



Regional Communication: Body Confident Sport Program

We're excited to introduce the Body Confident Sport program in our nationwide club rollout starting this fall. In 2024, USA Volleyball received a two-year grant to implement this program within the sport of volleyball from the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation.

During Year 1, we implemented the program within our NTDP beach and indoor programs and conducted a pilot program to create “best practice” recommendations for implementing this program at the club level. Many thanks to the Heart of America, WEVA, and Palmetto regions for participating in this pilot program.

Based on lessons learned and grant support, we're excited to announce a **nationwide club contest program** that encourages clubs and teams to embrace and implement the Body Confident Sport program with their teams. Prior to this announcement and these details going public, we would like to introduce the tenets of the contest program and provide FAQ information so you can feel equipped to promote this program within your region and answer any questions that may come your way.

Here is the link for teams to register: <https://survey.sogolytics.com/r/Hwz0a8>

What is Body Confident Sport and why is it important for our female athletes?

Body Confident Sport is a program that was developed by top researchers within the space of body image in sport - the Centre for Appearance Research ([Centre for Appearance Research \(CAR\) - Research centres and groups | UWE Bristol](#)) and the Tucker Center for Research on Girls and Women in Sport ([Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sport \(umn.edu\)](#)).

For more direct information on how the program was developed and to access the Body Confident Sport curriculum, please visit the program website: <https://bit.ly/49iCCUX>

Research from the Tucker Center and Centre for Appearance Research reflects that one of the top reasons female youth athletes leave sport is related to body image concerns. This program was created with the intention of creating a safe, effective intervention to change the culture and conversation around the female body in sport. This topic is particularly important to the sport of volleyball where the uniform and climates in which females compete can lead to reinforcement of negative body image stereotypes and excessive body related comments. We have the opportunity to shift this culture as key stakeholders (club directors, coaches) with programs like Body Confident Sport.



Summary Details of USA Volleyball's Body Confident Sport Contest Program

USA Volleyball is excited to **open registration on October 6** to the Body Confident Sport Contest Program for the 2025-26 club season. The contest program will have two parts for each coach/team that participates:

1. Implement the Body Confident Sport (BCS) curriculum with your team.
 - a. As an incentive to participants to be some of the first teams and clubs to opt in to the competition, we are offering the **first 80 eligible clubs that sign up AND complete all of the conditions a participation award** - a new travel ball bag, six new balls and a hand pump - as a thank you.
 - i. Note: Signing up early alone is not sufficient to get the participation award. All conditions for implementing the program itself (as noted below) are required to remain eligible (i.e., if #29 that signed up did NOT complete all conditions of eligibility, #81 who signed up would be the next in line to get the participation award).
2. Find a creative and impactful way to weave the Body Confident Sport objectives into your team culture.
 - a. As an incentive to participants **for BOTH conducting the BCS program AND finding creative and impactful ways to implement BCS values into their team, we are offering five "best practice" awards** - a comprehensive equipment bundle (e.g., balls, ball carts, nets).
 - i. Note: Everyone who implements the BCS curriculum will remain eligible for these five "best practice" awards. However, a team cannot receive BOTH (e.g., if you are a winner of the "best practice" awards, you will not get a participation award as well). Winners will be decided upon by an independent panel and a rubric for evaluation.

For full details on the required components of the program, please see below.

Part 1: Implement the BCS program with your team

Part I is required to remain eligible for participation awards (if within the first 80 to sign up).

- I. Complete the BCS coach facilitator training (BCS website) and submit proof of completion (screenshot of the final page is appropriate) **with registration**. This is free and publicly available: <https://bit.ly/49iCCUX>



- II. Complete the registration and agree to the USA Volleyball terms and conditions: <https://survey.sogolytics.com/r/Hwz0a8> All registrants must be confirmed coach members for the 2025-2026 competitive season and must have athletes who are confirmed members for the 2025-26 competitive season. The team must belong to a USAV-affiliated club in good standing with the organization.
- III. Conduct the three BCS sessions (all curricular materials are publicly available on the BCS website) with their team at some point between Nov. 10, 2025-Jan. 7, 2026. At the end of the last session, coaches will build in time and provide instructions to athletes to complete the athlete participant survey. Coach facilitators will ALSO need to fill out a survey with their own feedback on the program (coach participant survey). **To remain eligible for the award consideration, coaches will need to complete the athlete and coach surveys by Jan. 7, 2026.**

*The coach and athlete surveys will be offered through the Sogolytics platform. **Note: Athletes have always and will continue to be given the chance to opt out of the BCS program if they are concerned about their mental health as it pertains to the program's content. An athlete opting out of the program will not affect the team's eligibility for any program awards.***

Part II: Creative and impactful implementation of BCS values with your team

Part I AND Part II are required to remain eligible for five “best practice” awards.

- IV. Complete ALL parts of the BCS implementation with their team before Jan. 7.
- V. Come up with fun, creative and impactful ways to implement the concepts/ideas of this program into their team culture during the competitive season. They will document this application of the BCS core values with their team.
- VI. Submit their “proof” of creative implementation (videos, photos, impact statements) to the submission website by Feb. 14, 2026. **All submissions MUST follow the submission naming guidelines provided to remain eligible for the five “best practice” awards.** The contest will be judged by an independent panel with no direct involvement with the Body Confident Sport grant or affiliation to a USAV club.

Note: The submission proof may be used/made public by USA Volleyball to celebrate the teams and clubs who participated in this program (winners and non-winners alike).



Frequently Asked Questions

Please contact Dr. Lauren Walker, Manager of Athlete Development (lauren.walker@usav.org) if you have additional questions that are not covered in the FAQ below. Lauren is heading the grant implementation, so she is the first line for questions on the program. If Lauren is unavailable, you can direct questions to Dr. Jenny Johnson, Director of Education Services (jenny.johnson@usav.org).

General FAQ on the Body Confident Sport Program

Where can I find more information about the Body Confident Sport program development and curriculum?

All information on the Body Confident Sport program's history and development by the Tucker Center and Centre for Appearance Research can be found on their publicly available website: <https://bit.ly/49iCCUX>. (We encourage you to use this specific USA Volleyball UTM to access the website, as it helps track traffic to the website from our stakeholders, for grant purposes; however, you can also be directed to the website by their main URL: <https://www.bodyconfident sport.com/>).

Does this program contain conversation that could be potentially triggering my athletes?

Yes. While the BCS program does not include an explicit trigger warning on the material, we have created a parent and athlete communication about the material that you, as coaches and club directors, can use in implementing this program that contains a trigger warning.

The material does not explicitly address triggering topics (e.g., eating disorders, body dysmorphia); however, the creators and our NGB recognize that even peripheral discussion on the topic of body image can trigger these thoughts in our athletes who may currently or have previously struggled with these mental health issues.

While rare, the disclosure of these topics may happen. We are offering communications tools to assist you, and any athlete who has concerns about their mental well-being on the topic may opt out of the discussions without affecting your team's eligibility for contest awards.



What is a trigger warning, and why might I need to communicate this to parents and athletes?

A trigger warning is a short statement that appears before content that may be sensitive in nature. They are presented as a courtesy to the participant to allow them the choice to engage with the content based upon whether they believe that content could be harmful to their mental health.

Given that body image comments in sport can affect how an athlete views their own self-image and trigger previous mental health struggles, there is a trigger warning placed on this program that we recommend asking athletes and parents to review to guide the conversation and their consent to participate.

How is the program designed?

There are two elements that are critical to the effective implementation of the program, as designed:

1. Facilitators of the program should complete the BCS Coach Facilitator training. This provides facilitators with an understanding of the research behind the program and ways to effectively implement the program with your team. This training includes three modules, with each module taking 15-20 minutes to complete.
2. The Body Confident Sport curriculum is a 3 x 1 hour set of discussions pertaining to body image and body talk within sport. The BCS researchers developed a step-by-step facilitator guide to leading these discussions that allows the facilitation to be effective and easy. All BCS program resources are publicly available on the BCS website for your download and use.

USA Volleyball Contest FAQ

The program sounds great- how do I officially register?

The program registration runs from Oct. 6- Nov. 7, 2025. Register here: <https://survey.sogolytics.com/r/Hwz0a8> The registration link will be shared with regions and all members in a direct email communication and linked to all promotions of the program on social media throughout this timeline.

Note: Only ONE coach for a team needs to complete the registration. One registration form per team; multiple teams within a club may participate. The registration will require that you submit proof of having completed the BCS coach facilitator training (screen shot of the end screen/certificate) BEFORE completing your registration. As such, please account for this taking ~1 hour of your time before officially registering your team.



Is there an issue with a male coach facilitating this program with his female team?

No! The Body Confident Sport facilitator training was designed to equip coaches of any gender to facilitate the program with their team. However, if you are a male coach that wants this program implemented with your team but feel uncomfortable facilitating the program directly yourself or feel it would be better received by a female facilitator, we have created resources that can help you ask for this support within your club. If this is the case, we do still require that you complete the facilitation training as part of registering your team (and believe it's great coach professional development!) so you understand the program and how to uniquely implement the values of the program within your team.

If I am NOT one of the first 80 coaches/teams to sign up for the program, am I still eligible for the one of the five "best practice" awards at the end of the program?

Yes! The participation awards are being given as an incentive to sign up and commit to implementing the program early. However, let's say you are #256 to sign up- you will NOT receive a participation award; however, by completing all elements of the program, your team remains eligible for consideration of the awards being given for the most creative and impactful ways in which the program was implemented into your club culture. We also want to equally celebrate ALL teams that choose to participate in this program through publicity and recognition to your team.

Are there any funds to support implementing the program (e.g., getting athletes dinner, space rental)?

Unfortunately, no. However, we believe there may be several options available to help provide you this "structural" support to implementing the three sessions that could be creatively explored within your region or club. As such, we encourage you to discuss these possibilities at that level.

I have never facilitated a program like this before and I feel unsure about doing it well, even with the BCS resources provided. Are there any additional resources that will be available to me?

Yes! Through the process of implementing this program with our NTDP programs and the club pilot program, we have developed a robust set of resources that will be found on USA Volleyball's Body Confident Sport website (which will launch by the registration deadline of Nov. 7). This digital "toolkit" includes things such as:

- Parent and athlete communications about the program
- Lessons learned thus far from implementing with volleyball athletes
- Resources for club directors to help support the program
- Facilitation "best practices"



Additionally, USA Volleyball educational staff are available, if needed, to answer questions you have directly about the program. As a participant, you will receive periodic communications from Dr. Lauren Walker, the Manager of Athlete Development, who will provide reminders on the program's deadlines. You are always welcome to direct specific questions to Lauren directly or to the wider Education Services team.

How can I ensure I don't forget about program deadlines?

You will receive periodic email reminders of upcoming deadlines to remain eligible in the program three times nearing every critical date (two weeks out, one week out, day before). Those critical dates are:

- January 7 (deadline to finish conducting the 3 x 1-hour BCS sessions and have coach and athlete surveys filled out)
- February 14 (deadline to submit your "proof" of creative/effective implementation of BCS values into your own program)

If you do not receive these emails regarding the program, please contact Dr. Lauren Walker (lauren.walker@usav.org) or Dr. Jenny Johnson (jenny.johnson@usav.org) ASAP.

We encourage you to put all dates listed in the registration into your calendar and set appropriate reminders.

If I am one of the first 80 to sign up and complete all aspects of the program to keep me eligible for the participation award, when will I receive confirmation that my team is receiving this award?

After the January 7 deadline has passed OR as soon as you complete all parts of the program required before the January 7 deadline (i.e., if you complete all parts on December 2, you will receive quicker confirmation).

Participation awards will be sent out directly to the club, in bulk, to those that qualify no later than March 31, 2026. Coaches and clubs will be notified when these have been sent.

If I am one of the five "best practice" award winners, when will I receive confirmation that my team is receiving this award?

You will receive notification after the panel has chosen the five winners (by March 15, 2026). Each of these teams will have their teams featured in a TBD way with our Marketing, Communications, and Creative department. Awards will be sent out directly to the club no later than March 31, 2026. Coaches and clubs will be notified when these have been sent.