AQIU
AQUATICS INTEGRITY UNIT

Stages of grooming

1 TARGETING THE ATHLETE

Abusers will use their position of power to exploit an athlete's desire to excel in their sport.

2 GAINING TRUST

By providing calculated attention and support, abusers can lower suspicion and gain undue confidence from athletes and their caregivers – including even the most involved parents.

3 FULFILLING THEIR NEEDS

By giving small gifts, money, or attention, abusers endear themselves to an athlete while creating emotional dependency.

4 ISOLATING THE ATHLETE

Abusers want privacy and look for opportunities to be alone with an athlete. They may offer a ride home, private meetings, or extra one-on-one coaching.

5 SEXUALIZING THE RELATIONSHIP

Once dependence and trust have been built, abusers will introduce inappropriate behavior, gradually pushing and blurring boundaries until they no longer exist.

6 MAINTAINING CONTROL

Once abuse starts, abusers will use secrecy, threats, and manipulation to maintain the athlete's compliance and silence.

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