

TEN STEPS TO ABOLISH SEXUAL ABUSE IN SPORTS

Sports teams and leagues need to send the message that sexual abuse has no place in their organization. The most important step is to eliminate the opportunity for potential abusers to get close to children. Parents, coaches and others can work together to help keep sexual abuse out of sports by adopting the following steps:

1. **Get involved and be nosy.**
2. **Establish a Zero-Tolerance Policy Against Abuse** to deter potential abusers from getting involved.
3. **Perform criminal background checks** on all coaches and volunteers who interact with children.
4. **Communicate with players and parents about sexual abuse.** Secrecy allows abuse to continue.
5. **Impose the “Rule of Two Adults” at all times.** Players and coaches should never be one-on-one with each other, for everyone's safety.
6. **Chaperone team travel & sleepovers.** If you can't be there, make sure your child can get in touch with you 24/7, by cell phone, texting or email.
7. **Set a no-hugging policy for the team.** High fives and a pat on the back or shoulder are appropriate touches between coaches and players.
8. **Look for the warning signs of abuse.** Any changes in behavior may be your child's nonverbal cry for help.
9. **Monitor gifts, emails and instant messaging from coaches.**
10. **Ask why, if your child wants to quit the team.**

For more information, go to Bollinger's web site at www.BollingerInsurance.com or visit our blog on sports safety at www.SportsSafetyIQ.com.



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