

Abuse and Misconduct Prevention Policy

Effective October 2026 · Applies to all owners, employees, coaches and volunteers ("staff") · Reviewed every year

Apex Gymnastics, LLC ("Apex") is committed to protecting every child in its care from sexual, physical and emotional abuse and misconduct. This policy applies in the gym, at meets, camps, parties and events, during travel, and online. Apex follows the youth protection requirements of the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU), and uses the U.S. Center for SafeSport's standards as its guide. Where a membership organization's rules are stricter than this policy, those rules apply.

1. Prohibited conduct

- **Sexual abuse and misconduct** of any kind, including any sexual contact with a minor, sexual comments or jokes, showing sexual material, and indecent exposure.
- **Physical abuse:** hitting, shoving or any contact meant to hurt; using conditioning or exercise as punishment to the point of harm; denying water, food, rest or bathroom breaks; pressuring an athlete to train on an injury.
- **Emotional abuse:** repeated yelling, name-calling, ridicule, threats, humiliation, or comments that shame an athlete's body or weight.
- **Grooming:** building a special, private relationship with a child to lower their guard, for example gifts, secrets, private messages, special favors or arranging time alone.
- **Neglect:** ignoring an injury, illness or unsafe condition, or leaving athletes without supervision.
- **Bullying and hazing** (see the Anti-Bullying Policy).

2. Screening

- Every adult staff member (18 or older) passes a criminal background check before working with athletes, and is checked again at least every two years.
- No person with a record of child abuse, a sexual offense or a violent crime may work or volunteer at Apex.

3. Training

- Before working with athletes, every staff member goes through this policy with the Owner at a staff orientation. It covers how to recognize abuse and grooming, the boundary rules in section 4, and how to report.
- Each staff member then signs the acknowledgment below. Apex keeps the signed pages on file as the record of training. Staff go through the policy and sign again every year.

4. Boundaries: every interaction must be observable and interruptible

One-on-one contact

- Staff are never alone with an athlete where others cannot see and hear them. One-on-one time happens on the open gym floor, or with the door open and another adult nearby.

- Private lessons take place on the open gym floor while other staff or parents are present. Parents may always watch.

Physical contact

- Staff use good judgment and common sense with physical contact. Contact is always in public view and welcome to the athlete, and is never secret.
- Coaches explain spotting to athletes and parents and use appropriate hand placement.

Restrooms and changing

- Staff do not enter a restroom or changing area while an athlete is using it, except in an emergency. If they must, they tell another adult.
- Parents of young children take them to the restroom before class. If a young child needs help, a staff member stays at the open door and tells another adult.

Phones, messages and social media

- Messages to minor athletes go to the whole group or include a parent. Adult staff do not send private texts, direct messages or social media messages to minor athletes without direct parental permission and supervision.
- Adult staff do not follow, friend or privately connect with minor athletes on social media, except their own family members or with explicit parental permission and supervision from the youth's guardians.
- Photos and video are taken only for coaching or for the gym, only in public areas, and never in a restroom or changing area. They are never shared privately. If a family asks Apex not to post photos of their child, Apex honors that.

Meets and travel

- Parents are responsible for getting athletes to and from meets and events.
- Staff do not drive an athlete alone, or share a hotel room with an athlete, as part of their work for Apex. The only exceptions are a staff member's own child, or a private arrangement that the athlete's parent has made directly with the staff member (for example, a ride as a favor to the family). A private arrangement like this is not part of the staff member's work for Apex. Apex does not arrange, supervise or insure it.

Gifts and outside contact

- Adult staff do not give gifts or special privileges to one athlete. Team-wide awards and treats are fine.
- Adult staff do not meet a minor athlete outside the gym without the parent's knowledge and other people present.
- No staff member works with athletes under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

5. Reporting

A child in immediate danger: call 911.

Suspected child abuse: report it to law enforcement or to Polk County Health and Human Services (child protective services) right away, and always within 24 hours. Then tell the Owner. You may also call the Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-422-4453.

- **Every staff member must report.** You do not need proof. Do not investigate yourself and do not confront the person.
- Athletes, parents and anyone else may report a concern to any coach or to the Owner at (715) 539-3333 or office@apexgymnast.com, or go straight to the authorities.
- If the concern is about the Owner, report directly to the authorities and to AAU.
- Concerns that are not abuse, such as a broken boundary rule, go to the Owner.
- **No retaliation.** Anyone who reports in good faith is protected. Retaliation is itself a violation of this policy.

6. How Apex responds

- A staff member accused of abuse is removed from all contact with athletes while the matter is looked into.
- Apex cooperates fully with law enforcement, child protective services and AAU, and notifies its liability insurer promptly.
- The Owner writes down what was reported, when, by whom and what was done. These records are kept confidential and secure.
- Parents of the athletes involved are told as soon as the authorities allow.
- A violation of this policy leads to discipline up to and including termination. Abuse leads to termination and a report to the authorities.

Alex Gold, Owner, Apex Gymnastics, LLC

Date

Staff Acknowledgment

Abuse and Misconduct Prevention Policy · Signed before starting work and every year after

I have read the Apex Abuse and Misconduct Prevention Policy. I understand it and I will follow it. I understand that I must report any suspected abuse to the authorities within 24 hours, and that breaking this policy can end my work at Apex.

_____ Staff member name	_____ Signature	_____ Date
_____ Parent name (if staff member is under 18)	_____ Parent signature	_____ Date