

Discussion Questions: How to Spot an Obvious Spider

Notes:

- For simplicity, the questions refer to a coach. The questions apply to all people in a child's life.
- The [] indicate answers or hints.

Review

- How do you feel about your coach? (If the athlete has more than one coach, ask about each coach specifically, by name.)
- How would you explain abuse?
- Besides coaches, who else can be spiders?
- Can friends, teammates, and family members be spiders?
- What is the sticky thing that sneaky abusive spiders weave into their webs?
- What is the grown-up word for sticky lies?
- How would you explain gaslighting?
- How would you explain grooming?
- Which patterns of sneaky abuse do you remember? [Making you feel special. Charming you into trusting them. Bullying you. Separating people. Bragging about how great they are. Denying and pretending. Tricking you into lying.]
- For each of the patterns you remember, how would you explain those patterns to someone who doesn't know about them?
- Can sneaky spiders turn into obvious spiders?
- When/why is a sneaky spider likely to turn into an obvious spider? [When they feel scared or angry]

Obvious Abuse

- What are the three types of obvious abuse?

Emotional Abuse

- Is yelling always verbal abuse? [No.]
- Describe ways in which yelling can be positive coaching. [Yelling clear instructions, encouragement, or praise.]
- What are some specific examples of obvious verbal abuse (when a coach uses words to hurt your mind and your heart)?
- What are some specific examples of obvious non-verbal emotional abuse (when a coach doesn't use words, and doesn't touch your body, but still scares you, and hurts your mind and your heart?) [making a mean face, using nasty or threatening hand gestures; getting in your space in an angry, mean way; throwing a clipboard, water bottle, or chair; kicking something; slamming a locker door...]
- What are some simple ways to decide if a coach's behavior is abusive? [Trust your feelings. Listen to your wise self. Ask yourself "Would this behavior be ok if a classroom teacher did it?"]

Physical Abuse

- Is it physical abuse anytime a coach touches you?
- What are the four ways it is ok for a coach to touch an athlete?
- How would you explain physical abuse?
- What are some examples of physical abuse? Describe as many as you can.
- If a coach pushes or pulls you (even if it doesn't hurt your body), is that physical abuse?
- When is the only time it is ok for a coach to push or pull you?

- If a coach shoves, hits, kicks or steps on you, is that physical abuse?
- If a coach frequently “misses” when they are spotting you, is that physical abuse?
- If a coach makes you run or do other drills for punishment, or until you throw up, are dehydrated, or injure yourself is that physical abuse?
- If a coach doesn’t use proper equipment or safety gear, is that physical abuse?
- If a coach makes you train until you are, or when you are sick and injured, is that physical abuse? (Rigorous training and injury are part of sport. But a repeated pattern of athletes getting sick or injured is concerning)
- If a coach asks you to do workouts or skills you aren’t ready and able to do safely, is that physical abuse?
- If a coach makes you lose weight and be so skinny that you are not healthy, is that physical abuse?
- If a coach tells you to “suck it up” and to not go see the trainer or doctor, is that physical abuse?
- If a coach convinces you to ignore the trainer’s or doctor’s recommendations, is that physical abuse?
- If a coach makes you take vitamins or medicines that are unproven, or on the banned list, in other words if a spider coach makes you dope, is that physical abuse?

Sexual Abuse

- When and why might an obvious spider become a sneaky spider?
- Which parts of the body are involved in sexual abuse? Please say them loud and proud.
- Can you point to these body parts on yourself? In the [physically \(anatomically\) correct naked picture](#) provided. Or the [G rated “bathing suit” picture](#).
- If a coach talks about how your body looks, is that sexual abuse?
- If a coach talks or makes “jokes” about sexual body parts, is that sexual abuse?
- If a coach asks you to send them photos of, or show them your sexual body parts, is that sexual abuse?
- When is the only time it is ok for a coach to ask you to send a picture or a video?
- If a coach shows you, or sends you photos of their own or someone else’s sexual body parts, is that sexual abuse?
- If a coach asks to watch you touch your sexual body parts, is that sexual abuse?
- If a coach asks you to watch them touch their sexual body parts, is that sexual abuse?
- If a coach asks to touch your sexual body parts, is that sexual abuse?
- If a coach asks you to touch their sexual body parts, is that sexual abuse?
- For all of the “if...” questions above: What makes each of the actions sexual abuse, and therefore not ok? [Sexual abuse is any interaction between a coach and an athlete – talking, sexting, touching–involving sexual body parts.]

Taking action

- If you spot a spider, what should you do?
- If the first adult you tell doesn’t help you, then what should you do?
- Can you list some specific adults in your life whom you can tell if you spot a spider)? (Think about your parents, a friend’s parents, a trainer, a non-spider coach, a teacher, school counselor, or school nurse, your doctor...)
- Why is it important to name spider coaches?

Wrapping up

- What questions do you want to ask about spotting spiders?
- What ideas or feelings do you want to share about spotting spiders?
- Is there someone in your life who you think might be a spider?