



GYMNASTICS SASKATCHEWAN

SAFE SPORT POLICIES

Update October 2019

SECTION 1. SAFE SPORT POLICY

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Gymnastics Saskatchewan is committed to being a leader in Saskatchewan in providing a safe, healthy, and inclusive gymnastics environment for all individuals. Participants in Gymnastics Saskatchewan programs and activities, including athletes, coaches, judges, sport administrators, parents/guardians, volunteers, and others should be able to engage in a positive sport environment free of abuse, discrimination, and potential harm. As a primarily youth serving organization, Gymnastics Saskatchewan has a special responsibility to develop standards and mechanisms to help safeguard the children and youth in its programs and activities; however, it is imperative to safeguard and support the welfare of all participants in order to achieve an optimal Safe Sport environment.

Facilitating a Safe Sport environment is the collective responsibility of all individuals involved in the gymnastics community. Gymnastics Saskatchewan will work collaboratively with our national, provincial and territorial gymnastics federations and external organizations to build, advance, and administer Safe Sport policies, education, and advocacy initiatives.

SAFE SPORT PRINCIPLES

Creating and fostering a Safe Sport environment and culture is paramount in the administration and delivery of all gymnastics programs in Saskatchewan by Gymnastics Saskatchewan and its members. All participants of Gymnastics Saskatchewan will:

- Prioritize the current and future well-being of each participant above all else.
- Act in the best interests of all participants involved in our programs and activities.
- Respect, value, and champion the rights of all individuals in the gymnastics community at all times.
- Engage in behaviours and practices that are ethical, developmentally appropriate, and support the physical, psychological, social, and emotional welfare of participants.
- Actively encourage meaningful inclusion of individuals irrespective of their age, race, colour, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, language, religion, national or social origin, property, birth, physical or developmental abilities, athletic ability, or other status.
- Strive to create joyful, positive, and growth-enhancing sport experiences.
- Advocate for safe sport environments on local, provincial and national stages.

We will cultivate, uphold, live, and measure these Safe Sport principles through:

- Establishment, oversight, and continuous updating of policies, procedures, and best practice guidelines that are robust, clear, and accessible.
- Consistent enforcement of the ensuing policies, procedures, and best practice guidelines through all levels of the gymnastics community in Saskatchewan.
- Implementation of best practice safeguards, support for prompt identification and reporting of misconduct, as well as confidential, procedurally fair, and timely processes for investigating and resolving allegations of misconduct.
- Provision of educational resources, tools, and initiatives that serve to develop, support, and enhance the knowledge and positive practices of all members of the gymnastics community.
- Active promotion of our Safe Sport commitment throughout all Gymnastics Saskatchewan programs, interactions, activities, and events.
- Consistent engagement and open communication with all members of the Gymnastics Saskatchewan community.
- Collaboration with our clubs, provincial and national gymnastics federations, as well as public partners to support and advance Safe Sport programs.
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of Gymnastics Saskatchewan's Safe Sport Framework and corresponding policies, education, and advocacy initiatives on a periodic basis.

SCOPE OF POLICY

Gymnastics Saskatchewan's Safe Sport Policy applies to all persons listed below:

- All individuals employed or contracted by Gymnastics Saskatchewan;
- Members of the Gymnastics Saskatchewan Board of Directors and committees;
- Athletes, coaches, managers, integrated support team members, and judges participating in Gymnastics Saskatchewan competitions, training camps, programs, and activities;
- Parents, guardians, and spectators observing Gymnastics Saskatchewan training and competitions;
- Gymnastics Saskatchewan members;
- Coach developers;
- Volunteers at events or activities hosted by Gymnastics Saskatchewan;
- Volunteers appointed to accompany teams to events, training camps, competitions, or other activities

LINKED POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

Gymnastics Saskatchewan's Safe Sport Policy is an overarching organizational policy that should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Code of Ethics and Conduct
- Abuse, Maltreatment, and Discrimination Policy
- Dispute Resolution Policy Suites
- Screening Policy
- Travel Policy
- Safety, Medical, and Concussion Policy

RESPONSIBILITIES

The CEO, staff, Board of Directors and member clubs of Gymnastics Saskatchewan have the responsibility to individually and collectively:

- Embrace Gymnastics Saskatchewan's organizational commitment to Safe Sport and corresponding principles outlined in the Safe Sport Policy and consider, monitor and evaluate the Safe Sport principles in the development, approval, and application of programs, policies and procedures.

SECTION 2. CODE OF CONDUCT

INTRODUCTION

Gymnastics Saskatchewan is established for the purpose of the positive development of the activity/sport of gymnastics and those who participate in it. To that end, all members of the Association must abide by the rules of ethical and sportsmanlike behavior. In order to maintain the privilege of membership in Gymnastics Saskatchewan, all members shall act in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct applies to all members of Gymnastics Saskatchewan when participating in and traveling to or from any activity sponsored or sanctioned by the Association. Clubs/organizations shall make the Code of Conduct and Risk Management policies available to their members by posting them in their facilities and circulating the written documents to their members. Clubs/organizations, club and provincial team coaches and team managers bear the responsibility for ensuring that their individual members are aware of and understand the provisions of the Code of Conduct. The club/organization bears the responsibility for ensuring that their individual members are aware of and are following the Code of Conduct, and for preparing the individual in such a way as to clearly delineate precisely what conduct is expected when participating in any program, event or competition sponsored or sanctioned by the Association.

2.1 GYMNASTICS SASKATCHEWAN CODE OF CONDUCT

Definitions

The following terms have these meanings in this Code:

"Association" – **Gymnastics Saskatchewan**

"Individuals" – All categories of membership defined in the Association's Bylaws, as well as all individuals engaged in activities with the Association including, but not limited to, athletes, coaches, referees, officials, volunteers, managers, administrators, committee members, and directors and officers of the Association

Purpose

The purpose of this Code is to ensure a safe and positive environment by making Individuals aware that there is an expectation of appropriate behaviour consistent with this Code. The Association supports equal opportunity, prohibits discriminatory practices, and is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and fairness.

Application of this Code

This Code applies to Individuals' conduct during the Association's business, activities, and events including, but not limited to, competitions, practices, tryouts, training camps, travel associated with the Association's activities, the Association's office environment, and any meetings.

This Code also applies to Individuals' conduct outside of the Association's business, activities, and events when such conduct adversely affects relationships within the Association and/or its Members (and its work and sport environment) and is detrimental to the image and reputation of the Association. Such jurisdiction will be determined by the Association at its sole discretion.

An Individual who violates this Code may be subject to sanctions pursuant to the Association's *Discipline and Complaints Policy*.

An employee of the Association found to have breached this Code will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action subject to the terms of the Association's *Human Resources Policy* as well as the employee's Employment Agreement, as applicable.

Responsibilities

Individuals have a responsibility to:

- Maintain and enhance the dignity and self-esteem of the Association members and other individuals by:
- Demonstrating respect to individuals regardless of body type, physical characteristics, athletic ability, age, ancestry, color, race, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed, disability, family status, marital status, gender identity, gender expression, sex, and sexual orientation
- Focusing comments or criticism appropriately and avoiding public criticism of Individual or the Association
- Consistently demonstrating the spirit of sportsmanship, sport leadership, and ethical conduct
- Acting, when appropriate, to correct or prevent practices that are unjustly discriminatory
- Consistently treating individuals fairly and reasonably
- Ensuring adherence to the rules of the sport and the spirit of those rules

Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes **harassment**. Types of behaviour that constitute harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Written or verbal abuse, threats, or outbursts
- The display of visual material which is offensive or which one ought to know is offensive
- Unwelcome remarks, jokes, comments, innuendo, or taunts
- Leering or other suggestive or obscene gestures

- Condescending or patronizing behaviour which is intended to undermine self-esteem, diminish performance or adversely affect working conditions
- Practical jokes which cause awkwardness or embarrassment, endanger a person's safety, or negatively affect performance
- Any form of hazing
- Unwanted physical contact including, but not limited to, touching, petting, pinching, or kissing
- Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, requests, or invitations
- Physical or sexual assault
- Behaviours such as those described above that are not directed towards a specific individual or group but have the same effect of creating a negative or hostile environment
- Retaliation or threats of retaliation against an individual who reports harassment

Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes **workplace harassment or workplace violence**, where workplace harassment is defined as conduct against a worker in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome; and where workplace violence is defined as the exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker; an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker; or a statement or behaviour that it is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker. Workplace matters should not be confused with legitimate, reasonable management actions that are part of the normal work function, including measures to correct performance deficiencies, such as placing someone on a performance improvement plan, or imposing discipline for workplace infractions. Types of behaviour that constitute workplace harassment or workplace violence include, but are not limited to:

a. *Workplace Harassment*

- Bullying
- Repeated offensive or intimidating phone calls or emails
- Inappropriate touching, advances, suggestions or requests
- Displaying or circulating offensive pictures, photographs or materials
- Psychological abuse
- Discrimination
- Intimidating words or conduct (offensive jokes or innuendos)
- Words or actions which are known or should reasonably be known to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating, or demeaning

b. *Workplace Violence*

- Verbal threats to attack a worker
- Sending to or leaving threatening notes or emails
- Making threatening physical gestures
- Wielding a weapon
- Hitting, pinching or unwanted touching which is not accidental
- Blocking normal movement or physical interference, with or without the use of equipment
- Sexual violence
- Any attempt to engage in the type of conduct outlined above

Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes **sexual harassment**, where sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual comments and sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, or conduct of a sexual nature. Types of behaviour that constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Sexist jokes
- Display of sexually offensive material
- Sexually degrading words used to describe a person
- Inquiries or comments about a person's sex life
- Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions
- Persistent unwanted contact

Abstain from the non-medical use of drugs or the use of performance-enhancing drugs or methods. More specifically, the Association adopts and adheres to the Canadian Anti-Doping Program. The Association will respect any penalty enacted pursuant to a breach of the Canadian Anti-Doping Program, whether imposed by the Association or any other sport Association

Refrain from associating with any person for the purpose of coaching, training, competition, instruction, administration, management, athletic development, or supervision of the sport, who has incurred an anti-doping rule violation and is serving a sanction involving a period of ineligibility imposed pursuant to the Canadian Anti-Doping Program and/or the World Anti-Doping Code and recognized by the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES)

Refrain from the use of power or authority in an attempt to coerce another person to engage in inappropriate activities

Take reasonable steps to manage the responsible consumption of alcoholic beverages in social situations associated with Gymnastics Saskatchewan events

Respect the property of others and not willfully cause damage

Adhere to all federal, provincial, municipal and host country laws

Comply, at all times, with the Association's bylaws, policies, procedures, and rules and regulations, as adopted and amended from time to time

When driving a vehicle with an Individual:

- Not Have his or her license suspended
- Be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or substances
- Have valid car insurance

Refrain from engaging in deliberate cheating which is intended to manipulate the outcome of a competition and/or not offer or receive any bribe which is intended to manipulate the outcome of a competition.

Board/Committee Members

In addition to **Category 4, Section 2.1– Responsibilities** Association’s Directors and Committee Members will have additional responsibilities to:

- Function primarily as a member of the board and/or committee(s) of Association; not as a member of any other particular member or constituency
- Act with honesty and integrity and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the nature and responsibilities of the Association’s business and the maintenance of Individuals’ confidence
- Ensure that the Association’s financial affairs are conducted in a responsible and transparent manner with due regard for all fiduciary responsibilities
- Conduct themselves openly, professionally, lawfully and in good faith in the best interests of Association
- Be independent and impartial and not be influenced by self-interest, outside pressure, expectation of reward, or fear of criticism
- Behave with decorum appropriate to both circumstance and position
- Keep informed about the Association’s activities, the provincial sport community, and general trends in the sectors in which they operate
- Exercise the degree of care, diligence, and skill required in the performance of their duties pursuant to the laws under which the Association is incorporated
- Respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature
- Respect the decisions of the majority and resign if unable to do so
- Commit the time to attend meetings and be diligent in preparation for, and participation in, discussions at such meetings
- Have a thorough knowledge and understanding of all Association governance documents
- Conform to the bylaws and policies approved by Association

Coaches

In addition to **Category 4, Section 2.1 – Responsibilities** (above), coaches have many additional responsibilities. The coach-athlete relationship is a privileged one and plays a critical role in the personal, sport, and athletic development of the athlete. Coaches must understand and respect the inherent power imbalance that exists in this relationship and must be extremely careful not to abuse it, consciously or unconsciously. Coaches will:

- Ensure a safe environment by selecting activities and establishing controls that are suitable for the age, experience, ability, and fitness level of the involved athletes
- Prepare athletes systematically and progressively, using appropriate time frames and monitoring physical and psychological adjustments while refraining from using training methods or techniques that may harm athletes
- Avoid compromising the present and future health of athletes by communicating and cooperating with sport medicine professionals in the diagnosis, treatment, and management of athletes’ medical and psychological treatments
- Accept and promote athletes’ personal goals and refer athletes to other coaches and sports specialists as appropriate
- Support the coaching staff of a training camp, provincial team, or national team; should an athlete qualify for participation with one of these programs

- Provide athletes (and the parents/guardians of minor athletes) with the information necessary to be involved in the decisions that affect the athlete
- Act in the best interest of the athlete's development as a whole person
- Comply with the Association's Screening Policy
- Report to the Association any ongoing criminal investigation, conviction, or existing bail conditions, including those for violence, child pornography, or possession, use, or sale of any illegal substance
- Under no circumstances provide, promote, or condone the use of drugs (other than properly prescribed medications) or performance-enhancing substances and, in the case of minors, alcohol and/or tobacco
- Do not recruit athletes from other clubs/organizations; respect athletes who are members of other clubs/organizations and, in dealings with them, not encroach upon topics or actions which are deemed to be within the realm of 'coaching', unless after first receiving approval from the coaches who are responsible for the athletes
- Dress professionally, neatly, and inoffensively
- Use inoffensive language, taking into account the audience being addressed
- Recognize the power inherent in the position of coach and respect and promote the rights of all participants in sport. This is accomplished by establishing and following procedures for confidentiality (right to privacy), informed participation, and fair and reasonable treatment. Coaches have a special responsibility to respect and promote the rights of participants who are in a vulnerable or dependent position and less able to protect their own rights
- Not engage in a sexual relationship with an athlete under 18 years old, or an intimate or sexual relationship with an athlete over the age of 18 if the coach is in a position of power, trust, or authority over the athlete
- Refrain from using their power or authority to coerce another person to engage in or tolerate sexual or harmful activities.
- Refrain from conduct that causes physical or emotional harm to individuals
- Prevent the use of power or authority in an attempt, successful or not, to coerce another person to engage in or tolerate sexual activity.

Athletes

In addition to **Category 4, Section 2.1.1– Responsibilities** athletes are responsible to:

- Report any medical problems in a timely fashion, when such problems may limit their ability to travel, practice, or compete; or in the case of carded athletes, interfere with the athlete's ability to fulfill their carded athlete requirements
- Participate and appear on-time, well-nourished, and prepared to participate to their best abilities in all competitions, practices, training sessions, tryouts, tournaments, and events
- Properly represent themselves and not attempt to participate in a competition for which they are not eligible by reason of age, classification, or other reason
- Adhere to the Association's rules and requirements regarding clothing and equipment
- Act in a sportsmanlike manner and not display appearances of violence, foul language, or gestures to other athletes, officials, coaches, or spectators
- Dress in a manner representative of the Association; focusing on neatness, cleanliness, and discretion

- Act in accordance with the Association’s policies and procedures and, when applicable, additional rules as outlined by coaches or managers

Officials

In addition to **section 5.1.1 – Responsibilities** (above) officials will have additional responsibilities to:

- Maintain and update their knowledge of the rules and rules changes
- Work within the boundaries of their position’s description while supporting the work of other officials
- Act as an ambassador of the Association by agreeing to enforce and abide by national and provincial rules and regulations
- Take ownership of actions and decisions made while officiating
- Respect the rights, dignity, and worth of all individuals
- Not publicly criticize other officials or any club or the Association
- Act openly, impartially, professionally, lawfully, and in good faith
- Be fair, equitable, considerate, independent, honest, and impartial in all dealings
- Respect the confidentiality required by issues of a sensitive nature, which may include ejections, defaults, forfeits, discipline processes, appeals, and specific information or data about Individuals
- Honour all assignments unless unable to do so by virtue of illness or personal emergency, and in these cases inform the assignor or the Association at the earliest possible time
- When writing reports, set out the true facts
- Dress in proper attire for officiating

Parents/Guardians and Spectators

In addition to **Category 4, Section 2.1.1– Responsibilities** Parents/Guardians and Spectators at events will:

- Encourage athletes to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence
- Condemn the use of violence in any form
- Never ridicule a participant for making a mistake during a performance or practice
- Provide positive comments that motivate and encourage participants continued effort
- Respect the decisions and judgments of officials, and encourage athletes to do the same. Feedback on competition performances is provided by officials only to the coaching staff, so parents are encouraged to discuss any questions with your athletes coach
- Recognize that officials, executives and staff act in good faith, and in the best interests of the athletes and sport as a whole.
- Respect the decisions and judgments of officials, and encourage athletes to do the same
- Never question an officials’ or staffs’ judgment or honesty
- Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse, coercion, intimidation and sarcasm
- Respect and show appreciation to all competitors, and to the coaches, officials and other volunteers
- Refrain from the use of bad language, nor harass competitors, coaches, officials, parents/guardians or other spectators

SECTION 3. RULE OF TWO

THE RULE OF TWO DEFINITION

The Rule of Two is part of a joint collaboration between the Coaches Association of Canada and the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport as part of the Responsible Coaching Movement: A Commitment to Ethical Coaching in Canada. The Rule of Two states that there will always be two screened and NCCP trained or certified coaches with an athlete, especially a minor athlete, when in a potentially vulnerable situation. This means that any one-on-one interaction between a coach and an athlete must take place within earshot and view of the second coach, with the exception of medical emergencies. One of the coaches must also be of the same gender as the athlete. Should there be a circumstance where a second screened and NCCP trained or certified coach is not available, a screened volunteer, parent, or adult can be recruited.

This rule serves to protect minor athletes in potentially vulnerable situations by ensuring that more than one adult is present. Vulnerable situations can include closed doors meetings, travel, and training environments amongst others. Organizations must create and implement, policies and procedures, in a sustainable, phased and measurable process, that limit the instances where these situations are possible.

APPLICATION

Gymnastics Saskatchewan is committed to creating a safe environment for all members including coaches, athletes, administrators, volunteers and parents.

Gym Sask makes every effort when financially and logistically feasible to follow the Coaches Association of Canada's Rule of Two policy and recommends to member clubs that they do the same.

SECTION 4. SAFETY, MEDICAL AND CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

INTRODUCTION

All athletes have the right to participate in suitable and safe settings. Safety and the physical, psychological and emotional well-being of each individual athlete shall be of primary importance in all Gymnastics Saskatchewan and club programs. All athletes have a right to receive qualified instruction from certified and safety conscious coaches.

GENERAL SAFETY

It is each club and Head Coach's responsibility to:

- Ensure that a first aid certified coach or adult is present during club training/events.
- Ensure that gymnastics equipment and other facilities are checked for safety on a regular basis including: a daily check of equipment setup patterns and all equipment used that day; a semi-annual check of all cable attachments, floor plates and adjusting devices for signs of wear. Safety checks should be documented by date, noting repairs needed or completed.

- Ensure that emergency action plans are in place for activities, events and competitions.
- Ensure that gymnastics equipment is safe and appropriate for the age and skill level of the participants and competitors.
- Ensure that coaches use appropriate progressions for skill development to ensure that the safety and well-being of their athletes are not compromised and ensure that coaches are not attempting to teach skills which are beyond their own level of training and expertise.
- Ensure that athletes are following training plans suitable for their ages and levels and are not competing skills unless they have been performed many times in training and can be performed safely.
- Take action to bring any safety risk they witness to the attention of an official, qualified coach, or Gymnastics Saskatchewan representative.

MEDICAL

These policies and procedures apply to athletes who are travelling as members of Team Sask, however, clubs should also ensure that safe medical protocols are in place.

In the event of an emergency every attempt shall be made to contact the parent/guardian of an injured/ill athlete for consent for treatment and for the communication of information. Injured/ill athletes will be provided with caring attention by a team manager, coach, parent or other responsible adult designated by Gymnastics Saskatchewan until his/her return home or transfer to a health care facility. Should an athlete need to travel home in case of illness or injury, this will be at the athletes' cost.

All athletes requiring prescription medications are responsible to provide a Gymnastics Saskatchewan representative (Chef or Manager) with a list of medications, time and dose to be administered, as well as the reason they are prescribed, unless medications are long standing and are self-administered (for example oral contraceptive). Information regarding emergency medications and treatments should be provided with detailed instructions and made readily available to a Gymnastics Saskatchewan representative and Emergency Responders.

First Aid certified personnel or First Responders shall be available on site for all competitions hosted by Gymnastics Saskatchewan.

4.1 CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT PROTOCOL

Gym Sask believes that physical activity and sport participation provides positive developmental and health outcomes in terms of physical, cognitive, social and emotional domains. We recognize that many physical activities have an inherent risk of concussion and that sport-related concussions are a significant public health issue. Gym Sask is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for sport participation. To that end, we have created this Concussion Management Protocol to increase awareness of concussion in sport, reduce the incidence of concussion, and ensure the early recognition

and appropriate management of concussion in our athletes. We will share this protocol with all participants in our organization and strive to have all athletes follow the Concussion Management Protocol for safe return to learn and play.

WHAT IS A SPORTS CONCUSSION?

According to the *Consensus statement on Concussion in Sport: the 4th International Conference on Concussion in Sport, Zurich 2012*, a Sports Concussion is a brain injury and is defined as a complex pathophysiological process affecting the brain, induced by traumatic biomechanical forces.

Concussion may be caused either be a direct blow to the head, face, neck or elsewhere on the body with an “impulsive” force transmitted to the head.

Concussion typically results in the rapid onset of short-lived impairment of neurological function that resolves spontaneously. However, in some cases, symptoms and signs may evolve over a number of minutes to hours.

Concussion may result in neuropathological changes, but the acute clinical symptoms largely reflect a functional disturbance rather than structural injury.

Concussion results in a graded set of clinical syndromes that may or may not involve loss of consciousness. Resolution of the clinical and cognitive symptoms typically follows a sequential course.

However, it is important to note that in some cases symptoms may be prolonged.

CONCUSSION CAUSES

A concussion may be caused either be a direct blow to the head, face, neck or elsewhere on the body with an “impulsive” force transmitted to the head. It is recommended that athletes who receive this type of contact should be evaluated for a suspected concussion.

SUSPECTED CONCUSSION

A concussion is suspected when it is recognized that an individual appears to have either experienced an injury or impact that may result in concussion or is exhibiting unusual behavior (signs and symptoms) that may be the result of a concussion.

CONCUSSION DIAGNOSIS

A concussion is diagnosed by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner. Ideally this professional will have specific training and experience in the assessment and management of concussions.

THIS CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT PROTOCOL HAS THREE MAIN OBJECTIVES:

1. PREVENT - Create an environment that will minimize concussion incidence and complications through multiple prevention strategies.
2. IDENTIFY - Promote an environment that will optimize the early identification of suspected concussions by all stakeholders.

3. **MANAGE** - Optimize management of concussed athletes in their sport, academic, family, work and personal spheres.

1. PREVENT

There is evidence that concussion education leads to a reduction in incidence and improved outcomes for concussion.

Team Sask coaches will receive annual concussion education. Clubs are encouraged to provide education sessions for their coaches.

Education sessions will include the following topics:

- Concussion Physiology
- Signs and Symptoms
- Recognition
- Acute Management of a Suspected Concussion and the Concussion Action Plan
- Return to Learn Protocols
- Return to Play Protocols
- Prevention Strategies including Fair Play

Concussion education can be delivered in a variety of methods. This may include in-person presentations, videos, and on-line courses. Handouts and web-based resources will help reinforce learning. Posters in the team room or common areas may also be used. Parachute's Concussion Ed app is another tool. The creation of a Coach's Binder which includes attendance sheets, a concussion recognition tool, the Concussion Action Plan, handouts for parents/caregivers/athletes, a concussion documentation tool, and return to learn and return to play guidelines may be beneficial.

Creating a Safe Playing Environment

All equipment will regularly be inspected and in good repair.

All coaches will be knowledgeable and current in safe practices in sport. They should be familiar with the risks of concussion and how to minimize risks.

Gym Sask will strive to create a concussion culture where athletes feel safe to report a concussion. Athletes will be encouraged to tell the coach when they are injured or hurt. The health and safety of the athlete is our coaches' top priority. We will encourage strong lines of communication between the athlete, coach, parent and health care provider in the management of a concussed athlete to ensure a safe return to learn and play.

2. IDENTIFY

Recognize the Concussed Athlete through education, Sask Gym will promote an environment that optimizes the early identification of suspected concussions by all stakeholders including athletes, parents, coaches, and team staff. All should be aware of the Concussion Action Plan.

Coaches and medical professionals will be aware of the forces that cause concussion in athletes and be vigilant in recognizing signs and symptoms of concussion in an athlete who has suffered a blow to the head or body.

A concussion will be suspected when it is recognized that an athlete appears to have either experienced an injury or impact that may result in concussion or is exhibiting unusual behavior or reports symptoms that may be the result of a concussion.

Any athlete suspected of suffering a concussion must be immediately removed from play for evaluation.

All concussions will be documented, from identification of concussion to return to learn and play.

3. MANAGE

Remove the Athlete from Play

Emergency Action Plan

A hit to the head or body can be associated with other serious injuries besides a concussion. Initial management of any suspected concussion will be to initiate an established Emergency Action Plan.

Upon evaluation of the athlete using the basic principles of first aid, any athlete displaying any of the following signs warrants activating the Emergency Medical System and urgent transportation to the hospital:

- unconscious
- deteriorating mental status (lethargy, difficulty maintaining arousal, increasing confusion or irritability)
- potential spinal injury (numbness or weakness in the extremities, spine/neck pain)
- progressive worsening symptoms or new neurologic signs (seizure or convulsion)

The athlete will be stabilized and will not be moved until EMS arrives.

CONCUSSION ACTION PLAN

Any athlete who displays signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a suspected concussion will be removed from play once it is deemed safe to do so and will not return to activity the same day.

An athlete can be removed from play by their coach, their parent, the Head or Chief Judge, First Responder, medical personnel.

EVALUATE THE CONCUSSED ATHLETE

The athlete will be evaluated on the sideline using a tool such as the Pocket CONCUSSION RECOGNITION TOOL. http://www.parachutecanada.org/downloads/resources/Pocket_CRT_Final.pdf

Documentation of the concussion will begin immediately using a tool such as the Concussion Awareness Training Tool's (CATT) Concussion Response Tool. <http://ppc.cattonline.com/resources/files/concussion-response-tool.pdf>

Evaluation of the concussed athlete procedures will include assessment of symptoms:

- Confusion and Disorientation
- Double Vision or Fuzzy Vision
- Loss of Consciousness
- Ringing in the Ears
- Headache Slow or Slurred Speech
- Dizziness – Seeing “Stars”
- Nausea and Vomiting
- Feeling Stunned or Dazed
- Loss of Balance
- Emotional or Personality Changes

Notification will be made to parent, coach.

The athlete will have an appointment with their physician for assessment and to begin the Return to Learn and Play Protocols. The athlete will have an appointment with their physiotherapist/chiropractor/athletic therapist for assessment and treatment as indicated.

The athlete with a suspected concussion will be continually monitored for the development and presentation or any Red Flags over the next 48 hours following the injury. Red Flags are indicators that something other than a concussion may be going on. Worsening symptoms and the presence of any Red Flags requires a 911 call and urgent referral to the hospital.

Before allowing an athlete to leave the sporting environment after a suspected concussion, care of the athlete will be transferred to a responsible adult (parent/guardian/friend). The responsible adult will understand the severity of concussion, the Concussion Action Plan, the home care instructions, and will be capable of monitoring the athlete.

Any athlete with a suspected concussion will be evaluated by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner within 48 hours (earlier if Red Flags are present).

TREATMENT OF THE CONCUSSED ATHLETE

Return to Play and Learn Protocol

If a concussion is diagnosed by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner, the athlete will follow the Return to Learn and Play protocols. In order to ensure the appropriate management of the concussion for a safe Return to Learn and Play it is highly recommended that the athlete and/or parent advise the coach and other professionals (e.g. teachers, coaches of other sports the athlete may be involved in) that the athlete has been diagnosed with a concussion. A collaborative team approach with ongoing communication and monitoring by all members of the team will be employed to safeguard athlete health and safety.

The first step in concussion management is symptom limited physical and cognitive rest. The first priority for the athlete is Return to Learn. This is a stepwise program that is individualized, monitored,

and progressed by a health care professional with knowledge in the assessment and treatment of concussion. Progression through the Return to Learn protocol requires the athlete to be symptom free when at rest. A Return to Learn protocol such as Parachute's Protocol for Return to Learn after a Concussion, or the CATT Return to Learn Protocol can be used to guide and document this process. The steps of the protocol may occur at home or at school/work. There is no set length of time for this protocol. The athlete must have documented success in Return to Learn prior to beginning the Return to Play protocol.

After successfully completing the Return to Learn protocol, the athlete may begin the Return to Play progressions. This is again a stepwise program that is individualized, monitored, and progressed by a health care professional with knowledge in the treatment of concussion. The graduated return to play protocol has six stages. Parachute's After a Concussion Guidelines for Return to Play, or CATT's Return to Play Communication Tool can be used to guide and to document this process.

<http://horizon.parachutecanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Return-to-Learn-FINAL.pdf>

The protocol will include sport-specific exercises that incorporate the cognitive and physical demands of our sport. Each step of the protocol is a minimum of 24 hours, but some athletes may take longer to successfully progress through each step. The athlete must perform each step without aggravating their symptoms to move to the next step in the protocol.

All athletes will follow the Return to Play Protocol outlined below (from Consensus statement on Concussion in Sport: the 4th International Conference on Concussion in Sport, Zurich 2012).

No activity

Symptom limited physical and cognitive rest
Objective: Recovery

Light aerobic exercise

Activities such as walking, swimming or biking
Intensity should be < 70% predicted heart rate
No resistance training
Objective: Increase heart rate

Sport specific exercise

Example: skating drills in hockey, running drills in soccer
Not yet participating in practices, doing drills off to side
No head impact activities
No resistance training
Objective: Add movement

Practice, no contact (Noncontact training drills)

Progression to more complex training drills
Example: Passing drills in football or hockey

May start progressive resistance training
Objective: Exercise, coordination and cognitive load

Full contact practice (must have medical clearance)

After medical clearance participate in normal trailing activities
Objective: Restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff

Game play

Normal game play

Prior to receiving full clearance for all activities, the athlete must receive clearance from a medical doctor or nurse practitioner. This medical clearance will be documented, which may include a note from the practitioner and recording of the date on the documentation tool. The date of full clearance will be documented.

EVALUATION AND REVIEW OF PROTOCOL

This Concussion Management Protocol will be reviewed annually to reveal areas where processes can be improved based on feedback from users.

As new knowledge in concussion management becomes available this document will be reviewed to ensure it continues to reflect current evidence and practices. This review will coincide with the updated publication of the Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport, or as advised by the Sport Medicine and Science Council of Saskatchewan (SMSCS) when new knowledge is available.

For more information visit the Sport Medicine and Science Council of Saskatchewan website at www.smcs.ca

SECTION 5. SCREENING POLICIES

WHAT IS SCREENING?

A multi-step process to assess individuals who are in positions of trust or authority over athletes, both able-bodied and vulnerable.

A process to assess the backgrounds and qualifications of those who have access to finances. More than just a police records check - it is an ongoing 10 step process to help protect Gymnastics Saskatchewan and our clubs, and to help ensure the credibility of volunteers and staff.

WHY SCREEN?

As a Provincial Sport Organization, Gymnastics Saskatchewan has a duty of care to safeguard members against suspected or known abuse, neglect or unsafe practices, as outlined in the Child and Family Services Act.

Participant protection is morally, ethically and legally necessary.

To reduce the risk of harm to vulnerable participants in Gymnastics Saskatchewan activities. Screening is part of sound financial management and good human resources management, ensuring people are in positions best suited to them.

HISTORY OF SCREENING IN CANADA

Collaborative working groups and organizations developed guidelines based on Canadian and Provincial law (Canadian Criminal Code, Canadian Common Law, Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Saskatchewan Child and Family Services Act).

A 10-step model was developed and implemented by Volunteer Canada.

WHO?

Gymnastics Canada, other provincial gymnastics associations, Boy Scouts, Big Sisters, Canadian Hockey Association, Teachers' Colleges, schools, and a variety of other sport and non-profit organizations.

5.1 GYMNASTICS SASKATCHEWAN SCREENING POLICY - SAFE STEPS TO SCREENING

There are 10 steps in the Gymnastics Saskatchewan screening policies:

| | |
|---------|---------------------------------|
| Step 1 | Determine the Risk |
| Step 2 | Position Design and Description |
| Step 3 | Recruitment |
| Step 4 | Application Forms |
| Step 5 | Interviews |
| Step 6 | Reference Checks |
| Step 7 | Police Record Checks |
| Step 8 | Orientation and Training |
| Step 9 | Supervision and Evaluation |
| Step 10 | Participant Follow-up |

STEP 1 DETERMINE THE RISK

Screening requires good judgment and a well thought out process. The nature of the position and the level of risk dictate the need to conduct screening. Ask the following:

- What things could happen?
- How likely are they to happen?
- What are the consequences?
- Can we deliver the program if we eliminate the activity?
- How can it be modified?
- Can the risk be transferred (eg. Insurance)
- Can we assume the risk?
- What is the cost of reducing the risk in this activity?

Factors in determining risk - consider the following:

- participant
- setting
- nature of relationship
- activity
- supervision

Rating the Risk - **High Risk:**

- Positions that provide opportunities to be alone or have close contact with participants.
- Positions where control and influence are inferred.
- Positions that have a responsibility for the handling of finances or significant amounts of money.

Individuals to screen:

- All coaches/choreographers/medical staff
- Administrative/office staff
- Board members with signing authority
- All Team Managers and chaperones

Rating the Risk - **Medium Risk:**

- Positions where there is limited contact with participants or limited opportunity of being alone with them.
- Positions where there is limited access to finances.

Individuals to Screen:

- Judges
- Meet directors
- Volunteer registrars
- All individuals working with special needs participants
- Parent drivers

Rating the Risk - **Low Risk:**

- Positions with little contact with participants or finances.

Individuals to Screen:

- Meet personnel – including admissions, snack bar, registration or uniform volunteers
- Care taking staff
- Members of traveling delegation
- Awards personnel
- Hosting committee
- Equipment set up/take down volunteers

In the event that an individual will have more than one role in the organization, screening rating should occur for the position deemed to have the highest risk level.

STEP 2 POSITION DESIGN AND DESCRIPTION

Design the positions in your organization to:

- Reduce the risk.
 - Set screening standards based on level of risk involved in the position.
 - Establish behavior standards and communicate them to your volunteers.
 - Have participants sign code of conduct agreement forms.
-
- Create a Position Description
 - Set guidelines and boundaries.
 - Ensure that you clearly communicate that your organization/club is serious about the safety of its participants.

STEP 3 RECRUITMENT

Be clear on the position description and what skills you require.

STEP 4 APPLICATION FORM AND PERMISSION

The exact position being applied for will determine which application form is to be completed.

Asking applicants to complete it identifies the seriousness of your organization.

Collect all basic information and be sure to gain permission to run police and reference checks and to disclose information to Gymnastics Saskatchewan.

Be careful of human rights issues.

STEP 5 INTERVIEWS

Provide the opportunity to find out more information and explore any doubts.

Also provide an opportunity to relate your organization's expectations.

STEP 6 REFERENCE CHECKS

To confirm the background and skills of the applicant.

To provide opinion about the individual's "fit" in your organization.

STEP 7 POLICE RECORD CHECKS

Just one step of many in the screening process.

Policy record checks are not a guaranteed safeguard.

Reflects seriousness of the organization to protect its participants.

Have clear guidelines for how you will handle an individual whose record shows a previous conviction.

Weigh the nature of the conviction against the risks associated with the role the individual will play in your organization.

STEP 8 ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

Screening is an ongoing process.

During the orientation and training an individual is considered as being on probation.

During this period, you must:

gain knowledge of the individual's work style, values etc.

educate re: organization's policies and the individual's role within the organization,

develop the individual's interpersonal skills in the area he or she will be working

determine the "fit" of the individual in the organization.

STEP 9 SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION

Provide feedback at least once per year.

Institute a formal process to observe the individual in his or her role and monitor his or her progress.

Supervision and evaluation ensures a standard level of service/practice, improves the participants' experiences, and protects the participants.

STEP 10 PARTICIPANT FOLLOW-UP

Have regular ongoing contact with the individual and the participants.

Do random checks.

SCREENING IMPLEMENTATION

Responsibility for the implementation of Gymnastics Saskatchewan screening policies, record keeping and the release of information rests with the Gymnastics Saskatchewan CEO.

GYMNASTICS SASKATCHEWAN PROGRAMS

Gymnastics Saskatchewan requires enhanced police record checks, to include vulnerable sector checks from the following individuals:

- All staff, coaches, team managers and chaperones travelling with/participating with a Team Sask program.
- Any other individuals rated medium or low risk may be screened at the discretion/request of the Gymnastics Saskatchewan CEO or Board of Directors.

Cost for screening as above will be at the individual's expense.

POLICY FOR CLUB PROGRAMS

Responsibility for the implementation of club screening policies, record keeping and the release of information rests with the club President or his/her designate.

All clubs shall require their coaches, team managers, chaperones to submit to a police record check prior to applying for membership in Gymnastics Saskatchewan. Clubs must retain police record checks on file and submit them to Gymnastics Saskatchewan if and when requested. Gymnastics Saskatchewan will conduct sporadic audits of clubs to request record checks on file.

All criminal record checks that indicate a criminal code conviction for a relevant offence shall be reported/forwarded to the CEO of Gymnastics Saskatchewan.

Cost for this screening will be at the individual's or the club's expense.

It is recommended that all clubs immediately also implement Steps 1-10 of the screening program for their members using the following guidelines:

| STEPS REQUIRED | LEVEL OF RISK | INDIVIDUALS TO BE SCREENED |
|--|----------------------|--|
| Minimum Steps 1-10 | High | Coaches, choreographers, medical staff Team managers and chaperones |
| Minimum Steps 1-6 Steps 7-10 at the club's discretion | Medium | Judges Meet Directors Parent Drivers Administrative/office staff Board members |
| Minimum Steps 1-5 Steps 6-10 at the club's discretion | Low | Meet Personnel - hosting committee volunteers |

POLICE RECORD CHECKS

A Police Record Check/Vulnerable Sector Check/Enhanced Record Check will be valid for Gymnastics Saskatchewan for a period of 5 years from date of issue, unless information is presented to the CEO which shows that there are reasonable grounds for another police record check to be required.

To obtain a Police Records Check the individual must go in person to his/her local police station with appropriate identification and request a Police Record and Vulnerable Sector/Enhanced Check. There may be a charge for the record checks which varies depending upon the municipality.

Coaches new to Canada or coaches on a temporary work or visitor visa must have a completed check from their previous country of residence (translated) and an up to date CV/resume, unless proof can be provided that a police record check was submitted to the Government of Canada upon application for the related work or residency documents.

FOLLOW-UP

As a result of screening procedures or a police records check that indicates a previous criminal conviction, Gymnastics Saskatchewan will have the authority to request further information from the person about the nature and circumstances of the conviction in order to determine whether the conviction relates to a relevant offense.

Relevant offenses are: fraud, embezzlement, theft, assault on a minor, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, pornography, stalking and drug offences.

GYMNASTICS SASKATCHEWAN MAY:

Refuse to hire a staff person or appoint a manager, chaperone, coach, or volunteer who does not consent/agree to screening, and/or who does not cooperate in providing further information pertaining to the nature and circumstances of a criminal conviction.

Refuse to hire a staff person or appoint a manager, chaperone, coach or volunteer who has a conviction for, or has been found guilty of a relevant offense.

Suspend without compensation, dismiss or reassign the duties and responsibilities of any staff person, manager, chaperone, coach or volunteer as a result of a pending investigation or a criminal conviction for a relevant offense.

Suspend without compensation, or dismiss a staff person, manager, chaperone, coach or volunteer who does not cooperate in providing further information pertaining to the nature and circumstances of a criminal conviction.

To dismiss any staff person, manager, chaperone, coach or volunteer who has or receives a conviction for, or is found guilty of, a relevant offense.

Gymnastics Saskatchewan shall keep the results of criminal record checks confidential unless such disclosure:

- is required by law
- is necessary for a disciplinary proceeding or prosecution of a claim against the individual
- is required as per Gymnastics Saskatchewan's membership eligibility requirements with Sask Sport or Gymnastics Canada
- is in the best interest of the public or Gymnastics Saskatchewan and Gymnastics Canada members
- is in response to a reference check by other sports clubs, sports organizations or any other person whose membership or association may be affected by the person's criminal record.

All criminal record checks that do not indicate a criminal code conviction for a relevant offence shall be kept confidential.

SECTION 6. EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Any member (athlete, coach, staff, manager, official, volunteer or other persons) who identifies as gender and/or sexually diverse may participate fully and safely in Gymnastics Saskatchewan activities. This includes but is not limited to those who are, or who are perceived as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, queer or questioning.

All members, regardless of gender identity, shall have the opportunity to participate in gymnastics activities in a safe, respectful, inclusive and non-judgmental environment.

Any transgender athlete may participate fully in sex-separated gymnastics activities in accordance with his/her lived gender identity. Any athlete who identifies as unspecified must choose the gender with which they will participate.

SECTION 7. ABUSE, HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

All participants should be able to engage in a safe, healthy, and inclusive sport environment that is free from all forms of abuse, discrimination, harassment, violence, and other potential harm.

Creating and fostering this environment and culture is paramount to the administration and delivery of all gymnastics programs in Saskatchewan. Promoting, establishing, and maintaining this positive environment is the collective responsibility of each individual member of the gymnastics community. This means not engaging in, allowing, condoning, or ignoring behaviour that violates this Policy.

Therefore, it is the expectation of Gymnastics Saskatchewan that participant conduct will always reflect the highest standard of behaviour. Gymnastics Saskatchewan considers abuse, discrimination, harassment, and violence a very serious offence. Contravention of this Policy will be subject to review, investigation, and disciplinary and remedial action. Contravention may also result in Gymnastics Saskatchewan contacting law enforcement officials or taking legal action where necessary. The following Policy describes various offences and types of unacceptable behaviour and should be read in conjunction with the ***Code of Conduct***.

SCOPE OF POLICY

The Gymnastics Saskatchewan ***Abuse, Harassment, and Discrimination Policy*** applies to:

- All full-time and part-time employees (permanent, temporary, or fixed-term) of Gymnastics Saskatchewan and all consultants, contractors, and other service providers who may provide services to Gymnastics Saskatchewan;
- Members of the Gymnastics Saskatchewan Board of Directors and committees;
- Athletes, coaches, managers, integrated support team members, judges, and technical observers participating in Gymnastics Saskatchewan competitions, training camps, tryouts, programs, and activities;
- Parents, guardians, and spectators observing or participating in Gymnastics Saskatchewan events and competitions;

All members of Gymnastics Saskatchewan;

- Coach developers;
- Volunteers at events hosted by Gymnastics Saskatchewan;

- Volunteers appointed to accompany teams to events, training camps, competitions, or other activities;

ABUSE AND MALTREATMENT

(Adapted from Stirling, 2009; Canadian Centre for Child Protection's Commit to Kids) Abuse and maltreatment tend to be categorized based on the nature of the relationship in which the behaviour occurs. Specifically, physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect tend to occur in a critical relationship, in which an individual is dependent upon another individual in a position of authority or trust for safety, trust, and fulfillment of needs. Further information can be referenced in Gymnastics Saskatchewan's Abuse, Harassment and Discrimination Policy. The descriptions below provide broad definitional parameters of the various types of abuse and maltreatment that may occur in the sport environment. The subsequent examples are used to help differentiate between behaviours but should not be taken as an exhaustive list.

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect
- Harassment
- Bullying
- Hazing

DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination is unfair or improper behaviour, whether intentional or not, that results in differential treatment of one or more individuals and that is related to one or more of any grounds of discrimination prohibited by human rights legislation, including but not limited to:

- race or perceived race
- ancestry, citizenship, nationality or national origin, place of origin, colour, ethnic or linguistic background or origin, including aboriginal origin
- religion, or creed, or religious belief, association or activity
- political belief, association, convictions, or activity
- age
- sex, including sex-determined characteristics such as pregnancy, the possibility of pregnancy, and circumstances related to pregnancy
- sexual orientation
- gender identity and gender expression

- marital status (including single status), family status, civil status, family association
- social condition or disadvantage
- physical or mental disability, or related characteristics or circumstances, including reliance on a service animal, a wheelchair, or any other remedial appliance or device, as well as disfigurement and any irrational fear of contracting an illness or disease
- criminal charges or criminal record
- source of income or receipt of public assistance
- actual or presumed association with another individual or class of individuals having any of the aforementioned prohibited grounds of discrimination

Examples of conduct that may be considered discrimination include but are not limited to the following:

- stereotyping (assuming that an individual has certain traits, qualities, or beliefs)
- racial, ethnic, or religious jokes, slurs, nicknames, or mimicry
- practical jokes that cause awkwardness or embarrassment
- persisting with comments or jokes after becoming aware that the behaviour is unwelcome
- offering or withholding favours or employment benefits such as promotions, favourable evaluations, favourable assigned duties or shifts, conditioned on or related to a characteristic protected under any prohibited ground of discrimination

COMPLAINTS

An individual who believes they have experienced maltreatment or witnessed misconduct that contravenes this Policy has the right and obligation to file a formal complaint under Gymnastics Saskatchewan's ***Dispute Resolution Policies***.

If you have reasonable suspicion or believe that danger or violence are imminent or that a participant is in immediate danger or risk and/or is a victim of any form of abuse or neglect, you should:

- do nothing to put yourself in further risk;
- help the participant withdraw from the situation, if possible;
- inform others nearby of the situation, if possible;
- call 9-1-1 immediately where the situation requires immediate attention; and
- report the situation pursuant to the Dispute Resolution Policies.

Reprisal Prohibited

Under no circumstances will Gymnastics Saskatchewan condone acts of retaliation by registered participants, by parents or legal guardians, or other supporters of registered participants against those individuals who have reported inappropriate behaviour or actions to Gymnastics Saskatchewan. Similarly, no individual may retaliate against an individual who is accused of having acted inappropriately and contravened any policies. All participants are to report complaints under the Complaints and Discipline Policy and Procedures. Any individual who believes that they, or someone else, has been subjected to unlawful reprisal must promptly report those concerns to Gymnastics Saskatchewan.

SECTION 8. ANTI-DOPING

Gymnastics Saskatchewan in accordance with Gymnastics Canada (GCG) has adopted the Canadian Anti-Doping Program (CADP) which is in compliance with the World Anti-Doping Code. The CADP is administered by the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES) and much of the current GCG Policy comes directly from CADP and the World Anti-Doping Code.