

CANADIAN SPORT MASSAGE THERAPISTS ASSOCIATION
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Category: Membership

Topic: Member Code of Conduct

The CSMTA is committed to providing a safe environment for all athletes and its members, that is free from Maltreatment in Sport. The Canadian Sport Massage Therapists Association will operate a zero tolerance policy for any form of maltreatment in the workplace, treat all incidents seriously and promptly investigate all allegations. Any members found to have maltreated a client, will face disciplinary action, up to and including removal from the association. Further, that individual's Provincial College or Association will be notified. All complaints will be taken seriously and treated with respect and in confidence. No one will be victimized for making such a complaint.

The 4 Cs (adapted from Côté and Gilbert, 2009) stand for competence, confidence, connection, and caring/compassion. They are outcomes and necessities for a healthy life, in and outside of sport, toward which anyone involved in sport should strive. While the 4 Cs were developed to describe a coach's role in developing athletes, the concepts apply to all involved in sport. To ensure athletes have a positive experience in sport, all those working with athletes should focus on enhancing these core foundations of positive athlete development.

In addition to the prevention methods, supporting positive athlete development is another way to create a culture of safe sport.

"Maltreatment in Sport" is : abuse, assault, neglect, harassment, bullying, hazing and discrimination.

Physical maltreatment

Physical maltreatment is deliberate conduct that has the potential to be harmful to the physical well-being of the participant. It can be a pattern or a single, serious incident.

Physical maltreatment is determined by the objective behaviour, not whether harm is intended or results from the behaviour.

There are two types of physical maltreatment: contact and non-contact.

Non contact physical acts

This encompasses physically aggressive behaviours including but not limited to throwing objects at or in the presence of others without striking another, or hitting, striking or punching objects in the presence of others.

Acts that deny attention

This involves lack of support, isolation or acts that deny attention, including but not limited to ignoring psychological needs or socially isolating a person repeatedly or for an extended period of time; abandonment of an athlete as punishment for poor performance; or arbitrarily or unreasonably denying feedback, training opportunities, support or attention for extended periods of time or asking others to do the same.

Neglect

Neglect includes any pattern or single, serious incident of lack of reasonable care; inattention to a participant's needs, nurturing or well-being; or omissions in care.

Neglect is determined by the objective behaviour, not whether harm is intended or is a result. The behaviour must be evaluated with consideration given to the participant's needs and requirements. (For example, when travelling to a sporting event, a 16-year-old athlete would have different needs and requirements compared to an adult athlete.)

Neglect includes, but is not limited to:

- A. refusing an athlete recovery time and/or treatment for a sport injury;
- B. not being aware of and not considering an individual's physical or intellectual disability;
- C. not considering supervision of an athlete during travel, training or competition;

- D. not considering the welfare of the athlete when prescribing dieting or other weight control methods (for example, weigh-ins or caliper tests);
- E. disregarding the use of performance-enhancing drugs;
- F. failing to ensure safety of equipment or environment;
- G. allowing an athlete to disregard sport's rules, regulations, and standards;
- H. or subjecting anyone to the risk of maltreatment.

Psychological maltreatment

Psychological maltreatment is any deliberate conduct that has the potential to be harmful to the psychological well-being of another person. It can be a pattern or a single, serious incident.

Psychological maltreatment is the most frequently experienced form of abuse endured by adults.

Verbal

This involves verbally assaulting or attacking someone, including but not limited to unwarranted personal criticisms; body shaming; derogatory comments related to one's identity; comments that are demeaning, humiliating, belittling, intimidating, insulting or threatening; the use of rumours or false statements about someone to diminish that person's reputation; or using confidential sport and non-sport information inappropriately.

Sexual maltreatment

There are two types of sexual maltreatment:

- Involving a child (that is, a person under the age of majority). Any form of adult and child sexualized interaction is child sexual abuse. It is a criminal offence to engage in sexual activity with a child, as a child is unable to consent. Sexual abuse of a child may occur through behaviours that do or do not involve actual physical contact.

- Involving a person over the age of majority (the age when a person is considered to be an adult). Any sexual act, whether physical or psychological in nature, that is committed, threatened or attempted against a participant without the participant's consent.

The Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS) prohibits sexual relations between an athlete above the age of majority and a person who holds a position of trust and authority on the basis that there can be no consent where there is a power imbalance.

Key points on sexual maltreatment

Sexual maltreatment includes, but is not limited to, the Criminal Code offences of sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual interference, invitation to sexual touching, indecent exposure, voyeurism and non-consensual distribution of sexual or intimate images

Sexual maltreatment also includes sexual harassment and stalking, cyber harassment, and cyber stalking of a sexual nature. It can take place through any form or means of communication (online, social media, verbal, written, visual, hazing or through a third party)

Harassment

Harassment is defined as comment or conduct directed towards an individual or group, which is offensive, abusive, racist, sexist, degrading, or malicious. Types of behaviour that constitute harassment include, but are not limited to:

- a) Written or verbal abuse, threats, or outbursts
- b) The display of visual material which is offensive or which one ought to know is offensive in the circumstances
- c) Unwelcome remarks, jokes, comments, innuendo, or taunts
- d) Leering or other suggestive or obscene gestures
- e) Condescending or patronizing behaviour which is intended to undermine self-esteem, diminish performance or adversely affect working conditions
- f) Practical jokes which cause awkwardness or embarrassment, endanger a person's safety, or negatively affect performance
- g) Unwanted physical contact including, but not limited to, touching, petting, pinching, or kissing

- h) Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, requests, or invitations
- i) Physical or sexual assault
- j) Behaviours such as those described above that are not directed towards a specific individual or group but have the same effect of creating a negative or hostile environment
- k) Retaliation or threats of retaliation against an individual who reports harassment to the CAC

Sexual harassment

Where sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual comments and sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, or conduct of a sexual nature. Types of behaviour that constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- a) Sexist jokes
- b) Display of sexually offensive material
- c) Sexually degrading words used to describe a person
- d) Inquiries or comments about a person's sex life
- e) Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions
- f) Persistent unwanted contact

Hazing

Hazing is defined as "Any potentially humiliating, degrading, abusive, or dangerous activity expected of a junior-ranking athlete by a more senior teammate, which does not contribute to either athlete's positive development, but is required to be accepted as part of a team, regardless of the junior-ranking athlete's willingness to participate. This includes, but is not limited to, any activity, no matter how traditional or seemingly benign, that sets apart or alienates any teammate based on class, number of years on the team, or athletic ability."

Consent is a key element to creating and maintaining a safe sport environment.

Canadian standards have identified boundary violations. These may include:

- A. a degrading remark
- B. a sexual joke

- C. sexualized physical contact
- D. adults sharing rooms with a minor who is not an immediate family member
- E. providing a massage or other purported therapeutic interventions with no specific training or expertise
- F. private social media and text communications
- G. sharing personal photographs
- H. shared use of locker rooms
- I. private meetings
- J. private travel
- K. providing gifts

Signs and symptoms of maltreatment

The information below outlines some of the signs and symptoms that may be present when a person is experiencing maltreatment.

Social and attachment difficulties

impaired coach-athlete interactions
disturbed peer interactions
social withdrawal from others

Cognitive and academic deficits

low academic achievement
low academic engagement
difficulty paying attention and regulating emotions
difficulty starting tasks and staying focused on them to completion

Emotional and behavioural effects

low self-esteem
ineffective coping
increased anger, frustration and verbal aggression
increased feelings of unhappiness, depression or anxiety
suicidal tendencies

eating disorders

Physical effects

headaches

weight gain or loss

unexplained bruises or injuries

psychosomatic symptoms

Complaints Procedures

If a complaint is brought forth to the CSMTA that is beyond our purview, then the following will occur; we will assist the complainant in transferring their complaint to the appropriate provincial governing body.

Regulated Provinces Colleges and Non Regulated Provinces Associations:

Ontario <https://www.cmto.com/ensuring-professional-conduct/complaint-process/>

British Columbia <https://www.cmtbc.ca/public-complaints/making-a-complaint/>

New Brunswick <https://www.cmtnb.ca/en/for-the-public/complaints>

Newfoundland and Labrador <http://www.cmtnl.ca/our-purpose/complaints-discipline/>

Nova Scotia <https://www.mtans.ca/site/complaints?nav=sidebar>

Prince Edward Island <http://cmtpei.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/CMTPEI-Complaint-Summary-Form-Final.pdf>

Quebec <https://www.fqm.qc.ca/> and <https://rmpq.ca/>

Manitoba <https://mtam.mb.ca/72/complaints-and-concerns>

Saskatchewan <https://www.saskmassagetherapy.com/?page=18>

Client Complaints Mechanisms

If a complaint is brought forth to the CSMTA that is beyond our purview, then the following will occur; we will assist the complainant in transferring their complaint to the appropriate provincial governing body.

Sanctions and disciplinary measures

The nature of the sanctions will depend on the gravity and extent of the maltreatment. A committee will be formed to determine the extent and scope of any sanction applied to the member.