

## Supervision: It's Not Just a Job, It's a Requirement

One cause of litigation frequently associated with gymnastics claims is a lack of supervision by coaches and owners. Typical claims include failure to properly supervise a student's activities while in a gym and failure to properly supervise gym-sponsored events.

*Risk Management in Sport and Recreation* states that you must provide adequate and reasonable measures to ensure the safety of children. Failure to adequately screen your staff can expose you to liability for failing to provide appropriate and adequate supervision. It is your responsibility to ensure that you do not hire coaches with a history of mentally or sexually abusing students; completing background checks on potential employees can help you make good employment decisions.

Supervisory activities must be performed with a high standard of professionalism and accountability. Have clear and well-documented expectations of anyone who serves in the capacity of supervisor. The *USA Gymnastics Risk Management Safety Handbook* provides some excellent guidelines for supervision. Incorporate periodic reviews of this policy in your staff meetings and hold staff accountable to these standards.

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If you have a safety or risk management question or a suggestion for a topic, please contact Markel's Risk Management Department at [safety1st@markelcorp.com](mailto:safety1st@markelcorp.com).