

April 13, 2023

## Great advances as Abuse-Free Sport enters fourth quarter of its initial year

MONTREAL, QC - The Abuse-Free Sport program has released its third quarterly report since launching in June 2022, highlighting significant advances throughout its three pillars in implementing Canada's Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS).

### PILLAR ONE - PREVENT

Another **38** federally-funded National Sport Organizations (NSOs) have signed onto the Abuse-Free Sport program between January 1 and March 31, 2023, bringing the total number of **Program Signatories to 75**. The seven (7) remaining federally-funded NSOs have already signed agreements that will become effective by the end of the next quarter. This growth in numbers makes Abuse-Free Sport and the complaint intake services offered by the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner (OSIC) accessible to an even greater number of athletes and participants across the country.

This week, the OSIC published the [UCCMS Annotated version 1.0](#), which illustrates how some clauses are to be interpreted. The UCCMS version 6.0 was published in May 2022, and has been applauded by leaders in the prevention of sexual abuse against children as a model in Canada in the way it addresses grooming and incorporates the concept of boundary transgressions. "The Canadian Centre for Child Protection (C3P) believes the UCCMS should be enshrined in every sport organization's operations to ensure inclusive, accessible and safe environments for athletes," said Noni Classen, Director of Education and Support Services at C3P.

Also this quarter, through the **Safe Sport Research Grant Program**, a total of **\$253,295** was awarded to nine (9) research projects for 2022-2023. Five (5) of these projects will span up to three (3) years, bringing the total amount funded to **\$512,826**. The overall objective of the Safe Sport Research Grant Program is to invest in safe sport research to maintain and increase the understanding of the behaviours that need to be reinforced or prevented, and to evaluate the impact of the Abuse-Free Sport program and initiatives. The names of the grant recipients and the topics of their research projects are available on the [Safe Sport Research Grant Program's webpage](#).

### PILLAR TWO - RESPOND

So far in 2023, the number of new complaints/reports received by the **OSIC** has doubled from the last quarter (48 versus 24) and the number of these complaints/reports that fall within OSIC jurisdiction and authority has also increased to **38%** (from 33%). Since the OSIC's inception, **100%** of complaints/reports that fall within its jurisdiction and authority have been accepted by the office. The office is also expanding its capacity for case management to support the increase in Program Signatories and complaints/reports received.

The OSIC also continues to conduct **Sport Environment Assessments (SEA)**, a service that provides proactive, transparent and preventative measures to alleged systemic issues related to the UCCMS in order to cultivate safe, welcoming and inclusive sport environments. Independent assessors have been assigned to the three (3) SEAs currently underway.

### PILLAR THREE - ENGAGE

Abuse-Free Sport is also actively promoting its services to the sport community, both within Canada and internationally, participating in a number of sport sector events recently, including the 2023 Canada Winter Games in Prince Edward Island and the Japan Sports Arbitration Agency Annual Conference. The OSIC

also participated as witness to two studies of the House of Commons of Canada: (1) Women & Girls in Sport by the Standing Committee on the Status of Women; and (2) Safe Sport in Canada by the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

With such presence at various levels, Abuse-Free Sport seeks to enhance awareness of its services for sport participants and organizations, to achieve a greater impact in fostering a safe sport system in Canada.

To view the Abuse-Free Sport Quarterly Activity Report (January 1 - March 31, 2023), click [here](#).

### **About Abuse-Free Sport**

Abuse-Free Sport is an independent program responsible for upholding and administering the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS). Abuse-Free Sport seeks to influence a positive shift in Canada's sport culture and to foster safe, inclusive and welcoming sport participation through a variety of prevention, response and engagement initiatives. The Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner (OSIC) operates as an independent division of the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC) to administer the UCCMS as part of the Abuse-Free Sport program.

[abuse-free-sport.ca](http://abuse-free-sport.ca)

### **About SDRCC**

The SDRCC is a not-for-profit corporation created by federal legislation and funded by the Government of Canada. The mission of the SDRCC is to provide the sport community with a national alternative dispute resolution service and strengthen the culture of fairness in Canadian sport by resolving disputes quickly and efficiently and to provide expertise and assistance regarding alternative dispute resolution. The SDRCC is also mandated by the Government of Canada to implement an independent safe sport mechanism at the national level.

[crdsc-sdrcc.ca](http://crdsc-sdrcc.ca)

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