



BeInSynch

Education Newsletter

AUGUST EDITION • 2020

Welcome to the August 2020 Education Newsletter!
Our goal is to share information with you from experts, volunteers, coaches and officials. If you have suggestions to be included in future newsletters, please send them to shari@usaartisticswim.org.

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- Band Exercises for Vertical Height & Thrusts
- Judge Training – New
- Sports Can Battle Racism
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UPCOMING EVENTS

2020 USA Artistic Swimming Convention – August 31st – September 30th, 2020 (deadline to register August 23rd!)

2020 US Masters Virtual Events – October 15-18, 2020

November 6th – 8th
All-Star Camp
Spire Institute - Geneva, OH
Attendees: Phase 3 qualifiers from 12&U and 13-15 Age Group National Team Trials

November 6th – 8th
Coaches College
Spire Institute – Geneva, OH

Dec 27th - 31st
Camp for top 16
13-15 Age Group Athletes (ages in 2021) chosen from 2020 All-Star Camp
Location: tbd



Never give up, no matter how much
"you gotta be kidding me"
life throws at you!

VERY IMPORTANT **SAFESPORT MANDATE & COURSE INFO!!!**

As mandated by The Center for SafeSport, ALL individuals listed on USA Artistic Swimming's required list (included on the last page of this newsletter), **MUST** complete the Full SafeSport course! **NOTE: there is a new requirement for 18 year old athletes training or competing with minors which states that they MUST complete the course.**

The full SafeSport course is approximately 90 minutes long. New users will be presented with the single course automatically. **Only Coaches** need to send in the "SafeSport Trained" certificate to coachcerts@usaartisticwim.org (do not send them to Shari Darst). All individuals completing the course will be listed on the Certifications List, which is posted under Resources on the USA Artistic Swimming website: www.teamusa.org/USA-Artistic-Swimming.

IMPORTANT: If your expiration date was in 2018 or earlier or have never completed a course (refer to the posted SafeSport completion or CCP lists), you will need to take the Full Course. After completing the Full Course, you will be required to complete a Refresher course every year going forward.

Please watch your expiration dates for SafeSport! You only need to complete ONE Course per year. Refresher courses take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

NEW: When you register with USA Artistic Swimming, you will receive instructions and the Access Code to complete the course.

New Safety Reporting Form

USA Artistic Swimming has created a new athlete safety reporting form. The Center for SafeSport address will remain as the primary address to submit athlete safety concerns, but this is an alternate submission option for those that may prefer to submit to the National Office.

Click **HERE** to submit an issue to the National Office or by phone at 719-866-2235.





There is a fantastic facebook group called “The How Coaches”! This group is adminstrated by a Coach in Canada, and has held some extremely interesting webinars over the past few months.

Some of the topics covered have been: Building Performance Capacity by Bill May, Recruitment by Ashley Johnson, Building Culture and Community by Camille Bowness, Designing Effective Flexibility Programs by Inga, just to name a few.

There are also a multitude of documents that they have shared. These include Practice Plan Templates, Report Card Template, Athlete Profile Questionnaire, Common Learning Disabilities, Differentiation for Learning, etc.

You can find this facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/thehowcoaches>. Join in – it is worth it!



Changes to figures & elements will not occur until the 2022-2023 season – so you get an extra year with what is currently in place.

TAKE A LISTEN



Podcasts worth your time:

“Developing Players through Powerful Language and by Capturing, Keeping and Directing Attention, by Nick Winkelman, [click here](#)

“Mental Toughness and the Power of Breath”, Martin Reader, [click here](#)

Great Reads



“Balance Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation for Success”, Costas I. Karageorghis & Peter Terry, [click here](#)

“Focus on the Skills that Matter”, The Aspen Institute, [click here](#)

Videos to Enjoy



CrashCourse Concussion Education, [click here](#)

“Using Reflection to Become a Better Coach – Part 1”, by Wade Gilbert, [click here](#)

“How to Not Take Things Personally” [click here](#)

“Denzel Washington’s Life Advice – Fall Forward” [click here](#)

“Building a Diverse and Inclusive Sports Program”, from Davis Tutt (USOPC) - [click here](#)

BAND EXERCISES FOR VERTICAL HEIGHT AND THRUSTS

Please read before doing all thera-band exercises!

Position and posture must be perfect at all times when working on support scull on land. Placement of the head is key with long neck, ear away from the shoulders, ensuring the athlete does not use its traps or pectoral muscles but only back and arms muscles otherwise it is building strength in the wrong place and will be ineffective. Ensure symmetry of the position so as not to create imbalances in the back. Placement of the hands and wrists is key; try to avoid any unnecessary movements of the hands and wrists as it changes the arms, forearms, and back. Support Scull should be palms facing up with the pinkie directed up and always trying to rotate more towards the sky.



Number 1 - 50 X Arm Raises with bands.

Number 2 - 50 X Swimmer Pulls

Number 3 - 50 X Lat Pull-downs. Two ways to do this: 1 - with two partners to mimic using a Lat Pull down bar. 2 - overhead. Regardless of which way you choose pull Latissimus down and set first, then bend elbows to ribs.

Number 4 - 3 X 1-minute Standing Support Scull with bands. This should be done standing with the back flat against the wall. Count how many sculls you can do in 1:00 and work on improving your number without compromising your form and alignment. Form being #1 utmost priority.

Number 5 - 1 X 3-minute Isometric Hold. Stand with the back flat against the wall. In Support Scull position push arms against the wall for 45 seconds holding the bands, then for 15 seconds do support scull. Repeat 3 X for a total of 3 minutes.

Number 6 - 1 X 3-minute Isometric Hold. Same as number 2 but face the wall with arms in the Support Scull position. Push into the wall for 45 seconds and relax for 15 seconds. Repeat 3 X for a total of 3 minutes.

Number 7 - 50 X Wide Support to "Clap" above the head with bands. This is for the final press of the Thrust.

Number 8 - 50 X the entire Barracuda Thrust with bands. Pay very close attention that your body is completely vertical when your hands reach the catch and you hollow your body and pelvic tilt when you press. You can do this two ways, the whole Barracuda with a longer band OR use a shorter band for the beginning through the catch and a longer band for the catch to the press. 50 X regardless of which way you choose.

Number 9 - 50 Totem sculls with bands. Pay special attention that your body is hollow and you are pelvic tilting with a flat back.

Number 10 - Triceps extension with bands. 50 X both arms.

Additional Exercises

=> Handstands

3 X 30 seconds Handstand into the wall. Focus on pelvic tilting, tucking in the ribs, knee and foot extension, vertical line, and walking hands in as close to the wall as possible. Elbows should be extended. All parts of the body should be reaching away from the floor.

=> Support Scull

Add 300 sculls in the vertical to your daily sculling total. Add 150 sculls in vertical to your sculling warm-up and do another 150 at the end of practice before you exit the pool. The 150 sculls should be done in sets of 3 X 50.

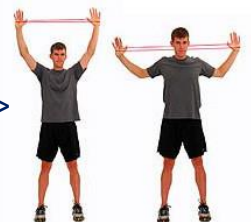
=> Fishtail Joins

Hold Fishtail for 10 seconds, join for 15 seconds, and hold for 15 seconds. Do 3 X. 1 - Right Fishtail, 2 - Left, 3 - Right Fishtail.

NOTE:

It is important to work up to these numbers, do not attempt right away, or without a coach present.

Lat pull-downs =>



=< Arm raises

Triceps extension =>



JUDGE TRAINING

Online training - has been launched for Judge Levels 1F, 1, 2F and 2. After the online course is completed, a webinar is required before taking the appropriate level test. Scheduled webinar dates will be sent to you after you complete the online course. Links to all courses can be found in the Judge Resources section of the USA Artistic Swimming website – Click [Here](#)

Online testing – has been launched for Judge Levels 1F, 1, 2F and 2. Online testing may be used after online training/webinars or an in-person training has been completed. Links to online testing is sent to individuals by the Education Director or Association Officials Chair.

Extended Testing Timeframes - the Judges' Board has decided that, owing to the cancellation of many meets in 2020, all judge candidates at ALL levels may extend their testing timeframe per Appendix G by one year.

Moving up Levels – the Judges' Board has given approval for individuals to start on their Level 2F and/or 2 before completing practice judging for the Level 1F and/or 1. A potential judge will still need to pass the practice judging for Levels 1F and 1 before practice judging for Levels 2F and 2.

Judges List – this year we will start keeping record of judges and their levels. When you register with USA Artistic Swimming this season it will ask what level you are currently, this will then be used to create the list of all certified judges, the expiration dates and if current or not. Please make sure to input correct information.

UP FOR A CHALLENGE?

Below you will find the numbers for individuals who have completed the Level 1F and Level 1 online courses, attended the webinar and completed the online test, as of August 15th. I know you are all VERY competitive, so I am issuing a challenge to each zone and all individual clubs to see who can get the most people all the way through the process! As you will see we have had quite a few taking the online course and participating in the webinars, so let's get everyone to go through all of the steps! Remember, the more the merrier!

Level 1F

Completed Online Course

East	North	South	West
14	12	25	9

Completed Webinar

East	North	South	West
13	9	23	8

Completed Tests

East	North	South	West
6	6	12	7

Level 1

Completed Online Course

East	North	South	West
14	12	25	9

Completed Webinar

East	North	South	West
13	9	23	8

Completed Tests

East	North	South	West
6	6	12	7

Level 1F 1st place Clubs in their Zone: Imagine Synchro, Ohio Coralinas, Northern Formation, Houston SynchroStars, Charlottesville Swans and Stanford University.

Level 1 1st place Clubs in their Zone: Imagine Synchro, Ohio Coralinas and Houston SynchroStars.

The next level 1F webinar is July 18th at 7:30 pm ET, Level 1 webinar will be July 25th at 7:30 pm ET.

SPORTS CAN BATTLE RACISM

Great athletes and coaches have long been recognized as a source of entertainment, using their talent to leave us breathless with emotion as they seek the thrill of victory or endure the agony of defeat. But the greatest have done even more. Jackie Robinson, Muhammad Ali, Althea Gibson, Tommie Smith and John Carlos used the platform of sports to fight for social justice in a way that other Black Americans could not — Colin Kaepernick is a present-day example. They are all known as greats because their relentless courage changed worldviews, blazed trails and unlocked doors for greatness to follow. Not only on the athletic fields on which they thrived, but within the communities that needed them most.

Coaches in our country have a platform and responsibility to teach their athletes that they have innate value and dignity that are neither defined nor limited by their race, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, or resources. Our children need inspiration and guidance from women and men of substance and character. As coaches, it is our responsibility to inspire and model this respect.

Thus, we call on all coaches to play an intentional and active role in ending bigotry and hatred. As coaches, we are motivated by the lore of the big win against a seemingly invincible enemy: systemic anti-Black racism. It's time for all of us to commit to coaching teams that refuse to accept the idea that this opponent cannot be defeated. **We owe it to our young athletes and their generation to show them the possibility of a better world, one in which bigotry, oppression, hatred, and violence are truly unacceptable. As their trusted coaches and leaders, we can prepare them for a world, in which they are not only invited to the table to discuss issues that impact them most, but they are asked and empowered to lead these conversations.**

*Voices from the Black Community at
Positive Coaching Alliance
By Trennis Joines
Click [Here](#)*

*Taken from Positive
Sports Alliance –
Click [HERE](#)*

THE ANATOMY OF AN ALLY



To speak out against injustice and speak up for those with no voice



To sniff out inequities and implicit bias



To identify privilege and power within yourself and others



To listen and truly hear the experiences of people in marginalized groups



To cultivate empathy and compassion for the oppressed



To take action and make change



WHY HARD WORK AND SACRIFICE?

By Andrea Fuentes
USA Senior National Team
Head Coach

Today we will talk about how a dream can be converted to a goal and later become a fact.

First of all, let's clarify: Synchro is too hard to go to the pool without motivation. We don't need to go to the pool jumping of joy every day, but the key is the answer to the following question:

Your life will be better with Synchro or without? If the answer is YES, just keep swimming, if not, your life need a change!

HARD WORK will only come if you have a strong YES inside. Some people want a very cool GOAL, like be in the Olympics, but they don't want to sacrifice other activities or do what it takes. What I love about life is NOBODY GIVES YOU NOTHING FOR FREE. Sometimes life can be unfair, but in general, your achievements have a direct relation with what you give. Pure balance!

Even with hard work, sometimes, the goal doesn't become a reality because we don't know HOW TO RECOGNIZE OUR STRENGTHS and we are not HUMBLE ENOUGH TO WORK ON OUR WEAKNESSES.

Our fire will be burning inside if we have a clear DREAM, but sometimes is just THE PASSION FOR DAILY IMPROVEMENT the strength that will keep us fighting.

The humans we have a particular quality: we have this STRONG DIRECTION FOR IMPROVEMENT, to overcome our LIMITS and to see HOW FAR we can arrive. It's in our DNA, we are HAPPY when we improve. And even more happy when you recognize the qualities that make you unique as a person. All of us know at least one talent that make us feel a little bit proud of ourselves. If not, think twice because I'm sure you will find it. This positive quality is a gift that nature gave you to evolve and to use. It can be anything. Recognize it and DEFEND IT. Is made in you to show, to believe and to use it to make your dream come true.

Write in a paper your strengths. Pin on your wall. To remember you are unique and capable to do ANYTHING YOU WANT. You just need to really want it.





GRADE LEVEL INFORMATION

Grade Level 6 – has been created and is available [Here](#). Make sure that you have downloaded the most recent version which is v7.1 as of 6-15-20 (updated 7-23-20).

Competition Requirements for Level 6 – Level 6 will be required for athletes attending Senior Nationals and athletes participating in Senior National Team Trials beginning in the 2021-2022 season.

Competition Requirements for all Levels – There will be no other Levels released at this time and there are no other changes at this time.

Virtual Competitions – will be allowed for the entire 2020-2021 season. These may be done through live Zoom sessions or through videos. Please see the Virtual Land Testing Information document posted on the website.

Level 6 Scoresheets – Will be posted in late August.

Contact shari@usaartisticswim.org with any questions.

ARTISTIC SWIMINARS

13 recorded Swiminars created by our Junior and Senior National Team Coaches are now available individually or as a package set for current USAAS Members in good standing who are residents of the United States.

Package set of 13- \$275.00, Individual videos- \$25.00

- *Extension*
- *Flexibility*
- *Positional Fitness*
- *The Secret to Improving Patterns*
- *Drills to Improve Execution*
- *Choreography (Part 1 & Part 2)*
- *Landdrill*
- *Upside-Down Water Basics*
- *Sharpness*
- *Improving Your Lifts*
- *Handstands & Headstands*
- *Cartwheels, Bridges & Walkovers*
- *Tabata (Bonus if you purchase all 13)*

For full descriptions and to purchase - Click [Here](#). These Swiminars are geared towards any level athlete or coach.

Note: if a full package is purchased, it will count towards your Coach Certification Renewal.

2020 Virtual Convention

Deadline to register is Sunday August 23, 2020!! Click [Here](#) to register.

Some important Education Committee meetings are listed below (all times listed are Mountain Time):

Long Term Athlete Development => Tuesday, September 8th, 6:00 pm

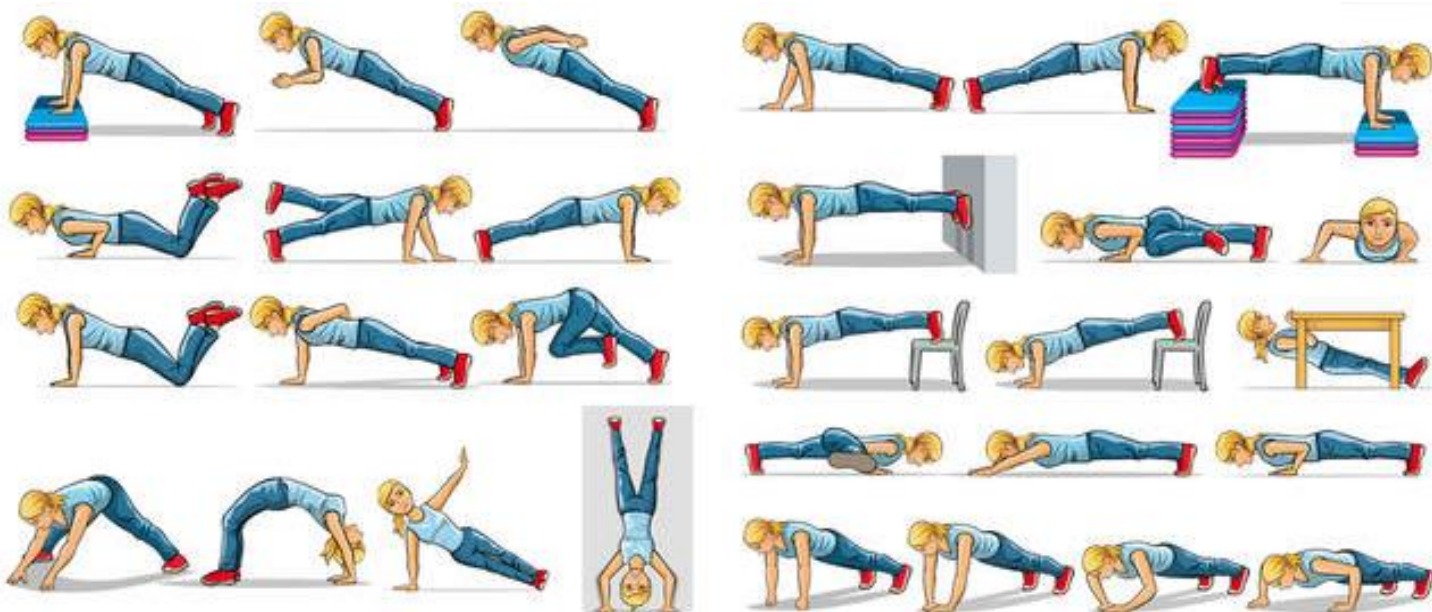
Judges Board => Wednesday, September 9th, 7:00 pm

Coaches Board => Tuesday, September 15th, 6:00 pm

Association Administrative Chair Meeting => Saturday, September 19th, 10:00 am

If you have any questions that you would like addressed at any of these meetings, please send them to shari@usaartisticswim.org beforehand.

PUSH-UP FUN!





COLLEGIATE ARTISTIC SWIMMING – Q&A

By Megan Azebu
Head Coach, Stanford University
& Collegiate Committee Chair

Q: I'm interested in swimming in college, but I'm not sure where to start!

A: There are a wide range of opportunities available to any athlete interested in collegiate synchro. Whether you are a total novice with no prior synchro (artistic swimming) experience or you're a National Team caliber athlete, there is a team that will be a good fit for you. The most difficult part about the process is figuring out where that might be! Start with the Collegiate page of the USAAS website where you can find up-to-date information on each active program.

Q: What is the difference between a Varsity & a Club program?

A: At Collegiate Nationals, Club & Varsity programs compete against each other in the same division. However, Varsity programs receive university sponsorship. This means that they have access to a variety of resources such as Athletic Aid (scholarship), strength & conditioning staff, Sports Psychology, Sports Nutrition and Academic Advising. Athletes in Varsity programs are not expected to make a financial contribution in order to participate. In Club programs, the university may provide a stipend; however, the club typically participates in fundraising to offset the costs that athletes are expected to pay to participate. Club programs tend to be more heavily student-run, which allows participants to gain leadership skills and experience.

Q: When can I start talking to Varsity programs? What about Clubs?

A: Both Varsity & Club programs may begin recruiting conversations on July 1 following the completion of an athlete's sophomore year of high school. Some clubs may be limited on how heavily they can recruit based on their unique university guidelines. It never hurts to drop a line to the coaching staff of the program that you are interested in! Just know that if they do not reply right away they may be waiting until the appropriate time to do so.

Q: I'd love to swim in college, but I know that I will need financial support to make it happen. What resources are available for this?

A: As mentioned above, Varsity programs may be able to offer athletically-related aid for their team members. If athletic aid is unavailable, academic aid may help to supplement! The best way to prepare yourself is to keep your academics strong during the application process and throughout college. This will allow you to qualify for the most financial assistance possible.

Q: I am a high school student starting to look at colleges, but I'm worried about how COVID will affect my chances. Help!

A: The good news is that you are not alone! Almost every applicant will have faced COVID-related academic hardships. Since the pandemic has affected all incoming students in different ways, universities are making adjustments to the normal application process. For instance, some institutions are waiving the standardized testing requirements. Others are accepting Pass/ Fail or Credit/ No Credit grading scales instead of traditional letter grades. Check the website for each school that you are interested in since each institution is making these decisions independently!

Q: I'm nervous about reaching out to coaches about my interest in collegiate synchro? How should I start?

A: First of all, try not to be too nervous! The best way to start is with an introduction to the program that you're most interested in. Include your name, school information (high school name & location, graduation year) and some basic information about your athletic experience. Many coaches, especially Varsity programs, will also be interested in a copy of your transcript, any standardized test scores and AP/IB scores that you might have available. If you are a rising junior or senior, then you should also expect to provide your proposed class schedule! If you have recent routine video or competition results that you'd like to share, you should be ready to share those as well. I recommend using a YouTube link or Google drive to help organize this information!

Q: I have dreams of swimming on National Team AND going to college to swim. Can I do both?

A: Absolutely! First and foremost, strong communication will be required to make sure that you and your coaches (both Collegiate and National Team) are on the same page. You have two different options available in order to accomplish both goals: you can defer the start of college or you can take a leave of absence during college. Depending on what the National Team training plan looks like, this would be a conversation to have with both National Team and Collegiate coaches. The Collegiate programs have a rich history of former National Team and Olympic athletes competing within their ranks!

Refer to this link for more in-depth information about the Collegiate programs! (Also has the Collegiate webinar link on this page!)

Click [Here](#)

FOAM ROLLERS

“Mental Toughness is nothing more than having the discipline to do what’s hard.”

Allister McCaw
M



Foam rolling, or self-myofascial release (a fancy term for “massaging yourself”), is a proven way to decrease soreness, increase flexibility and speed up recovery. Something swimmers, with the countless number of sessions in and out of the water can use to improve overall performance.

Below you will find some videos that should help you dive into the world of foam rolling.

=>Is Foam Rolling Worth It?

Click [Here](#)

=>Soft Tissue Work for Swimmers

Click [Here](#)

=>Foam Roller Ab Exercises

Click [Here](#)

=>3 Foam Roller Exercises for a Strong Core

Click [Here](#)

=>Foam Rolling Routine for Swimmers

Click [Here](#)

=>Swimmer Strength Tech Tip: How to Foam Roll Properly

Click [Here](#)

Foam Rollers are not just for SMR!

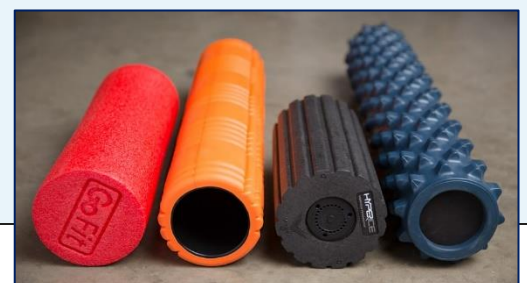
In addition, foam rollers can be used for other fitness activities:

=>Make press-ups more demanding by placing hands and/or feet on foam rollers.

=>Use a foam roller in place of a stability ball for hip bridges and hamstring curls.

=>Good alternative to yoga blocks.

=>Use a foam roller to increase the demand of core workouts – try doing crunches while lying lengthways on a foam roller.



RANDOM LITTLE TIDBITS

=>An addition of individuals who are now required to complete the SafeSport course: **ALL** 18 year old athletes who train or compete with minor age athletes must complete the course.

=>**Expirations!** There are currently **MANY** coaches whose CCP Level and/or SafeSport course expires in 2020 – Please make sure to stay up to date. Send ALL certificates to coachcerts@usaartisticswim.org.

=>**To recertify** your CCP Level you must repeat the course for your current level or higher, attend Coaches College or purchase a full package of Artistic Swiminars by December 31st of your expiration date. (There is no Level 4 CCP at this time). **Coaches College will be held Nov 6th – 8th at the Spire Institute in Geneva, OH.**

=>**All Coach Certifications should be sent to** coachcerts@usaartisticswim.org. Anyone who is not a coach is not required to send in certifications, it will be picked up through reports that are run by the office. If you have a question about a certification not showing up on the list, contact coachcerts@usaartisticswim.org.

=>**PLEASE** be aware of your expirations dates and **DO NOT** wait until the days or week before a competition to complete CCP Levels, First Aid/CPR, Safesport or NCSI Background Checks!

SAFESPORT – IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Everyone has a role to play in creating a healthy environment for our sport and our athletes. SafeSport helps raise awareness about misconduct in sport, promote open dialogue, and provide training and resources. Providing a safe environment to protect the health and well-being of athletes is a high priority for USA Artistic Swimming. *The FULL course must be completed 1 time, the Refresher courses are mandatory 1 per year every year after that.*

PLEASE NOTE: It is now **MANDATORY** for the following individuals to complete the course.

USA Artistic Swimming

(Staff, Board Members, Support Staff, and Consultants)

National Team

(Head and Assistant Coaches, Consultants, Volunteers & Chaperones)

National Talent, Olympic Development Camps & National Elite Camp

(Head and Assistant Coaches, Consultants, Volunteers & Chaperones)

National Team Athletes

All National Team Athletes currently listed in the USADA Registered Testing Pool

All members of all USAAS Committees, Subcommittees and Boards

(18 years old and over)

Club Teams

(Any Coaches, Chaperones, Support Staff and Volunteers who have constant and consistent interaction and/or authority over athletes,

(This includes, but is not limited to: Dance, Acrobatics, Flexibility, Swimming Staff, etc., at any national or local Training Facility)

(Any Athlete 18 years or older who practices or competes with minor age athletes)

Approved Club Options/Private Invitations/ICE Program Participants

(All Staff - including Coaches, Managers, Chaperones and Adults who have constant and consistent interaction and/or authority over athletes while traveling with the athletes, excludes Adults who are attending as fans)

All Judges

(Levels 1 through FINA A & Emeritus)

Optional but highly recommended

Club Teams - BOD members

USA Artistic Swimming has added an area on the website solely dedicated to SafeSport. Under Resources, you will find information on how to take the course, the complete list of individuals who have taken the course, information on the US Center for SafeSport, and USA Artistic Swimming's Abuse and Harassment Policy.

SafeSport for Parents is not an accepted certification, nor is any other outside program.

If you have any questions, please contact adam@usaartisticswim.org

When we work as a team, we can build a game plan to make sport safe for everyone.