

December 3, 2021

Sarah Hirshland, CEO, United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee
Susanne Lyons, Board Chair, United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee
USOPC Colorado Springs Headquarters
27 S Tejon St.
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Dear Ms. Hirshland and Ms. Lyons,

My name is Marci Hamilton, and I am the Founder & CEO of CHILD USA, an interdisciplinary think tank dedicated to the prevention of child abuse and neglect at the University of Pennsylvania, where I am a Professor in the Fels Institute of Government and a Senior Resident Fellow in the Program for Research on Religion. CHILD USA is the leading national nonprofit think tank dedicated to the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

I write to you today to request the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (“USOPC”) compel National Governing Bodies and the US Center for Safesport (“SafeSport”) to terminate their relationships with SportsEngine Inc. (“SportsEngine”) unless SportsEngine develops a better system to protect the privacy of their data on minor athletes.

SportsEngine is a youth sports management system for athletes, parents, coaches, and administrators. The software platform is housed in NBC Sports Next and has formal contracts with SafeSport and National Governing Bodies, including USA Volleyball.

I am deeply concerned about the safety of children whose information is disseminated through SportsEngine. The data privacy system of SportsEngine actively endangers children, and I request that you take immediate action to remedy this issue. According to a lawsuit filed against SportsEngine in September 2021, there are serious data privacy concerns with SportsEngine, namely that **SportsEngine allows individuals who are suspended or banned by SafeSport to potentially have access to all the data of minors within a Club.**

According to the lawsuit, filed by the Keystone Regional Volleyball Association (“KRVA”), USA Volleyball (“USAV”) President Jamie Davis issued a letter in August 2019 announcing that USAV would postpone launching SportsEngine’s Member Management System for one year “to provide a truly superior member management system” after Regional Volleyball Associations had expressed data privacy concerns to USAV.

When USAV started using SportsEngine a year later, the data privacy complaints of Regional Associations continued. The lawsuit alleges that KRVA notified USAV in October 2020 of privacy concerns regarding Brian Begor, an individual who was ruled as “Permanently Ineligible” by SafeSport due to sexual misconduct involving a minor, an intimate relationship with a minor, and emotional misconduct against a minor. **After his suspension, Begor still had a SportsEngine account with a KRVA member Club, and through the account could potentially access all the data of minors within that Club, including dates of birth, phone numbers, and home addresses.**

“We, in Keystone, live with the Jerry Sandusky memory. How many children could have been spared if action had been taken immediately after something was suspected? . . . Is Rick Butler back in the system now, too?” the October 20, 2020 email to USA Volleyball President & CEO and COO stated.

Before bringing this issue of youth safety to litigation, KRVA attempted to address the situation with the SafeSport directly, but on April 13, 2021 SafeSport told KRVA that SafeSport does not have the ability to dictate to the NGB to remedy the situation even if the technology is exposing children's information. Between November 2020 and April 2021, KRVA made a formal report to SafeSport, held meetings/phone conversations three times with SafeSport, and emailed SafeSport several times to address this issue, but SafeSport failed to act, claiming it was outside their jurisdiction.

Despite knowing that SportsEngine software reveals private information to child predators, USAV and SafeSport have refused to stop using SportsEngine and have taken no meaningful action to protect the privacy of children's data. Thus, I am calling on the USOPC to do so.

As the organization focused on protecting, supporting, and empowering America's athletes, and the organization governing SafeSport, I request that the USOPC immediately require NGBs and SafeSport to terminate their relationships with SportsEngine until and unless SportsEngine resolves the data privacy issues regarding the private information of minors.

Until this action is taken, your partnership with SportsEngine makes you complicit in the endangerment of children for whom you have the obligation to protect from harm.

Regards,



Marci A. Hamilton, Esq.
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Elizabeth Ramsey, United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee Athletes' Advisory Council, Executive Director
Senator Richard Blumenthal & Senator Jerry Moran, United States Senate

