

United States Equestrian Federation Creates a Culture of Trust with RealResponse

Anonymous Reporting Tool Helps Build a Safe Space for Equestrian Athletes

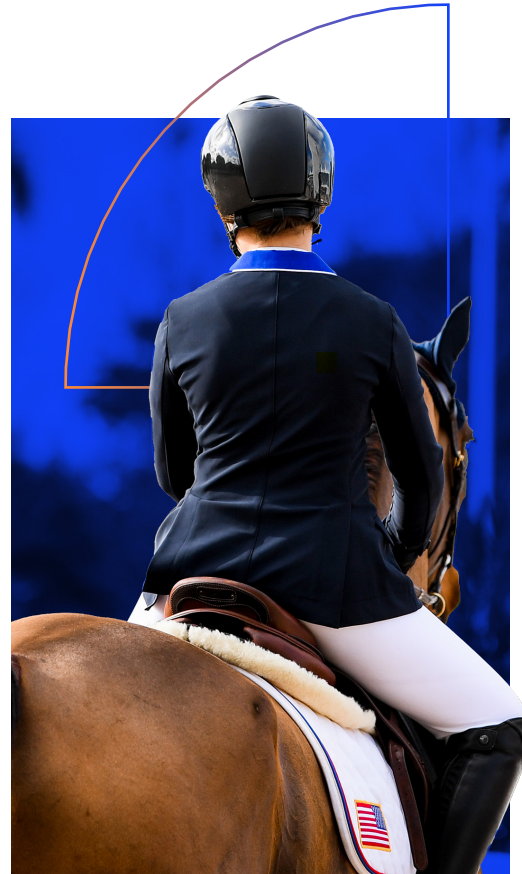
For Sonja Keating, Chief Operating Officer and General Counsel for the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF), creating a safe, anonymous reporting and feedback structure was vital to the success of the equestrian community. US Equestrian, the National Governing Body (NGB) for Equestrian Sport, has promoted a culture of excellence and safety for human and equine athletes alike since its inception, but when it came time to expand their confidential reporting system, RealResponse had the technology they needed.

“We were looking for a way to remove as many barriers to reporting as possible in order to provide equestrians a safe place to report misconduct,” said Keating, who has been associated with US Equestrian for nearly two decades. With three daughters who participated in multi sports growing up, she is heavily invested in the safety and well-being of the athletes and community at large.

Previously, the only way to report issues or provide other feedback was via telephone or email, which did not offer sufficient source anonymity for reporting parties. Fear of retaliation or repercussions presented difficulties in obtaining the necessary information to open an investigation on concerns raised about athlete abuse and horse health issues. Without the reassurance of privacy, follow-up or even initial reporting could feel too risky.

Leading the safeguarding program at US Equestrian since its inception, Keating understands the importance of removing barriers to anonymous reporting. “I heard about RealResponse from another NGB who implemented the platform for their national team members and how it built rapport within their community and offered choices for how to share information.”

RealResponse is dedicated to sparking positive behaviors and cultural change by elevating all voices with its real-time, anonymous information exchange. Submitting issues via QR codes, text messages, email, and WhatsApp anytime, anywhere, makes the reporting process easier and faster than traditional analog versions.



Andrea Evans/US Equestrian

US Equestrian COO & General Counsel Sonja Keating has been actively involved in the safe sport movement since its inception and was devoted to creating a safeguarding program for USEF. She continues to work closely with the [U.S. Center for SafeSport](#)—a national organization serving athletes in the Olympic and Paralympic community. The center provides training resources and best practices for coaches, athletes, and parents to foster respect and prevent abuse. In addition, the center responds and resolves allegations of sexual abuse.

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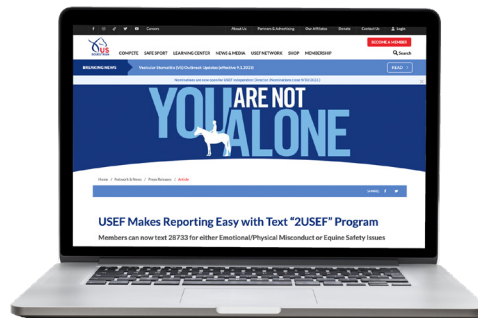
—SONJA KEATING, US EQUESTRIAN'S CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER AND GENERAL COUNSEL

Implementing RealResponse Technology Across the Organization

The encrypted, two-way communication offered by RealResponse is what US Equestrian needed to further their mission to provide access to and increase participation in equestrian sports at all levels by ensuring fairness, safety, and enjoyment.

US Equestrian rolled out the RealResponse platform to its entire membership with the following tools and technologies:

- » A portal to anonymously share information that is reviewed by a designated administrator.
- » Signage at events with information on Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies and instructions on how to report issues.
- » A reporting page on the US Equestrian website and in the Equestrian Weekly newsletter.



Looking to a Future of Transparency, Integrity with High-Tech Help

With a team of former student-athletes, professional athletes, senior athletics department administrators, and pro sports executives, RealResponse's goal of creating long-lasting positive sports experiences aligned with US Equestrian's vision for improvement.

Keating is pleased with the results so far and expects the platform will lead to an increase in reports, responses, and resolutions. Managing the volume of reports was an initial concern that turned out to have little impact due to the system's ease of use and information flows among administrators. With participant trust earned through prior engagement with the platform, USEF opened the platform to other types of reporting, including equine health and abuse.

Building trust between a membership and the governing body is paramount to the integrity of an organization, and RealResponse's advanced technology has provided the necessary tools to US Equestrian. Two-way, anonymous communication ensures reporters that their identity will be protected, and the administrator is able to conduct thorough interviews to obtain more information than before.

“We are truly committed to the safety and integrity of our participants, and especially our minor athletes. With the utilization of RealResponse, we now know we have a reliable platform that protects the anonymity of the reporting party while affording our staff the opportunity to communicate with them in a confidential manner.”

With RealResponse, US Equestrian can be sure that every voice is heard.



See what this game-changing platform can do for your organization.
RealResponse.com