

Laurie Hernandez thinks USA Gymnastics took too long to investigate her abuse claims

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Olympian Laurie Hernandez thinks USA Gymnastics took too long to investigate the [claims of abuse she and her mom made against her former coach Maggie Haney](#), she said in an appearance on NBC News' 3rd Hour of Today on Monday.



© Provided by Yahoo! Sports Laurie Hernandez of the United States performs during the 2016 Olympics on Aug. 17, 2016, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. (Clive Brunskill/Getty Images)

Hernandez, a member of the gold medal-winning U.S. team during the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, was one of at least a [dozen gymnasts who said they were verbally or emotionally abused by Haney](#).

Haney was suspended for eight years last month for having failed “to provide a safe, positive and healthy environment with a culture of trust and empowerment.” “We had sent in some type of report in 2016 when I had first told my mom about everything that had happened,” Hernandez said, *via NBC News*. “The case was opened late 2019, early 2020, and so I think in all that time, it could have prevented a lot of athletes from having to go through the same thing that I went through.

“But I’m just glad we were able to do something about it.”

Olympian [@LaurieHernandez](#) talks to us about overcoming mental abuse in the gymnastic world and how she's using her experience to help teens with mental health through #STYT. pic.twitter.com/zC8YqJywVP

— 3rd Hour of TODAY (@3rdHourTODAY) May 18, 2020

Hernandez and her mom first filed abuse complaints against Haney in 2016. She said Haney used to scream at her for minor mistakes and call her names, shamed her for her weight and body, made gymnasts train while injured and more. The abuse, Hernandez said, sparked eating disorders and depression.

“I thought I deserved all of it,” Hernandez said earlier this month.

“The toughest part about it was that there were no bruises or marks to show that it was real. It was all just so twisted that I thought it couldn’t be real.”

Haney apologizes, plans to appeal

Haney made her first public comments since the suspension was handed down, offering an apology in a statement to NBC News on Monday.

The 42-year-old coach also said she plans to appeal the suspension.

“My coaching techniques were at all times well-intended, meant specifically to lead her to her personal goal of achieving Olympic gold,” Haney said in a statement. “If the pursuit of excellence and the rigor of my coaching style has resulted in any harm to any gymnast that has been a part of my team, I am truly sorry.”

USA Gymnastics CEO Li Li Leung also offered a statement following just the latest scandal to hit the organization in recent years.