



Body Confident Sport & USA Volleyball Parent Guide

The following guide is meant to transparently inform parents about educational athlete development programming that will occur in their local volleyball club. This educational programming is supported by USA Volleyball's Education Services Department.

What is Body Confident Sport?

Body Confident Sport was developed by top researchers within the space of body image in sport- the Centre for Appearance Research ([Centre for Appearance Research \(CAR\) - Research centres and groups | UWE Bristol](#)) and the Tucker Center for Research on Girls and Women in Sport ([Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sport \(umn.edu\)](#)).

It's part of a global initiative to decrease girls from dropping out of sport due to body image concerns. The coach training and athlete discussions were co-designed by girls and coaches from a variety of sports worldwide. They are informed by the latest scientific research, and the program has been shown to effectively promote positive body image conception in sport.

Why is Body Confident Sport appearing in USA Volleyball club programs?

USA Volleyball obtained a grant from Laureus Sport for Good (<https://www.laureus.com/>) to help promote and use the Body Confident Sport curriculum within our programs and clubs for the 2024 and 2025 calendar years. Given the number of female athletes within volleyball, as well as the growing following of the sport within the U.S. at the collegiate and professional level, we offer the potential to positively reach more than 200,000 youth athletes through the work we do as an organization. We want to continue to provide a positive and meaningful path to enjoying, learning and developing in the sport that will keep our athletes playing for years to come.

As such, USA Volleyball and your local club are partnering to bring more developmental education resources to your athletes, including the Body Confident Sport program. Facilitating this program within your athlete's club team allows for a safe place to explore this topic with trusted coaches.

What is a trigger warning and why is it on resources/communications from the Body Confident Sport program?

A trigger warning is a short statement that appears before content that may be sensitive in nature. Trigger warnings are presented as a courtesy to the participant to allow them the choice to engage with the content or not, based upon whether they believe that content could be harmful to their individual mental health.

Given that body image concerns and comments in sport can affect how an athlete views their own self-image and trigger previous struggles with eating disorders, feeling sexualized in sport etc.,



there is a trigger warning placed on the supplemental materials we ask athletes to review to guide the conversation and the conversations/sessions themselves.

We strongly feel, as do the researchers who created the Body Confident Sport program, that this program offers far more benefit to our female athletes than potential to cause harm. The ability to create a safe space for female athletes to discuss body image candidly with one another and trusted mentors allows them to find support, reassurance and empowerment regarding making healthy choices for their own bodies in sport.

Can my athlete opt out of this Body Confident Sport session discussion in their club?

Your athlete will always be given the chance to opt out of these sessions if they believe it will be more harmful than helpful to their mental health.

If your athlete chooses to opt out of the Body Confident sessions, we simply ask that they communicate this choice directly with their club coach.

Resources for Athletes After Body Confident Sport Sessions

NCAA Mental Health Resources

The following link will take you to a full page of resources from the NCAA's Health, Safety and Performance Division. Even though your club athlete is likely not yet in the collegiate space, the NCAA's resource page does offer excellent educational resources on the topic of mental health and sport. We encourage athletes and parents to look and learn from these resources.

<https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2021/2/10/sport-science-institute-mental-health.aspx>

USOPC Recommended Mental Health Providers

The following link will take you to a searchable database/spreadsheet that helps you find mental health providers in your area that have a background/specialty in sport and clinical psychology. This can be a useful resource to connect with a suitable provider in your local area that may better understand the unique stressors your athlete might face as an adolescent in sport.

<https://www.usopc.org/mental-health/mental-health-registry>

Contact for Questions/Concerns

If you have any questions or concerns about the Body Confident Sport program, please contact Dr. Jenny Johnson, Director of Education Services: jenny.johnson@usav.org or Dr. Lauren Walker, Manager of Athlete Development: lauren.walker@usav.org.