



Aly Raisman Partners with *Darkness to Light* to Provide Immediate Training and Support to Gymnastics Community

Launches Campaign to #FlipTheSwitch on Child Sexual Abuse in Youth Sports

BOSTON, MA / CHARLESTON, SC (March 7, 2018) **Aly Raisman** today announced a new partnership with ***Darkness to Light***, the nation’s leading advocate for the prevention of child sexual abuse, to provide immediate support to the gymnastics community and to begin work on a comprehensive program to help young athletes everywhere participate in a safe and abuse-free environment.

The partnership was inspired by the many people who have voiced concern to Raisman about the lack of support and attention being devoted to the issue of sexual abuse within the sport, particularly at the grassroots level. Adult education is vital to athlete safety, and Raisman and Darkness to Light are committed to ***“Flip the Switch”*** on abuse in youth sports. The ***#FlipTheSwitch*** campaign calls for all adults involved in youth sports to complete Darkness to Light’s ***Stewards of Children***[®] training, which is widely recognized as the leading, evidence-informed child sexual abuse prevention program in the country.

“To address this terrible problem, we all need to be willing to confront it head-on,” said Raisman. “Sexual abuse is something that needs to be discussed openly — especially now — given the challenges our sport is facing, and all adults should become educated as to how to prevent it. Ignoring the issue, in hopes that it goes away, is unacceptable. Athlete safety must be the highest priority.”

One in 10 children will experience sexual abuse before their 18th birthday, which Darkness to Light estimates there are 42 million adult survivors in the United States. To date, *Stewards of Children*[®] has trained more than 1.5 million adults in 50 states and 17 countries, but unfortunately, relatively few adults within the gymnastics community have completed the program.

“The recent events surrounding USA Gymnastics has shown that we must direct a bright spotlight on this issue that for too long has been shrouded in darkness and stigma,” stated Katelyn Brewer, President and CEO of Darkness to Light. “Sexual abuse prevention is the responsibility of all adults, not children. We are privileged to be working with Aly on addressing this silent epidemic. Aly has made it very clear to us that this needs to happen immediately, and she has committed her support to make the [online](#) program free to all participants who use the FLIPTHESWITCH code.”



To jumpstart the campaign, Raisman is challenging parents, coaches, and all other adults involved in youth sports across the country to visit www.fliptheswitchcampaign.org, use the VIP code FLIPTHESWITCH, complete the program, and become trained to protect children.

Raisman’s message is clear. “Please, join me in this effort to make sport safer by completing this important program, as I have done. I will personally sign each and every certificate of completion. It is so important for this to happen now. By acting together, we can change the culture of sport.”

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ABOUT DARKNESS TO LIGHT

Darkness to Light is a nonprofit organization committed to empowering adults to prevent child sexual abuse. They believe that protecting children is of paramount importance and that it is an adult responsibility to do so. They empower adults through comprehensive educational programs that teach them how to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to child sexual abuse.

Their *Stewards of Children*® training is an evidence-informed, two-hour online or group facilitator led session which takes participants through “5 Steps to Protecting Our Children™.” These steps, which are the foundation of all its programming, are to: 1) Learn the Facts 2) Minimize Opportunity 3) Talk About It 4) Recognize the Signs and 5) React Responsibly. Adults should always act in the best interest of the child, which in the case of suspected abuse, involves reporting directly to authorities.

Follow Darkness to Light on Facebook: [DarknesstoLight](https://www.facebook.com/DarknesstoLight) Twitter: [@Darkness2Light](https://twitter.com/Darkness2Light) and Instagram: [@D2Lorg](https://www.instagram.com/D2Lorg) or visit www.D2L.org.

ABOUT ALY RAISMAN

A leader on and off the floor, Aly Raisman uses her platform to promote positive body image and encourages everyone to be comfortable and confident in their own skin. In her New York Times best-selling memoir, – *Fierce* – she shares the highs and lows of her journey, including her survival of sexual abuse. Inspired by an army of survivors, Raisman continues her advocacy for systematic changes within the sport of gymnastics and efforts to help to eradicate sexual abuse in youth sports.

Follow Aly on Twitter: [@Aly_Raisman](https://twitter.com/Aly_Raisman) and Instagram/Facebook: [@AlyRaisman](https://www.instagram.com/AlyRaisman)

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