

Sexual violence in a sports environment. What are we talking about?



Sexual violence

Any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, committed or attempted by a person without it being freely consented to, or against someone who is unable or refuses to consent. The term sexual violence includes sexual assault, sexual abuse and sexual harassment.

Examples of sexual violence in a sports or leisure-related environment:

- Touching any intimate part of a participant or a person involved in the field.
- Forcing a participant or a person involved in the field to perform sexual acts in exchange for favours, privileges, or under the manipulation of a peer, to have a verbal or written conversation of a sexual nature.
- Making offensive sexual jokes, gesturing suggestive, exposing his private parts;
- Exposing a participant or a person involved in the field to sexual images.

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is a more subtle form of sexual violence. It is conduct of a sexual nature that is abusive, hurtful and unwanted and which, for the person who is subject to such behaviour, leads to direct consequences in terms of maintaining or improving their living conditions and/or creates an environment of bullying, humiliation or hostility. These behaviours are just as unacceptable from a coach as any other member of the sports community. Nobody has to accept such behaviour.

Examples of behaviour that can be related to sexual harassment:

- Any form of undesired attention or advance of a sexual nature, such as: being whistled at, any suggestive or vulgar behaviour, persistent solicitation, looks, kisses or sexual touching, sexist insults, obscene language, sexually offensive jokes or images of a sexual nature through any means, technological or otherwise.

Sexual assault

Gesture of a sexual nature, with or without physical contact, committed by an individual without the consent of the person concerned or in certain cases, particularly children, through emotional manipulation or blackmail. This act aims to subject another person to an abuser's desires through abuse of power, by using strength or coercion or by implicit or explicit threat.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is when one person makes gestures or acts of a sexual nature towards another person, with or without physical contact. Any unsolicited sexual harassment or conduct of a sexual nature is considered sexual abuse.

Examples of sexual abuse with physical contact:

- Inciting the athlete to engage in sexual touching or be subject to sexual touching.
- Offering to trade favours or privileges in return for sexual favours.
- Kissing an athlete on the mouth or any other part of the athlete's body.
- Having a sexual relationship with the athlete (oral, vaginal or anal).
- Forcing the athlete to have sexual relations (rape).

Examples of sexual abuse without physical contact:

- Exposing one's genitals in front of the athlete.
- Asking the athlete to get undressed.
- Asking the athlete to caress themselves or masturbate.
- Showing sexually explicit images or movies.
- Calling, texting, sexting or sending emails of a sexual nature.
- Using the Internet to contact minors online and enticing them to their home for sexual, pornographic or criminal purposes.

Sexual consent

If a person is in a position of power or a position of trust with a minor (under 18 years of age), this child's consent to any sexual activity is **never recognized by law**, regardless of the age difference.

28%

of athletes report having experienced sexual violence*