

AT THE HEART OF GOLD

INSIDE THE USA GYMNASTICS SCANDAL

MANUAL FOR
HOSTING A SCREENING

COURAGE
FIRST

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ABOUT

Thank you for your interest in hosting a screening of *At the Heart of Gold: Inside the USA Gymnastics Scandal*. This non-theatrical screening tour is part of the Courage First initiative from The Foundation for Global Sports Development and Sidewinder Films. Our hope is that by partnering with institutions like yours, we can educate the public about the lesser known elements of abuse, especially when it occurs within an organization as depicted in the documentary.

This manual provides instructions on how to best promote your screening, how to communicate with your audience about the type of content featured in the film, what resources to have available to audience members, and tips for any post-screening Q&A.

ABOUT THE FOUNDATION FOR GLOBAL SPORTS DEVELOPMENT AND SIDEWINDER FILMS

For over twenty years, The Foundation for Global Sports Development has provided grants to youth sports organizations, international sports groups, and adaptive sports programs with the aim of promoting the benefits of sport for youth around the world.

In 2015 the foundation created Sidewinder Films, its media division. Sidewinder Films produces compelling documentaries, largely centered around sport, and *At the Heart of Gold: Inside the USA Gymnastics Scandal* is our 2019 documentary release. Learn more at www.SidewinderFilms.org.

ABOUT COURAGE FIRST

In 2018, the foundation recognized the Sister Survivors from the USA Gymnastics abuse scandal and another group of women who had spoken out against their former coach, an abuser who had been allowed to continue coaching. These women received our Humanitarian Award -- our most prestigious award -- for their courage and willingness to make their personal lives public with the goal of creating change in sport. Inspired by their efforts, we created Courage First, an impact campaign meant to inspire adults to make the world a safer place for athletes.

The film's screening tour is just one of the ways we hope to accomplish our goal. Please visit us at www.CourageFirst.org or follow us on Instagram: @CourageFirst to learn more.

PLANNING THE SCREENING

MEDIA

The film is available via web screener link.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

We have created a Discussion Guide for you and your guests, and we strongly suggest you read the guide. It delves deeper into some of the issues presented in the film. As a screening host, you can use it to consider potential guest speakers, gain a better background of the film, and prepare for post-screening discussions. We encourage you to share a link to the guide prior to the screening. The guide features a timeline, terms and concepts, suggested discussion questions, and audience engagement activities.

PROGRAMS

If you elect to print a program for the screening, we can furnish a bio for each advocate who will attend and a description of the film. A sample program is in the screening materials folder.

LOGISTICS

To ensure a successful screening event, we recommend the following:

- Develop a detailed timeline (run-of-show) for the event (see sample timeline that follows)
- Gather speaker/survivor bios prior to the event for the moderator to announce.
- Ensure audience members have adequate and clearly indicated parking and directions to the screening venue.
- Please ensure your event is wheelchair-accessible.

SAMPLE TIMELINE

The following timeline has worked well previously; please feel free to adjust as appropriate:

3:45-4:30pm	Event set up, technology check
4:30pm	Doors Open
5:15pm	Welcome, share content warning, introduce victim advocate(s) in attendance
5:20-6:50pm	Screening
6:50-7:00pm	Moderator introduces survivor advocate(s)
7:00-7:40pm	Moderator asks questions
7:40-8pm	Moderator-lead Q&A from the audience
8:00pm	Closing statement & thank-yous

PLANNING THE SCREENING

CONTENT WARNING

A verbal content warning should also be shared at the event prior to starting the film:

“Given the subject matter, you may have a strong reaction to parts of the film. Though there are no graphic visuals, much of the information in the documentary is of a sensitive nature. We encourage you to practice self-care as you watch the film; feel free to come and go as needed.”

AUDIENCE SUPPORT

Make sure you have readily available resources to distribute and be sure to let your audience know where at the event they can access them. If possible, please have someone trained in crisis or sexual assault support in attendance to assist any guest who may disclose abuse. At a minimum, you should provide contact information for local and national support organizations. Some of the most recognized national providers are:

RAINN

National Sexual Assault Hotline:
1-800-656-HOPE
www.rainn.org

NATIONAL CENTER FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME

(202) 467-8700
www.victimsofcrime.org

VICTIM CONNECT

1-855-4-VICTIM
www.VictimConnect.org

CHILDHELP

National Child Abuse Hotline:
1-800-4-A-CHILD
www.childhelp.org

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE

1-800-273-8255
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

PLANNING THE SCREENING

AUDIENCE SUPPORT

During the screening and panel, members of the audience may feel compelled to disclose personal experiences of sexual abuse. For this reason, we recommend having a local, trained victim advocate in attendance. If you need assistance finding an advocate in your area, please visit <https://centers.rainn.org/> or contact a victim advocacy center near you. How supporters respond to a disclosure is crucial in aiding the survivor as they move through the healing process.

Below are RAINN's recommended responses:

BELIEVE

"I believe you. / It took a lot of courage to tell me about this."

It can be extremely difficult for survivors to come forward and share their story. They may feel ashamed, concerned that they won't be believed, or worried they'll be blamed. Leave any "why" questions or investigations to the experts—your job is to support this person. Be careful not to interpret calmness as a sign that the event did not occur—everyone responds to traumatic events differently. **The best thing you can do is to believe them.**

REMOVE BLAME

"It's not your fault. / You didn't do anything to deserve this."

Survivors may blame themselves, especially if they know the perpetrator personally. Remind the survivor, maybe even more than once, that they are not to blame.

SUPPORT

"You are not alone. / I care about you and am here to listen or help in any way I can."

Let the survivor know that you are there for them and willing to listen to their story if they are comfortable sharing it. Assess if there are people in their life they feel comfortable going to and remind them that there are service providers who will be able to support them as they heal from the experience.

EMPATHIZE

"I'm sorry this happened. / This shouldn't have happened to you."

Acknowledge that the experience has affected their life. Phrases like "This must be really tough for you," and, "I'm so glad you are sharing this with me," help to communicate empathy.

We have a [flyer](#) with this information that you can print copies of for your attendees.

PROMOTING THE SCREENING

PROMOTION

- 1. Social Media** When promoting on social media (before, during, or after the event), we ask that you include the following hashtags: #AtTheHeartofGold #CourageFirst #SidewinderFilms #PledgeCourage
- 2. Registration Webpage** (Optional, but can be helpful to track attendees and emails)
- 3. E-newsletter or flyers**

PR AND PUBLICITY

If your screening is open to the public, please let us know so that we can assist with additional promotion through our website and local news media.

DIGITAL ASSETS

The visual assets listed below can be found here: <http://bit.ly/ATHOGscreenings>

- JPG and PDF versions of the film poster
- Title treatments of the film (can be used when creating your own imagery)
- Film poster's background image of gymnast (can be used when creating your own imagery)
- Our logos: Courage First logo; combined logos for The Foundation for Global Sports Development and Sidewinder Films (in color and B&W)
- Film festival laurels and awards
- Stills from the film
- Sample screening program

***Required:** Include our logos in any promotion of the film. Where appropriate, please also include the following text:
"This screening is brought to you by Courage First, from The Foundation for Global Sports Development."

CONTENT WARNING

Written content warnings must be included when promoting the screening. An example is:

"At the Heart of Gold: Inside the USA Gymnastics Scandal contains details of sexual abuse some may find disturbing. Sensitive viewers be advised."

**Please remember you may not charge admission for the screening. The film is being provided as an educational tool.

POST-SCREENING Q&A OR PANEL

COURAGE FIRST SURVIVOR ADVOCATES

We are honored to be working with some of the women whose story is told in the film. Many of them are volunteering as Courage First Advocates to help us educate the public about their experience, and they may be available to attend screenings and participate in a post-film Q&A session or moderated panel discussion. Learn more about our CF Advocates at www.couragefirst.org/team.

If you would like to include the perspective of an advocate at your screening event, please let us know. We will connect you with one of the advocates to coordinate details. The screening host is responsible for all travel, dining, and lodging expenses incurred by the advocate as part of their attending the screening. Some events choose to include survivors that are not part of Courage First. Please let us know if you plan to do so.

SUGGESTED PANEL AND Q&A QUESTIONS

Note: You are free to adjust questions as necessary to better suit your audience. These are common best practices that can help expand the discussion.

1. I know this has been an intense journey for you. From your perspective, what can we do to make sure this never happens again?
2. For you and other survivors, something that is a very personal experience has become public. Can you tell us a little bit more about what that's been like for you?
3. What is something most people don't realize about grooming and sexual abuse?
4. Do you have any advice for parents or caregivers so that they can better support the survivors in their lives?
5. If someone tells you that they have been assaulted, how can you help them?
6. What has it been like to connect with and help other survivors?
7. How has what you went through as a survivor impacted your decision to go into the work you are doing now?
8. What has your healing process looked like?
9. How do you think < x UNIVERSITY or INSTITUTION > can best support survivors?

POST-SCREENING Q&A OR PANEL

MODERATOR GUIDELINES

If you decide to host a Q&A or panel discussion, we encourage you to designate a trained counselor, therapist, or trauma-informed moderator to guide the discussion. We have compiled suggestions for the moderator to review, including sample questions and best practices for moderating a panel with survivors of abuse. The moderator should watch the film prior to the screening via a viewing link we provide by email. This link stays active for one week to allow them time to formulate thoughtful, appropriate questions.

When framing questions to survivors and making statements to the audience, it's important to abide by the following guidelines to maintain a safe environment for everyone involved.

1. DO NOT: Mention the perpetrator's name.

Repeatedly hearing the perpetrator's name is difficult for some survivors. While it may not affect all survivors negatively, the best practice is to use these alternatives:

- "Ex-Doctor"
- "Olympic Doctor"
- "USA Gymnastics Doctor"

This includes referring to the group of survivors as "<perpetrator's last name> survivors". We do not wish to further glorify the name of the abuser. Alternatives include:

- "Survivors"
- "Michigan State"
- "USA Gymnastics Survivors"
- "Advocates"

2. DO NOT: Ask specific questions about the abuse itself.

This can be extremely triggering and distracting for survivors, both on the panel and in the audience. Under no circumstance is it appropriate to ask for details surrounding the mechanics of abuse. This includes:

- How the doctor positioned himself
- The layout of the doctor's office
- What exactly happened during the abuse
- What the abuse felt like
- How long the abuse lasted
- How the abuse shifted or escalated over time

3. DO NOT: Ask questions that shame or blame survivors.

While these questions typically come from a good place and demonstrate curiosity, they can unintentionally victim-shame survivors. Here are some examples of those types of questions:

- "Your parents were in the room -- why couldn't they see what was happening?"
- "How has this affected your family and loved ones?"
- "Why didn't you ask questions about what was happening?"
- "Why didn't you speak up when something felt wrong?"
- "Why did it take you so long to come forward?"

AFTER THE SCREENING

AUDIENCE FOLLOW-UP

We suggest you follow up with your audience members by email, to ensure anyone who might be feeling uneasy has the tools to get help if needed. Your email might include information on: campus counseling offices, victim advocacy centers, and local organizations that offer assistance. You may also add a link to our Courage First website that lists some nationwide providers (www.CourageFirst.org).

EVENT FEEDBACK

- We would like to hear about your event! If you have photos from the screening, please send them to us via email.
- As we track the success of Courage First, we are especially interested to know the number of attendees at your screening. Please send us that information along with any comments or audience feedback from the screening.
- Do you have any other feedback you would like to share with us? What was successful about your screening event? What would you suggest changing? We appreciate your insights as we are always striving to improve processes.

THANK YOU FOR BEING A PART OF CREATING CHANGE!