

From our partners at United Soccer Coaches



New Law Brings New Responsibility to Youth Coaches

Following the recent USA Gymnastics scandal with Dr. Larry Nassar, Congress enacted a new federal law intended to require coaches to report any suspicion of child abuse, including sexual abuse. The new law, known as the [Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017, became effective February 14, 2018.](#)

According to the [U.S. Center for SafeSport](#), the Act “extends the duty to report suspected child abuse, including sexual abuse, within 24 hours to certain adults who are authorized to interact with minor or amateur athletes at a facility under the jurisdiction of a national governing body,” including U.S. Soccer.

Any individual who is required, but fails, to report suspected child abuse will now be subject to criminal penalties.

“This new law obviously has an important impact on our community of soccer coaches, but also our sport as a whole,” said Lesle Gallimore, president of United Soccer Coaches. “Safety is always a priority and our goal is to ensure our members have access to the most up-to-date resources and training to help protect the athletes they serve and themselves.”

Additionally, the bill amends the federal criminal code to revise civil remedy provisions. Among other things, it changes the civil statute of limitation to 10 years from the date the victim discovers the violation or injury (currently 10 years from the date the cause of action arose). The bill also extends the statute of limitations for a minor victim of a federal sex offense to file a civil action to 10 years (currently 3 years) from the date such individual reaches age 18.

Resources and Training

Prior to this legislation going into effect, our team at United Soccer Coaches has been proactively working to establish new educational resources and training information on the prevention and detection of sexual abuse and assault. To that end, today we are announcing a new partnership [\[EC1\]](#) with the Metropolitan Organization to Counter Sexual Assault (MOCSA) to develop a variety of online and in-person education resources related to the prevention of sexual abuse and assault. This partnership is a direct result of a grant from [Raliance](#), a collaborative initiative to end sexual violence in one generation, made possible through a commitment from the National Football League (NFL).

United Soccer Coaches members should keep an eye out for more information on this in the

coming weeks as we will begin rolling out a new e-learning module, coach's toolkit and other information.

In the meantime, if you suspect abuse of a youth athlete, here are some helpful resources on how to report that suspicion and how to assist the suspected victim(s):

[SafeSport.org](https://safesport.org) is the designated independent national safe sport organization. The organization offers a variety of tips and resources on how to report a potential violation.

Visit <https://safesport.org/report-a-concern> for more information.

[Childhelp.org](https://childhelp.org) provides a 24-hour national child abuse hotline you can also call into to discuss or report any suspected abuse. They can also help look up and refer you to the local child abuse hotline.

[Rainn.org](https://rainn.org) is a 24-hour confidential hotline and live chat platform victims of abuse can call into for help.