during goal-setting meetings, team socials, travel meets, or even during dryland.
  - ii. Talk about "what would you do" scenarios to practice strengthening your team's culture.

### III. Protect

- a. What do I do when someone breaks a rule, crosses a boundary, or steps out of line?
  - i. If you feel comfortable, let the person know that they've broken a rule, and ask them to stop. Use phrases like:
    1. "We don't do that here."
    2. "Not cool."
    3. "That's against the rules."
  - ii. You can also go to one of your trusted 5 people for advice.
- b. How do I help my team re-focus on all the great parts of our team?

***Continue to finish the course.***

## Closing: Quick Review

- I. What is a Safe Sport environment?
  - a. Healthy, safe, positive, inclusive, supportive, and respectful.
  
- II. What are the three types of boundaries?
  - a. Physical
  - b. Emotional
  - c. Behavioral
  
- III. Who are my five trusted people?
  
- IV. How do I find more information about Safe Sport?
  - a. Ask my coach
  - b. Online at [www.usaswimming.org/protect](http://www.usaswimming.org/protect)
  - c. On Twitter and Facebook @SwimSafeSport