



## Alberta Water Polo Association Safe Sport Initiatives

The Safe Sport initiative is taking hold across Canada. From our federal government, national sports governing bodies, provincial organizations to individual clubs, recognition of this important movement is paramount to the health, safety and success of our youngest to oldest athletes.

In February 2019, [The Red Deer Declaration: For the Prevention of Harassment, Abuse and Discrimination in Sport](#) was signed by the Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Ministers responsible for Sport, Physical Activity, and Recreation. Shortly afterwards the Federal Minister of Science and Sport announced the following:

- That all Canadians have the right to participate in sport—in an environment that is safe, welcoming, inclusive, ethical and respectful. An environment that protects the dignity, rights and health of all participants.
- That there must be zero tolerance for gender-based violence and abuse in sport.
- And that we will work together to implement a collaborative, intergovernmental approach to address harassment, abuse and discrimination in sport—in the areas of awareness, policy, prevention, reporting, management and monitoring.

All national sport organizations, including Water Polo Canada, followed suit in declaring their commitment to Safe Sport. “Water Polo Canada is committed to offer to all of it’s athletes and all individuals involved in the sport an environment free of all forms of abuse, harassment, bullying or discrimination.”

AWPA sees this as an opportunity to create and/or improve our own processes within the organization and province which aligns with the AWPA strategic plan goal to strengthen our organizations. We are working towards reinforcing and incorporating principles of Safe Sport in a number of different ways:

- [Responsible Coaching Movement](#)
  - Coaching Association of Canada certification
  - Respect in Sport for coaches
  - Making Ethical Decisions
  - Screening of coaches
    - References
    - Police Information and Vulnerable Sector checks
  - The “Rule of Two”
- Creation and implementation of “Return to Water Polo Guidelines - COVID 19”
- AWPA hosted free Zoom coaching education sessions in June with guest speakers who covered a variety of topics:



- Athlete communication over social media and develop their own personal social media strategy -Kevin Lawrie
- Effective Coaching Communication on the pool deck and games with your athletes and parents - Andrew Muir
- Coaching the 21st Century Athlete - Bob Wilkie
- Coaching athletes with behavioural challenges and learning disabilities - Carrie Riddle
- Introduction of requirement for completion of Respect in Sport for Parents prior to athlete being registered
- [Safe Sport Training for Sport Organizations](#) required by all AWPA board members and it's employees
- [Concussion Protocol](#), the return to play player protocol including stages and symptoms
- Policy review and committee formation
  - Continuing process involving the formation of a committee to review and provide input into the policies related to Safe Sport.
    - Code of Conduct
    - Discipline and Complaints
    - Confidentiality
    - Privacy
    - Appeals
- Resources
  - Sport Law and Strategy Group - Steve Indig
    - Consultation and review of policy
    - Resource for assistance with complicated/sensitive disciplinary matters
  - Safe Sport resources from Water Polo Canada
    - [Safe Sport Officer](#)
    - [Link to resource list](#)