



**For Immediate Release**

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**The U.S. Center for SafeSport Opens**  
***Focused on Keeping Athletes Safe, Supported & Strengthened***

**Denver, Colo. (March 23, 2017)** — The U.S. Center for SafeSport (The Center), a national non-profit focused on preventing all forms of abuse in sport, today announced that it opened its doors in Denver, Colorado. The Center is a first-of-its-kind organization, providing independent response and resolution services across the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movements.

“Sports are an important part of our national fabric,” said Shellie Pfohl, CEO of The Center. “Our mission is to see that every athlete has an opportunity to participate in sport while being safe, supported and strengthened.”

Prevention is at the heart of The Center’s charter. Its Education and Outreach Office promotes issue awareness and provides athletes and sport organizations, at all levels of competition, with best-in-class resources and training to promote respect and prevent abuse. These materials include talking points, fact sheets, self-evaluation tools and a comprehensive online training course. The Center also centralizes best practices, connecting sport organizations with thought leaders on issues common across sport.

“There is a critical need to address abuse in sports and we want to do everything we can to provide athletes with a positive, safe and secure environment,” said U.S. Olympic Committee (USOC) CEO Scott Blackmun. “Violence, abuse and misconduct in sport not only threatens athletes, but also undermines the fundamental values that sport is based on.”

“The launch of the U.S. Center for SafeSport is an essential step in protecting athletes from abuse,” said Han Xiao, Chairman of the USOC’s Athletes’ Advisory Council. “We look forward to working together to create a safe environment for our youth and athletes.”

Through its Response and Resolution Office, The Center receives and resolves reports of policy violations within the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movements. It also identifies patterns and trends in reporting and case data to update best practices when necessary and to fine tune its prevention efforts.

“The WSF is committed to promoting safety in sports for athletes of all ages and abilities,” said Deborah Antoine, CEO of the Women’s Sports Foundation. “We are encouraged by the formation of this new center and look forward to working with SafeSport leadership to ensure its promise is fulfilled.”

Governed by nine independent directors, The Center staff and board are comprised of subject-matter experts in abuse prevention and response, ethics compliance and sport administration. The Center will continue developing its collaborative relationships with experts in the field of abuse prevention to ensure that it is the gold-standard education and awareness resource for athletes and sport organizations.

“We are overwhelmed by the support of so many athletes and sport organizations around the country,” said Pfohl. “Fostering a national culture of respect and safety in sport is important work; we want every athlete to thrive on and off the field.”

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**The U.S. Center for SafeSport**, headquartered in Denver, Colo., is a 501(c)(3) non-profit focused on preventing physical, emotional and sexual abuse in sport. The Center, initially chartered by the U.S. Olympic Committee, is an independent organization with a nine-member board of directors, including subject-matter experts in abuse prevention, child abuse and sexual assault investigation, ethics compliance and sport administration. It collaborates with sport organizations to foster a culture of safety by raising awareness, developing best practices, and providing education and training to promote respect and prevent abuse.