

# 5 TIPS FOR PARENTS



## SAFE SPORT

USA Swimming is committed to reducing the risk of abuse in swimming and increasing awareness of red flag behavior through its Safe Sport program. All adults working with athletes are responsible for creating an abuse-free environment.

# 1

### GET EDUCATED

Education is the most important tool for combatting misconduct. There are resources that can help you understand how abuse occurs and what you can do about it. You should be able to recognize signs of grooming behavior and boundary violations and what to do when you suspect a child's safety is at risk. You can access the Parents Guide to Misconduct in Sport at <https://safesport.org/training>.

# 2

### CREATE HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

It is important to establish healthy boundaries between athletes and coaches and have clear expectations about the coach's role. A coach can often serve as a teacher, a mentor or a role model for a young person. A coach is not an athlete's friend, peer or romantic partner. USA Swimming clubs and all youth sport organizations should spell out prohibited behaviors to ensure strong and safe boundaries between adults and athletes. Be empowered and ask for your team's policies and guidelines regarding boundaries between coaches and athletes such as the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy.

# KEEPING ATHLETES SAFE IN SWIMMING

## 3

### RECOGNIZE AND ADDRESS HIGH RISK AREAS

Abusers need privacy, access and control in order to perpetuate misconduct and abuse. One way to reduce the risk of abuse is to implement policies designed to limit one-on-one interactions between adults and minor athletes. For this reason, every USA Swimming member club is required to implement the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy addressing one-on-one interactions, social media and electronic communications, local and team travel, locker rooms and changing areas and massages, rubdowns and athletic training modalities. For more information, visit [www.usaswimming.org/maapp](http://www.usaswimming.org/maapp).

## 4

### SPEAK UP AND REPORT MISCONDUCT

If you recognize questionable behaviors – say something! Your club should designate a Safe Sport Coordinator – a coach, team administrator or parent advocate – who is there to hear your concerns or help you report inappropriate behavior. Make sure to know who your club Safe Sport Coordinator is. Report any instances of known or suspected sexual misconduct or abuse to local law enforcement, the U.S. Center for SafeSport at [www.uscenterforsafesport.org](http://www.uscenterforsafesport.org) and to USA Swimming at [www.usaswimming.org/protect](http://www.usaswimming.org/protect).

## 5

### TALK TO YOUR KIDS

Physical and sexual misconduct can be hard topics for parents to talk about with their children but having these conversations is extremely important. Ongoing and open communication with children about their bodies and appropriate boundaries will make it easier for them to talk to you if anyone makes them feel uncomfortable.



[www.usaswimming.org/protect](http://www.usaswimming.org/protect)