

Abuse of a child is an unforgivable and inhumane crime.

I had a family member endure the pain of repeated sexual abuse by his trusted priest. My brother was never able to win the battle over depression caused by the abuse, and he eventually committed suicide.

I saw the unthinkable harm inflicted by such acts. I all too well understand firsthand the terrible things that come from abuse. Lifelong feelings of confusion, pain, embarrassment, guilt, betrayal, abandonment and distrust lead to a difficult future for most victims. I also understand the importance of preventing this from happening to any child

As a coach or an employer of coaches, you are the beloved and trusted people the children look up to each day. You can be a part of the prevention solution. Consider Joining "Darkness to Light" <http://www.d2l.org/> and learn all of the signs of abuse. Learn how to talk to children about the issue and report any issues you notice. Don't put any possible consequences of reporting ahead of the protection of a child. If you see something! Say something! Take the issue seriously each day.

DGS and our *Keep Kids Safe* program has been a supporter of USA Gymnastics previous Clubs Cares Program and the educational programs which came with it. We now fully support the new *Safe Sport* partnership between USA Gymnastics and the US Olympic Committee and all of its safe sport programs including those regarding this difficult issue.

DGS will continue to support and sponsor USA Gymnastics education initiatives. We will continue to sponsor the US National Team in their quest to be the best athletes they can be. Safely helping these athletes to reach their goals of representing their country and the sport they love.

A partnership with *Darkness to Light* has been a positive way to make an impact in the prevention of sexual abuse of children.

Safety in gymnastics does not only come by placing the soft mat under the athletes landing. Sometimes it requires so much more.

Please do your part and protect children.

John Deary

VP

Deary's Gymnastics Supply