



***Safety in Sport - Focus Group Report***  
***Government of British Columbia and viaSport BC***

***October 4 2023***

***Respectfully submitted by Nadia Kyba, MSW, RSW***

***Now What Facilitation***

## **Introduction to Now What Facilitation Inc. and Nadia Kyba, MSW, RSW.**

*Now What Facilitation Inc.*

Our team of facilitators has extensive expertise and experience in the fields of conflict management, instructional practice, meeting facilitation, and investigative interviewing. With over 25 years of working in conflict management, our involvement spans across the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors. Our clients include sports associations (coaches, administrators, volunteers, and team members), educators, law enforcement, health professionals, psychologists, social workers and families.

*Nadia Kyba, MSW, RSW - Founder and President of Now What Facilitation Inc.*

Nadia has worked in the field of Alternative Dispute Resolution for 25 years. Within the Provincial Child Welfare system, Nadia worked as a social worker, team leader, collaborative practice facilitator, and practice consultant. She has extensive experience facilitating dispute resolution for a wide variety of cultural groups, including extensive work with Indigenous communities. Nadia's passion for training and conflict management led her to found the company Now What Facilitation, where workshops are designed and facilitated for businesses, not-for-profits, and sports associations to address individual and group conflicts. She is a regular instructor at the Justice Institute of British Columbia, where she trains social workers and law enforcement professionals in foundational skills such as conflict management and forensic interviewing.

Nadia is an Adjunct Professor at the University of British Columbia in the School of Social Work. She has several publications, including "THIS IS HOW WE ROLL: A Coach's Guide to Transforming Conflict into High Performance" and two workbooks: "THIS IS HOW WE ROLL: Team Building Through Conflict Management in the Workplace WORKBOOK" and "THIS IS HOW WE ROLL: Team Building Through Conflict Management in the Workplace WORKBOOK." Nadia believes that involvement in organized sports can have a significant impact on the lives of children and adults.

Since 2021, Nadia has served as the Safeguarding Liaison at viaSport BC. In this capacity, Nadia and her team support designated sports organizations in British Columbia provide safety for their participants through conflict management training, conflict coaching, and facilitated mediations.

Since 2021, Nadia has been named an Expert with the US Anti-Doping Agency's True Sport Program, where she provides speaking engagements, interviews, resource development, articles, and video resources to support National-level Coach and Athlete development in the United States. Her work has been featured by USA Basketball, USA Water Polo, USA Swimming, USA Figure Skating, USA Ski and Snowboard, and USA Lacrosse.

Nadia is a registered Social Worker with the British Columbia College of Social Work.

## Introduction

According to the Government of British Columbia (2023), the Province and viaSport are improving safety in sports by continuing to provide education about safe sport, and by taking steps toward an independent complaints process for B.C.'s amateur sport sector. This investment empowers viaSport to work alongside the government and the designated sport sector to enhance a culture of positivity, openness and safety.

Currently, we find ourselves in the consultation and engagement phase of this initiative. An integral aspect of constructing an effective system is to provide individuals from diverse backgrounds and perspectives with an opportunity to contribute valuable insights. To accomplish this goal, focus group sessions were conducted by Now What Facilitation throughout September 2023, in an online environment. We gathered input from individuals engaged in various roles within organized sports, including athletes, parents, guardians, coaches, program leaders, board members, administrators, referees and sport services staff.

These sessions were open to anyone affiliated with a [Designated Sport Organization in BC](#), at both the club and provincial levels.

## Purpose

To understand the perspectives and insights of individuals from various backgrounds within the designated sports community in British Columbia.

## Recruitment Methodology

### 1. Expression of Interest

- a. The [Expression of Interest](#) application was disseminated by viaSport through various channels, including:
  - i. The viaSport Connector newsletter
  - ii. Charlene Krepiakevich's CEO Message emails sent to designated organization leaders
  - iii. Direct emails to individuals with access to various types of participants (for example: Canadian Sport Institute Pacific's Director of Health and Performance Services, BC Recreation and Parks Association, Surrey Immigration Partnership, viaSport Learning Facilitators).

viaSport aimed to promote it exclusively within the designated sector, and requested that those who received direct emails only forward the invitation to a select group of individuals involved in designated sports organizations whom they believed could provide valuable input.

- b. Chosen participants were offered \$100 honorarium in the form of a gift card which would be sent after the completion of their session.
- c. The expression of Interest application was available from August 20, 2023 to September 8, 2023.

- d. Five sessions were offered at various times of the day as well as a mix between weekdays and weekends. This was intended to accommodate diverse home, work and sports schedules.

## 2. Selection Process

- a. Three hundred and seventy-four Expressions of Interest applications were received.
- b. Five groups were established (athletes, parents/guardians, coaches/program leaders, board members/administrators, referees/sport services staff, and participants were carefully selected to fill eight spots in each group.
- c. The population of focus groups consisted of individuals aged thirteen through sixty-four who are part of Provincial Sports Organizations residing in British Columbia, Canada.
- d. To ensure diversity, the groups were intentionally chosen to include people from a wide range of backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives. We made an effort to include people of different gender identities, ethnicities, ages, and abilities to foster creativity, expand perspectives, and promote inclusivity.
- e. Availability and completion of the application were additional factors involved in the selection process.
- f. Of the 374 Expressions of Interest received, 51 were excluded as they answered "no" to the question: "Are you from a Provincial Sport Organization or one of their affiliated clubs?" Forty-five were excluded because, in response to the question "What city or town do you live in?" a location outside of British Columbia was identified.
- g. On September 10, 2023, emails were sent out to selected participants inviting them to take part in a session. Three "back-up" participants were also chosen for each session.
- h. Selected participants were asked to confirm acceptance and to complete a consent form [linked here](#). Participants under the age of 19 were asked to have a guardian complete their consent form.

## Focus Groups Sessions

1. A main facilitator and co-facilitator were used for each session. The facilitator's role was to share information and engage participants in a discussion. The co-facilitator was there to confirm consent forms, assist participants with technology issues, ensure the participants who were on hold were able to enter the room and to document the discussion.
2. A standardized system was used for each focus group session. The focus group session agenda included:
  - a. Land acknowledgement
  - b. Introductions
  - c. Review of Session Agenda
  - d. Group Guidelines
    - i. *Ask for clarification before assuming another person's intent*
    - ii. *Be polite, respectful and patient*
    - iii. *Be curious; seek to understand*
    - iv. *Own your intention and impact*
    - v. *Invite and honour diversity of opinion*

- vi. *Refer to people and groups by the names and pronouns they prefer*
- vii. *Whatever you share will not be traced back to you*
- e. Why are we running the Groups?
  - i. We're working on creating a new way for people to raise concerns and complain about harmful behaviours in sport in British Columbia. We want to listen to a wide range of people who might use this new process in the future so that we build a system everyone trusts and feels safe using. We're running 5 groups including: Athletes, Coaches, Sports Leaders, Administrators, Referees, Support Services Staff and Parents/Guardians
- f. [A link](#) to the June 20, 2023 Government news release was provided in the chat at this time to support understanding of the initiative background.
- g. How are we using the information?
  - i. Record on Zoom, Menti and take notes
  - ii. No identifying information will be used.
  - iii. Information summarized into overall findings
  - iv. Findings to help us create a new process for complaints about behaviour in sport
  - v. We will share our findings with all of the focus group participants, as well as with those who are involved with the project
- h. Trial of the Menti platform with fun question
  - i. Six questions answered on Menti platform
  - j. Group Discussion
  - k. What else are you wondering about?

## Information Gathering

Information was collected during each session in 4 ways.

1. Recording on the zoom platform
2. Transcription by the zoom platform
3. Co-Facilitator Notes
4. Written answers on Mentimeter.com

## Challenges and Other Considerations

One of the primary challenges encountered during these sessions was related to the usage of technology. Throughout each session, several participants faced difficulties with the audio on the Zoom platform. Additionally, participants occasionally entered and exited the meetings, citing connectivity issues, while others did not respond when offered assistance. These connectivity issues affected the overall session attendance, and as a result, the number of participants per session fluctuated, impacting the intended goal of having eight participants with three on standby. This variability in attendance may have been distracting for other participants. Despite instructing participants to join via computer in their confirmation emails to facilitate the use of both the Zoom and Menti platforms, it is possible that some participants joined using their smartphones which would have created a challenge. Furthermore, on a few occasions, participants mentioned that they couldn't use audio due to their locations, possibly when they were calling in from work or home.

Additionally, participants were encouraged to turn on their cameras during the sessions. Regrettably, despite the request, participants almost universally chose not to turn on their cameras, relying solely on oral and written communication. This form of communication was problematic since crucial non-verbal cues, such as body language, were missed during interactions (Thompson, 2011). Despite all participants seemingly having English as their first language, there was a diversity of accents among them. The absence of non-verbal cues during the sessions occasionally posed a challenge in understanding the dialogue.

### Rationale for Not Insisting on Camera Usage

The decision not to insist on participants turning on their cameras was influenced by a substantial body of research (Gabriel, Robertson, & Shockley, 2021) examining the impact of having cameras on or off during online meetings. Individuals often opt to keep their cameras off during Zoom sessions for various reasons including privacy concerns, being uncomfortable sharing appearance or living space and noise. Technical problems such as poor internet connectivity or hardware issues can also hinder effective camera usage which may have been experienced by our participants.

### Focus Group Session Data

Group 1: Coaches and Program Leaders

Lead Facilitator: Nadia Kyba, MSW, RSW; Co-Facilitator: Julia Wilson, B.Kin, B.Ed.

September 12 2023 6:00-7:30 pm

# of Participants: 10

*"The service handling the complaint should be a neutral third party. (They) should be clearly independent from any sports organization, ensuring impartiality. The complaint process should be (an) easily accessed service, confidential, familiar with the process. The process should be fair, timely, (with) appeal processes. (It should be) transparent, have authority and legitimacy."*

(Session participant in response to the question: *What would make you comfortable coming forward with a complaint to a new independent service?*)

### Question 1: What is the best way to communicate with you about initiatives like this?

Participants shared various preferences regarding communication methods. A substantial number favoured email communication, because of its effectiveness and privacy. Some participants suggested that a follow-up via text message after an initial email would be helpful in case the email went to the junk folder. Additionally, a few participants proposed the use of webinars and social media platforms. One participant mentioned that subscribing to newsletters would be their preferred method.

### Question 2: Who would you go to if you had a concern or a complaint about you or someone else being harmed in a sport?

Participants identified various individuals they would turn to in case of concerns or complaints. Coaches were the most common response. Sports administrators, including sport executives and team managers, were also mentioned as individuals to whom

participants would report. Reporting to the governing body of the sport was another response. In a school context, participants indicated that they would consider reporting such concerns to the school administration, although this fell slightly outside the focus group's primary scope.

**Question 3: What would make you comfortable coming forward with a complaint to a new independent service?**

Participants emphasized several factors that would contribute to their comfort in coming forward with a complaint. Establishing a non-biased, fair, and objective system from the outset was considered crucial. Participants stressed the importance of confidentiality for their complaints and highlighted the need for a supportive and empathetic environment for complainants. Additionally, quick and effective actions and responses to complaints were factors that would increase their comfort level. Participants also expressed the importance of a proven track record and open communication channels in factors that would enhance trust.

**Question 4: What might make you hesitate to contact a complaints service if you had a complaint?**

Participants shared their concerns and hesitations about reaching out to a complaints service. Fear of retaliation was a significant concern, as participants worried about potential negative consequences. Some participants mentioned hesitating if they had doubts about the validity of their complaint. Negative past experiences with any complaint service was identified as a potential deterrent. Additionally, participants might hesitate if they perceived the complaints procedure as lengthy or overly complicated, which could discourage them from using the service.

**Question 5: What could this service do to earn your confidence?**

To earn confidence in the service, participants identified several key factors. First and foremost, demonstrating a commitment to taking complaints seriously was discussed as a confidence-building measure. Participants stressed the importance of maintaining professionalism and objectivity. Ensuring confidentiality in identities and complaint details was another factor in building trust. Providing feedback on complaint outcomes and maintaining open communication channels were also viewed as essential in earning confidence.

**Question 6: What else should we consider when building this new complaint service?**

Participants provided insights into various aspects to consider when developing the new complaint service. Participants emphasised the importance of making the service easily accessible to everyone, regardless of location or technical ability. Ensuring cultural safety in handling complaints was highlighted as a key consideration. Establishing feedback loops to regularly seek input and assess the service's performance for continuous improvement was identified as important. Ensuring data security in storing personal information and complaint details to prevent data breaches was also noted. Maintaining open channels for communication, providing timely feedback, and being transparent about complaint progress

were deemed essential. Lastly, ensuring that the service is inclusive and promotes gender equality was emphasized as a key consideration.

#### Group 2: Parents/Guardians

Lead Facilitator: Nadia Kyba, MSW, RSW; Co-Facilitator: Lindsay Mattson, MA (Psych)

September 15 2023 12:00-1:30 pm

# of Participants: 9

*"You don't pay attention to this service until you need it- so having searchability in terms of internet, or a link on sports/team web pages (is important)."*

*"This is a complex question, every sport is different in terms of how it's run and the relationship between provincial bodies. Information should come in a different way to different people (for example) coaches, when you sign your child up for sport." (Session participant responses to the question: What is the best way to communicate with you about initiatives like this?)*

#### **Question 1: What is the best way to communicate with you about initiatives like this?**

There were a variety of communication preferences in this group. The most common response was email, primarily due to its convenience and effectiveness. Other communication methods included newsletters, webinars, virtual presentations, social media, text messages, and phone calls. Participants highlighted the importance of flexibility in communication methods, recognizing that individual preferences may differ.

#### **Question 2: Who would you go to if you had a concern or a complaint about you or someone else being harmed in a sport?**

Participants identified various individuals they would turn to if they had complaints. Team coaches, club managers, medical staff, referees, and the governing bodies were all identified. The choice of whom to contact depended on the specific situation, with an emphasis on involving neutral third parties to ensure fairness.

#### **Question 3: What would make you comfortable coming forward with a complaint to a new independent service?**

In this session, factors that would make participants comfortable reporting to a new independent complaints service included the willingness of the service to listen to complaints, trust in the independence and fairness of the system, the freedom to express oneself without fear, assurance of confidentiality, accessible and empathetic communication, transparency in processes, and feedback mechanisms. Participants expressed the importance of past reviews (experiences of others) in building confidence.

#### **Question 4: What might make you hesitate to contact a complaints service if you had a complaint?**

Potential hesitations shared included fear of retaliation from superiors, peers, or involved parties, concerns about anonymity and the disclosure of their identity, past experiences of



complaints not being taken seriously or addressed adequately, bureaucratic issues and uncertainty about the complaint process, and worries about negative impacts on their status within sports organizations.

### **Question 5: What could this service do to earn your confidence?**

Participants discussed actions the complaints service could take to earn their confidence, including being clear about the service's mission and objectives, timely and transparent communication, clear processes, and easy access to information, accountability for outcomes and transparency in operations, showing concern for the well-being of complainants, empowering individuals to stand up for themselves and speak out for what's right, and ensuring effective solution delivery and resolution of complaints.

### **Question 6: What else should we consider when building this new complaint service?**

Considerations included ensuring easy accessibility for all, maintaining consistency in processes and procedures, providing clear communication about the steps to file complaints, building reliability and trust in the service, offering the option of anonymity for complainants, allocating resources and support, especially in volunteer-run sport organizations, addressing legal considerations in complaint handling, proper documentation, data protection, and cost management, and focusing on user experience, scalability, and feedback mechanisms. Stakeholder engagement in the development and improvement of the service was also highlighted as essential.

#### **Group 3: Athletes**

Lead Facilitator: Nadia Kyba (RSW, MSW); Co-Facilitator: Julia Wilson (B.Kin, B.Ed)

September 16 2023 1:00-2:30 pm

# of Participants: 8

*"Lack of Information- Not being aware of the existence of a complaints service or the correct method to approach it." (Session participant response to the question: What might make you hesitate to contact a complaints service if you had a complaint?)*

### **Question 1: What is the best way to communicate with you about initiatives like this?**

Athletes predominantly reported favouring email as their preferred mode of communication. While email was the primary preference, athletes also suggested using other communication channels such as text messages, newsletters, advertisements (ADS), campaigns, and virtual presentations.

### **Question 2: Who would you go to if you had a concern or a complaint about you or someone else being harmed in a sport?**

Participants identified coaches, team managers, and sports organizers as primary points of contact for addressing their concerns or complaints. However, they stressed that the choice of whom to approach would depend on the nature of the concern. Team captains were also mentioned as potential points of contact.

**Question 3: What would make you comfortable coming forward with a complaint to a new independent service?**

A key theme was the need for a neutral third party to handle complaints independently, ensuring impartiality. Confidence in the service's fairness and impartiality was deemed vital for encouraging athletes to report their concerns. Additionally, athletes emphasized the significance of supportive and responsive communication in playing a pivotal role in instilling confidence. Knowing that previous cases have been resolved successfully and receiving guarantees of fair treatment were identified as factors that inspire confidence in the reporting process.

**Question 4: What might make you hesitate to contact a complaints service if you had a complaint?**

Hesitations shared in this session included fear of unfair judgement, perceived bias within the service, and concerns about the futility of the complaint process. Lack of information about the service, negative past experiences with complaint resolution, and concerns about privacy were identified as potential barriers that might discourage athletes from reporting their concerns. Athletes expressed that a bad reputation for handling complaints by the service would further contribute to hesitation.

**Question 5: What could this service do to earn your confidence?**

Athletes highlighted the importance of ensuring transparency, maintaining the privacy of complainants, and upholding impartiality. They stressed the need to emphasize diversity not only in the services offered but also in the personnel involved. Service responsiveness, clear processes, professionalism, and a commitment to continuous improvement were identified as factors that would contribute to building confidence. Ensuring protection mechanisms and safeguarding complainants' interests were reported as ways to instil confidence in the service.

**Question 6: What else should we consider when building this new complaint service?**

Considerations encompassed managing conflicting perspectives and embracing diversity among the stakeholders. Collaboration with other entities and adherence to ethical standards were highlighted. The importance of recognizing unique personal experiences and biases and the need for a nuanced approach to complaint handling was described. Public education and awareness campaigns, continuous improvement, the establishment of emergency protocols, transparency in operations, and a user-centric design were identified as important factors to consider when building the service.

Group 4: Administrator and Board Members

Lead Facilitator: Nadia Kyba (MSW, RSW); Co-Facilitator: Annelisa Thomas (M.Ed)

September 19 2023 12:00-1:30 pm

# of Participants: 8

*"This body shows awareness of the whole issue of mental health and that they care about the mental health of people who take part in sports would give me confidence."* (Session participant in response to the question *What could this service do to earn your confidence?*)

### **Question 1: What is the best way to communicate with you about initiatives like this?**

When it comes to communicating about initiatives like this, the responses in this session, similarly to the others, indicated a preference for email and text messages as the primary modes of communication. Participants also mentioned the importance of using social media and sport group organizations for updates. Combining both text messages and email was suggested to ensure no important information gets missed.

### **Question 2: Who would you go to if you had a concern or a complaint about you or someone else being harmed in a sport?**

Participants identified various sources to turn to with a concern or complaint, including coaches, board members, trainers, therapists, managers, sports officials, and the organizing body.

### **Question 3: What would make you comfortable coming forward with a complaint to a new independent service?**

To make individuals comfortable coming forward with complaints, this group identified, trust, confidentiality, and accountability as key factors. Participants shared the need for a trustworthy, well-organized structure that can handle complaints with transparency and fairness. The group highlighted that building confidence in the service was crucial, with suggestions such as showcasing the service's impartiality and effectiveness, maintaining confidentiality, and creating transparency through social media channels.

### **Question 4: What might make you hesitate to contact a complaints service if you had a complaint?**

Participants shared factors such as distrust, fear of intimidation or bias, lack of evidence, and concerns about previous unsatisfactory experiences. Ensuring confidentiality, providing feedback on complaint handling, and demonstrating a commitment to addressing complaints were seen as ways to alleviate these hesitations.

### **Question 5: What could this service do to earn your confidence?**

Participants shared that to earn their confidence, the new complaints service should focus on enhancing equity, addressing issues intentionally, improving quality and expertise, and demonstrating consistency in handling complaints. The service's commitment to fairness,

mental health awareness, reliability, and a proactive approach to addressing issues were key factors identified by participants.

### **Question 6: What else should we consider when building this new complaint service?**

Participants shared that factors to consider should include ensuring widespread awareness, data privacy and security, easy access, equal attention to all issues, jurisdiction for justice, and creating awareness among sports participants. Soliciting feedback from clients and using it for continuous improvement, as well as promoting equality and accessibility, were also highlighted as important aspects of building an effective complaints service. The importance of following up on complaints and demonstrating fairness to avoid biases was emphasized, along with the need for consistent and reliable services. Mental health awareness and being intentional about addressing issues were also identified as key considerations. Participants shared the idea of conducting webinars and showcasing success stories to build trust and engage the sports community effectively.

#### Group 5: Referees and Sport Services Staff

Lead Facilitator: Nadia Kyba; Co-Facilitator: Andy Stuart

September 20 2023 6:00-7:3 pm

# of Participants: 8

*"First impressions really do matter. So if a first time person comes, and he doesn't have a good review about the whole organization, it will definitely affect people that will follow suit. So if I am the first person and I have a negative thought, a negative review, or I wasn't treated nicely, definitely I will tell my friend, oh, these people are not doing well and stuff. So that will definitely affect the reputation you seek to build in future. So the first impression has to be very, very good." (Session participant in response to the question: What could this service do to earn your confidence?)*

### **Question 1: What is the best way to communicate with you about initiatives like this?**

This group was consistent with the others identifying newsletters, email, social media, and direct emails as effective ways to communicate. Email was the most common choice, highlighting its effectiveness in reaching sports participants. Additionally, ensuring strong data security was emphasized, underlining the importance of safeguarding sensitive information.

### **Question 2: Who would you go to if you had a concern or a complaint about you or someone else being harmed in a sport?**

Participants shared that they would turn to coaches, sports associations, medical teams, and disciplinary committees. The chosen reporting decision varied depending on the sport and the severity of the issue, highlighting the need for clear and well-defined reporting mechanisms within sports organizations.

**Question 3: What would make you comfortable coming forward with a complaint to a new independent service?**

This group identified airness and trust were key factors in increasing comfort in coming forward with a complaint. Participants mentioned the importance of inclusivity, a track record of upholding justice and fairness, and the confidence that complaints would be treated with honesty and fairness. Building trust through transparency and a public awareness campaign emphasizing equity, diversity, and inclusion was also recommended.

**Question 4: What might make you hesitate to contact a complaints service if you had a complaint?**

Factors that might make individuals hesitate to contact a complaints service were identified as fear of discrimination, retaliation, and public criticism. Concerns about inactivity, jurisdiction, and the perception that complaints might not be treated privately and fairly were also mentioned. Ensuring confidentiality, taking complaints seriously, and addressing emotional strain and linguistic/cultural obstacles were suggested as ways to alleviate these hesitations.

**Question 5: What could this service do to earn your confidence?**

Considerations around earning confidence included a focus on transparency, qualified personnel and assurance of fairness and equity. Addressing mental health issues was also identified. Treating everyone equally, regardless of gender, race, or language, and being dedicated to addressing concerns were highlighted as important. An intuitive and user-friendly interface for the complaint process was also recommended.

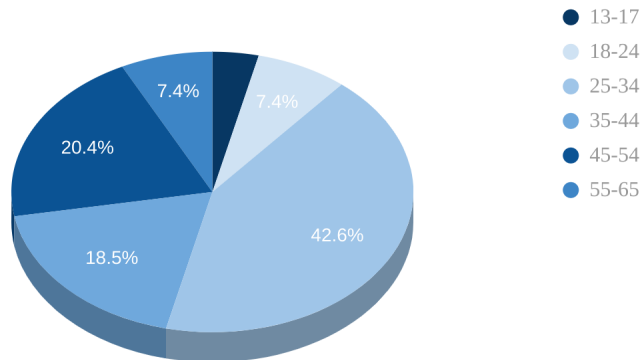
**Question 6: What else should we consider when building this new complaint service?**

Factors identified by participants include the service's history of providing solutions, user-friendly design, time-bound resolution, data security, and inclusivity catering to individuals with disabilities. Consultation with sports professionals, accommodation of diversity, and maintaining confidentiality were identified. Understanding and handling different types of complaints, detailed record-keeping, third-party mediation options, regular training for staff, and clear communication channels were additional considerations. Providing appropriate feedback to complainants, even if investigations take longer, and facilitating progressive changes in sports were also suggested.

## Metrics of Participants

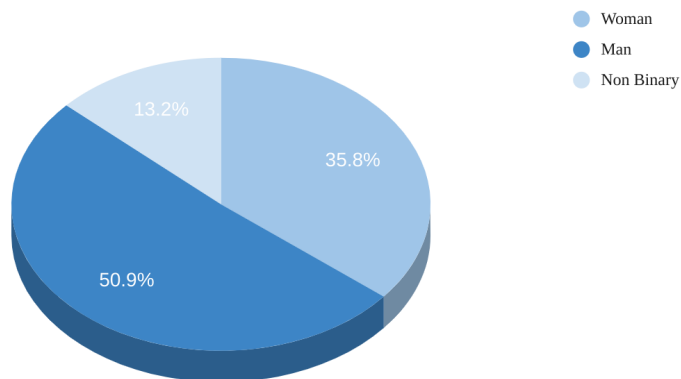
Age of Participants	# of Participants	Percentage
13-17 yrs	2	3.7%
18-24 yrs	4	7.4%
23-34 yrs	23	42.6%
35-44 yrs	10	18.5%
45-54 yrs	11	20.4%
55-65 yrs	4	7.4%

Age of Participants



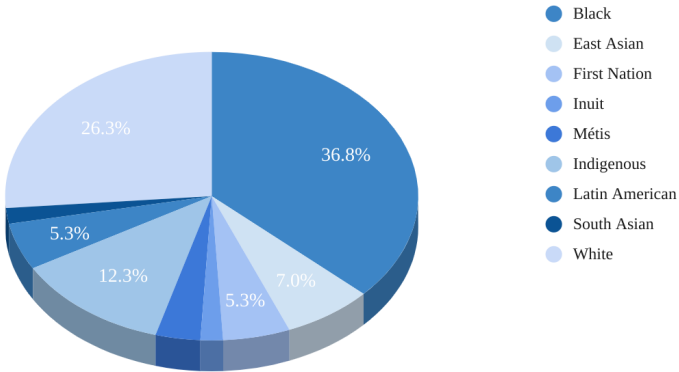
Gender	# of Participants	Percentage
Woman	19	35.8%
Man	27	50.9%
Non-Binary	7	13.2%

Gender Identity



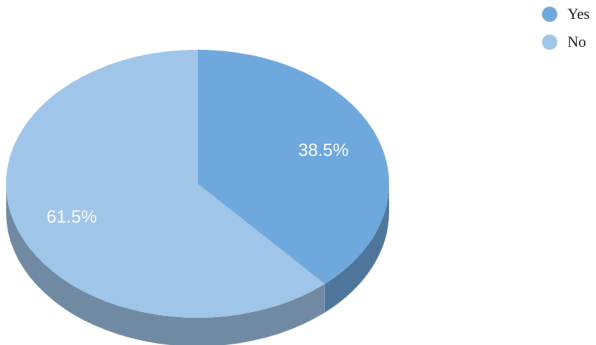
Ethnicity	# of Participants	Percentage
Black	21	36.8%
East Asian	4	7%
First Nation	3	5.3%
Inuit	1	1.8%
Métis	2	3.59%
Indigenous	7	12.3%
Latin America	3	5.3%
Middle Eastern	0	-
South Asian	1	1.8%
White	15	26.3%

Ethnicity



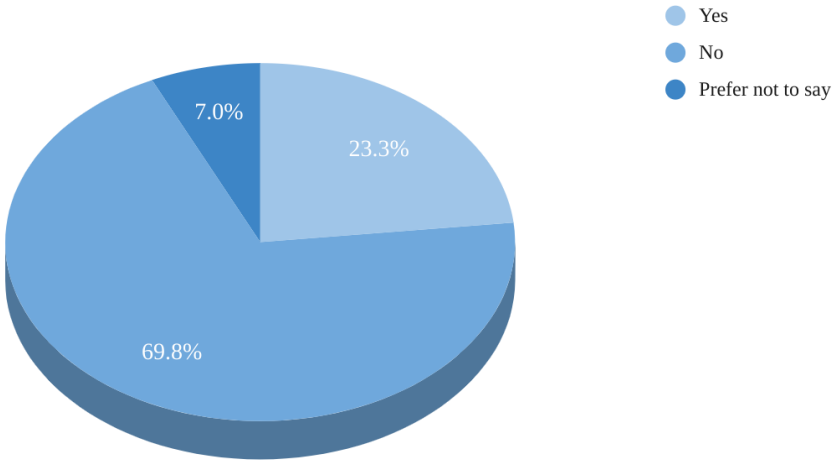
Identify as 2SLGBTQI+	# of Participants	Percentage
No	32	61.5%
Yes	20	38.5%

Identify as 2SLGBTQI+



Are you living with a Disability?	# of Participants	Percentage
No	30	69.8%
Yes	10	23.3%
Prefer not to say	3	7%

Are you living with a Disability?



**Themes that Crossed all Groups:**

First and foremost, the importance of clear and effective communication cannot be overstated. Participants from all groups highlighted their preferences for email and text communication, but also emphasized the need for flexibility in communication methods to accommodate diverse preferences. This underscores the importance of reaching a broad audience through various channels, including newsletters, webinars and social media.

Concerns and complaints in sport are expected, and participants identified a range of individuals and entities to whom they would turn for addressing such issues, including coaches, team managers, medical staff, referees, and governing bodies. Ensuring that these reporting channels are impartial and transparent is crucial to building trust.

Participants articulated the factors that would make them comfortable reporting to an independent service, emphasizing impartiality, confidentiality, responsiveness, and empathy in handling complaints. Building confidence in the service requires transparency, clear processes, and accountability for outcomes.

Hesitations in reporting were also shared by participants, including concerns about retaliation, anonymity, past negative experiences, and complex complaint procedures. Addressing these concerns and making the process user-friendly are essential steps in encouraging reporting.



To earn the confidence of stakeholders, the complaints service should demonstrate a commitment to mental health and the well-being of those involved in sports. Timely and transparent communication, along with a clear mission and objectives, are vital.

Considerations for building the service encompass accessibility, consistency, data protection, and a user-centric approach. Stakeholder engagement in the service's development and continuous improvement is key to its success.

## Conclusion

In summary, despite the diversity in the composition of the five focus groups, there was significant consensus in the responses generated. The insights emphasize the need for clear and flexible communication channels, impartial reporting avenues, and a service that prioritizes fairness, confidentiality, and responsiveness. To gain trust, the service should focus on transparency, simplicity, and accountability. Considerations include accessibility, data protection, and stakeholder involvement. Participants were generous with their time and were thoughtful and passionate in their responses. It was a pleasure to spend time with and hear the insights of each group.

## Information Sharing

This report will be shared with focus group participants and facilitators via email and key stakeholders via the viaSport website. It will also be shared with the Government of British Columbia along with raw data gathered during the focus group sessions.

## References

1. Government of British Columbia. (2023, September 15). News Release: [B.C., viaSport take steps to make amateur sport safer]. Retrieved from <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2023TACS0029-000978>
2. Gabriel, A. S., Robertson, D., & Shockley, K. (2021, October 26). Research: Cameras On or Off? Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2021/10/research-cameras-on-or-off>
3. Thompson, Jeff. "Is Nonverbal Communication a Numbers Game?" *Psychology Today*, September 30, 2011. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/beyond-words/201109/>.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns regarding this report.

Yours in sport,

*Nadia Kyba*

Nadia Kyba, MSW, RSW  
President, Now What Facilitation Inc.  
[nadia@nowwhatfacilitation.com](mailto:nadia@nowwhatfacilitation.com)  
[www.NowWhatFacilitation.com](http://www.NowWhatFacilitation.com)