



June 2026

ADVANCING CHILD SAFEGUARDING IN NORTH AMERICAN SPORT: PRACTICAL ACTIONS FOR DECISION MAKERS

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1 ABOUT THIS REPORT

Safeguarding includes “all proactive measures to both prevent and appropriately respond to concerns related to harassment and abuse in sport as well as the promotion of holistic approaches to athlete welfare.”¹

This report provides an overview and comparative analysis of safeguarding in sport legal and policy frameworks in Canada, Mexico, and the United States (U.S.). It also presents city-specific, state, or provincial snapshots for Guadalajara, Mexico; New York & New Jersey, U.S.; and Toronto, Canada, all of which are FIFA World Cup 2026 host cities that the Centre for Sport and Human Rights (CSHR) has focused on through the [Generation 2026](#) initiative to improve safeguarding in sport, with a focus on children. Throughout the report are perspectives shared by youth through CSHR’s Generation 2026 [Youth Media Forward](#) initiative and [Youth Leadership Council](#).²

The report highlights application of safeguarding policies for sport organizations; identifies key similarities, differences, and gaps in protection mechanisms; and provides recommendations for harmonizing safeguarding in sport policies and approaches across North America.

SCOPE AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this publication is to outline recommendations for safeguarding at mega-sporting events (MSEs) as well as youth sport in general by leveraging the awareness that the 2026 World Cup in North America will generate on this topic. The report, therefore, focuses on legal frameworks in North America and aims to suggest practical actions for

¹ [IOC consensus statement: interpersonal violence and safeguarding in sport | British Journal of Sports Medicine.](#)

² The Youth Leadership Council is led by CSHR with support from UNICEF USA and UNICEF Mexico.

decision makers to improve child safeguarding in sport with a specific focus on North America. It also shares examples of good practices and opportunities for collective improvement in the region, as well as approaches and learnings within law and sport governance. Additionally, it provides a resource directory for accessing safeguarding support,³ as well as resources on prevention that can be helpful in the lead up to and during the 2026 FIFA World Cup. Links to existing safeguarding in sport policies in North America are included, and charts are provided to help simplify a complex list of resources that often have jurisdictional overlap.

LIMITATIONS

Many of the laws represented in this publication are those in force as of December 2025. This information is not intended as legal advice for any third party, should not be relied upon as such, and does not create an attorney-client relationship with any third party. It is recommended that individuals and organizations consult with their attorney for advice. Further, this information was prepared for information purposes only. Any reference to this report after publication should ensure that laws and regulations are still current. Due to the complexity of the topic and the time-constraint of the research team, the report has not focused on all potentially relevant sources such as specific UN Conventions, human rights due diligence, mental health and well-being, labor matters and enforcement mechanisms, sex offender registration, concussion safety, and the intersection of diversity and inclusion legislation impacting safeguarding in sport. The authors recognize that no effective safeguarding can take place without attention to mental health, well-being, and diversity and inclusion being reflected in every aspect of prevention and response. Additionally, the authors wish to note that the Future of Sport in Canada Commission Final Report was published during the final drafting of this publication, and for this reason an in-depth analysis of its provisions is not provided.

CONTRIBUTIONS

CSHR is the primary author of this report, led by Katie Hanna, Head of North America; and co-authored by Claudia Villa-Hughes, Head of Safeguarding; and María Fernanda López Portillo Ramírez, UNV Mexico City. The legal research undertaken for this publication was made possible thanks to the generous contributions of pro bono legal support from Clifford Chance US LLP ("Clifford Chance"); Ritch, Mueller y Nicolau, S.C.; and Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP law firms.⁴ CSHR thanks the following team members for their valuable contributions: From Clifford Chance: Steve Nickelsburg, Janet Whittaker, Natalie Hoehl, Kaitlyn Beyer, Tanya Bazar, Taylor Glover, Saif Bajwa, and Angela Yang; from the Ritch, Mueller y Nicolau, S.C. team: Pablo Perezalonso Eguía, Anitza Velázquez Márquez, Pablo Rueda Carmona and Santiago Rojas Muro de Nadal; and from Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP,⁵ Sven Poysa, Jasnit Pabla, and Carleigh Farquhar.

CSHR also wishes to thank the numerous organizations and individuals with specialized expertise in safeguarding in sport who also contributed: Julie Ann Rivers-Cochran and Emily Austin, The Athlete Survivors' Assist; Kim Shore, Project SafeKids; Sport Integrity Canada; Matt Mullen and Linda Mastandrea, FIFA26; and Jessica Perrill and Eric Williams, U.S. Center for SafeSport.

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- 3 This does not represent an endorsement or validation of the resources included in the directory. The information provided is for general informational purposes only. All information is provided in good faith; however, CSHR makes no representation or warranty of any kind, express or implied, regarding the accuracy, adequacy, validity, reliability, or availability of any of the services and/or organizations mentioned.
 - 4 The law firms' and lawyers' contributions to this Report were limited to the identification of the existing legal and policy landscapes of each of their jurisdictions, and do not extend to the opinions and recommendations herein. The opinions and recommendations presented in this Report are CSHR's and do not necessarily represent the views of any of the firms or lawyers named above.
 - 5 Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP's contributions to this report are limited to legal research regarding the legal and policy landscape applicable to youth sports in Canada and the City of Toronto. The opinions and recommendations herein do not represent the views of the firm or any of the lawyers named above.



Safeguarding includes “all proactive measures to both prevent and appropriately respond to concerns related to harassment and abuse in sport as well as the promotion of holistic approaches to athlete welfare.”⁶ Safeguarding in sport has garnered increased attention over the last decade, in part due to increased media reporting on abuse in sport and the courageous advocacy of survivors who have called on governments and sport institutions to create safer environments. In one study in the U.S., 43% of the athletes who experienced unwanted sexual behavior indicated that at least one instance occurred before they were 18.⁷

This report brings together a focus on safeguarding in sport in North America, as part of the Centre for Sport and Human Rights’ [Generation 2026](#) initiative leading up to the FIFA World Cup 2026 in Canada, Mexico, and the United States. As part of Generation 2026, focused on advancing safer, youth-inclusive sport, CSHR has provided training and convened sport organizations, host city committees, city and national government representatives, survivors, civil society, youth, and other groups to increase child safeguarding in sport capacity and coordination. The report is the result of efforts by a continental working group that identified a need for urgent attention and robust policies and approaches protecting the safety and rights of youth impacted, directly and indirectly, by their nation hosting the FIFA World Cup, and through continental collaboration to improve safeguarding in sport in North America. To date, while some measures exist, governance and legal frameworks in the three host countries do not yet consistently provide comprehensive mechanisms to prevent and respond to abuse in sport.

“ CSHR calls upon groups to embed safeguarding as a human rights obligation, rather than as a technical risk-management function. ”

⁶ [IOC consensus statement: interpersonal violence and safeguarding in sport | British Journal of Sports Medicine.](#)

⁷ [U.S. Center for SafeSport and Pacific Research and Evaluation, LLC \(2024\). 2024 Athlete Culture & Climate Survey Key Findings.](#)

Currently there is a confusing patchwork of safety requirements relating to sport across North American jurisdictions, and no umbrella protections that apply to all children.⁸ In fact, the current system focuses on individual organization policies, with little focus on children as rights holders. Safeguards should follow a child from one setting to the next, centering their rights and needs.

Perpetrators of abuse who pose safeguarding risks do not respect jurisdictional boundaries. With child and youth athletes moving between grassroots programs, development pathways, and elite environments, often within the same training and competition facilities, their protection must be prioritized regardless of where they are in the system. This applies as well to children as fans in a stadium or living in a city hosting a large sporting event.

The report provides a number of recommendations to strengthen safeguarding in sport, including steps to create safer sport environments for all those involved, and for those impacted through the hosting of mega-sporting events. These recommendations call on the sport ecosystem as a whole to:

- 1** Embed child voice and participation.
- 2** Mandate independent, compensated survivor consultation and leadership with decision-making authority and oversight.
- 3** Invest in grassroots capacity to implement safeguarding standards.
- 4** Require a robust safeguarding framework for mega-sporting event hosting.
- 5** Harmonize safeguarding standards and enforcement across jurisdictions to reflect best practices.
- 6** Integrate safeguarding within security and law enforcement practices.
- 7** Strengthen information-sharing and cross-jurisdictional coordination.

⁸ Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (2017). [Final Report](#).



3 | THE STATE OF SAFEGUARDING IN NORTH AMERICAN SPORT

Over the last ten years, research by experts around the world⁹ highlighted the extent of harm in sport in various countries. This includes psychological, sexual, and physical abuse and neglect; power imbalances between coaches and athletes; abuse perpetrated by adults in positions of authority; child abuse; and youth with sexual behavior problems who harm other youth. Many athletes have shared how the systems set up to support them have sometimes resulted in further harm to survivors of abuse and provided no real remedy.¹⁰ This work has contributed significantly to the increased attention now being given to the issue. These evidence-based studies along with the voices of athletes and impacted people have helped shape best practices and safer sport environments for athletes and all involved in the sport ecosystem. This includes a movement towards incorporating player safety or welfare officers within leagues and getting regular feedback from athletes,¹¹ greater recognition that athlete mental health and well-being is part of safeguarding,¹² and that investing in cyber abuse protection services,¹³ and addressing the needs of child athletes¹⁴ were all critical in responding to this challenge in the context of sport.

- 9 Fasting, K., & Sand, T. S. (2015). [Narratives of sexual harassment experiences in sport](#). *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 7(5), 573–588. Fasting K, Brackenridge C, Sundgot-Borgen J. [Experiences of sexual harassment and abuse among Norwegian elite female athletes and nonathletes](#). *Res Q Exerc Sport*. 2003 Mar;74(1):84-97. Fasting, K, Huffman, D. and Sand T.S. (2015) [gender-based violence in Zambian Sport: prevalence and prevention](#). Akilles. Maranhão, J., Parent, S., Clermont, C., & Vertommen, T. (2025). [Self-Reported Experiences of Interpersonal Violence Among High-Performance Athletes in Brazil](#). *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 0(0). Ohlert, J., Vertommen, T., Rulofs, B., Rau, T., & Allroggen, M. (2021). [Elite athletes' experiences of interpersonal violence in organized sport in Germany, the Netherlands, and Belgium](#). *European Journal of Sport Science*, 21(4), 604–613. Parent, S., & Vaillancourt-Morel, M.-P. (2021). [Magnitude and risk factors for interpersonal violence experienced by Canadian teenagers in the sport context](#). *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 45(6), 528–544. Pankowiak A, Woessner MN, Parent S, Vertommen T, Eime R, Spaaij R, Harvey J, Parker AG. [Psychological, Physical, and Sexual Violence Against Children in Australian Community Sport: Frequency, Perpetrator, and Victim Characteristics](#). *J Interpers Violence*. 2023 Feb;38(3-4):4338-4365. Epub 2022 Aug 9. Erratum in: *J Interpers Violence*. 2026 Jan;41(1-2):486-490. Vertommen, T., Schipper-van Veldhoven, N., Wouters, K., Kampen, J. K., Brackenridge, C. H., Rhind, D. J. A., Neels, K., & Van Den Eede, F. (2016). [Interpersonal violence against children in sport in the Netherlands and Belgium](#). *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 51, 223–236. Wójcik, S., N. Organista, J. Kopycka, and J. Szolańska. 2025. ["The Prevalence of Violence Against Children in Organized Sport in Poland."](#) *Child Abuse Review* 34, no. 5: e70064.
- 10 [Roadmap to Remedy | Effective Responses to Abuse in Sport | Centre for Sport and Human Rights](#).
- 11 U.S. Soccer Federation (2023). [U.S. Soccer Provides Update on its Participant Safety Efforts](#).
- 12 Safe Sport International (2025). [Mental Health Is Safeguarding: Why Athlete Wellbeing Must Be Part of the Safety Conversation](#).
- 13 International Olympic Committee (2024). [World Mental Health Day: How the IOC ran the largest online abuse prevention programme ever conducted in sport at Paris 2024](#).
- 14 Miller, T. & Volmert, D. (2023). [A New Narrative about Elite Child Athletes: Reframing Wellbeing and Abuse Prevention](#), FrameWorks Institute.

“ Good sporting environments should ensure safety and cultivate respect, which ultimately help the athletes thrive. Not only does this build confidence in their abilities, it creates a love for the sport, and a willingness to continue playing. But emotional and physical distress caused by adults can ruin athletes’ passions entirely. ”

Joyce, LA

From the 2018 Canadian study of athletes on the prevalence of maltreatment¹⁵ to the 2020 and 2024¹⁶ U.S. athlete culture and climate surveys, research on the scope of the problem of abuse in sport is gaining more traction. Athletes are increasingly sharing their experiences both anonymously and publicly, to inform prevention approaches to better safeguarding from abuse in sport.

PREVALENCE OF HARMS (% of athletes reporting at least one incidence)¹⁷

	PSYCHOLOGICAL	SEXUAL	PHYSICAL	NEGLECT
Quebec, Canada (Parent & Vaillancourt-Morel, 2000) (athletes 14-17 years)	79.2	28.2	39.9	35.7
Belgium & The Netherlands (Vertommen et al., 2016) (adults asked about experiences before age of 18)	38	14	11	
U.S. (U.S. Center for Safe Sport, 2020) (current and former Para and Olympic Team Members)	65	9	21.7	
Canada (Willson et al., 2021) Canadian National Team athletes	60.2	20.5	14.3	68.8
Germany & The Netherlands (Ohlert et al., 2021) (adults and National Team members asked to reflect on experiences before age of 18)	72	30.6	24.8	
2024 US Center for Safeport study	78.4*	10.9	35.3	78.4*

* That this included psychological and neglect

The safeguarding landscape in North America is currently comprised of a combination of local and national laws, organizational regulations, independent safe sport entities, local clubs, and industry good practices in survivor advocacy and abuse prevention. These laws and practices generally don’t operate across national borders.

15 Kerr, G., Willson, E., Stirling, A. (2019). [Prevalence of Maltreatment Among Current and Former National Team Athletes](#), University of Toronto In Partnership with AthletesCAN.

16 Athlete Culture & Climate Survey (2020) and (2024), U.S. Center for SafeSport.

17 Willson, E. (2024). [Success in Sport: More than Medals](#). University of Toronto.

While different actors play distinct roles in preventing and responding to abuse in sport, it is important to understand who the various stakeholders are, and what roles they play. This is critical in determining where collective impacts happen, and how progress can be made, with a focus on child safeguarding.

In North America, Canada and the U.S. have passed national safeguarding in sport laws designating independent safe sport entities and mandating additional safeguarding in sport requirements that are detailed below. In Mexico, no centralized mandate is currently in place.

CANADIAN SAFEGUARDING FRAMEWORK

The Canadian safeguarding landscape is characterized by a significant jurisdictional distinction between grassroots and national-level sport organizations. The Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner (OSIC), established as a division of the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC) was originally responsible for administering the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS), receiving and addressing complaints within the federally funded national sport system. As such, its mandate primarily applied to national-level sport organizations that receive federal funding. On April 1, 2025, responsibility for the administration of the UCCMS and the handling of complaints transitioned to Sport Integrity Canada, formerly known as the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES). While this transition was intended to strengthen oversight and coordination within the national sport system, the core jurisdictional limitations remain largely unchanged. Sport Integrity Canada, as mandated by the federal government, continues to focus on breaches committed by individuals who are part of national, federally funded sport organizations. As a result, large segments of grassroots, community, and developmental sport, including school, municipal, and many club-level programs, remain outside the formal scope of the national integrity mechanism, leaving significant gaps in safeguarding protections across the broader sport ecosystem.

MEXICO SAFEGUARDING FRAMEWORK

Mexico currently does not have a specific entity dedicated exclusively to addressing safeguarding in sport. Mexico's approach includes the National System for the Integral Development of the Family (DIF Nacional)¹⁸ and System for the Comprehensive Protection of Children and Adolescents (SIPINNA) in charge of managing child protection, which is shaped by federal, state, and municipal laws that place a constitutional and legislative emphasis on human rights and children's rights. This means that children's rights are protected by federal and state laws. This approach applied to mega sporting-events recognizes that safeguarding risks (e.g. child labor, trafficking, exploitation, harassment, and abuse) cut across sport regulation, labor law, migration frameworks, and child protection systems.

With the reforms to the General Law of Physical Culture and Sports of 2025, there is increasing awareness among actors in the sports sector of challenges relating to safeguarding. Actions promoted in the context of the FIFA World Cup have also contributed to greater awareness. There is an opportunity now to strengthen coordination on this issue among institutions involved in sport throughout Mexico, and to enhance safeguarding protocols for children in sport at all levels, including potential harms linked to large-scale events.

¹⁸ The Federal Attorney's Office for the Protection of Children and Adolescents is administratively attached to the National DIF System, maintaining technical autonomy in the exercise of its powers for the defense and restoration of rights.

U.S. SAFEGUARDING FRAMEWORK

In contrast to Canada, the U.S. safeguarding framework extends beyond elite sport to certain grassroots and amateur sport settings, depending on statutory coverage and organization affiliation.¹⁹ The Safe Sport Act, a federal law enacted in 2018, designated the U.S. Center for SafeSport as the independent national safe sport organization, with authority to investigate and respond to reports of abuse and misconduct within U.S. Olympic or Paralympic organizations and national governing bodies (NGBs).²⁰ The U.S. Center for SafeSport is a non-profit organization that receives government and nongovernmental funding.²¹ While the U.S. Center for SafeSport handles reports for sexual misconduct and child abuse,²² the NGBs of each sport "handle most physical and emotional abuse allegations."²³ Through various stages in the process, the case may be resolved, placed on hold, or administratively closed.

As more athletes across all sports have come forward to report abuse, a pivotal report commissioned by the U.S. Soccer Federation was issued in 2022, widely known as the "Yates report."²⁴ The investigation documented a safeguarding ecosystem in which FIFA, the U.S. Soccer Federation (USSF), the U.S. Center for SafeSport, the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL), and individual clubs all held partial authority; yet no single entity ensured timely, coordinated action.²⁵

These findings emphasize that safeguarding is not just one organization's responsibility; but that all actors in the sport ecosystem must work together in clearly defined, coordinated roles that prioritize athlete well-being. While significant reforms have been made²⁶ since the 2022 report, challenges remain. Trauma-informed communication, transparency, and coordination is necessary for the athletes, including children, navigating the process.

SAFEGUARDING AT MEGA-SPORTING EVENTS (MSEs) IN NORTH AMERICA

While the U.S. and Canadian initiatives have similar objectives, their mandates differ. For both Canada and the U.S., requirements are in effect for national teams and specific nationally sanctioned events.²⁷ In the U.S., federal requirements also extend beyond elite sport to some grassroots and amateur athletic organizations.

The frameworks in Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. lack connection to the hosting of international sporting events in North America. The enforcement of safeguarding measures presents its own challenges which are often exacerbated by MSEs.

19 The U.S. law (the Safe Sport Act), does not govern all amateur and youth sports within the U.S. Instead, its statutory requirements apply to (1) the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic sports organizations, (2) National Governing Bodies, (3) amateur sports organizations sanctioned by National Governing Bodies, and (4) amateur sports organizations that participate in interstate or international amateur athletic competitions and with membership including adults in regular contact with minor amateur athletes. [Participants in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement](#) are also required to comply with the SafeSport Code.

20 In addition, suspected child abuse, including child sexual abuse, must be reported to law enforcement and designated child protection agencies.

21 The U.S. Center for SafeSport was the first national-level safe sport organization in North America, designated in the U.S. to respond to and prevent abuse in U.S. Olympic and Paralympic sport.

22 The Safe Sport Act requires covered individuals to report suspected child abuse, including child sexual abuse, to law enforcement and designated child-protection authorities, and authorizes the U.S. Center for SafeSport to receive reports, investigate misconduct within the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement, and coordinate with law enforcement as appropriate.

23 U.S. Center for SafeSport (2026). [Exploring the Response and Resolution Process](#) (cleaned up).

24 [Report of the Independent Investigation to the U.S. Soccer Federation Concerning Allegations of Abusive Behavior and Sexual Misconduct in Women's Professional Soccer \(2022\)](#).

25 As the report notes: "Congress empowered SafeSport to assert exclusive jurisdiction over sexual misconduct allegations of abuse by coaches licensed by USSF, but there are serious limitations to its effectiveness in professional soccer. Importantly, SafeSport's jurisdictional mandate does not preclude the NWSL or the teams from independently investigating and resolving sexual misconduct allegations." (Yates, 2022, p.24).

26 The report also highlighted widespread misunderstanding within professional soccer environments, where many actors incorrectly believed that safeguarding applied only to youth players, resulting in under-reporting and delayed responses. A participant safety taskforce was launched by US Soccer and many reforms have been actioned, following the initial report.

27 [The Canadian Safe Sport Program Rules](#) specifically highlight the national level scope of application under Rule 3.1, and Rule 3.2 explains the application to other individuals at events.

MSEs highlight one of the difficulties of applying safeguarding practices to international environments. And while frameworks exist for some events,²⁸ fragmented and/or overlapping jurisdictions present challenges. When responsibility for prevention, reporting, investigation, and remedy is distributed across clubs, leagues, federations, regulators, host cities, event owners, and local and national authorities, safeguarding responses should be harmonized.

MSEs often operate across several jurisdictions, and can create heightened safeguarding risks (e.g. exploitation, trafficking, discrimination, etc.) due to the temporary concentration of large populations, high media visibility, cross-border mobility, commercial pressures, and the involvement of multiple public, private, and civil society actors.²⁹ There is significant potential for institutional harm if policies to address these concerns are not effectively and contextually designed and implemented.

Effective safeguarding at scale requires a proactive, human rights-based and systems-oriented approach that extends beyond athletes to encompass the entire sport ecosystem. This means embedding prevention into all phases of the event life cycle, ensuring accessible, trusted reporting and remedy mechanisms; and enabling coordinated action across organizers, host governments, contractors and civil society. Addressing safeguarding adequately requires specific planning and coordination, as well as the inclusion of relevant experts in host cities and countries.

“ Planning should connect and deliver on child safeguarding commitments made during the bidding process,³⁰ all the way through delivery of events. ”

It also includes ensuring that safeguarding information, education and training is provided in accessible ways for persons with disabilities, to accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities in all safeguarding programs, to provide accessible ways to report safeguarding concerns, and to recognize the heightened risk individuals with disabilities may face.

“ We must all work together to foster a community where every single youth in sports feels safe and respected. ”

Angel, Generation 2026 Youth Leadership Council member from LA

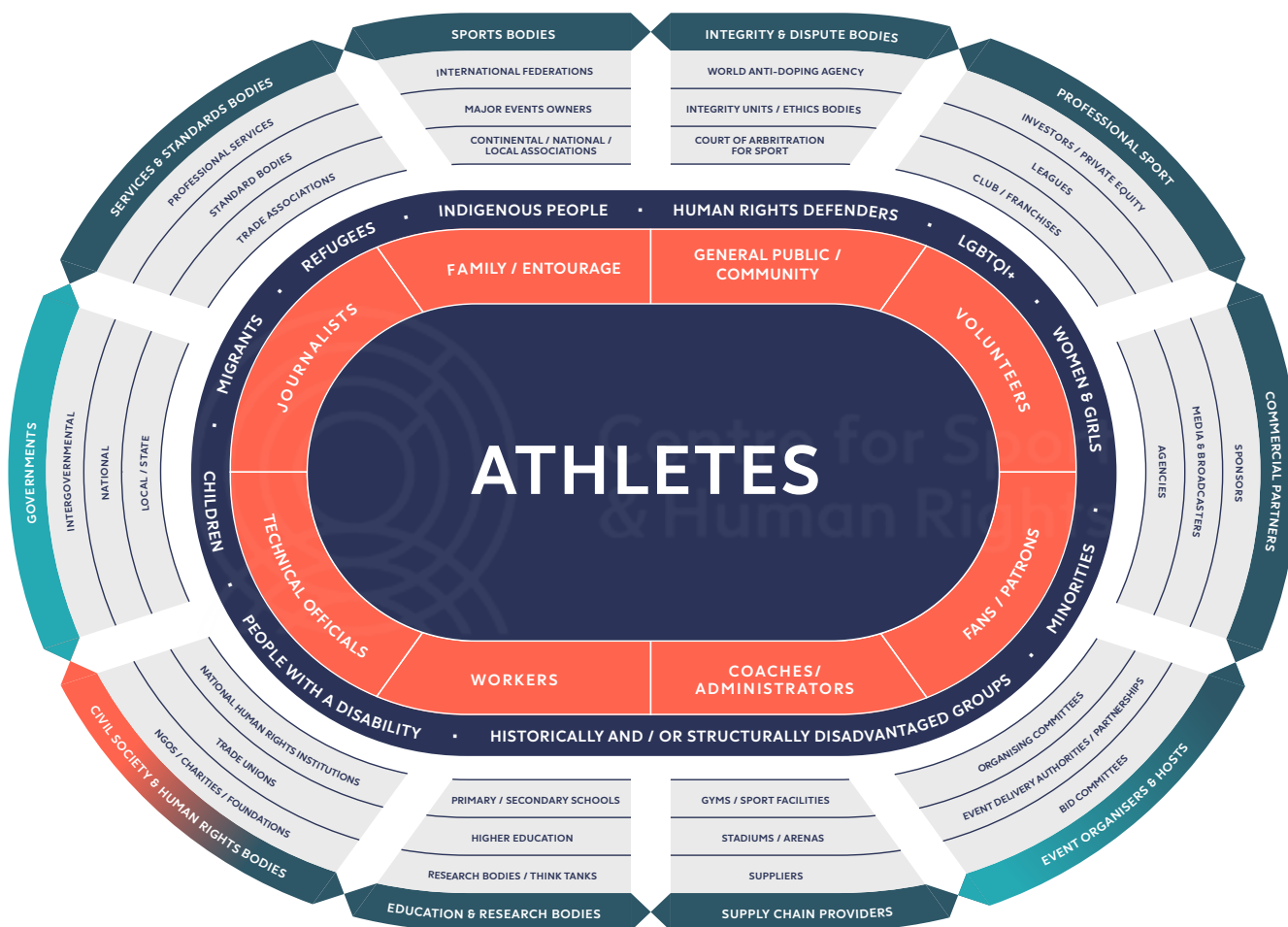
28 [IOC-Games-Time-framework-ENG.pdf; FWC26 Human Rights Framework.](#)

29 Villa, C. (2024), [The Importance of a Human Rights Approach to Child Safeguarding at MSEs | Centre for Sport and Human Rights.](#)

30 [United 2026 human rights bid](#), pages 57-58 Child Safeguarding Commitments for hosting FWC26.

Where safeguarding is treated primarily as a compliance add-on, failures are predictable; where it is instead a core condition of delivery, safeguarding policies become a central enabler of safe, inclusive and sustainable events.

Research consistently shows that isolated organizational responses are insufficient in such contexts; instead, what is required is networked safeguarding governance characterised by cross-sectoral cooperation, shared accountability, and coordinated prevention and response mechanisms.³¹



The importance of safeguarding in sport has acquired greater attention during the hosting of the Olympic and Paralympic Games³² as well as other mega-sporting events. The UK offers a valuable model to consider. [UK stadium safety](#) and safeguarding/child protection frameworks integrate welfare into stadium licensing, requiring trained welfare and safeguarding officers, establishing clear behavioral standards for spectators, authorizing immediate intervention, and embedding strong links between sport organizations, local authorities, and police. Adapting relevant elements of the UK ‘[Safety of Sports Grounds](#)’ framework, local authority safeguarding duties, and club-level welfare officer models would help strengthen safeguarding governance in live sport environments in North America.

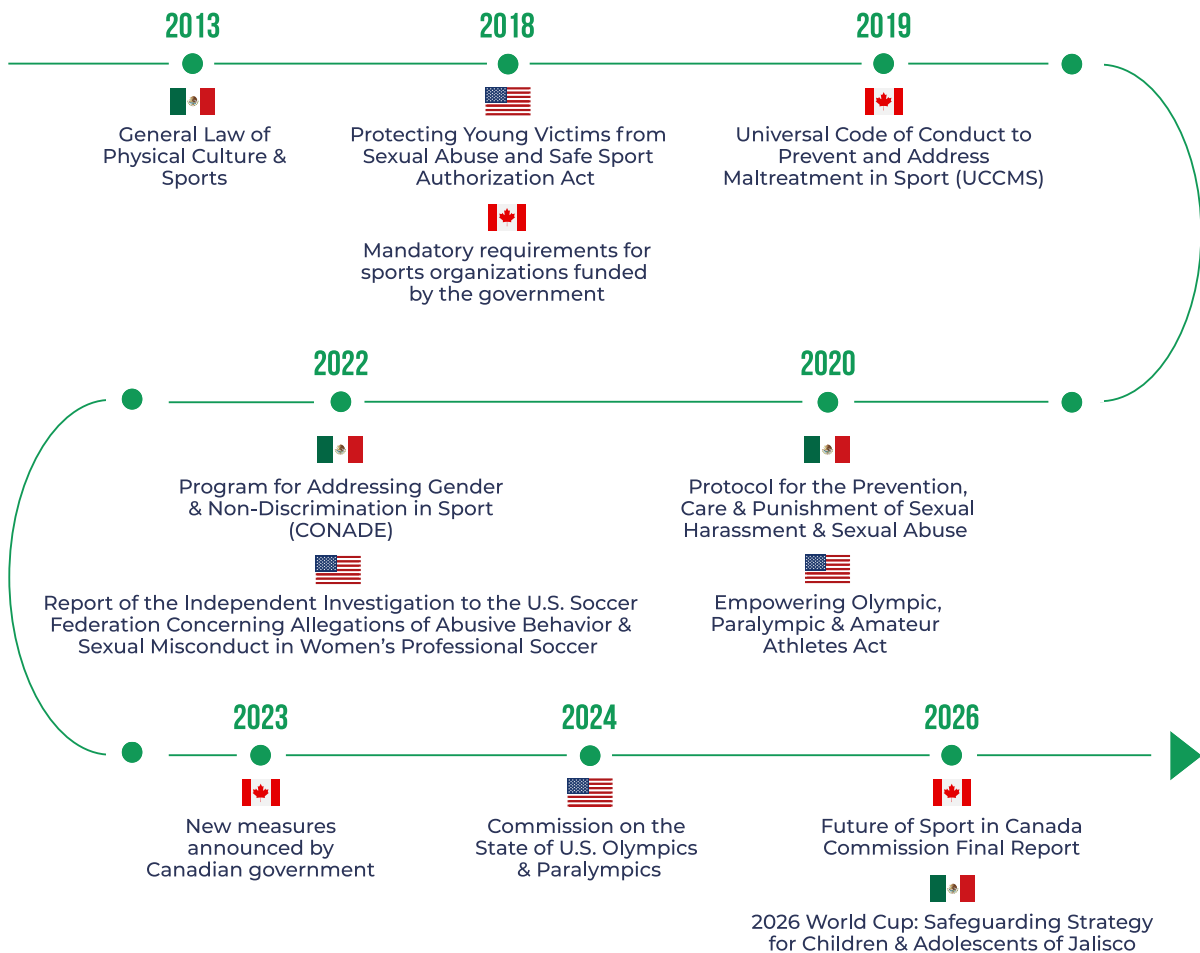
31 UNICEF (2026). [Child Safeguarding Toolkit for Business](#).

32 [IOC Safeguarding Toolkit](#); [IOC Consensus Statement](#); [IOC Games-Time Framework](#).



4 | TIMELINE OF KEY SAFEGUARDING REFORMS IN NORTH AMERICAN SPORT

This chart represents key milestones in North America. For additional key dates and details see Appendix A.



5

SUMMARY OF RELEVANT FEDERAL LAWS AND WHAT THEY MEAN FOR SPORT ORGANIZATIONS IN CANADA, MEXICO, AND THE U.S.

The below table provides a summary of laws related to safeguarding in sport in Canada, Mexico, and the United States.³³

BACKGROUND CHECKS ^{34 35}	
CANADA	<p>Any person or organization responsible for the well-being of a child or vulnerable person may request that a police check (known as a vulnerable sector check) be conducted for a person who applies for a paid or volunteer position if: (i) the position is one of trust or authority; and (ii) the applicant provides written consent for the check.³⁶</p> <p>There is no general legislative requirement for coaches (and other organization personnel) to complete background checks or screening at the federal level. However, certain sports organizations falling under the purview of the federal government, and who rely on the federal government for funding, must produce a police record check for coaches in order to receive federal funding. These organizations must also ensure that coaches receive certain coaching and training certifications.³⁷</p> <p>The federal government supports, through Sport Canada, a National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP), which provides training and screening for prospective sports coaches in all jurisdictions in Canada.</p>
MEXICO	No background checks are required.
USA ³⁸	U.S. law creates a mechanism for qualified entities including those providing recreation to children to conduct background checks on current or prospective employees or volunteers working with children, ³⁹ and also sets out procedural guidelines governing how such background checks must be conducted.

³³ Additional detail is provided in Appendix D - J, with a focus on laws applying to New York, New Jersey, Guadalajara, and Ontario (for Toronto), regions where CSHR's Generation 2026 initiative has been focused. Further information on digital safety is included in Appendix K.

³⁴ Background checks alone do not meet safe recruitment standards nor qualify as primary prevention.

³⁵ Some states and cities in the U.S. have implemented fair hiring policies and provide guidance on the use of background checks, detailed [here](#).

³⁶ *Criminal Records Act*, RSC 1985, c C-47, s 6.3.

³⁷ Canada. Preliminary Report – Future of Sport in Canada Commission: Chapter 14 - Prevention strategies: education, training and background screen, see pinpoint [here](#).

³⁸ While this table refers to federal law in the U.S., note that each state has different laws around background checks, mandatory reporting, and other topics that impact safeguarding.

³⁹ 34 U.S.C. §§ 40102, 40104.

MANDATORY REPORTING OBLIGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

CANADA	<p>At the federal level, federally funded sports organizations are subject to the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS), which provides for a duty to report concerns of inappropriate conduct in sport.</p> <p>There is no federal legislative requirement to report suspected or known child abuse, nor is there a statutory requirement for federally-funded sports organizations to maintain or publish public registries.⁴⁰ However, Sport Integrity Canada maintains a searchable public database of participants whose eligibility to participate in sport has been restricted in some way, along with a summary of the applicable violation and restrictions. The registry only covers individuals subject to certain federal government programs. The CSSP public registry also includes decisions from National Sport Organizations (NSOs) who have voluntarily reported decisions involving permanent ineligibility sanctions.</p>
MEXICO	<p>In terms of article 222 of the National Code of Criminal Procedure (<i>Código Nacional de Procedimientos Penales</i>; “CNPP”)⁴¹, which is applicable to the entirety of Mexico, any person in Mexico has a duty to report (<i>denunciar</i>) that may constitute a criminal offense before the Public Prosecutor’s Office (<i>Ministerio Público</i>) or, in urgent cases, before any police officer.</p>
USA	<p>The Safe Sport Act requires covered individuals (including adults authorized by NGBs, members of NGBs, or amateur sports organizations that participate in interstate or international amateur athletic competition to interact with minor or amateur athletes at amateur sports organization facilities or sanctioned events) who suspect child abuse to make a report within twenty-four hours.⁴²</p>

PREVENTION EDUCATION & TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

CANADA	<p>There are no legislative requirements specific to education and training for personnel in children’s sports organizations. However, coaches providing services to federally funded sports organizations are required to possess certain NCCP certifications as a condition of funding for the sports organization. It is mandatory for participants within the CSSP to complete a course about the CSSP Rules and maltreatment.</p>
MEXICO	<p>No prevention education or training requirements are applicable to personnel related to sports organizations; however, it is a recommended good practice to ensure compliance with applicable regulations.</p>
USA	<p>The Safe Sport Act requires applicable amateur sports organizations to provide training on child abuse prevention and reporting to adult members who are in regular contact with minor amateur athletes, and, subject to parental consent, to minor members.⁴³ The MAAPP also require annual refresher courses for adults who have regular contact with or authority over minor amateur athletes, and employees and board members of NGBs, local affiliated organizations (LAOs) and the USOPC, and require offering annual training to minor athletes and parents.⁴⁴</p>

40 Canada. Preliminary Report – Future of Sport in Canada Commission: Chapter 17: Public registries of sanctioned individuals, see pinpoint [here](#).

41 [National Code of Criminal Procedure \(Código Nacional de Procedimientos Penales\)](#).

42 34 U.S.C. § 20341.

43 36 U.S.C. § 220530.

44 U.S. Center for SafeSport, [Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies](#) (Jan. 1, 2025).

LIABILITY & ENFORCEMENT

CANADA	<p>Federal criminal law prohibits several offences relative to children that may theoretically arise in the context of organized sports, including sexual assault, sexual exploitation, child luring, making or possessing child sexual abuse material, criminal negligence, and orders to comply with sex offender registration laws.</p> <p>Sport Integrity Canada is mandated to administer and enforce the UCCMS on behalf of federally funded national sport organizations, which includes determining whether a participant has engaged in prohibited behaviour. Sport Integrity Canada can impose sanctions on coaches or other organization personnel, including suspending them or deeming them permanently ineligible to participate. It is the responsibility of the sport organization to ensure sanctions are appropriately carried out. The CSSP public registry is a mechanism to help prevent personnel from continuing to work in new jurisdictions or with different sports organizations.</p> <p>Codes of conduct and other governance frameworks also require or encourage the use of specialized dispute resolution mechanisms and institutions, such as the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada.⁴⁵</p>
MEXICO	<p>Enforceability of Mexican regulations applicable to sports organizations falls under the jurisdiction of several different authorities, including: (i) the National System for the Integral Protection of Children and Adolescents (<i>Secretaría Ejecutiva del Sistema Nacional de Protección de Niñas, Niños y Adolescentes</i>; "SIPINNA"⁴⁶), a branch of the Ministry of the Interior (<i>Secretaría de Gobernación</i>); and (ii) the Federal Courts.</p>
USA	<p>The Safe Sport Act immunizes covered individuals from liability for "good faith" reports.⁴⁷ However, U.S. federal law creates certain private rights of action that may be used to bring claims against organizations. This includes a private right of action for victims of certain crimes of child sexual exploitation or abuse to sue for personal injury, with no limitations period,⁴⁸ and a private right of action for victims of covered trafficking offenses to sue perpetrators or knowing beneficiaries within ten years of the accrual of the cause of action or the victim's eighteenth birthday.⁴⁹</p> <p>Under the Safe Sport Act, organizations subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Center for SafeSport may be subject to corrective measures for noncompliance with certain of the Center for SafeSport's policies and procedures.⁵⁰</p>

45 See, for example Saadi v. Gymnastics Canada, 2024 CASDRC 34, in which the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada upheld a decision of a disciplinary panel of Gymnastics Canada to place a lifetime ban on the appellant from various coaching activities involving athletes as a result of her maltreatment and abuse of athletes (including minors) during her tenure as a coach

46 <https://www.gob.mx/sipinna>.

47 34 U.S.C. § 20341(g).

48 18 U.S.C. § 2255.

49 18 U.S.C. § 1595.

50 U.S.C. 220541(h)(2).

RISK MITIGATION

<p>CANADA</p>	<p>Federally funded sports organizations are required to comply with certain policies and practices mandated by the federal government, including the UCCMS.</p> <p>Private organizations should mirror the federal principles to the extent possible, without creating undue hurdles, considering the size and funding of the organization. This includes requiring coaches and other personnel to complete certifications and education consistent with the NCCP.</p> <p>At minimum, sports organizations should take steps to ensure that coaches and other personnel who will work directly with children (whether in an employment or volunteer capacity) are appropriately screened prior to engagement. Engagements should be conditional on the completion of regular criminal background checks and screening to the extent permitted by applicable employment standards and human rights legislation.</p> <p>Private sports organizations should also consult publicly available registries to determine whether candidates are sanctioned/monitored in light of prior sports engagements (including those maintained by federal organizations, Sport Integrity Canada, and large private federal sports organizations).</p>
<p>MEXICO</p>	<p>Although no specific risk mitigation strategies are outlined in the applicable regulation, the following actions are recommended: (i) developing and implementing a code of ethics, and (ii) implementing a hotline for workplace abuse and/or other violations to applicable regulation.</p>
<p>USA</p>	<p>In light of the U.S. federal legal framework, youth sports organizations should (1) conduct background checks within the confines of applicable laws, (2) establish reporting requirements and procedures to respond adequately to reports, and (3) conduct adequate training on identification of and response to child abuse. Organizations can also take steps to decrease their risk, such as by limiting adult participants' one-on-one interactions with child athletes, and considering purchasing insurance.</p>

IMPLEMENTATION / APPLICABILITY OF LAWS

<p>CANADA</p>	<p>The federal government has exclusive jurisdiction over the criminal law and thus handles all criminal matters (this includes setting precedent for future treatment of criminal cases). However, civil actions on the basis of tort law, which fall within provincial jurisdiction (including, for example, battery/sexual assault and the mental suffering of children), remain viable alternatives to criminal prosecution. The burden of proof in a civil action is materially lower than a criminal case.</p> <p>There are certain limitation periods under the criminal law framework. Notably, there is no limitation period on criminal claims involving sexual assault or sexual abuse in Canada.</p>
<p>MEXICO</p>	<p>Mexican regulation is applicable to all entities and persons located in Mexican territory. Implementation of such laws are in charge of judges, as well as federal administrative authorities, in case of any non-compliance or a civil, criminal or administrative complaint.</p>
<p>USA</p>	<p>The federal laws discussed above generally define the categories of entities and individuals to which they apply. Both U.S. federal courts and state courts have jurisdiction over actions arising under U.S. federal law.</p> <p>The U.S. Center for SafeSport has jurisdiction to investigate and resolve allegations of sexual misconduct and child abuse involving participants within the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement.</p>



6 | SANCTIONING & ACCOUNTABILITY

Individuals in positions of authority or other forms of influence such as coaches who have previously perpetrated abuse against young people involved in sport continue to benefit from a lack of standardized screening procedures. Such individuals have been permitted to move from one team to the next, often without any proper accountability.⁵¹ This happens partially due to an over-reliance on criminal background checks, which carries its own limitations. Criminal background checks only catch abuse in cases where someone has been convicted of a crime – which is a very high bar and is not a complete list of people who have been found to have caused harm. It can provide a false sense of security to solely rely on background checks. Additional screening is recommended.⁵²

“ Football should be a gateway to opportunity, not exploitation. Protecting young athletes means reshaping the sport into a system that values human dignity over profit. Talent should open doors, not place children in danger.”⁵³

Micah, Toronto

51 Yates, S. (2022). [Report of the Independent Investigation to the U.S. Soccer Federation Concerning Allegations of Abusive Behavior and Sexual Misconduct in Women's Professional Soccer](#).

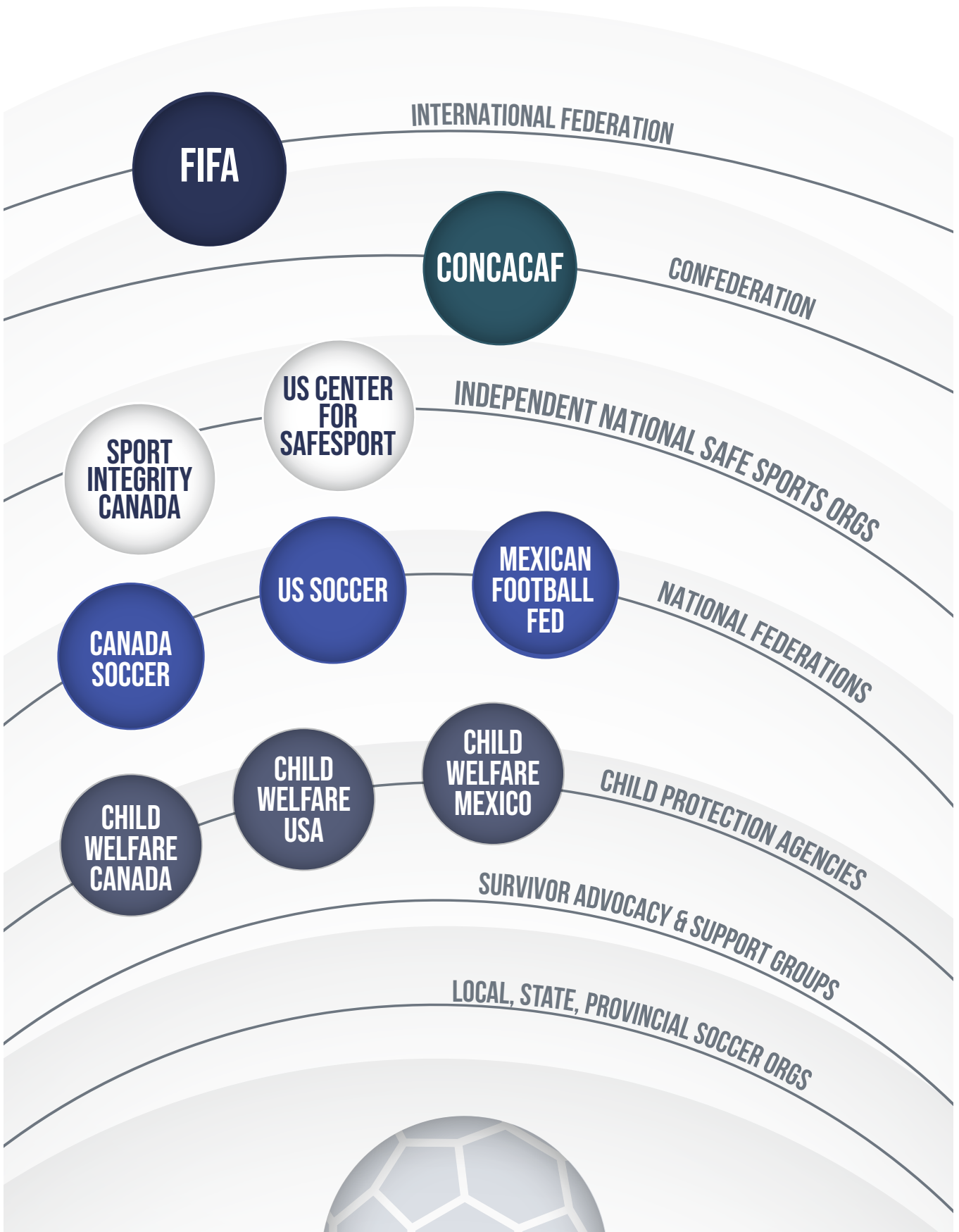
52 McKeen A,* Ingram M,* Alexander S, Grimes J, Kennedy KS, Lancaster C, Le VD, Miedema SS, & Ray C. (2025). Preventing and Responding to Child Sexual Abuse in Youth-Serving Organizations.

53 Youth Media Forward Reporter Micah (2026). [Sold a Dream](#).

Both the United States and Canada have public disciplinary databases or registries that publish the names of adults found responsible for committing abuse or misconduct through the sports disciplinary processes of the U.S. Center for SafeSport and Sport Integrity Canada. Awareness of these registries is not yet mainstream. And, while progress has been made within some sports and individual countries, not all within sport are covered by these systems, and not all sport federations mandate reporting of child abuse. Additionally, across all sports globally, sanctioning reciprocity is not universal. In football/soccer specifically, however, [FIFA's Disciplinary Code](#) outlines special procedures to extend sanctions to have worldwide effect. Additional information is included in [FIFA's 2026 Safeguarding Policy](#): "If the infringement is serious, in particular but not limited to discrimination, manipulation of football matches and competitions, misconduct against match officials, or forgery and falsification, as well as sexual abuse or harassment, the member associations, confederations, and other organising sports bodies shall request that the Disciplinary Committee extend the sanctions they have imposed so as to have worldwide effect (worldwide extension)."

SPORT SPECIFIC OVERLAP

Within the soccer ecosystem, different groups have distinct responsibilities related to safeguarding. These responsibilities vary depending on different factors including: the organization responsible for sanctioning the event, the location, the people involved, and other key factors. Depending on these factors it is possible more than one organization could be responsible simultaneously for responding to reports of abuse. The interrelation between local, state/provincial, and national laws, rules, regulations, and enforcement mechanisms plays an important role in how safeguarding is approached. The graphic below highlights the different organizations involved in the soccer ecosystem with responsibilities for safeguarding, with links to reporting and more information on their jurisdiction. Appendix C highlights the Fan + Communities Guide with links and resources for reporting child abuse, concerns during the World Cup, and accessing support resources for safeguarding issues in Canada, Mexico, the U.S., and across the 16 host cities.





7 | SUMMARY OF KEY LEGAL STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN CANADA, MEXICO, AND THE U.S.

KEY STRENGTHS	
CANADA	Federal sport organizations and commissions are working to build necessary training and certification infrastructure to respond to safety concerns in sport. This infrastructure includes the development of dispute resolution tribunals, public registries and a widely applicable sports code of conduct.
MEXICO	<p>In Mexico, the legislation protecting children's human rights is exceptionally protective, to the extent that it could be considered special legislation.</p> <p>First, special protection for children is established in a constitutional article, which means that the mechanisms available to protect their rights include the possibility of resorting to constitutional review mechanisms.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Supreme Court of Justice created a special legal concept that serves as an interpretive, procedural, and treatment rule applicable to any proceeding and at the time of issuing a decision on the merits, known as the best interests of the child (<i>interés superior del menor</i>). It has been held that this principle "implies that the development of the child and the full exercise of their rights must be considered as guiding criteria for the drafting of laws and their application in all matters relating to the child's life."</p>
USA	The U.S. federal legal framework (1) enables covered sports organizations to vet potential employees and volunteers; (2) establishes reporting requirements for covered adults, requires applicable amateur sports organizations to comply with reporting requirements, and designates an agency to investigate and resolve reports within its jurisdiction; (3) requires regular training for adults working with minor athletes; and (4) enables victims of certain child sexual exploitation or abuse to sue for personal injury, with no limitations period.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

CANADA	Notwithstanding growing research and attention on sports in Canada, organizations are struggling to consistently apply sanctions across organizations. Much of the work done so far is only applicable to federally funded sports organizations. There is an opportunity to prescribe coaching and screening requirements where appropriate for all sports organizations and build robust legal frameworks and public registries to support child athletes not captured by a specific government's purview.
MEXICO	Federal enforcement of applicable law is sparse and generally difficult to obtain. The Human Rights National Commission is a state autonomous institution in Mexico that issues non-binding resolutions which can be difficult to implement (this also applies to the local Human Rights Commissions in each state of the country), and federal labor courts are short-staffed, which may result in delays of such enforcement action. In connection therewith, enforcement actions related to labor matters are relatively easier to obtain, but enforcement actions related to human rights are very difficult to obtain.
USA	U.S. federal law can be strengthened by (1) considering consequences for failure to report where federal law so requires; and (2) expanding training requirements to all adults involved in youth-serving organizations. ⁵⁴

⁵⁴ While this section focuses on federal law opportunities, there are also key opportunities to improve laws and protections state by state in the U.S.



8 | RECOMMENDATIONS

While many safeguarding related reforms have been implemented in North America over the last ten years, seven recommendations are highlighted below for stakeholders in MSEs (e.g. host city governments, host city committees, event owners, governing bodies) to address the overarching challenges that remain. These recommendations are intended to inform future events beyond the FIFA World Cup 2026 given the time and resources required to implement them effectively.

- 1 Embed child voice and participation.
- 2 Mandate independent, compensated survivor consultation and leadership with decision-making authority and oversight.
- 3 Invest in grassroots capacity to implement safeguarding standards.
- 4 Require a robust safeguarding framework for mega-sporting event hosting.
- 5 Harmonize safeguarding standards and enforcement across jurisdictions to reflect best practices.
- 6 Integrate safeguarding within security and law enforcement practices.
- 7 Strengthen information-sharing and cross-jurisdictional coordination.

These recommendations to enhance safeguarding in sport are discussed in more detail here.

1. EMBED CHILD VOICE AND PARTICIPATION.

Children's voices and participation should be integrated throughout the MSE lifecycle. For example, when drafting a safeguarding policy, developing a training, or conducting a risk assessment, engage with youth and ask for their input. Youth may identify risks that adults haven't considered and can offer creative solutions that support their peers. More information on meaningful youth participation is available in the [Child Rights and Sports Alliance Playbook](#).

2. MANDATE INDEPENDENT, COMPENSATED SURVIVOR CONSULTATION AND LEADERSHIP WITH DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY AND OVERSIGHT.

Sport governing bodies, mega-sporting event organizers, and safe sport entities should partner with external advocacy organizations with expertise in responding to abuse to provide trauma-informed training and provide independent advocacy and support. This must go beyond tokenistic inclusion, and meaningful representation should be given to affected people to effectively embed their voices in policy design and system change. Sustained and ring-fenced funding should be allocated to independent survivor advocacy organizations addressing athlete survivors, and those supporting affected groups, to provide credible and meaningful contributions to the field.

3. INVEST IN GRASSROOT CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS.

Event organizers should encourage the creation of a legacy fund from profits gained to support additional safeguarding initiatives that will be required in the future given the World Cup will inspire increased registration in soccer programs.

Sport organizations, particularly grassroots, volunteer-run programs, often lack resources to prioritize safeguarding. They should be incentivized (for example through funding opportunities) to invest in their own safeguarding programs, and encouraged to partner with local experts in child sexual abuse and exploitation prevention.⁵⁵

4. REQUIRE A ROBUST SAFEGUARDING FRAMEWORK FOR MEGA-SPORTING EVENT HOSTING.

Safeguarding at venues and large sporting events in North America is generally not regulated. After host countries or host cities submit bids guaranteeing commitments,⁵⁶ often no centralized accountability system is in place to follow-through on implementation promises.⁵⁷ And while safeguarding standards and best practices are available,⁵⁸ they are often not fully integrated or aligned with existing safeguarding frameworks in the host countries. It is important that event organizers set standards in accordance with best practices, and that where standards vary, the higher safeguarding standard prevails.

5. HARMONIZE SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS AND ENFORCEMENT ACROSS JURISDICTIONS TO REFLECT BEST PRACTICES.

Safeguarding requirements that currently exist in some jurisdictions are only applicable to some sport organizations. There is an opportunity to expand training requirements to all adults in youth-serving organizations, prescribe coaching and screening requirements⁵⁹

55 For example, the Commission on the State of U.S. Olympics and Paralympics recommended the creation of a new entity, the Office of Sports and Fitness under the Department of Health and Human Services, to “establish a competitive-grant program to upgrade, repair, and expand public sports facilities as well as launch new leagues and clinics in under-served communities. In order to be eligible for funding, grantees should be required to adopt leading practices, such as positive youth-development programming, safety standards, and excellence in coaching education.” From *Passing the Torch: Modernizing Olympic, Paralympic, & Grassroots Sports in America* (2024). The Final Report of the Commission on the State of U.S. Olympics and Paralympics. Recommendation #9: Congress, state governments, USOPC, the NCAA, and other stakeholders should take concrete steps to improve equitable access to movement sports. [Commission on the State of U.S. Olympics and Paralympics](#).

56 [United 2026 human rights bid](#), pages 57-58 Child Safeguarding Commitments for hosting FWC26.

57 For example, in the U.S. where there is no Minister of Sport, which is common in many other countries, no central coordination or accountability rests with any one organization. And for countries that do have Ministers of Sport, they don’t always have oversight authority to hold institutions accountable for events held in their country.

58 The 2025 CSHR and University of Miami Human Rights Law Clinic report, [Keeping the Game Safe](#), recommends the following: Mandatory Safeguarding Training, Establishing Safeguarding Officers, Secure and Child-Centered Venue Design, Enhanced Screening and Accountabilities, Centralized Reporting and Response Protocols, Monitoring, Evaluating & Data-Driven Oversight, Community Engagement, and Awareness Campaigns.

59 In addition to criminal background checks, sport registries of adults who have committed misconduct should be checked, like the ones in [Canada](#) and the [U.S.](#)

where appropriate,⁶⁰ building robust child protection legal frameworks to support child athletes not captured by a specific government's purview.

Safeguarding standards should be grounded in a wider human rights framework, whether a young person attends a grassroots training session, a professional league match, or a friendly match under a national federation. This includes whistleblower protections across the sport ecosystem centering support for athletes, rather than stand alone organizational policies that fail to provide adequate protections.

Safeguarding standards need to raise the bar beyond compliance - not only focusing on one-time mandatory training and/or only criminal background checks, but incorporating athlete mental health and well-being, and including risk assessments, trauma informed and person-centered reporting and response mechanisms, consistent with the [International Safeguards for Children in Sport](#).

6. INTEGRATE SAFEGUARDING WITHIN SECURITY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT PRACTICES.

All aspects of sport venues, from stadia to fan zones, transport hubs, etc. have emerged as important, but at times overlooked aspects of the overall safeguarding plan. Access to stadiums, training grounds, and community areas during a MSE requires contextualized management of safeguarding with adequate (and adapted) policies and procedures, appointment of designated safeguarding leads for the MSE, development of bespoke training, as well as comprehensive and accessible reporting and responding mechanisms. This should either complement or add to existing mechanisms, and integrate seamlessly with local legislation and available resources, creating strong incentives for cross-sector and cross-jurisdictional multi-agency collaboration. This multi-agency collaboration needs to meaningfully include confidential, culturally relevant, and 24-hour resources for survivors.

Existing safety nets within North America such as child advocacy centers, rape crisis centers, human trafficking coalitions, and child protection services should be engaged as safeguarding partners. This collaboration should not rely solely on law enforcement, but work with it as necessary, while recognizing that many safeguarding concerns will not reach the criminal threshold.

7. STRENGTHEN INFORMATION-SHARING AND CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL COORDINATION.

Information regarding individuals sanctioned for abuse in sport is often siloed with information-sharing not reaching across institutions or borders. Even if the information is available, such as in public databases, there is not a shared practice to promote information sharing. An international framework similar to information sharing amongst child protection practitioners is needed, as called upon by Safe Sport International in 2024, to “guide sports organizations in making decisions about representation by individuals with criminal, civil or disciplinary records related to the abuse of others.”⁶¹

⁶⁰ This was also recommended in the Future of Sport in Canada Commission Final Report.

⁶¹ Safe Sport International (2024). [Safeguarding in sport: Towards an international framework for representation by individuals with criminal, civil or disciplinary records related to the abuse of others](#).



9 | CONCLUSION

Organizers have a responsibility to not only ensure the safety of youth attending MSEs, but also to shape a positive legacy these events will leave for the future. The FIFA World Cup aims to promote global football development, unite nations through sport, and foster peace. It serves as a major commercial platform to inspire future players, showcase elite competition, and drive positive social, economic, and environmental legacies in host countries. Many youth will be inspired to play in organized clubs as a result of what they experience during the World Cup.

Taken together, the findings and analysis presented in this report suggest that the FIFA World Cup 2026 represents a critical opportunity to reposition safeguarding in North America from a peripheral compliance obligation to a core dimension of ethical sport governance. Coordinated governance, consistent standards, coherent frameworks, empowered professionals, human rights integration, youth participation, and legacy-oriented design offer a pathway not only to safer events in 2026, but to a more just, accountable, and protective sport system in the long term.



10 | APPENDIX

APPENDIX A - TIMELINE OF KEY SAFEGUARDING REFORMS IN NORTH AMERICAN SPORT

This section provides an overview of safeguarding actions, consultations, research, and specific reforms undertaken in recent years. A number of relevant reports that address safeguarding related concerns have been issued since 2024. These include the [Commission on the State of U.S. Olympics and Paralympics \(2024\)](#); [Keeping the Game Safe \(2025\)](#);⁶² and the [Future of Sport in Canada Commission Final Report \(March 2026\)](#). The below timeline provides an overview specific to Canada, Mexico, and the U.S.

Canada⁶³

- **2018** - the Canadian Minister of Science and Sport, Kirsty Duncan,⁶⁴ announced mandatory requirements for sports organizations funded by the government to have a safeguarding policy, a mandatory reporting system, access to independent third party grievance mechanism and training on abuse, harassment and discrimination grievance
- **2019** - [Red Deer Declaration for the Prevention of Harassment, Abuse, and Discrimination in Sport](#) is endorsed by all federal-provincial/territorial Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation ministers
- **2019** - Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC) launches Canadian Sport Helpline and abuse investigations pilots

⁶² Following this report the Centre for Sport and Human Rights and the University of Miami School of Law Human Rights Clinic convened a bilateral meeting with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and other organizations to introduce the importance of a regional approach to safeguarding and human rights in sport.

⁶³ Government of Canada (2022). [Chronology of Sport Canada activities to enhance safety in sport since 2018](#).

⁶⁴ Duncan served as Minister of Science (2015–2018) and Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities (2018–2019).

- **2019** - Sport Canada commissioned a study by AthletesCAN/University of Toronto on the Prevalence of Maltreatment Among Current and Former National Team Athletes
- **Coaching Association of Canada** carries out a cross-country consultation on safe sport
- **2019** - [Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport \(UCCMS\)](#) development led by Sport Integrity Canada, formerly known as the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport is approved
- **2020** - An open call for applications for serving as the independent safe sport mechanism is launched
- **2021** - Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC) is selected to host the independent safe sport mechanism
- **2022** - [Canadian gymnasts request independent investigation](#) of systematic abuse across all levels of the sport and left unaddressed
- **2022** - [\\$16 million investment over three years proposed to support the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner \(OSIC\)](#), with initial services launched in June 2022
- **2023** - [Educators call for federal inquiry into 'widespread' abuse in Canadian sports](#)
- **2023** - Canada's Minister of Sport Carla Qualtrough announces new measures which included [moving OSIC and Canada's safe sport program out of the SDRCC](#) (until summer 2025) and establishing the [Future of Sport in Canada Commission](#)
- **2024** - [Government of Canada announces](#) that the CCES, now named [Sport Integrity Canada](#) is responsible for administering the UCCMS as of April 1, 2025
- **2024** - ["On September 10, 2024, the Future of Sport in Canada Commission launches a public online submission portal to gather input from athletes, parents, coaches, officials, administrators, academics, victims and survivors of maltreatment in sport and others to identify ways to improve safe sport and the sport system in Canada."](#)
- **2025** - final Canadian Safe Sport Program (CSSP) rules published in January 2025 went into effect for national-level participants of all federally funded, national-level sport organizations (additional historical timeline available [here](#))
- **OSIC** ceases administration of the UCCMS effective July 31, 2025
- **On August 28, 2025**, the Future of Sport in Canada Commission published its [Preliminary Report](#).
 - ▷ It sets out 71 preliminary recommendations aimed at enhancing safe sport and improving the sport system in Canada.
 - ▷ The Preliminary Report, along with the feedback gathered during the [National Summit on the Future of Sport](#), will help to inform the findings and recommendations in the Commission's Final Report.
- **March 24, 2026** - [Future of Sport in Canada Commission Final Report](#) identifies the Canadian sport system as fragmented and underfunded, characterised by power imbalances and a culture of silence as enablers of harm. Maltreatment is described as widespread, systemic, and ongoing. The report identifies the following key calls to action (selected, safeguarding-relevant):
 - ▷ Pan-Canadian Safe Sport Authority must cover all levels of sport (not just federally funded);
 - ▷ Development of Pan-Canadian Safe Sport Education program;
 - ▷ Mandatory universal background screening;
 - ▷ Appointment of safeguarding officers independent from performance structures;
 - ▷ Creation of a publicly available Pan-Canadian Sanctioned Individuals Registry;
 - ▷ Creation of a new Crown Corporation for national sport governance oversight.

Mexico

Currently, Mexico does not have a specific federal protocol dedicated exclusively to safeguarding children and adolescents in sport. However, the national child protection frameworks listed below establish clear protection standards, which are applicable across all sectors, including sport.

Thus, the legal framework for preventing, addressing, and responding to all types of violence against children and adolescents within the sports sector is primarily established through two laws, namely:

2013 - The General Law of Physical Culture and Sports: Along with current general guidelines for the prevention and handling of violence, which are applicable to sports contexts involving children and adolescents.

2014 - The General Law on the Rights of Children and Adolescents: Establishes the Protection Attorney's Offices as well as the National System for the Comprehensive Protection of Children and Adolescents (SIPINNA).

Both laws establish principles and obligations that must be interpreted in accordance with the principle of the best interests of the child as established in the Constitution. At the operational level, this harmonization is reflected in the design and implementation of public policies, sports programs, and the regulations of federations, clubs, and authorities, all of which should incorporate these principles.

The General Law of Physical Culture and Sports empowers the National Commission for Physical Culture and Sports (CONADE) to design, implement, and coordinate targeted actions to prevent, address, and eradicate violence in sports spaces. They granted the Commission the authority to issue guidelines and establish criteria for developing and applying prevention and response protocols. These changes provide a formal framework for integrating specific measures focused on the protection of children and adolescents in the sporting context. Institutional responsibilities for safeguarding in sport in Mexico are further outlined in chart form in Appendix G.

A. SPECIFIC LAWS FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

- **2014** - [General Law on the Rights of Children and Adolescents](#) is published creating the Protection Attorney's Offices for Children and Adolescents (at federal, state, and municipal levels) responsible for the restitution of rights, and SIPINNA, as an inter-institutional coordination body to design, articulate, and evaluate public policies.
- **2021** - [National Protocol for Inter-institutional Coordination for the Protection of Child and Adolescent Victims of Violence](#) (SIPINNA).
- **2025** - [Case Management Model for the Restriction or Violation of the Rights of Children and Adolescents](#).
- **2026** - [General Law on the Rights of Children and Adolescents](#) (latest reforms).

B. PROTECTION LAWS IN THE FIELD OF SPORTS

- **2013** - [General Law of Physical Culture and Sports](#) (Initial publication).
- **2020** - [Protocol for the Prevention, Care, and Punishment of Sexual Harassment and Sexual Abuse](#): Published by the Government of Mexico on the official CONADE website. It applies to the context of sports in Mexico, specifically to individuals linked to public sports administration.
- **2022** - [Program for Addressing Gender and Non-Discrimination in Sport \(CONADE\)](#): aligns with The National Human Rights Program (PNDH) 2020–2024 and the [National Program for Equality between Women and Men \(PROIGUALDAD\) 2020–2024](#) integrating a general human rights–based and non-discriminatory approach into sport policy, as well as other special national programs⁶⁵ established to address and promote the rights of groups in vulnerable situations.
- **2025** - [General Law of Physical Culture and Sports](#): The General Law defines violence in sport and requires prevention protocols, with CONADE issuing national guidelines for prevention and response protocols, which must be adopted by sports organizations within the National Sports System. Its Special Commission Against Violence plays a key role in coordinating actions to prevent violence through sport and supporting inter-institutional cooperation.
- **2026** - [2026 World Cup: Safeguarding Strategy for Children and Adolescents of Jalisco](#):⁶⁶ Protocol for the detection, care, and referral of cases involving children and adolescents.

United States of America (USA)

Several key reports and laws over the last decade have shaped safe sport reforms in the United States. Congressional hearings have been held in various committees resulting in new federal laws listed below. These steps were taken in significant part due to the courageous advocacy of survivors of abuse who called on Congress and sport institutions to create safer environments for all athletes and everyone in sport.

- **2014** - Gundersen National Child Protection Training Center assessment of USA Swimming's Safe Sport Protocol is published: [When the Athlete is a Child: An Assessment of USA Swimming's Safe Sport Program](#).
- **2018** - Congress passes [Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act](#) (Safe Sport Act) in response to numerous hearings and investigations into systemic failure to protect athletes, and following the courageous testimony of athlete survivors of abuse perpetrated by a now-imprisoned former sports doctor.⁶⁷ Key provisions of this law included:

65 From the [National Development Plan 2025–2030](#), different programs are developed including [The National Human Rights Program \(PNDH\) 2020–2024](#), and the [National Program to Prevent and Eliminate Discrimination \(PRONAIND\) 2021–2024](#), currently under update; [the National Program for the Development and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities \(PNDIPD\) 2014–2018](#) (the most recent national program published, still used as a normative reference in the absence of an official update); and [the Special Program for Indigenous and Afro-Mexican Peoples 2020–2024](#). These programs are not directly implemented within the National Sports System (SINADE). However, their principles are mandatory for the Federal Public Administration and must be incorporated by CONADE and SINADE stakeholders.

66 UNICEF México, SIPINNA, Sistema DIF Jalisco - Procuraduría de protección de niñas, niños y adolescentes (2026). [Protocolo de detección, atención y derivación de casos de desprotección de niñas, niños y adolescentes](#).

67 2018. [Committee Opens Investigation into Sexual Abuse within USA Gymnastics](#), U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Oversight and Government Reform; See "Our Team" on the founding story of [The Assist](#).

- ▷ Strengthening reporting requirements for abuse and increasing consistency with respect to the obligations to report for certain types of organizations across the U.S.⁶⁸
- ▷ Designating the [U.S. Center for SafeSport](#) with the authority to investigate and resolve reports of abuse involving individuals affiliated with the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) and Olympic and Paralympic sport NGBs, which collectively serve approximately 11 million participants.
- ▷ Authorizing Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP) and training to be developed and mandated for the USOPC and NGBs to follow.
- ▷ Requiring the development and enforcement of the [SafeSport Code](#) for those within the USOPC and NGBs to follow.
- **2020** - Congress passes the [Empowering Olympic, Paralympic and Amateur Athletes Act](#), which includes the creation of a Commission on the State of U.S. Olympics and Paralympics and the following provisions:
 - ▷ Prohibiting retaliation against athletes who report abuse
 - ▷ Requiring that the USOPC provide \$20 million in annual funding to the U.S. Center for SafeSport, with at least 50% of those funds allocated to investigating abuse
 - ▷ Establishing mechanisms for Congress to dissolve the USOPC board and decertify NGBs who fail to protect athletes
 - ▷ Increased athlete representation on USOPC and NGB boards
 - ▷ Required public reporting of annual audits of NGBs and the USOPC
 - ▷ Required public availability of the centralized disciplinary database of adults sanctioned by the U.S. Center for SafeSport
 - ▷ Additional audits and transparency measures with greater oversight by Congress and the Office of the Inspector General
- **2022** - [Report of the Independent Investigation to the U.S. Soccer Federation Concerning Allegations of Abusive Behavior and Sexual Misconduct in Women's Professional Soccer](#) released
- **2024** - [Commission on the State of U.S. Olympics and Paralympics issues final report](#). Recommendations related to safeguarding in the U.S. included:
 - ▷ Recommendation #2:
Congress should make SafeSport fully independent so it can earn athletes' trust and be held more accountable to the movement and the public.
 - ▷ Recommendation #3:
Congress should reform certain SafeSport practices and reimagine the way SafeSport operates at the youth and grassroots level.
 - ▷ Recommendation #7:
Congress should enhance public oversight of the movement to ensure transparency, accountability, and due process at all levels.
 - ▷ Recommendation #9:
Congress, state governments, USOPC, and other stakeholders should take concrete steps to improve equitable access to movement sports.
 - ▷ Recommendation #10:
USOPC should adopt a new model for organizing U.S. bids to host the Olympic and Paralympic games.

⁶⁸ While more coaches and sport organizations were covered under this law, it is still limited in that it does not govern all amateur and youth sports within the U.S.; only amateur sports organizations (1) [recognized by the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic sports organizations](#), (2) sanctioned by national governing bodies, or (3) that participate in interstate or international amateur athletic competitions and with membership including adults in regular contact with minor amateur athletes.

APPENDIX B - NATIONAL-LEVEL POLICIES & RESOURCES IN NORTH AMERICA

Prevention Training Resources

Canada

- [Canadian Centre for Child Protection](#)
- [Coaching Association of Canada](#)
- [Sport Integrity Canada](#)

Mexico

- [National Network of Sports Training and Certification Systems \(RENASCCED: Red Nacional de Sistemas de Capacitación y Certificación del Entrenamiento Deportivo\)](#)

U.S.

- [U.S. Center for SafeSport](#)
- [The Athlete Survivors' Assist](#)
- [Stop It Now! and USA Football](#)
- [Futures Without Violence - Coaching Boys into Men](#)

Global

- [Sport and Rights Alliance Athletes Network for Safer Sports](#)
- [FIFA Guardians](#)
- [OLCreate: Safeguarding in Sport | OLCreate](#)

Policies & Resources

Canada

- The [Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport \(UCCMS\)](#) is the core document that sets harmonized rules to be adopted by, but not limited to, sport organizations that receive funding from the Government of Canada to advance a respectful sport culture that delivers quality, inclusive, accessible, welcoming and safe sport experiences.
- The [Canadian Safe Sport Program Rules](#) incorporate the UCCMS, which is enforced by Sport Integrity Canada for federally funded Canadian sport organizations at the national level.
- [Canadian Safe Sport Program Public Registry](#) - Sport Integrity Canada
- [Safe Soccer - Canada Soccer](#)

Mexico

- [General Law of Physical Culture and Sports \(Ley General de Cultura Física y Deporte\)](#) with the latest reform proposal published by the Chamber of Deputies 14-11-2025 (con última reforma propuesta por la Cámara de Diputados publicada DOF 14-11-2025)
- [National Protocol for Inter-institutional Coordination for the Protection of Child and Adolescent Victims of Violence](#) SIPINNA

United States

- [U.S. Center for SafeSport Code](#)
- U.S. Center for SafeSport [Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies \(MAAPP\)](#)
- U.S. Center for SafeSport [Centralized Disciplinary Database](#)
- [US Soccer Federation Safe Soccer Clearance Program](#)

Global

- [FIFA Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [FIFA - Report a Concern](#)
- [FIFA26](#) Report a Concern during Competition
- [YourSide](#) - FIFA Foundation



The [Fan + Communities guide](#) for the World Cup 2026 provides practical resources and hotlines in the three host countries and the sixteen host cities.

- National and city level resources in [USA](#)
- National and city level resources in [Canada](#)
- National and city level resources in [Mexico](#)

The directory of resources has been compiled by CSHR with input from host cities, civil society and other stakeholders. These are the topics covered by the guide:



[Accessibility](#)



[Immigration](#)



[Heat and Climate](#)



[Freedom of Expression](#)



[Gender-Based Violence](#)



[Health](#)



[Public Safety](#)



[Human Trafficking](#)



[Child Safeguarding](#)



[Housing & Homelessness](#)



[Workplace Issues](#)



[Inclusion](#)

⁶⁹ This does not represent an endorsement or validation of the services above. The information provided is for general informational purposes only. All information is provided in good faith, however we make no representation or warranty of any kind, express or implied regarding the accuracy, adequacy, validity, reliability, availability of any of the services and/or organizations mentioned.

APPENDIX D - SUMMARY OF FEDERAL LAWS IN CANADA

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Any person or organization responsible for the well-being of a child or vulnerable person may request that a police check (known as a vulnerable sector check) be conducted for a person who applies for a paid or volunteer position if: (i) the position is one of trust or authority; and (ii) the applicant provides written consent for the check.⁷⁰

There is no general legislative requirement for coaches (and other organization personnel) to complete background checks or screening at the federal level. However, certain sports organizations falling under the purview of the federal government, and who rely on the federal government for funding, must produce a police record check for coaches in order to receive federal funding. These organizations must also ensure that coaches receive certain coaching and training certifications.⁷¹

The federal government supports, through Sport Canada, a National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP), which provides training and screening for prospective sports coaches in all jurisdictions in Canada.

MANDATORY REPORTING OBLIGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

At the federal level, federally funded sports organizations are subject to the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS), which provides for a duty to report concerns of inappropriate conduct in sport.

There is no federal legislative requirement to report suspected or known child abuse, nor is there a statutory requirement for federally-funded sports organizations to maintain or publish public registries.⁷² However, Sport Integrity Canada maintains a searchable public database of participants whose eligibility to participate in sport has been restricted in some way, along with a summary of the applicable violation and restrictions. The registry only covers individuals subject to certain federal government programs.

PREVENTION EDUCATION & TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

There are no legislative requirements specific to education and training for personnel in children's sports organizations. However, coaches providing services to federally funded sports organizations are required to possess certain NCCP certifications as a condition of funding for the sports organization.

LIABILITY & ENFORCEMENT

Federal criminal law prohibits several offences relative to children that may theoretically arise in the context of organized sports, including sexual assault, sexual exploitation, child luring, making or possessing child sexual abuse material, criminal negligence, and orders to comply with sex offender registration laws.

Sport Integrity Canada is mandated to administer and enforce the UCCMS on behalf of federally funded sports organizations, which includes determining whether a participant has engaged in prohibited behaviour. Sport Integrity Canada can impose sanctions on coaches or other organization personnel, including suspending them or deeming them permanently

⁷⁰ *Criminal Records Act*, RSC 1985, c C-47, s 6.3.

⁷¹ Canada. Preliminary Report – Future of Sport in Canada Commission: Chapter 14 - Prevention strategies: education, training and background screen, see pinpoint [here](#).

⁷² Canada. Preliminary Report – Future of Sport in Canada Commission: Chapter 17: Public registries of sanctioned individuals, see pinpoint [here](#).

ineligible to participate. The CSSP public registry is a mechanism to help prevent personnel from continuing to work in new jurisdictions or with different sports organizations. Codes of conduct and other governance frameworks also require or encourage the use of specialized dispute resolution mechanisms and institutions, such as the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada.⁷³

RISK MITIGATION

Federally funded sports organizations are required to comply with certain policies and practices mandated by the federal government, including the UCCMS.

Private organizations should mirror the federal principles to the extent possible, without creating undue hurdles, considering the size and funding of the organization. This includes requiring coaches and other personnel to complete certifications and education consistent with the NCCP.

At minimum, sports organizations should take steps to ensure that coaches and other personnel who will work directly with children (whether in an employment or volunteer capacity) are appropriately screened prior to engagement. Engagements should be conditional on the completion of regular criminal background checks and screening to the extent permitted by applicable employment standards and human rights legislation.

Private sports organizations should also consult publicly available registries to determine whether candidates are sanctioned/monitored in light of prior sports engagements (including those maintained by Sport Integrity Canada, federal organizations and large private federal sports organizations).

IMPLEMENTATION / APPLICABILITY OF LAWS

The federal government has exclusive jurisdiction over the criminal law and thus handles all criminal matters (this includes setting precedent for future treatment of criminal cases). However, civil actions on the basis of tort law, which fall within provincial jurisdiction (including, for example, battery/sexual assault and the mental suffering of children), remain viable alternatives to criminal prosecution. The burden of proof in a civil action is materially lower than a criminal case.

There are certain limitation periods under the criminal law framework. Notably, there is no limitation period on criminal claims involving sexual assault or sexual abuse in Canada.

KEY STRENGTHS SUMMARY

Federal sports organizations and commissions are working to build necessary training and certification infrastructure to respond to safety concerns in sport. This infrastructure includes the development of dispute resolution tribunals, public registries and a widely applicable sports code of conduct.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES SUMMARY

Notwithstanding growing research and attention to sports in Canada, organizations are struggling to consistently apply sanctions across federal organizations. Much of the work done so far is only applicable to federal sports organizations that rely on federal funding. There is an opportunity to prescribe coaching and screening requirements where appropriate for all sports organizations and build robust legal frameworks and public registries to support child athletes not captured by a specific government's purview.

⁷³ See, for example *Saadi v. Gymnastics Canada*, [2024 CASDRC 34](#), in which the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada upheld a decision of a disciplinary panel of Gymnastics Canada to place a lifetime ban on the appellant from various coaching activities involving athletes as a result of her maltreatment and abuse of athletes (including minors) during her tenure as a coach.

APPENDIX E - SUMMARY OF LAWS IN ONTARIO

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Persons and organizations may request police checks and vulnerable sector checks from provincial and municipal law enforcement.

Child protection and welfare laws require organizations to conduct legal background checks when providing certain services to children, although there is no direct application to sports organizations.

In Ontario, certain not-for-profit sports organizations recognized by the province are required to maintain risk-based screening policies for volunteers due to the position of trust inherent in the provision of sport activities. These organizations must also certify coaches in accordance with certain approved programs, including the federally developed National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP).

MANDATORY REPORTING OBLIGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

Any person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child under the age of 15 may need protection (including instances and risks of emotional or physical harm and sexual abuse or exploitation) must make an immediate report to the applicable children's aid society. The obligation to report extends to individuals with professional or official duties with respect to children, including youth and recreation workers (not volunteers).⁷⁴

PREVENTION EDUCATION & TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

While not legally mandated, many governing bodies and individual sports clubs adopt specific training requirements for coaches and other people working in sporting facilities involving children. Provincially recognized not-for-profit sports organizations are required to have certain policies in place that apply to participants in the organization, including a code of conduct (applicable to participants and parents), policies in respect of harassment, inclusion, screening, social media, accessibility, discipline and dispute resolution and concussion management.

Certain municipalities in Ontario have developed their own policies and procedures applicable to city-run or city-permitted recreation programs and facilities. Toronto, the largest city in Ontario, has established such policies and procedures in the provision of recreation services. For example, the City of Toronto mandates that all people employed by the municipality whose job entails working with children must provide the results of a vulnerable sector check.⁷⁵ The city has also established specific training procedures and rules to protect children, such as mandated supervisor to children ratios.⁷⁶

LIABILITY & ENFORCEMENT

Local law enforcement will administer record checks and vulnerable sector checks in accordance with local and provincial legislation. Failure to comply with laws regulating record checks may result in a fine.

⁷⁴ *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017*, SO 2017, c 14, Sch 1, s 125.

⁷⁵ City of Toronto, How to Get Hired in Recreation: [How to Get Hired in Recreation – City of Toronto](#).

⁷⁶ City of Toronto, Recreation Program Policies & Procedures: [Recreation Program Policies & Procedures – City of Toronto](#).

Provincially recognized sports organizations are required to have dispute resolution processes in the event of disciplinable conduct or harassment in sport. Organizations are required to provide for complaint procedures, hearings, sanctions and appeals as needed.

Child welfare laws establish provincial offences in respect of child abuse. Persons (and corporations or organizations) may be liable for a fine if they are found guilty of an offence under child welfare laws, including in respect of a failure to report a suspicion of child abuse,⁷⁷ and improper use and disclosure of personal information under child protection laws.⁷⁸ It is a provincial offence for any person (and/or organization) having charge of a child to inflict abuse on the child or to permit the child to suffer abuse by failing to care and provide for or supervise and protect the child adequately.⁷⁹

Provincial human rights legislation prohibits discrimination on the basis of age with respect to services, goods and facilities, including with respect to the activities of sports and recreation organizations.⁸⁰ Human rights claims can be brought to the provincial human rights tribunal, including to seek human rights damages in the event of harassment.

Individuals and sports organizations may be subject to civil action in respect of child abuse in the provincial civil courts, including in the event of sexual assault, sexual misconduct, and negligence. Courts are empowered to award various forms of damages for suffering. In cases where an employee or volunteer working with a child is in a quasi-parental relationship, an organization may be held vicariously liable for misconduct and harm.⁸¹

RISK MITIGATION

Provincially recognized sports organizations are required to comply with certain policies and practices mandated by the provincial government.

Private organizations should mirror provincial principles to the extent possible, without creating undue hurdles, considering the size and funding of the organization. This includes requiring coaches and other personnel to complete certifications and education. Private organizations that operate with a provincial scope may benefit from adopting federal training and certification programs, including the NCCP.

At minimum, sports organizations should take steps to ensure that coaches and other personnel who will work directly with children (whether in an employment or volunteer capacity) are appropriately screened prior to engagement. Engagements should be conditional on the completion of regular criminal background checks and screening to the extent permitted by applicable employment standards and human rights legislation.

Private sports organizations should also consult publicly available registries to determine whether candidates are sanctioned/monitored in light of prior sports engagements (including those maintained by Sport Integrity Canada, federal organizations and large private federal sports organizations).

⁷⁷ *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017*, SO 2017, c 14, Sch 1, s 125.

⁷⁸ *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017*, SO 2017, c 14, Sch 1, s 332; see also Personal Information, O Reg 191/18.

⁷⁹ *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017*, SO 2017, c 14, Sch 1, ss 136, 142(2).

⁸⁰ *Ontario Human Rights Code*, RSO 1990, c H.19, s 1; Ontario Human Rights Commission: Teaching human rights in Ontario - A guide for Ontario schools, [Fact sheet #1: The Ontario Human Rights Code | Ontario Human Rights Commission](#).

⁸¹ CED Sports, s 55 - Sexual Offences in Sports Contexts; Fiduciary Duties in Canada, s 630 - Vicarious Liability of Institutions.

IMPLEMENTATION / APPLICABILITY OF LAWS

Organizations and individuals engaged in providing sports programming to children are governed by federal criminal laws, in addition to civil and social laws established by the provincial legislature, including laws with respect to child welfare, human rights, and other provincial matters.

In Canada, limitation periods for civil actions are primarily determined by the provincial legislature. The basic limitation period that applies to most civil cases is two years, meaning that a proceeding must be brought before or on the second anniversary of the date that the claim became discoverable. There is no limitation period applicable to proceedings based on sexual assault and proceedings based on assault or misconduct of a sexual nature involving a claimant who was a minor at the time of the relevant act or omission.

KEY STRENGTHS SUMMARY

Child protection and welfare laws impose specific duties on organizations that work with children, including a duty to report child abuse.

Provincially recognized organizations are subject to certain organizational requirements, including in respect of screening and training personnel, and managing complaints.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES SUMMARY

Given the breadth of sports organizations that fall under the provincial purview, there is a key opportunity to establish laws specific to sports organizations and work with federal commissions to establish robust public registries.

APPENDIX F - SUMMARY OF FEDERAL LAWS IN MEXICO

BACKGROUND CHECKS

No background checks are required.

MANDATORY REPORTING OBLIGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

In terms of article 222 of the CNPP, which is applicable to the entirety of Mexico, any person in Mexico has a duty to report (denunciar) that may constitute a criminal offense before the Public Prosecutor's Office (Ministerio Público) or, in urgent cases, before any police officer.

PREVENTION EDUCATION & TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

No prevention education or training requirements are applicable to personnel related to sports organizations; however, it is a recommended good practice to have them to ensure compliance with applicable regulations.

LIABILITY & ENFORCEMENT

Enforceability of Mexican regulations applicable to sports organizations federally falls under the jurisdiction of several different authorities, including: (i) the National System for the Integral Protection of Children and Adolescents (Secretaría Ejecutiva del Sistema Nacional de Protección de Niñas, Niños y Adolescentes; "SIPINNA"), that is a branch of the Ministry of the Interior (Secretaría de Gobernación); and (ii) the Federal Courts.

RISK MITIGATION

Although no specific risk mitigation strategies are outlined in the applicable regulation, we would recommend the following: (i) developing and implementing a code of ethics, and (ii) implementing a hotline for workplace abuse and/or other violations to applicable regulation.

IMPLEMENTATION / APPLICABILITY OF LAWS

Mexican regulation is applicable to all entities and persons located in Mexican territory. Implementation of such laws are in charge of judges, as well as federal administrative authorities, in case of any non-compliance or a civil, criminal or administrative complaint.

KEY STRENGTHS SUMMARY

In Mexico, the legislation protecting children's human rights is exceptionally protective, to the extent that it could be considered special legislation.

First, special protection for children is established in a constitutional article, which means that the mechanisms available to protect their rights include the possibility of resorting to constitutional review mechanisms.

Furthermore, the Supreme Court of Justice created a special legal concept that serves as an interpretive, procedural, and treatment rule applicable to any proceeding and at the time of issuing a decision on the merits, known as the best interests of the child (interés superior del menor). It has been held that this principle ‘implies that the development of the child and the full exercise of their rights must be considered as guiding criteria for the drafting of laws and their application in all matters relating to the child's life.’

KEY OPPORTUNITIES SUMMARY

Federal enforcement of applicable law is sparse and generally difficult to obtain. The Human Rights National Commission is a state autonomous organism in Mexico that issues non-binding resolutions which can be difficult to implement (this also applies to the local Human Rights Commissions in each state of the country), and federal labor courts are short-staffed, which may result in delays of such enforcement action. In connection therewith, enforcement actions related to labor matters are relatively easier to obtain, but enforcement actions related to human rights are very difficult to obtain.

APPENDIX G - INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SAFEGUARDING IN SPORT IN MEXICO

Institution	CONADE (National Commission for Physical Culture and Sport) - part of National System of Physical Culture and Sport (SINADE)	SIPINNA (National and States System for the Comprehensive Protection of Children and Adolescents)	PPNNA (Federal and States Attorney's Offices for the Protection of Children and Adolescents)
Main Objective	Lead and implement national sport policy and promote safe sport environments.	Coordinate national policy to guarantee children's rights.	Protect and restore violated rights of children and adolescents.
Key Powers (2025)	Issues sport policy guidelines (reform 2025: new mandate: issue guidelines and criteria for protocols to prevent and address violence in sport, including definition of violence in sport; promotes training, prevention measures, and institutional coordination in sport.	Articulates cross-sector child protection policies; promotes prevention of violence and institutional coordination.	Receives complaints; issues urgent protection measures; provides legal representation; coordinates with prosecutors and courts.
Level of Action	Federal, coordinating with states and sport system members (federations, clubs).	Federal with state and municipal systems.	Federal (through DIF system and state-level offices).
Case Management	Does not directly manage child protection cases; may refer or coordinate with competent authorities.	Coordinates inter-institutional response mechanisms; does not provide direct legal representation.	Handles cases, implements protection measures, and monitors restitution of rights.
Scope in Prevention, Response & Remediation of Violence in Sport (Children & Adolescents)	Prevention: Issue guidelines & protocols and define violence in sport (reforms 2025) ; promote training. Response/ Remediation: Enable implementation of prevention/attention protocols; coordinate with competent protection authorities.	Prevention: Policy, public awareness, capacity building. Response: Coordination and referral for protection measures. Remediation: Framework linking agencies to restore rights.	Prevention: Rights promotion & advisory. Response: Immediate protective interventions. Remediation: Legal representation and follow-up until rights restoration.

APPENDIX H - SUMMARY OF LAWS IN GUADALAJARA

BACKGROUND CHECKS

No background checks are required.

MANDATORY REPORTING OBLIGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

In terms of article 222 of the CNPP, which is applicable to the entirety of Mexico, any person in Mexico has a duty to report (denunciar) that may constitute a criminal offense before the Public Prosecutor's Office (Ministerio Público) or, in urgent cases, before any police officer.

PREVENTION EDUCATION & TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Sports organizations are required to publish posters regarding the prohibition of minors under the age of 3 (three) in locations considered "closed".

The event organizers are required to have ambulances and control vehicles during the entire event. Events are also required to be recorded for further review by local authorities, if necessary.

LIABILITY & ENFORCEMENT

Enforcement of applicable laws is responsibility of: (i) Municipal Government of Guadalajara (Gobierno Municipal de Guadalajara); (ii) Municipal Departments (Dirección de Inspección y Vigilancia); (iii) Civil Protection (Protección Civil); (iv) Civic Judges (Jueces Cívicos), and (v) Criminal Judges, when felonies are committed.

In terms of liability, potential penalties for sports organizations include: (i) warnings; (ii) admonition (apercibimiento); (iii) fine; (iv) temporal or permanent shut down; and (v) cancellation of the license, permit, concession or authorization, as applicable.

Additionally, prior to holding any sporting events, a permit is required by the Municipal Government of Guadalajara (Gobierno Municipal de Guadalajara). The sports organization also is required to notify the Municipal Government the details of the event.

RISK MITIGATION

Sports organizations are required to inspect locations where the events are going to be held to ensure they are safe.

IMPLEMENTATION / APPLICABILITY OF LAWS

The laws for Guadalajara are applicable to sports organizations located in Guadalajara, Jalisco. Additionally, implementation of such laws is the responsibility of judges and juries, as well as local authorities, when there is any non-compliance or a civil, criminal or administrative complaint.

KEY STRENGTHS SUMMARY

Enhanced supervision by local authorities means that sports organizations are required to comply with more strict regulations to obtain permits. Enforceability is more likely for local authorities in Mexico City.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES SUMMARY

There is no specific applicable regulation to sports organizations.

APPENDIX I - SUMMARY OF FEDERAL LAWS IN THE U.S.⁸²

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Covered entities, such as sports organizations, that provide services including education, training, instruction, or recreation to children may use the national system to conduct background checks on any current or prospective employee or volunteer of such an entity who has, seeks, or may have access to children. Federal law sets guidelines for such background checks, including that (1) the subject must provide fingerprints and other information, and (2) the subject can obtain a copy of the background check and appeal it.

MANDATORY REPORTING OBLIGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

The Safe Sport Act requires certain adults (those authorized by NGBs, members of NGBs, or amateur sports organizations that participate in interstate or international amateur athletic competition to interact with minor or amateur athletes at amateur sports organization facilities or sanctioned events) who suspect child abuse (including child sexual abuse) to make a report within twenty-four hours. The SafeSport Code requires adults who are, were, or are seeking to be members, license-holders, employees, or board members of an NGB, LAO, or the USOPC, within "the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction" of an NGB, LAO, or the USOPC, or authorized, approved, or appointed by an NGB, LAO, or the USOPC to have regular contact with or authority over minor athletes to report child abuse, sexual misconduct, criminal charges or dispositions involving such misconduct, and certain other misconduct and policy violations as provided for in the SafeSport Code. Child abuse must be reported to the U.S. Center for SafeSport and law enforcement. Under the Safe Sport Act, certain amateur sports organizations are required to comply with federal reporting requirements and are prohibited from retaliating against any individual who submits a report.

PREVENTION EDUCATION & TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Under the Safe Sport Act, applicable amateur sports organizations must provide consistent training on child abuse prevention and reporting to adult members who have regular contact with minor amateur athletes, and subject to parental consent, to minor members. Under the MAAPP, adult participants (including employees and board members of certain sports organizations and other adults who have regular contact with or authority over minors) must complete the "SafeSport Trained Core Course" provided by the U.S. Center for SafeSport. This must be completed before regular contact with minors or within 45 days of starting a new role that triggers the requirement. Annual refresher courses are also mandatory. Organizations are also required to offer annual training to minor athletes and their parents on child abuse prevention and reporting (minors' participation is subject to parental consent).

LIABILITY & ENFORCEMENT

There is no right of action for failure to report under the Safe Sport Act, and the Safe Sport Act immunizes individuals from liability for "good faith" reports. However, federal law creates certain private rights of action that may be used to bring claims against organizations through the Child Abuse Victims' Rights Act and the Trafficking Victim Protection Reauthorization Act. The Child Abuse Victims' Rights Act contains a private right of action for victims of certain crimes of child sexual exploitation or abuse to sue for personal injury, with no limitation period. The Trafficking Victim Protection

⁸² While this section focuses on federal laws in the U.S., it is important to note that the state where every MSE is held may also have specific relevant laws.

Reauthorization Act contains a private right of action for victims of covered trafficking offenses to sue a perpetrator or knowing beneficiary participating in a venture which the beneficiary knew or should have known engaged in a covered offense within ten years of the accrual of the cause of action, or ten years from the victim's eighteenth birthday if the victim was a minor at the time of the offense.

RISK MITIGATION

Youth sports organizations should (1) conduct background checks on employees and volunteers within the confines of the applicable laws; (2) establish a reporting procedure through which individuals can submit complaints about an employee, volunteer, or third party, require parties to make reports consistent with statutory requirements, and monitor and respond adequately to reports; and (3) conduct adequate training on identification of and response to child abuse. Organizations can also take steps to decrease their risk, such as by limiting adult participants' one-on-one interactions with child athletes and considering purchasing insurance.

IMPLEMENTATION / APPLICABILITY OF LAWS

The reach of federal law varies depending on the legislation in question. The reporting requirements under the Safe Sport Act apply to covered individuals (adults authorized by NGBs, members of NGBs, or amateur sports organizations that participate in interstate or international amateur athletic competition to interact with minor or amateur athletes at amateur sports organization facilities or sanctioned events), and applicable amateur sports organizations must comply with such requirements. The SafeSport Code's reporting requirements apply to adults who are, were, or are seeking to be members, license-holders, employees, or board members of an NGB, LAO, or the USOPC within "the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction" of an NGB, LAO, or the USOPC, or authorized, approved, or appointed by an NGB, LAO, or the USOPC to have regular contact with or authority over minor athletes. The National Child Protection Act, which enables certain entities to conduct background checks and sets out guidelines for such background checks, applies to entities that provide services including education, training, instruction, or recreation to children. The training requirements under the Safe Sport Act apply to applicable amateur sports organizations. The training requirements in the MAAPP apply to adult participants who have regular contact with or authority over minor amateur athletes, as well as employees and board members of an NGB, LAO, or the USOPC. U.S. federal courts have jurisdiction over actions arising under U.S. federal law (such as actions brought pursuant to the Child Abuse Victims' Rights Act and the Trafficking Victim Protection Reauthorization Act), and state courts generally have jurisdiction over actions brought under federal law as well.

KEY STRENGTHS SUMMARY

There are several key strengths of the federal legal framework, including that: (1) it enables covered sports organizations to obtain national criminal history background checks on potential employees and volunteers who will have access to children; (2) it establishes reporting requirements for covered adults, requires applicable amateur sports organizations to comply with reporting requirements, and designates an agency to investigate and resolve reports within its jurisdiction; (3) it requires regular training for adults in contact with minors involved in applicable amateur sports organizations; and (4) it enables victims of certain child sexual exploitation or abuse to sue for personal injury, with no limitations period.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES SUMMARY

There are also numerous opportunities for federal law to be strengthened—for example, by (1) considering consequences for failure to report where federal law so requires; and (2) expanding training requirements to all adults involved in youth-serving organizations.

APPENDIX J - SUMMARY OF STATE LAWS⁸³ IN NEW YORK, NEW JERSEY

<p>Background Checks</p>	<p>NY Under New York Correction Law, a sports organization may deny employment based on criminal history if there is a direct relationship between the criminal offense and the employment or if the employment involves an unreasonable risk to the safety of specific individuals or the general public.⁸⁴ However, under the New York Human Rights Law, employers cannot ask about or act adversely upon non-pending criminal accusations or arrests that were resolved in favor of the applicant, adjourned in contemplation of dismissal, resolved by a youthful offender adjudication, or sealed, unless required or permitted by statute.⁸⁵</p>	<p>NJ New Jersey law permits criminal background checks for current or prospective employees and volunteers of "nonprofit youth serving organizations"; certain "youth serving organizations" generally must deny employment or a volunteer position to an excluded sex offender, and "nonprofit youth serving organizations" may deny employment or a volunteer position to a person who was convicted of certain other crimes or disorderly persons offenses.⁸⁹ However, the Opportunity to Compete Act sets certain requirements for the use of background checks, including prohibiting inquiry into criminal history before an initial interview has been conducted, unless certain exceptions apply.⁹⁰ The administrative code sets certain requirements for denial of employment or volunteer work based on a criminal record check.⁹¹</p>
<p>Mandatory Reporting Obligations of Child Abuse</p>	<p>New York Social Services Law requires certain professionals including school coaches and athletic trainers to report when they have "reasonable cause" to suspect child abuse or maltreatment; assigns responsibility for the subsequent administration of such reports made in the reporters' capacity as staff of an institution, school, facility, or agency to the person in charge of the reporter's employing organization, or that person's designated agent; and prohibits retaliation against reporters.⁸⁶</p>	<p>New Jersey law requires any person with "reasonable cause" to suspect child abuse to immediately report it.⁹²</p>
<p>Prevention Education & Training Requirements</p>	<p>New York Social Services Law requires employers of mandatory reporters to provide information on reporting requirements,⁸⁷ and the Education Law provides for the establishment of standards to require applicants for new or renewed licenses in certain professions to complete two hours of coursework or training on identifying and reporting child abuse and maltreatment.⁸⁸</p>	<p>The New Jersey administrative code requires employees, volunteers, and interns of school districts to receive information and training on reporting missing, abused, or neglected children as part of their orientation process.⁹³</p>

⁸³ In addition to state laws, there may be relevant city laws and ordinances throughout these states.

⁸⁴ N.Y. CORRECT. L. § 752.

⁸⁵ N.Y. EXEC. L. § 296(16).

⁸⁶ N.Y. SOC. SERV. L. § 413.

⁸⁷ N.Y. SOC. SERV. L. § 413.

⁸⁸ N.Y. EDUC. L. § 6507(3)(a).

⁸⁹ N.J. STAT. ANN. §§ 15A:3A-1-15A:3A-4, 2C:7-22-2C:7-23

⁹⁰ N.J. STAT. ANN. §§ 34:6B-13-34:6B-16

⁹¹ N.J. ADMIN. CODE § 13:59-1.6.

⁹² N.J. STAT. ANN. § 9:6-8.10.

⁹³ N.J. ADMIN. CODE § 6A:16-11.1(a)(8).

Liability & Enforcement

NY

New York Social Services Law provides that mandatory reporters (including entities) can be civilly liable for knowing and wilful failure to report.⁹⁴ However, "[a]ny person, official, or institution" making a report in "good faith" "shall have immunity from [liability] that might otherwise result by reason of such actions."⁹⁵

New York recognizes common law claims which may be brought against youth sports organizations for abuse committed under their watch:

First, New York recognizes vicarious liability for actions committed by employees within the scope of employment. Depending on the facts of a case, defendants could be found vicariously liable for conduct of certain agents other than formal employees.

Second, New York recognizes negligence claims where the defendant breached a duty owed to the plaintiff and that breach of duty proximately caused the plaintiff's harm. For example, employers could be liable for negligently hiring, retaining, supervising, or training employees who commit abuse. Depending on the facts of a case, employers could be found negligent with respect to certain agents other than formal employees. New York also recognizes claims of negligent supervision of children in certain circumstances.

Under New York law, the Child Victims Act extends the limitations period for child victims to bring suit for physical or non-physical injuries resulting from certain covered offenses "against any party whose intentional or negligent acts or omissions are alleged to have resulted in the commission of said conduct" until the plaintiff reaches the age of fifty-five years.⁹⁶

NJ

The Child Sexual Abuse Act contains a statutory cause of action "for injury or illness based on sexual abuse," including psychological injuries, which may be brought against persons who commit the abuse, or against parents or other persons "standing in loco parentis who knowingly permit[] or acquiesce[] in sexual abuse by any other person[.]"⁹⁷

New Jersey recognizes common law claims which may be brought against youth sports organizations for abuse committed under their watch.

First, New Jersey recognizes vicarious liability for acts committed by employees within the scope of employment. Depending on the facts of a case, defendants could be vicariously liable for actions of certain agents other than formal employees.

Second, New Jersey recognizes negligence claims where the defendant breached a duty owed to the plaintiff and that breach of duty proximately caused the plaintiff's harm. For example, employers could be liable for negligently hiring, supervising, training, or retaining employees who commit abuse. Depending on the facts of a case, employers could be liable for their negligence with respect to certain agents other than formal employees. New Jersey also recognizes claims of negligent supervision of children in certain circumstances.

There are some protections against liability which may be applicable to youth sports organizations. First, state law provides that reporters "shall have immunity from any liability...that might otherwise be incurred or imposed."⁹⁸ Second, the Charitable Immunity Act provides that nonprofits "organized exclusively for religious, charitable or educational purposes" are immune from liability to their beneficiaries for negligence (but not for "wilful, wanton or grossly negligent act[s] of commission or omission," including >>

94 N.Y. SOC. SERV. L. § 420(2).

95 N.Y. SOC. SERV. L. § 419.

96 N.Y. C.P.L.R. § 208(b).

97 N.J. STAT. ANN. § 2A:61B-1.

98 N.J. STAT. ANN. § 9:6-8.13.

Liability & Enforcement (continued)	NY	NJ >> certain acts of sexual abuse, nor for claims of negligent hiring, supervision, or retention which "resulted in a sexual offense being committed against [a minor beneficiary of the organization]". ⁹⁹ Under New Jersey law, the statute of limitations for certain child sexual abuse claims is thirty-seven years after a minor's eighteenth birthday, or seven years from the "date of reasonable discovery of the injury and its causal relationship to the act, whichever date is later." ¹⁰⁰
Implementation / Applicability of Laws	The laws of New York are generally applicable to sports organizations located in or having sufficient connections to New York, although each law may set out specific categories of individuals or entities to which it applies. New York state agencies enforce regulations and New York state courts can adjudicate matters arising under state law.	The laws of New Jersey are generally applicable to sports organizations located in or having sufficient connections to New Jersey, although each law may set out specific categories of individuals or entities to which it applies. New Jersey state agencies enforce regulations, and New Jersey state courts adjudicate matters of state law.
Key Strengths Summary	One of the key strengths of New York law is the extension of the limitation period to bring certain child sexual abuse claims until the child victim's fifty-fifth birthday.	One of the key strengths of New Jersey law is the extension of the limitations period to bring certain child sexual abuse claims until the child victim's fifty-fifth birthday.
Key Opportunities Summary	Key opportunities for New York to strengthen its protection of youth athletes include: (1) requiring all youth sports organizations to conduct background checks within the confines of the applicable laws; and (2) requiring all employees and volunteers who have contact with child athletes to report suspected child abuse.	Key opportunities for New Jersey to strengthen its protection of youth athletes include: (1) requiring all youth sports organizations to conduct background checks within the confines of the applicable laws; and (2) extending prevention education and training requirements to youth sports organizations.

99 N.J. STAT. ANN. §§ 2A:53A-7, 2A:53A-7.4.

100 N.J. STAT. ANN. § 2A:14-2a.

APPENDIX K - LEGISLATION PROTECTING CHILDREN ONLINE

Sport organizations operating across jurisdictions face inconsistent legal obligations regarding the online safety of minor athletes. The gap between the obligations imposed on sport organizations regarding in-person safeguarding and the ambiguous requirements for digital environments represents a structural risk for youth sport.

Canada

Canada does not yet have enacted legislation specifically governing online safety for children, though the issue has been the subject of continuous legislative effort. The Criminal Code of Canada already criminalizes ‘child luring’ and digital communication with a minor for the purpose of sexual abuse and exploitation, making or distributing child sexual abuse material, and online communication for sexual exploitation of minors (section 172.1).

The Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) imposes baseline obligations on organisations handling personal data, including that of minors, though it lacks the child-specific protections increasingly expected under international standards.¹⁰¹

As of April 2026, The Protecting Victims Act (Bill C-16)¹⁰² largely based on UK Online Safety Act 2023 is being developed, with the Government committed to criminalising online sexual extortion and exploitation of minors and the creation of non-consensual sexual deepfakes.

The absence of enacted online protection legislation in relation to sport represents a safeguarding gap for sport organisations operating in digital environments in Canada, particularly where online contact between adult staff/volunteers and minor athletes can be unregulated and unsupervised.

Mexico

Like other child protection legislation, Mexico does not have a standalone online child safety law. Child protection online is embedded within Federal Criminal Code, the General Law on the Rights of Children and Adolescents ([Ley General de los Derechos de Niñas, Niños y Adolescentes \(reformada 27 mayo 2024\)](#); LGDNNA), and the Federal Law for the Protection of Personal Data Held by Private Parties. The Federal Criminal Code criminalises child sexual abuse material (Article 202), child abuse, exploitation of minors through electronic media, and child luring via digital platforms. The LGDNNA mandates all institutions, including sport organisations, to guarantee children’s right to protection from violence, exploitation, and abuse in all environments, including digital ones. This creates a legal basis for requiring sport organisations to address online safeguarding risks in their governance structures, even in the absence of sector-specific digital safety legislation.

¹⁰¹ UNICEF: [Keeping children safe online](#).

¹⁰² Public Safety Canada (2025). [Government of Canada invests in protecting children and youth from online sexual exploitation](#).

United States

The U.S. has a number of federal and state laws addressing the safety of children online. At the federal level, the primary framework governing children's online safety is the [Children's Online Privacy Protection Act](#) (COPPA, 1998) and [COPPA Rule](#), which impose certain regulations on operators of websites and online services that collect personal information from children under the age of 13, including a requirement to obtain parental consent.

More recently, Congress passed the [TAKE IT DOWN Act](#) (2025) which restricts non-consensual publication of intimate images including AI-generated depictions of minors.

Additionally, in 2025, the Senate re-introduced the [Kids Online Safety Act](#), which aimed to impose a statutory duty of care on platforms to prevent and mitigate harms to children ages 16 or younger, including eating disorders, sexual exploitation, and the distribution, sale, or use of certain addictive products.

Certain state laws also provide protection and safeguards for children's online privacy—see, for example, the New York [Child Data Protection Act](#) and [New Jersey law](#).

APPENDIX L - GLOSSARY

For definitions of key terms used in the report please refer to the CSHR [Sport and Human Rights Glossary](#).



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