



Feb 16th, 2023
Ottawa Gymnastics Centre
294 Elmgrove Avenue
Ottawa, ON
K1Z 6V1

Statement RE: Benjamin Cooper

The Ottawa Gymnastics Centre (OGC) acknowledges that a former Ottawa area gymnastics coach, Benjamin Cooper, was charged with multiple counts of sexual assault yesterday by Kingston and Ottawa Police Services. Benjamin was employed by OGC from 2014 to 2019 and has not been employed with OGC since. Please see Gymnastics Ontario's full statement [here](#) and the Ottawa Police Service statement [here](#). The OGC fully cooperated with investigators in this case.

The OGC has strict safe sport policies and procedures in place that are reviewed annually to screen and monitor all coaches who work in our facility. All coaches must pass a Vulnerable Sector Check, which is the highest level Criminal Records Check through the Ottawa Police Services. Coaches must also undergo reference checks from previous employers to be employed with our organization. The OGC will initiate its annual screening policy review effective immediately to assess whether any changes are needed as a result of this case.

No coach can be in the gym alone with any athlete. Coaches must complete numerous safe sport modules from the Coaching Association of Canada to maintain employment at OGC. The OGC has zero-tolerance with respect to the harm of any participant in our organization.

We are committed to supporting and listening to every individual who comes forward with a complaint.

For more information on this investigation please see Gymnastics Ontario's Statement. Anyone with information is asked to contact the Ottawa Police Service Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Unit at 613-236-1222, ext. 5944.

For more information on the Ottawa Gymnastics Centre or our safe sport policies please contact Mike Vieira, at mvieira@ottawagymnasticscentre.ca, Ottawa Gymnastics Centre Interim Executive Director.