

# Protective Behaviors continued



# Am I a Mandatory Reporter Under my State's Laws?



- Nearly all states have laws that require some individuals to report suspected abuse (such as teachers, healthcare providers, etc.)
- In some states, everyone is mandatory reporters

Utilize the Child Welfare Information Gateway website below to familiarize yourself with your state's reporting requirements. On the site, choose the state that you wish to check and under the "Child Abuse and Neglect" heading, check "Mandatory Reporters of Child Abuse & Neglect" and then click "Go"

- [Child Welfare Information Gateway Website](#)

# Reporting Suspicious Activity



- Suspicious activity should be reported to Special Olympics staff
- Reports will be reviewed and reported as appropriate
- Suspensions may be utilized during investigations
- Special Olympics reserves the right to expel athletes or volunteers as a result of suspected or confirmed physical, sexual or emotional abuse of a Special Olympics athlete.

## Be Ready to Say:

- What makes you think this activity is suspicious
- When you witnessed the activity- or first suspected it

# How to Recognize Abuse



- Statements by the athlete concerning inappropriate touching or physical harm
- Physical indicators of abuse
  - Questionable injuries such as bruises or lacerations in the soft tissue areas of an athlete's body. Bruises change color during the healing process and bruises of different colors indicate different stages of healing, thereby indicating that the injuries happened on more than one occasion.
  - Injuries to genital areas may indicate sexual abuse; for example, cigarette burns on the inside of the upper leg or buttocks.
  - Tether marks or rope burns and abrasions caused by tying wrists, ankles or the neck are also indicators of probable abuse.

# How to Recognize Abuse



- Changes in behavior may offer the only visible clue that an athlete is the victim of abuse. Abuse causes stress and victims often exhibit stress related behavior.
  - Depression
  - Withdrawal (including loss of interest in participation in Special Olympics)
  - Thoughts of or attempts of suicide
  - Aggression
  - Immature Acts
  - Sleep disturbances
- Uncharacteristic changes in behavior that last for more than a few days indicate a possible need for intervention, but are not a certain indicator of abuse as there are other causes of stress. The absence of behavioral indicators does not indicate a lack of abuse.

# Final Quiz

Please take the following quiz to test your knowledge of protective behaviors

