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About the Program

Athletes As Leaders (AAL) is a program for athletes on girls' sports teams. The program aims to empower youth to take an active role in challenging stereotypes about gender, promoting healthy relationships, and creating a safe, inclusive, and welcoming community for all. AAL is based on research and best practices in the field of sexual assault prevention. Athletes are encouraged to be leaders in changing peer norms to a culture of safety and respect. To learn more visit www.AthletesAsLeaders.org.

This edition of Athletes As Leaders was adapted by people with lived experience and subject matter experts in partnership with the Virginia Department of Health for use with athletes on girls' and young women's adaptive sports teams to empower athletes with disabilities to be leaders in their sporting communities and beyond. To learn more about how Athletes As Leaders was adapted for this audience, email carter@blueoctopus.consulting.

Any good coach knows that the best athletes don't just have great athletic ability, but they also know the game inside and out. The same is true for you when delivering AAL. Knowing the basics of harassment, abuse, and sexual violence will better prepare you to lead the weekly trainings as well as identify and address negative behaviors as a teachable moment. This 10-week Athletes as Leaders (AAL) program equips you with the tools you need to help your athletes promote positive mental health, gender equity, and build respectful and non-violent relationships.

Structure of the Program

Each session is set up in the following way:

Guidance for Facilitators

- This section includes key concepts and suggestions for how to either guide the discussion or seek additional resources to enhance the coach's understanding of the day's lesson.
- A list of additional materials or resources that would be needed to facilitate the session

Warm Up

- This section is where the concept of the day is introduced to the team in a brief explanation by the coach.
- There may or may not be questions for discussion in this section.
- The coach can deliver this section in their own words as long as they get the key message across to the team or they can read from the materials.

Work Out

- This section is the bulk of the group discussion related to the concept of the day.
- The coach does not have to ask all the questions in order to have a robust discussion. Additionally, all the talking points do not have to be shared verbatim with the group. Try to get the bolded ones into the conversation and add others as time/context allows.
- The team has an opportunity to brainstorm how they will take action to address the key concept.

Cool Down

- This section reiterates the key concept of the day.

The discussions do not require every question to be asked/answered. A coach can sense when the discussions have had an impact or when digging deeper might be more helpful. It is always important to wrap up with highlighting the key takeaways again and encouraging the team to address whatever concept has been discussed in a positive manner.

Damaging Behavior And Language

Coaches know the power of language to lead, instruct, and inspire. Unfortunately, language can also be used negatively. Put-downs and derogatory jokes cross the line and can be harmful in myriad ways. Damaging behavior and language can include:

- Singling out a person's race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, disability, socioeconomic status or other personal traits/ characteristics.
- Using gender to insult (e.g., "You throw like a girl").
- Bragging/Joking about sexual exploits as conquests.
- Derogatory language toward another person (e.g., catcalls, whistling, sexual innuendo, insults related to sexual activity or appearance).
- Controlling or coercive actions regarding finances, academics, or jobs.

Defining Abuse

It is essential that your players understand that abuse can come in many forms. The following are definitions of abuse and examples of how abusive behavior might appear so you can recognize the signs and take action:

- Physical: hitting, punching, kicking, etc.
- Sexual: pressuring, coercing or forcing someone to perform sexual acts
- Verbal: insulting, name calling, yelling
- Isolation: keeping someone from friends and family
- Economic: maintaining control over or interfering with someone's finances, job, or school
- Cyber: abuse that occurs online, text, or over social media; demanding passwords
- Social: rumors, gossip, etc.
- Emotional: humiliation, intimidation, and the cumulative effects of other abuse

Note: In Virginia, some coaches are considered mandated reporters for child abuse and neglect. Consult with your organization's administration to find out about mandated reporter laws and policies.

Though most young adults say they would take action if they witnessed physical or sexual abuse, they are less comfortable when the abuse is less overt or involves someone they know. Their instincts may tell them it's wrong, but they may not have the confidence or knowledge needed to respond. As a coach, you can empower your athletes to recognize, reject, and safely confront hurtful behavior when they see it by modeling healthy behavior themselves and learning from teachable moments. Also let them know that they can come and talk to you anytime.

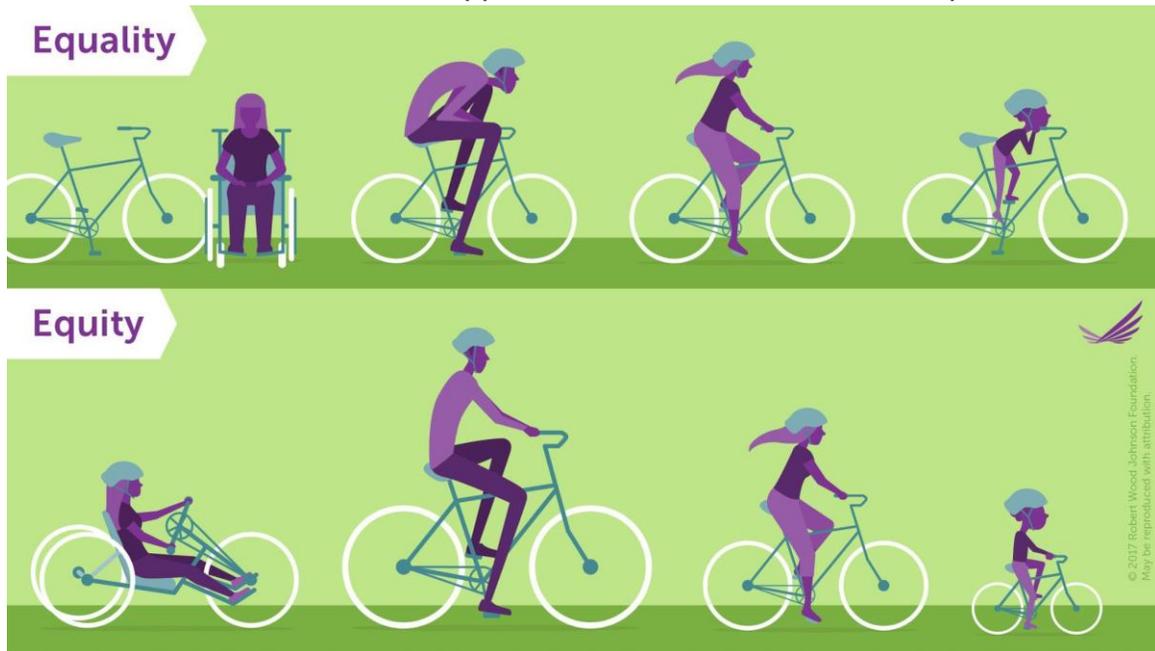
Additional Key Concepts

Empathy

We discuss using empathy as a tool of connection and understanding throughout the curriculum. Empathy is very basically the ability to understand and connect to the feelings of another person in a given circumstance through their perspective. Here is a short video that explains the difference between empathy and sympathy and specific components of empathy: <https://brenebrown.com/videos/rsa-short-empathy/>.

Equity

“While the terms equity and equality may sound similar, the implementation of one versus the other can lead to dramatically different outcomes for marginalized people. Equality means each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities. Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.”¹



<https://www.rwif.org/en/insights/our-research/infographics/visualizing-health-equity.html>

¹ <https://onlinepublichealth.gwu.edu/resources/equity-vs-equality/>

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Session One: Introductions & Group Agreements

Guidance for Facilitators: With this module, we want to introduce the concept that empathy is our best tool to prevent any kind of violence from happening. Over the course of these training sessions, we will see how we have created a lot of labels for each other that are often informed by stereotypes, rather than someone's actual life experiences. It's important that we engage with and respect one another to educate ourselves about the way violence can covertly show up in our lives.

Key Messages to Introduce in Discussion:

- Athletes have a key role in helping to create a sense of safety, welcoming and belonging for all people in the community. This type of community benefits everyone.
- We are going to create this type of space here during our sessions and hopefully in the larger community too.
- There is no way for every space to be accessible to everyone 100% of the time. We all have different and sometimes even conflicting needs. We want to create a culture where everyone can communicate their needs and this is always an ongoing process.

Prep Before Session:

Make sure you have:

- Dry erase board or poster paper (with markers) to write group agreements
- Ball to pass for discussion, or alternative plan as developed by athletes during session

Note:

- This first session will probably require a little more time than 15-20 minutes, and can be integrated into a scrimmage activity, especially as a method to introduce the athletes to each other during warm up.

Introduce the Program to the Team

 We are starting a new program called Athletes As Leaders. Throughout this program we are going to talk about some important topics that show up in our everyday lives. We hope this will be a space where you can speak openly about your experiences, problems you see happening, and your ideas to solve them. As athletes and leaders, you can help create a community that is safe and welcoming. We want everyone to have a sense of belonging here on our team and in the adaptive sports community.

During this program, our group discussions will be based around some key principles. These are things I want for everyone in our community, and I hope you want these things too. We will explore how we can support these key principles of:

- Health & Safety
- Inclusive & Welcoming Community
- Empathy
- Consent
- Gender & Racial Equity
- Youth Leadership

Each time we meet, we will discuss important topics that aren't always talked about openly and think of ways your leadership can create change. These sessions are going to be about 10-15 minutes once a week. Each week we will follow a general agenda:

- ❖ We will introduce a topic
- ❖ We will discuss the topic as a group
- ❖ We will create a group expectation or team commitment related to that topic

Warm Up

Introduce Facilitators and Athletes

Get to know who is in the room. Spend time on this, especially if you do not know the group, or the group does not know each other well. This ice breaker is designed to allow athletes to reveal personal facts they may not have had the opportunity to share yet. It also may break down stereotypes by highlighting qualities of people that are not obvious based on their outward appearance. Starting with the high school-aged children is advised so the younger athletes can see a couple examples of using this format and set the stage for talking about how oppression and stereotypes impact all of us.

It can be really helpful to ask each athlete how to properly pronounce their name and what pronouns they use. More about sharing pronouns can be found here: www.mypronouns.org/what-and-why

Suggestion for Ice Breaker: “Just By Looking At Me” Activity

Have athletes share in a circle or in small groups. Introduce the prompt:

“My name is _____ and I use _____ pronouns**.

One thing you cannot tell just by looking at me is _____.
 This is important for me to tell you because _____.”



Work Out

Create Group Agreements



We will be talking about some sensitive topics and how to build a strong and safe community. We are all here to learn and we want everyone to feel like they are able to participate as freely and as safely as possible. Let's come up with some group agreements that we can all stick to for our discussions this season.

When we're talking in a group it can be hard to go one at a time.

? **How does this team want to be sure one person is speaking at a time?** *Possible answers: We can pass the ball to each other. When one person is done they will pass the ball to the next person and only the person with the ball can speak. We could stand in a circle and you can move forward when you want to be called on. We can just raise our hands.*

? **What other ideas do you have that you'd like to try? What would be helpful and comfortable for you?**

During group sessions, we agree to....

? **Think about a group where you felt very comfortable expressing yourself. What helped you be able to participate fully in that group?**

Examples of group agreements include:

Come ready to participate	*One person speaks at a time
Show respect to those who are speaking (Avoid using cell phones or side talk)	**What's said here stays here (confidentiality). What's learned here leaves here.
*Take space/Make space. (If you want to speak but you are shy, challenge yourself. If you are talking a lot, allow some space for others to talk.)	Respect differences of opinion.
It's your choice if you want to share	

*These ground rules are critical, so if they are not brought up by the group, then you can

bring them up and add them to the list.

****It's ok to share concepts learned in the group, but not ok to share personal things about people or mention names. When confidentiality is mentioned, it is also important to note the exceptions to that, e.g. if you are a mandated reporter and what specifically you must report. For more information on mandatory reporting and to find out Virginia's requirements and training opportunities visit: <https://www.dss.virginia.gov/abuse/mr.cgi>. Please note your organization's staff, volunteers, and coaches may be mandated reporters for abuse/neglect of minors depending on the laws of your state.**



Facilitator Notes

You can have volunteers write on the board or in a notebook. You can also create a poster to display at every session. Use the questions below if needed as prompts. Try to re-frame most group agreements into positive, affirmative statements if possible. For example, instead of “Don’t talk over someone”, you could write “One person speaks at a time.” Make sure everyone in the group agrees to the ground rules!



Cool Down

Wrap Up Today's Discussion

 Athletes have a key role in helping to create a sense of safety, welcoming and belonging for all people in the community. This type of community benefits everyone, and we are going to create this type of space here during our sessions and hopefully in the larger community too! This is a key time to ask yourself what type of community you want to be a part of. We have the opportunity to do that this season. This is a space for you all to step up as leaders, support each other, and create the kind of community you want to live in!

I'm really excited to have these discussions with you this season! I appreciate the thought you put into coming up with our group agreements.

Our next session will be on _____ and we will discuss why our mental health matters.



Facilitator Notes

Take pictures of the group agreements so you have a record of them and can refer

back to them if needed.

Optional: Make a poster with the group agreements to bring each week.

Close the Circle with a Team Cheer

You can say "Athletes As Leaders!" or a powerful word or phrase that relates to the discussion. You could also do any team cheer that the team normally uses to end huddles. If this is the beginning of the season, it can be a great time to have team captains or veterans teach team cheers.

Session Two: Respect & Personal Responsibility

Guidance for Facilitators:

Key Messages to Introduce in Discussion:

- Athletes will define respect and identify when behaviors and language are disrespectful
- It is important to respect each other's ability.
- There are athletic benefits of knowing and working with each other's ability levels.
- We can discuss disability in a respectful way and prevent harassment based on disability.

Prep Before Session:

Make sure you have:

- Group agreements from Session 1
- Ball to throw during "Work Out" or alternate plan as designed in first session



Warm Up



Today's focus is on what respect and accountability mean in sports and everyday life and why respecting each other's ability is critical for the success of our team. As athletes with disabilities, it's important for us to respect our differences in abilities and the challenges that those represent. For some of us, it might be easy to make light of our disability and even joke around about it with family or friends that we know well. But not all of our teammates will necessarily feel as comfortable about their disability. Maybe their disability makes it hard to make friends at school, or they were recently injured and are still dealing with significant life changes. It is important for us to be sensitive to the needs of our teammates - adaptive sports practice should be a place where athletes with disabilities feel safe and understood.



Work Out

Discussion Questions: [You can break into small groups for the "work out" discussion if you have a large group.] Remind the team about the group agreements.



What does respect mean? Is it important to you? Why or why not?

① What does it look and sound like to show respect to your teammates? Why is it important to be sensitive to others' disabilities?

② How can you show respect for yourself and how might that help boost your mental health?

③ Can you think of a time when you had to brush off a comment about your disability?

④ Can you think of a time when you made a comment about someone else's disability that might have been hurtful - or that they might not have been ready for?

⑤ What does it mean to be accountable to our community "off the field?"

⑥ Why might making fun of someone's disability be harmful? What should you do if you see/hear someone making fun of your teammate's ability level?

⑦ What are some ways we can be respectful of each other's disabilities during practice?

Talking Points: [You may choose to share all talking points, or only those that have not been discussed already by the athletes.]

- ❖ Respect means being empathetic, actively listening to others, and understanding the impact of our actions.
- ❖ This team is for everyone. That means anti- LGBTQ+ language, racist stereotypes, or harassment of any kind is against our team ideals and will not be tolerated. By being understanding of all levels of ability, we earn trust with our teammates - they know we will not make fun of them for something they cannot control.
- ❖ I care about how you act on and off the field. As athletes, people watch you, and many look up to you. The language you use, who you choose to support, how you act, and how you treat people are all very important. Even if you don't like someone or are angry with them, that's never an excuse to physically or verbally harass someone.
- ❖ Being sensitive to others' disabilities can help everyone feel welcome and understood.
- ❖ Understanding different levels of ability can help us become a better team - when we know the level of function our teammates have, we can make the right pass, serve, or move to allow them to make an effective play.
- ❖ If you are going to ask about someone's disability, say something like "What is your disability, if you don't mind me asking? It's completely ok if you don't want to share." - this way, you have given them the option to say no. Avoid saying things

like “Were you just born like that?” or “Did you get in an accident?” - assuming someone’s life story is always risky and you may be broaching a sensitive subject.

- ❖ **So here is a challenge for you...** If you see someone making fun of your teammate’s ability level, you should tell them firmly and immediately to stop it. People with disabilities have enough challenges without picking on each other for something they cannot control - report their actions to the coaching staff so that the situation can be handled properly.
- ❖ **As athletes and leaders...** Accountability means taking ownership and learning from our mistakes. Holding each other accountable also means speaking up to me when you see or hear something that’s not OK, like disrespectful language or abusive behavior such as bullying, catcalling, or shaming. We can create a community where everyone is welcome as they are by practicing accountability as leaders.



Cool Down

Wrap Up Today’s Discussion

 Thanks for sharing all your ideas and experiences today. It sounds like we know what respect is and what it looks like on and off the court, field, etc. Let’s make sure we bring this level of respect to all our practices, games, and every day lives!

Close the Circle with a Team Cheer

Session Three: Mental Health Matters

Guidance for Facilitators: For this next session, it would be good to familiarize yourself with material resources or avenues athletes can use if they feel like reaching out to their coach about mental health challenges.

Key Messages to Introduce in Discussion:

- Nobody's disabilities or needs look the same way. We need to explore coping strategies for a variety of challenges.
- We understand the anxiety that many athletes, especially young athletes with disabilities, have surrounding surgery, and have tools to discuss those anxieties.
- Athletes need to know that it's ok to talk to coaching staff and teammates about worries leading up to a big surgery and to be able to reach out for support related to all kinds of mental health needs.

Prep Before Session:

Make sure you have:

- Group agreements from Session 1
- Ball to throw during "Work Out" or alternate plan as designed in first session



Warm Up

Introduce Topic and Make Connections



Being an athlete and a leader in our communities requires more than just physical strength or athletic talents. We also need to take care of our mental health. Over the course of one's life, each individual will identify certain coping strategies that work best for them. Today we are going to discuss a variety of tools, hear from you about how you face challenges in your lives, and commit to creating a space for all parts of us to be honored and cared for throughout our season together and beyond.

We want our team to be a space where you can bring yourself on good days and bad. We are here to support each other and if things feel too hard for you, your coaches are here. We can listen to you and help you get connected to resources that you might need.



Facilitator Note

Sometimes, young athletes with disabilities will have medical issues that require recurring surgeries. This can be a scary and overwhelming time. Athletes might also be concerned about needing to spend time away from sports or being away from their friends to recover. It is important that we give players with upcoming procedures appropriate space and privacy - and the ability to share their feelings with us as they wish. If these kinds of medical interventions seem to be coming up for your players, feel free to address this with the team. This is one of many potential mental health concerns that may be mentioned by the athletes and we want to be sure we create space for anything they bring up to be validated.



Work Out

Discussion Questions: [You can break into small groups for the "work out" discussion if you have a large group.] Remind the team about the group agreements.

- ① **Why is it important to take care of our mental and emotional health?**
- ① **What are some challenges young people with physical disabilities face that could impact your mental health?** *Possible answers: facing physical barriers to access things/spaces in daily life, bullying, isolation, surgeries and physical/occupational therapy, parents/family that are too interventionist/not attentive enough.*
- ① **When you're feeling down or anxious, what might stop you from telling a friend or someone you trust?**
- ① **What are some things you do to feel better when you're feeling stressed, sad, or overwhelmed?** *Possible answers: listen to music, talk to friends/caring adults, go outside, rest, journal about it.*
- ① **What are signs that a friend might be experiencing a mental health challenge?**
- ① **Imagine a teammate is having a rough time and you overhear a group of other teammates making fun of them for crying or being so sad. What could you do to interrupt this behavior and make sure the teammate who is upset is ok?**
- ① **If you know a teammate is going through a hard time, but they don't want**

many people to know, how can you help them?

Talking Points: [You may choose to share all talking points, or only those that have not been discussed already by the athletes.]

- ❖ We need to take care of our emotional and mental health to be successful when competing.
- ❖ Mindfulness, counseling, talking with friends, and exercising can help us control how we respond to difficult situations.
- ❖ There is nothing to feel ashamed of if you feel down or alone. These are feelings that everyone has, even if we're taught as athletes to just power through them.
- ❖ It's OK to ask for advice or help no matter what you're going through. If you do not want to tell us why you are anxious, that is ok too.
- ❖ Look out for your friends and teammates, especially if they're injured or if something is going on in their personal lives. Be aware of changes in mood, being more withdrawn or anxious, drops in their team functioning. (And possibly increased drug/alcohol use)
- ❖ You can always talk to me about support for yourself or someone else. I can connect you with other confidential people, professionals, online resources, and discussion groups.

- ❖ **So here is a challenge for you...** Think about ways that you personally can identify coping strategies and put them into practice for your mental health. Working on protecting your mental and emotional health and engaging in positive coping strategies can show others how to do the same.
- ❖ **As athletes and leaders...** It is our responsibility to help create a community where people are supported and can get their needs met as best as possible. If you see someone having a hard time, check in with them or tell a coach. Everyone's mental and emotional health is critical to the success of our team and the community. If you do feel comfortable sharing your worries, your teammates and coaching staff are here to support you. If you are uncomfortable sharing with your team, you can share what you're going through with an adult one-on-one as well.



Cool Down

Wrap Up Today's Discussion



Thank you for all your ideas and sensitivity to this topic. Let's help promote a culture where mental health challenges can be addressed through support and encouragement. As athletes and leaders, it's important to reach out and support anyone who needs it. It's time to break for the day (or get to practice).

Close the Circle with a Team Cheer.

Session Four: Be A Leader

Guidance for Facilitators: We will explore what it means to be a leader - on the team, in a community, etc. and we will discuss challenges faced by girls with disabilities throughout their leadership journeys.

Key Messages to Introduce in Discussion:

- Anyone can be a leader on this team.
- Leadership is a set of qualities and skills that can be developed over time.

Prep Before Session:

Make sure you have:

- Group agreements from Session 1
- Ball to throw during "Work Out" or alternate plan as designed in first session



Warm Up



We talked about the kind of community we want to have on this team when we made our group agreements and we discussed what taking care of our mental health looks like as individuals and as a team. Today we're going to talk about leadership - on the court and off - since both are important! Leadership isn't just about being the captain; it's about making a positive impact on your team and community.



Work Out

Discussion Questions: [You can break into small groups for the "work out" discussion if you have a large group.] Remind the team about the group agreements.



How would you describe a leader in sports and in everyday life?



What are some qualities of leadership? *Possible answers include: empathy, decision-making, clear communication, ability to inspire/motivate others, leading by example, problem solving*



What challenges do people face because of their gender or disabilities as they try to be leaders? *Possible answers include: not being taken seriously, lack of opportunities, being forced into a supportive role, having their authority/expertise questioned*



One essential aspect of leadership is leading by example. What are some ways you can lead by example as athletes?

 **Communication is key on and off the court. How can effective communication contribute to leadership?**

 **A leader uplifts their teammates. How can you motivate and support each other during both successes and challenges?**

 **Leaders often need to make decisions under pressure. How can problem-solving skills contribute to effective leadership?**

Talking Points:

- ❖ Whether it's showing up early for practice, giving your all during drills, or encouraging your teammates, leading by example sets the tone for the team.
- ❖ Clear communication helps everyone understand their roles, builds trust, and enhances team dynamics.
- ❖ Encouraging words during tough times and celebrating each other's achievements can create a positive environment that boosts team morale.
- ❖ Being able to make quick yet thoughtful decisions during a game or in team matters can show your leadership skills.
- ❖ While leadership is empowering, we all face challenges on our journey. Physical disabilities can sometimes add extra hurdles. However, remember that challenges don't define us. They simply shape our unique paths.

- ❖ **So here is a challenge for you...** think about the opportunities you have to be a leader on this team and in your everyday life. Identify your personal strengths and set some goals for yourself to build some of the skills we discussed during today's session.
- ❖ **As athletes and leaders...** you are able to influence teammates and peers alike. It is important to us to have leaders on our team who can motivate and encourage, speak with intention, and make thoughtful decisions. You are all learning to be excellent problem-solvers through our work on this team and I encourage each of you to identify skills you'd like to develop and continue to work on those skills over time.



Cool Down

Wrap Up Today's Discussion

 Thank you for participating in our discussion on leadership. You know what a leader looks like, sounds like, and feels like on this team. I'd like for each of you to identify ways you can be a leader on this team and throughout the rest of your lives. Leaders don't always have to be team captains or in charge of everything. We can all

find ways to practice empathy, show encouragement, lead by example, and practice strong decision-making in our everyday lives.

Close the Circle with a Team Cheer

Session Five: Understanding Privilege and Oppression

Guidance for Facilitators: We can't really talk about violence prevention without acknowledging that oppression exists and makes it so that some groups are more valued than others and some groups have access to fewer resources and systems of support in our society. This may seem like a big topic to approach with youth but they are certainly having these experiences already. It is important that we understand oppression is a problem that impacts all of society so youth can understand how privilege and oppression show up in their daily lives.

Key Messages to Introduce in Discussion:

- Oppression occurs at all levels of society and causes inequality
- Our identities impact our experiences in life
- We need to understand our own identities and experiences and not make assumptions about others

Prep Before Session:

Make sure you have:

- Group agreements from Session 1.
- Ball to throw during "Work Out" or alternate plan as designed in first session

Optional video to view before the session or send to team electronically after the discussion:

- Sometimes You're A Caterpillar (<https://youtu.be/hRiWgx4sHGg>)



Warm Up



Today we are talking about privilege and oppression. This lesson is not meant to make anyone feel guilty or ashamed of having or lacking privilege. We recognize that we ALL have some privileges. And we have all faced challenges, too.



Can anyone define empathy for us [Let athletes define]? Empathy is key to respecting others. Empathy is very basically the ability to understand and connect to the feelings of another person in a given circumstance through their perspective. Respecting others looks like being empathetic, actively listening to others, and understanding the impact of our actions.



Work Out

Privilege Activity: [You can break into small groups for this activity if you have a large group.] Remind the team about the group agreements.



We are going to do an activity that requires a little bit of self-reflection. The purpose of this activity is not to blame anyone for having more privilege or for receiving more help than others but to make us think through what our privileges are so that we can start understanding how people without these privileges experience oppression.

You don't need paper or to talk while we do this activity, you will just be reflecting by yourself. I will read a couple statements and pause in between so that you can think about each statement. You will not have to share how many of the statements are true for you.

1. I can play sports at my school.
2. I don't have to worry about anyone understanding me when I speak.
3. I can read public signs in my own language.
4. I am comfortable eating in public.
5. I see leaders and celebrities in the public eye that look like me.
6. I am comfortable at doctor's appointments.
7. I've never had a bad experience asking for help from a teacher, doctor, resource officer, or other authority figures.
8. People assume I am strong and capable.
9. No one treats me differently because of my disability.
10. When I order books or movies online, I don't have to worry about subtitles or screen-reading hiccups.



Why is it sometimes difficult for people to see their own privilege?

Possible answers: their way of life is "normal" to them; most people look like them; they are in the majority; they don't know it any other way; they have their own struggles, so it's hard to see when they have been privileged too.



Why is it sometimes difficult to see the oppression that other groups experience?

Possible answers: they don't take the time to listen or observe; they are not that close with other people who are oppressed; it's not personally affecting them; they blame challenges on the individual, rather than larger patterns.

Talking Points:

- ❖ Oppression is when certain groups or people are given less power, more barriers, and disadvantages. This has existed throughout history and in present-day systems. It is a widespread societal issue, not just isolated experiences of individuals.
- ❖ Privilege is when certain groups or people are given more power, access, and advantages. This has existed throughout history and in present-day systems. It is a widespread societal issue, not just isolated experiences of individuals.
- ❖ Oppression shows up in patterns in society, not just individual interactions.
- ❖ Oppression leads to inequality.
- ❖ When a person is part of a group with less power, it is because institutions, laws, and regulations give privileges to some groups over others, not because there is anything "wrong" with the person.
- ❖ It is important to not make assumptions of other people's identities and experiences. Always follow someone's lead to learn how to pronounce their name, what pronouns they use, and how they talk about their disabilities.
- ❖ Follow the lead of people who are most affected by particular issues. For example, if you want to help make facilities more accessible and inclusive to people with disabilities, start by listening to people with disabilities.
- ❖ It's especially important when you have privilege to challenge things that are unfair or hurting others, even if it hasn't personally affected you.
- ❖ Sometimes it hurts us to realize how our privilege has impacted other people, and that's okay to feel that way. We can take those feelings and fight for equality for the people we value.
- ❖ Having privilege doesn't mean you don't deserve your achievements or earnings.

- ❖ **So here is a challenge for you...** Listen to people who are left out, harmed, or discriminated against, so you can understand an issue. Educate yourself about different forms of oppression.
- ❖ **As athletes and leaders...** It is important to speak out against unfairness, discrimination, and oppression and to work toward justice and fairness for all people.



Wrap Up Today's Discussion

 Thank you for all of your participation and sharing. I know this is a big topic and I

appreciate you bringing your open minds together to discuss a complicated issue. As we go through the rest of our season, let's continue to find ways to work toward justice and fairness as a team and in our communities. This is also part of being a strong leader! It's time to break for the day.

Close the Circle with a Team Cheer

Session Six: Challenging Harmful Stereotypes

Guidance for Facilitators: Empathy is vital to reducing harm. It may sound cliché, but we have created a lot of labels for each other that are often informed by stereotypes, rather than someone's actual life experiences. It's important that we engage with and respect one another to educate ourselves about the way violence can covertly show up in our lives.

Key Messages to Introduce in Discussion:

- Many people have learned harmful stereotypes about specific groups of people that we need to "unlearn."
- We can understand the athletic benefits of knowing and working with each other's needs and discuss disability in a respectful way.
- We can help create a community that is safe and welcoming for all people, including all gender, racial identities, and disabilities.

Prep Before Session:

Make sure you have:

- Group agreements to refer to during "Warm Up" (if needed)
- Oppression chart: Create or print
- Ball to throw during "Work Out" or alternate plan as designed in first session



Warm Up

 Now for today's session, I want you to go back to our first session. In that day's activity, we introduced ourselves by doing the "Just By Looking At Me" icebreaker, where we talked about one thing you can't tell just by looking at you. In society, many of us have learned harmful messages and labels about specific groups of people. We can "unlearn" these messages and help create a community that is safe and welcoming for everyone.



Facilitator Note

You may choose to share that this is something that applies to you too, and that it's ok to give yourself grace as you learn and "unlearn" together in these discussions.

For example, there are many stereotypes based on gender. For athletes on girls' sports teams, we can have some pretty limiting assumptions for athletes that are not boys. We can also have some harmful ideas about disabled athletes.

Can you think of some examples of stereotypes in sports?

There are endless stereotypes about race, gender, disabilities, etc. A lot of the time, stereotypes assign something negative or limited to a specific group. Most of us have heard these types of messages. They come from media, families, and historical roles and expectations. When we think about what we have been taught, we can understand the harm they cause. We can be direct about disagreeing with stereotypes. This can help change these messages in society.



Work Out

Discussion Questions: [You can break into small groups for the "work out" discussion if you have a large group.]

 **What are some different expectations people have for boys in your sport that are different from the expectations set for girls, non-binary, and trans athletes?** [*Prompts include: Why is this concerning? What message does this send?*]

 **Can you think of any racial stereotypes in sports you heard?** [*Prompts include: Why is this problematic? What message does this send to people in the community?*]

 **What are some ways you can try to "unlearn" harmful stereotypes?**

Talking Points: (2 min) [You may choose to share all talking points, or only those that have not been discussed already by the athletes. Important points are bolded to help build off the athletes' discussions and examples]

- ❖ A person's race and gender does not limit who they can be or what they can be good at.
- ❖ Some **common phrases in sports that we may not often think of are based on gender stereotypes**. For example, knee push-ups are often called 'girl push-ups' which implies that girls are weaker. We need to think about how those kinds of phrases can be harmful.
- ❖ Some sports teams have racial groups as **mascots**. The images often are based

on racial stereotypes. We need to understand how hurtful it can be to have someone's culture or identity reduced to a caricature or a costume. It can be very limiting to reduce a person down to a single trait or experience.

- ❖ **Even stereotypes that may seem positive can be harmful.** Like saying that a certain racial group is good at a certain job. Or saying that men are strong and tough. It can make people feel like they don't belong if they don't fit the stereotype.

- ❖ **So here is a challenge for you...** try to catch yourself making an assumption or judgment about someone. Ask yourself "would I think that if they were a different gender, a different race, or non-disabled?" Then try to replace it with a non-judgmental thought. We've all been taught these stereotypes and we need to "unlearn" them.

- ❖ **As leaders and athletes...** you can challenge the idea that people have to be a certain way based on their gender, race, or ability. You can help create a community that is safe and welcoming for all people.



Cool Down

Wrap Up Today's Discussion



Thank you for all of your participation and sharing. We have learned about stereotypes and how they negatively impact people even if it seems like a positive stereotype. We can commit to unlearning stereotypes as we continue to grow. By challenging stereotypes, we can create a community that is safe and welcoming for all people and that gives each person an opportunity to be themselves. It's time to break for the day.

Close the Circle with a Team Cheer

Session Seven: Unpacking Beauty Standards

Guidance for Facilitators: While beauty standards may seem like a superficial thing at first, they directly inform what we think about someone's value and place in society. Beauty standards are heavily impacted by oppression and often reveal a lot of the hidden biases we deal with each day.

Key Messages to Introduce in Discussion:

- There's no right or wrong way to have a body.
- No one should feel pressured to look or present in a certain way.
- Avoid making comments about people's bodies.

Prep Before Session:

Make sure you have:

- Group agreements to refer to during "Warm Up" (if needed)
- Ball to throw during "Cool Down" or alternate plan as designed in first session



Warm Up



Today we are going to talk about unpacking beauty standards. From a very young age, people receive messages about beauty standards from products, peers, the media, and their communities. Of course, we know these messages differ for certain communities based on our unique experiences with gender, ethnicity and nationality, disability, and so on. Many of these beauty standards are unrealistic and impossible to achieve. Oftentimes, people feel pressured to change their body or appearance to fit a normalized image. There is so much judgment about how people look, and that can take focus away from all the other amazing things that they are doing in their lives and this pressure can sometimes negatively affect people's mental health.



Work Out

Discussion Questions [You can break into small groups for the "work out" discussion if you have a large group.]



What are some things considered beautiful in our culture?



Are there a part of your identities you wish you saw more of in pop culture?

❓ **What impacts do you think not being considered beautiful or normal because of beauty standards have on folks who are left out?**

❓ **What beauty standards would you like to unlearn? How can you unlearn them?**

❓ **What are some positive things to notice or comment on about someone, other than their appearance?**

Talking Points (2 minutes) [You may choose to share all talking points, or only those that have not been discussed already by the athletes. Main points highlighted for easy facilitation]

- ❖ **There is no right or wrong way to have a body.** Someone's body is not a measurement of their worth.
- ❖ **Avoid commenting on other people's bodies.** Except maybe if you are trying to help a friend avoid embarrassment with an easy fix, like picking something out of their teeth or wiping something off their face.
- ❖ **Social media, especially filters, contribute to unrealistic beauty standards, racism, negative body image, and lack of confidence.** Remember, you can choose who you follow. Unfollowing or blocking people who make you feel bad about yourself is a form of self-care. This can also be a great way to use social media and the internet to expand what you know about identities you don't experience because of your privilege and come to value people with different identities.
- ❖ **It's never OK to fat shame others.** Like disability, fat is not a bad word, and some folks have reclaimed and are empowered by their bodies. People who identify as fat deserve love and respect just like everyone else. You cannot assume fat people are unhealthy. They are often mistreated in the medical field, the fashion industry, and in everyday life.
- ❖ **Health concerns are never a good excuse to comment on someone else's body.** Do your part to ensure that all bodies are respected.
- ❖ **Clothes, hair styles, and makeup are all forms of self-expression.** They can be representative of people's cultures or communities. People should feel free to present themselves however they're comfortable with, and we should celebrate that!
- ❖ **When we go against society's beauty standards and maintain that there is no right or wrong way to look or present, then we are also fighting against harmful gender and racial stereotypes.**
- ❖ There are many things that we as a society need to unlearn. We need to unlearn that we need to have wrinkle and scar free skin, that we're not allowed to gain weight, that we need to tan or lighten our skin, and that our body image defines

our worth. **Our bodies are constantly changing and we should try to love them at every stage.**

- ❖ **So here is a challenge for you...** When you see a new person at practice, catch yourself before judging their body, hair, skin, and clothes. Instead, get to know them. When you compliment a friend, see if it can be first about their personality, something they are good at, or something great that they did. We also can use social media as a tool for positive body image and challenge ourselves. Look for a content creator that experiences a marginalized identity that you do not share. Use this as a learning opportunity and a way to reflect on our own hidden biases.
- ❖ **As leaders and athletes...** It is important for you to challenge harmful beauty standards, and to look at people more deeply for who they really are.



Cool Down

Wrap Up Today's Discussion



Beauty standards can make people feel bad about themselves. Negative comments on people's appearance and bodies are so common that we often may not notice the damage they cause. Social media encourages us to compare ourselves to other people. These standards and expectations are everywhere. This team will be challenging beauty standards and finding other things to compliment our friends on. We will look for our own hidden biases around what we think of as beautiful in ourselves, our friend groups, and in the larger community. Thank you for today's discussion. It's time to break for the day.

Close the Circle with a Team Cheer

Session Eight: Respecting Physiological Impairments

Guidance for Facilitators: To do our best work in ensuring we respect all people, we need to continue to learn to respect the differences that make each of us unique. This team is made up of athletes with different kinds of physical disabilities and this session focuses on a few different aspects of physiological impairment.

Key Messages to Introduce in Discussion:

- We can understand some of the physiological impairments some disabled people experience may not be the same impairments we experience ourselves. This means respecting issues that come with disability like accidental spitting, losing track of thought, and incontinence.
- It is important to have tools to discuss accidents and be sensitive to teammate's feelings.
- It is helpful to have a mature vocabulary around instances.

Prep Before Session:

Make sure you have:

- Group agreements to refer to during "Warm Up" (only if needed)
- Ball to throw during discussion or alternate plan as designed in first session



Warm Up



Welcome! Last session, we talked about unpacking society's beauty standards. Today, we are going to talk about respecting each other's bodies. Let's start with some common symptoms disabled people experience. In adaptive sports, especially in athletes with partial or full paralysis, it is not uncommon for players of all ages to have accidents before they make it to the bathroom. In medical terms, we call this incontinence. Some of us might have regular schedules and diets that help us control our bodies better. But, no plan is perfect, and accidents happen. This is a totally normal occurrence, and while it may sound funny, it can be embarrassing and upsetting. I want you to know that you can report accidents privately to a coach and let us know whether you can go to the bathroom and take care of the situation alone, or whether you need to call a parent. It is also important that you encourage each other to privately disclose that information to coaching staff, rather than "outing" them to the team and further embarrassing them.

Additionally, as people with disabilities, we may experience accidental spitting when talking, involuntary spasms or tics in language or movement, trouble remembering talking points, and other symptoms of our impairments. We also know that no two people experience their disability the same way, even with a shared diagnosis. As we've talked about in previous sessions, it is our job to unlearn harmful behaviors, and to allow each of us to handle symptoms our bodies experience in our own way while maintaining privacy and dignity for everyone around us.



Work Out

Discussion Questions (8 minutes) [You can break into small groups for the "work out" discussion if you have a large group.]

❓ **What could you do if you think your teammate has had an accident?**

[encourage youth to let their teammate handle the situation instead of calling attention to it, ask if their teammate needs any help from them or aides]

❓ **Does anyone know how you should address aides or medical alert animals our teammates may work with?**

[medical alert animals should be ignored, avoid eye contact with them, you can ask your teammate at an appropriate time if their animal is allowed to "visit" but that answer is allowed to be no; assume that if someone does not introduce their aide or caretaker, you shouldn't interact with them except to clarify an interpretation]

❓ **What should you do if you see a teammate need help doing something like transferring to their sports chair or tying their shoe?**

[stress that we should always ask people's consent and if they need help, especially when it comes to touching their body. This can include giving hugs]

❓ **How can we make space for all of us to be welcome in all the ways our disabilities show up at practice and in games?**

Talking Points [You may choose to share all talking points, or only those that have not been discussed already by the athletes. Main points are highlighted for easy facilitation]

- ❖ **Having accidents at practice is not uncommon.** Paralysis and partial paralysis can affect the bowels and bladder causing digestive and urinary issues that can result in accidents.
- ❖ **Each person with a disability experiences their disability uniquely.** Even two athletes who have the same disability may have different levels of functionality
- ❖ **Volunteers should NOT be helping minors take care of accident-related issues.** If a volunteer asks to help you take care of an accident, let the coaching staff know immediately.

- ❖ **So here is a challenge for you...** Each of us experiences our disabilities in unique ways. Let's all find ways to be supportive of each other as we navigate the different physiological impairments we face.
- ❖ **As student athletes and leaders...** It is our responsibility to help create a community where people can be in their bodies exactly as they are.



Cool Down

Wrap Up Today's Discussion

 Learning about how we manage our bodies is a big part of being an athlete. This also helps us learn how to ask for support and reduces opportunities for bullying and shaming others. It is up to all of us to respect each other and be kind when our disabilities show up in different ways, whether it be incontinence, involuntary spasms, or any other thing we can think of. We are here for each other as a team and the coaches are here for you too!

Session Nine: Promoting Consent

Guidance for Facilitators: We want to give youth a vocabulary around making sure the decisions they make around their own bodies are respected. In this session, we'll explore some practical examples to help athletes begin to experiment with setting their own boundaries.

Key Messages to Introduce in Discussion:

- Practicing consent can prevent harm and shows care and concern for another person.
- Consent is also non-sexual; we have a right to decide and communicate any boundaries we build for ourselves and our bodies.
- Athletes can expect volunteers to be conscientious about consent in situations like transferring chairs, interpreting what someone has said, respecting someone's wishes around aides or medical alert animals, saying your name before talking for folks with visual impairments, and making sure Deaf people and folks with hearing impairments feel included in our discussion.

Prep Before Session:

Make sure you have:

- Group agreements to refer to during "Warm Up" (only if needed)
- Ball to throw during "Work Out" or alternate plan as designed in first session
- Research your state's laws related to sexual assault & age of consent, or save a website you can use as a reference
- Research the local resources at your organization (such as names of employees) and in the community (such as local sexual assault programs). You can write them on the board, make a poster, provide brochures, or display resources in locker rooms.

Optional video to view before the session or share with the team via email:

- "Consent and Kids with Disabilities"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZkrFq2BQVs>



Warm Up



Welcome! Today we are going to talk about promoting consent. We will also discuss sensitive topics including sexual assault and how people with disabilities have had their bodily autonomy discounted by volunteers and other support persons. Please take care of yourself in any way you need. We will not be sharing personal experiences today.

If you or anyone you know needs support, here are some community resources (refer to resources at the end of this curriculum). You can also talk to someone you trust like a parent, coach, or friend. I am always here as a support as well. [Please remember that if you report abuse or assault to some adults, they may legally have to report it because they are mandated reporters for abuse/neglect of minors. Keep this in mind when thinking of what options are best for you.] Also, please take care of each other. If a friend or peer needs help, be there to listen and support.

Consent generally means agreement. Practicing consent looks like:

1. Asking for permission to do something
2. Listening to what the other person is saying with their words and their body language
3. Respecting the answer
4. If someone says "no," the answer should be respected, and the person shouldn't feel pressured to change their mind.
5. Consent is an ongoing process, not just a one-time question. Agreeing to one type of activity does not mean a person can't change their boundaries, or communicate new needs.

We usually hear consent used to refer to a sexual activity with a partner and sexual contact without consent is sexual assault. It is also important to keep in mind that consent doesn't only apply to sexual activity. Consent is important in everyday life! You can ask for consent before posting a photo of someone online, sharing someone's phone number with another person, or giving someone a hug. It's a way to show care and concern for another person.

For disabled athletes, it's important that you can come up with your own boundaries and needs around your body, even if you use the assistance of an aide or volunteer. Some adaptive athletes need to transfer from their everyday chair to a sports chair in order to participate in sports. When assisting with transfers to a sports wheelchair, consent, communication, and appropriate lifting techniques will ensure the process is comfortable for the staff and the athlete. Staff, coaches, and volunteers should be asking for consent

before offering assistance requiring physical touch. This includes transfers, making adjustments in positioning related to the sport, etc.

Although you may require outside assistance, it is important for volunteers to ask how you want to transfer:

1. This gives you a chance at attempting to transfer yourself, if it appears you can safely try.
2. Also allows you to decide how the transfer process will go, even if you will ultimately need help transferring.

Work Out

Discussion Questions (6 minutes) [You may want to break into small groups for the "work out" discussion if you have a large group.]

? **What are some examples of behavior you'd like people to ask your consent for before doing?** [some examples could be sitting close on public transport, whispering in your ear, touching hair, etc.]

? **What do you do if you set a boundary but someone talks you out of it? For example, if you communicate that you don't like hugs, but a person keeps asking or tries to convince you otherwise?** [stress that we all deserve to make our own decisions about our bodies, and that we are allowed to change our minds about our boundaries, as long as we are the ones driving that change]

? **When is it important to ask for consent?** [Possible answers: before borrowing something, taking or posting a picture of someone, being intimate, sharing private information, before going over to someone's house, before having sex or doing any type of sexual activity].

Talking Points [You may choose to share all talking points, or only those that have not been discussed already by the athletes. Main points highlighted for easy facilitation]

- ❖ **Consent is important for lots of other situations too**, like posting a picture online, sharing someone's personal information, or transferring chairs.
- ❖ Things like clothing, dancing, or flirting do not mean consent. **There is no excuse to deny anyone ownership of their own body and choice.**
- ❖ Consent is good practice, but in some cases, it is also the law. In Virginia, having sex with someone who did not give consent is sexual assault. **A person who is physically or mentally incapacitated (due to being drunk, on drugs, ill, asleep, or unconscious) cannot give consent.** Similarly, sexual contact is

illegal when there is a significant difference in power, like when there is a big age difference, or when a person is abusing a position of power.

- ❖ Studies show that women & girls, LGBTQ+ folks, people with disabilities, and certain racial groups experience sexual assault at higher rates, which is related to oppression as we discussed in an earlier session. Although certain populations experience sexual assault at higher rates than others, it's important to know that **anyone can be assaulted, including men and boys.**
- ❖ **Sexual assault is never the victim's fault** and it is not our job to judge whether a person's claim is true or not.

- ❖ **So here is a challenge for you...** Think about how you can practice consent in your relationships-including with your friends and teammates. You could ask before sharing intense information, borrowing equipment, or touching someone's hair or body. Everyone deserves to be comfortable with what they share, and to not be pressured into something that they don't want to do. You can also remind volunteers and other helpers to ask for consent before touching your body or when offering you different kinds of support.
- ❖ **As leaders and athletes...** It is important for you to help create a culture where consent is expected and normal. It is also important to believe and support survivors of sexual assault.



Cool Down



Thank you for all your ideas and sensitivity to this topic. Let's help promote a culture where consent is expected and respected. As athletes and leaders, it's important to reach out and support anyone who needs it. It's time to break for the day (or get to practice).

Close the Circle with a Team Cheer.

Session Ten: Celebrating Our Successes

Guidance for Facilitators: While we have learned that oppression and bias are systemic and social, we have also learned ways we can reduce harm in our personal relationships to create a healthy culture for everyone. Empathy is key to this and we want to encourage youth to feel empowered about their decisions about their own identities and bodies.

Key Messages to Introduce in Discussion:

- All healthy relationships require equal partnerships, communication, and boundaries.
- Everyone has the right to feel safe and be treated with respect in all relationships.
- You are responsible for your own behavior, and not others' behavior.

Prep Before Session:

Make sure you have:

- Group agreements to refer to during "Warm Up" (only if needed)
- Ball to throw during "Cool Down" or alternate plan as designed in first session
- If you are administering the survey, bring:
 - Copies of post-survey for every athlete
 - Pens/pencils for every athlete
- If possible, provide snacks or treats
- If possible, plan for extra time, especially for large groups



Warm Up



Welcome! Today is our final Athletes As Leaders session and we are going to talk about how we can create a community of inclusion and connection.

Communities whose members are strongly connected have decreased rates of sexual violence, youth violence and relationship violence. This season we have discussed how to build the kind of community we all want to be a part of. This may sound like a big task, but the biggest change can happen when we work together. As leaders, we can show empathy and see everyone as a part of our community and learn how to limit our judgments of others. We can lead by treating people with care and concern first.

Another way we can strengthen our community is by holding ourselves and our community members accountable when harm occurs. It is so important to apologize when we harm others. We also need to speak up when you see someone hurt. This

community accountability can reduce and prevent violence. As we discuss this topic today, keep in mind the ways that you can replace judgment with empathy instead. And how accountability makes our community better.

Work Out

Discussion Questions (7 minutes) [You can break into small groups for the "work out" discussion if you have a large group.]

? **This first question is a fill in-the-blank question and I'd love to hear from everyone. "I feel like I belong when_____."** [Possible answers: people acknowledge me; I am complimented; people check in on me; people ask me questions; people use kind words]

? **What groups of people might we be excluding unintentionally on our team or in the adaptive sports community?**

? **What should community leaders do when they see harm or cause harm?**
[Possible answers: Apologize when you cause harm; when someone makes a hurtful comment, ask what they meant by that, or educate them why its hurtful; check in with the person who was hurt]

Talking Points [You may choose to share all talking points, or only those that have not been discussed already by the athletes]

- ❖ Many athletes already practice showing love and support to each other. Think of the things you already do on your team, like motivating a teammate at practice, supporting a teammate when they are struggling, and doing team cheers and huddles. Think about how that sense of camaraderie can be spread to the rest of the community.
- ❖ Building a strong and welcoming community benefits everyone. Showing empathy, kindness, care, and concern for your community members increases connectedness, and can create a network of compassion that keeps everyone safer.
- ❖ Part of being an athlete is being a leader in adaptive sports. You can create a sense of inclusion and belonging through your actions and words both on social media and in real life.
- ❖ **All people have the potential to cause harm.** Harm includes: hurtful comments, prejudice, harassment, shaming, exclusion, and violence. We may cause harm unintentionally. Part of building a strong community is apologizing for harm that we may have caused.
- ❖ It is our job as leaders in the community to speak up when we see harm being caused. When you hear a hurtful comment, you can ask the person what they

meant by that. Or educate them why it was hurtful. People should only do this if they feel safe to do so. Sometimes it is less risky for people with privilege to speak up or intervene. This can be an opportunity to be an ally.

- ❖ It is our responsibility to hold our community members accountable. We need to make it clear that oppression and violence are not acceptable.

- ❖ **So here is a challenge for you...**Try to catch yourself making unfair or negative judgments. See if you can make your thoughts and interactions lead first with care and concern. If you do hurt someone, take accountability and reflect on how you can do better.

- ❖ **As leaders and athletes...**it is important for you to help create a culture that is more inclusive, especially for those who may feel like they do not belong. You will be contributing to a safe and welcoming environment.



Cool Down

Conduct Recognition Circle

Now we want to take time to recognize our teammates! [Explain how to split up pairs or small groups]. Please think of at least one thing that you admire or appreciate about your teammate. It could be:

- ❖ Something about their athletic skills or something that they contributed to the team
- ❖ One aspect of their personality that you like
- ❖ Something you admire about them
- ❖ An accomplishment you want to recognize
- ❖ Something you learned from them, or maybe a time that they helped you or someone else

You get the idea! I am going to give you a few minutes to chat with your partner.

[Give athletes a few minutes to prepare, socialize, and eat snacks. Then go around the circle and ask each person to share with the group one thing that they appreciate about their teammate. If you are short on time, mention that while there may be many things they admire about their teammate, please only share one thing with the large group.]

Debrief

Thank you so much for recognizing your teammates and showing your appreciation. It was so inspiring to hear. Now that the Athletes As Leaders work

is coming to an end, think about how you can bring this type of teamwork and connection to other people and groups.

Pass Out Post-Survey and Give Instructions (1 minute)

I would like to ask for your feedback on Athletes As Leaders this season. This survey will take about 5 minutes to complete. Please do not write your name. Your responses are very helpful for us to know how the program impacted you, and what we can do to make it better for future teams.

Allow Time for Survey Completion (5 minutes)

Final Words (1 minute)

Thank you all for engaging in our discussions this season. It really shows your leadership skills and your great ideas. One of our top goals for Athletes As Leaders is to promote athletes' leadership.

We've talked about many ways to do that, like challenging harmful stereotypes and promoting a culture of consent and inclusion. I know your team has committed to treat other people with care and empathy. If you feel safe to do so, you can speak up when someone is causing harm. You can speak out when something is unfair or unequal. You can support someone who is facing challenges.

You can be a role model for respect, both in person and online. By doing so, you are doing your part to create a community that is safe, inclusive, and welcoming to everyone. I appreciate how you have engaged in these conversations this season. I hope that the dialogue and community work we have started here does not stop here. There is still so much work to do!

Let's close today with one final cheer!

Close the Circle with a Team Cheer.

RESOURCES

If you, a youth, or anyone else is in immediate danger, call 911.

Virginia Resources

Statewide Hotline voice 800-838-8238; text 804-793-9999

Local programs

- Richmond YWCA (Richmond City) Hotline 804-612-6126; www.ywcarichmond.org
- Hanover Safe Place (Hanover County) 805-752-2702; www.hanoversafeplace.com
- Safe Harbor (Henrico County) 804-500-2755; www.safeharborshelter.com

Crisis Intervention

National Dating Abuse Helpline (Love is Respect) 1-866-331-9474

1-866-331-8453 TTY

Text "LOVEIS" to 22522

www.LovelsRespect.org

Love is Respect, operating the National Dating Abuse Helpline, offers real time chat, one-on-one support, information, and advocacy for youth who are experiencing dating abuse. Support is available 24/7/365 over text or phone, which offers translations services.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

Dial 988

www.SuicidePreventionLifeline.org

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline provides free, confidential services to anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress. Support is also available through their website via online chat.

Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

www.RAINN.org

RAINN offers assistance to those who have experienced sexual assault 24/7/365 through both a telephone hotline and via online chat on their website. Callers are automatically routed to a local RAINN affiliate where advocates are available to answer questions, provide support, and refer to local resources.

LGBTQ+ Resources

The Trevor Project

1-866-488-7386

Text "START" to 678-678

www.TheTrevorProject.org

Crisis and suicide prevention services for LGBTQ+ youth are available 24/7/365, nationwide, 100% free & confidential.

Athlete Ally www.AthleteAlly.com

Resources for coaches and others to create and foster inclusive sports communities.

GLSEN Changing the Game

www.GLSEN.org

Program gives resources for educators and students to ensure that physical education classes and athletics are inclusive for LGBTQ+ individuals.

Bullying Resources

StopBullying.gov

Learn how to identify bullying and stand up to it safely.

Federation for Children with Special Needs FCSN.org

Information, support, and assistance to parents of children with disabilities, their professional partners, and their communities.

Mental Health Resources

How Right Now www.HowRightNow.org

Designed to promote and strengthen the emotional well-being and resiliency of people adversely affected by COVID-19– related stress, grief, and loss.

National Council for Mental Wellbeing www.TheNationalCouncil.org

Drives policy and social change on behalf of over 3,100 mental health and substance use treatment organizations and the more than 10 million children, adults, and families they serve.

* It is also important to know your local, regional, and state resources, especially for providing professional mental health support, including therapy. Ask your violence prevention advocate about programs and services offered in your community. The national resources listed above can also help connect you with local resources.

For More Information on How to Help

Futures Without Violence

1-415-678-5500

www.FuturesWithoutViolence.org

Futures Without Violence works to prevent and end violence against women, children, and families around the world and administers the Coaching Boys Into Men Program.