

To the USTA Tennis Community,

This is a particularly exciting time for tennis at every level of the sport. Once again in 2022, we've seen increased growth in participation, as more people in more places discover the unparalleled life-enhancing benefits of our great game. It is indeed an honor and a privilege for both of us to lead this association into a new year so full of promise and potential for continued success. We believe in and feel energized by our mission – to grow the game of tennis. We have many areas to focus on to maximize our mission, but we are writing today about one area that is very important to us; one that is, without doubt, equally important to you as well.

In order to continue to keep our game growing strong, we need to do everything in our power to ensure the safety of our players by creating a tennis environment of trust, respect, and zero tolerance for any aspects of violence against tennis athletes. From our most junior athletes to our high school and collegiate athletes to pro athletes and beyond – we must make safety our foundation to every aspect of tennis play. This is an unwavering commitment under our watch. Today, we wanted to share how our organization is further enhancing our longstanding effort to facilitate safety in tennis and how we need your help to continue to embrace this critical work.

As the national governing body for tennis in the United States, the USTA is committed to promoting safe and respectful environments for athletes in which to thrive. “Safe Play” is our comprehensive athlete safety program, consisting of education, screening, reporting tools and policies for appropriate conduct in tennis. Long before it was standard practice for sports governing bodies, the USTA was providing recommendations regarding background screens and other means to provide a safe environment for young athletes to be successful. Since that time, we have formalized these practices by launching Safe Play and we continue to evolve the program to include stricter standards and the latest information on how to recognize and prevent all aspects of psychological, physical and sexual violence in sport. This includes annual training for all USTA staff and Board of Directors, as well as all Sectional Association staff and Boards of Directors and Subdivisions of Sectional Associations staff and Boards of Directors.

Our Safe Play program is integrated into how we do business, with a growing team focused on athlete safety each day who regularly collaborate with the U.S. Center for SafeSport and the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee to ensure that our Safe Play policies, procedures and educational resources are first-class. In fact, the U.S. Center for SafeSport has conducted three independent audits of the USTA Safe Play program and we have always received strong marks for our program. Their insight as a third party is critical and we are thankful for their input so that we know that we are doing all we can to support a zero-tolerance environment for our athletes.

We are proud to say that as of December 2022, 21,900 adults in our USTA community are now Safe Play approved -- a 21% increase from 2021. We want to thank the nearly 14,000 of you who renewed in 2022, as well as the nearly 8,000 newly Safe Play-approved adults in our USTA community. Your commitment to athlete safety is essential to providing the type of environment in which our kids can thrive while developing a love for the game. If you have yet to complete the Safe Play approval process, which includes training on how to identify misconduct and what

to do about it, we strongly encourage you to visit www.usta.com/safeplay to take the time to do so.

In 2023, we will have a strong focus on educating and training our parents and athletes on how to recognize psychological, physical and sexual violence, ensuring that they are aware of the robust support tools and resources we have available. We want both parents and kids to feel that the tennis environment and tennis stakeholders protect and embrace our most sacred asset – our developing tennis players. We encourage parents to review the resources we have available to them via our Safe Play program and reach out to their section leads if they ever have a question or a concern.

There is unequivocal evidence that victims of psychological, physical and sexual violence become scarred for life. The sporting community – and indeed the world – is grateful to the brave athletes who have spoken out about their abusers. It is now up to us to do everything possible to prevent such atrocities from happening again. For that reason, we have created the following **call to action** for each one of us across the USTA:

Be committed and vigilant about player safety and wellness. In 2023, we will focus on leveraging our network of Sectional Associations and their relationships with clubs, facilities, and locally administered programs to enhance our overall Safe Play program objectives. We know that facilitating a strong partnership and creating allies across all facilities, clubs, and program delivery systems will help support and prioritize Safe Play across the tennis industry and allow us to reach even more individuals while creating an extended and interconnected environment of safety and trust.

We want to thank you again for being part of the USTA community. We're excited for a strong 2023, because we know that we can accomplish great things when we work together for a common goal.

Sincerely,

Brian Hainline & Lew Sherr