



## Sports Safety Zone District Event Model

### Introduction

Sports and play are vital parts of being a kid. A kid’s involvement in sports enriches parents’ lives in so many ways. Going to your child’s T-Ball and soccer games are irreplaceable moments.

Sports promote good health and values such as teamwork, leadership and fellowship. Despite the rewards, parents are scratching their heads about whether it’s such a good idea to have their kids participate in contact sports. Most of the headlines in the news are about concussions, but injuries that can happen in sports play go beyond brain injury. Likewise, brain injury can occur in sports that one would not suspect, like softball, swimming and cheerleading.

Other sports injuries that can occur include acute and overuse injuries, repetitive motion injuries, dehydration, sudden cardiac arrest and sprains to the knees and ankles which can endure.

All kids should have the opportunity to engage in sports and play without suffering a preventable injury. It would be a tragedy on top of tragedy if we were to lose this important part of growing up.

### Teamwork for Sports Safety

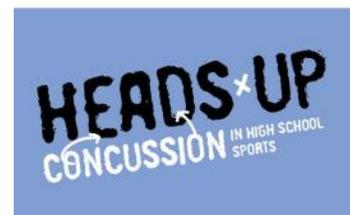
Sports safety is an area that all of us can work on together. An elected official may consider holding an event in their district, and could do so in partnership with others in the community such as children’s hospitals, schools and PTAs, brain injury associations, safety organizations, sports associations, and many others. Safe Kids Worldwide is a network of more than 500 coalitions around the nation—[find them in your state](#)—which hold hundreds of sports safety clinics throughout the country and the coalitions are often looking for ways to engage partners. The Safe Kids’ national office in DC is more than happy to introduce you to your local coalition leaders, [write us](#) at [agreen@safekids.org](mailto:agreen@safekids.org)

We are providing you with this tool kit to help you hold a sports safety event in your district.

### Goal

Why should/would an elected official consider holding a sports safety clinic in their district? One of the best services he or she could provide to constituents is education on how to prevent injuries to their kids. That’s because preventable injury is the number one killer in the U.S. Sports safety clinics can help parents, coaches and others discover resources provided by the government. For example, in sports

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS	
Emergency Medical Services	
Name:	_____
Phone:	_____
Health Care Professional	
Name:	_____
Phone:	_____
School Staff Available During Practices	
Name:	_____
Phone:	_____
School Staff Available During Games	
Name:	_____
Phone:	_____



Sample of CDC HEADS UP materials: this is a wallet card for coaches. Among hand-outs you can provide at the clinic.

safety, the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) has the gold standard for education about concussions for coaches, teachers, school administrators and almost every person engaged in young athletes' role in sports: the [HEADS UP program](#). A significant number of the coaches required to take concussion continuing education use [HEADS UP Training](#). Just as elected officials hold job fairs and events for small businesses with federal agencies, a sports safety clinic is a valuable constituent service and one that is captivating because so many of us love sports. "Our sports safety program is important to us because sports can be an open door to talk about other safety issues," says [Torine Creppy](#), Safe Kids' Chief Program Officer. "That's of course, in addition to the seriousness of some sports injuries."

## Score to Success: Interactivity

Safe Kids has learned from experience in its four years of providing sports safety education. "Holding an event that lasts for hours with talking heads speaking about injuries, prevention techniques and what research shows does not work," says Safe Kids' Torine Creppy. "What *does* work is providing the education through compelling stations that teach important lessons about risks, everything from concussions to cardiac arrest." Their "edutainment" make them something a parent can do based on their own timeframe, for a briefer period of time, and with their kids. Coaches need education on preventing sports injuries—often as a matter of the law of their state—and the event will be a draw for them, too.

A short speaking program at the beginning is appropriate for the elected official who hosts the event to kick it off with brief remarks. [See talking points](#). Another good addition is to invite a prominent sports hero, professional athlete or sports media talent to participate.

## Other Key Tips for All-Star Events

- **Don't set a hard start and finish time, make it more of an open house.**
- **Go where they are, rather than build your own event: Saturday games or practices, a supermarket or mall, a stadium.**
- **Have a photographer present and pick out good photo ops.**
- **Tweet and encourage tweeting before and at the event. "Going to [@Reptucker's sports safety clinic at #WashingtonHigh](#) with my son Peter. Gonna learn about preventing injuries when he plays soccer" (139 characters.)**
- **Have computers present to show coaches and others where to find CDC Heads Up education.**
- **Consult the ethics rules of your legislative body or government entity as you plan the event.**

Below you will find an outline for your sports safety event that includes interactive stations, a guide to preferable venues and target audiences and partners.

## Putting Points on the Board with "Edutaining" Stations

We have learned that a key to making one of these events work is to use easy-to-develop interactive stations. It will entertain both parents and their kids, and it is good to make it feel like a parent-child outing.

## Water Power: Hydration



In any sport, whether it involves adults or a little leaguer, water is vital. However, a child processes water more quickly than adults. A young athlete on the field might think just the opposite, that if they drink a lot of water, they'll have to take a break and leave the field of play even for a moment. The goal of this station is to teach the value of

steady intake of liquids, and the right kind of liquids. For example, some sports drinks are good in moderation to replace electrolytes, but some have lots of sugar and consuming them throughout the day can have unintended consequences.

momsTEAM Youth Sports Hydration Guidelines	
Ages 6 to 12	Ages 13-18
<b>Before Sports</b>	
Drinking fluids prior to exercise appears to reduce or delay the detrimental effects of dehydration.	Drinking fluids prior to exercise appears to reduce or delay the detrimental effects of dehydration.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 to 2 hours before sports: 4 to 8 ounces of cold water</li> <li>10 to 15 minutes before sports: 4 to 8 ounces of cold water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 to 2 hours before sports: 8 to 16 ounces of cold water</li> <li>10 to 15 minutes before sports: 8 to 12 ounces of cold water</li> </ul>
<b>During Sports</b>	
Every 20 minutes: 5 to 9 ounces of water or a sports drink, depending on weight (5 for a child weighing 88 pounds, 9 ounces for a child weighing 132 pounds)	Every 20 minutes: Between 5 and 10 ounces of water or sports drink, depending on weight
<b>After Sports</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post-exercise hydration should aim to correct any fluid lost during the practice.</li> <li>Within two hours: at least 24 ounces of water or a sports drink for every pound of weight lost</li> </ul>	

From [momsTEAM.org](http://momsTEAM.org)

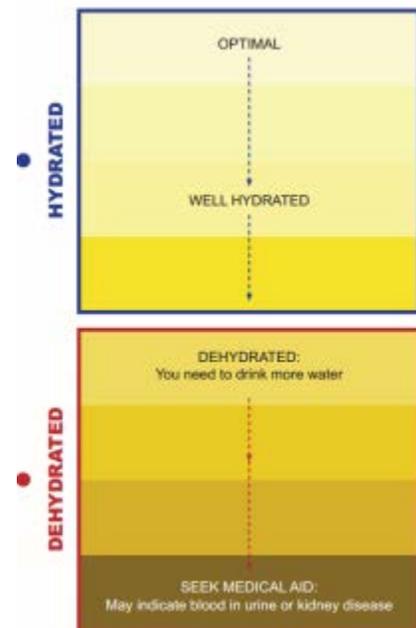
### Here's how to make the water message interactive:

- Conduct a quiz on the best, better, good and bad kinds of fluids by displaying a selection of products and have attendees arrange them in the right category.
- Have two clear containers of water showing what a 6-12 year-old and a 13-18 year old must take in before sports.
- Have a large bowl of fruit at the station because fruit can be an attractive alternative to help stay hydrated. A big watermelon would also work.
- Distribute bottles of water along with the top three hydration tips. 1. Take water breaks. 2. Drink enough, *for you*. 3. Know dehydration.
- Provide wallet size urine testers, courtesy of the U.S. Army ([at right](#)). One can compare it to their urine and it will tell them if they adequately hydrated or need water.
- Show the Safe Kids ["Hydration Rap"](#) video.

### Hand-Outs:

- [Safe Kids Sports Hydration Graphic](#)
- [Safe Kids Dehydration Tips](#)
- [Safe Kids Dehydration Tips in Spanish](#)
- [MomsTEAM Signs and Symptoms of Dehydration](#)
- [Army Urine Color Test for Hydration](#)

### U.S. Army's Color Test



\*This color chart is not for clinical use.

[Available at U.S. Army Public Health Command](#)

## Heads Up on Concussions

There has been a great deal of attention on traumatic brain injuries and concussions. Google “concussion” with “high school” and it comes up with 4,760,000 results. As parents, young athletes, coaches and public policy makers, it is important that we keep concussions top of mind and know how to both prevent and recognize concussions.

### Here’s how to make the concussion message interactive:

- There are goggles that can show how a concussion looks and feels. Many Safe Kids coalitions use these goggles in their sports safety programs and might be willing to share them or partner with you
- Knowing that budgets are tight, you can use a pair of snorkeling or swimming goggles, or large, non-Rx glasses and smear petroleum jelly on them as an alternative to concussion goggles. (And have tissues available to wipe off the jelly.)
- You can make the experience more interactive by challenging people to jog through a maze of traffic cones wearing the goggles. You can also challenge participants to throw a foam football into a target of a piece of wood covered with astroturf.
- Another alternative is to display (and let people see and feel) a Jello mold of a brain’s shape to teach the importance of preventing concussions by knowing what they are. [There’s one on amazon.com for \\$6.87.](#)

Having a neurologist, sports medicine doctor and/or athletic trainer on hand to answer questions is a great idea and opportunity to partner with healthcare institutions in your district.

### Hand-Outs:

- [CDC/Safe Kids Concussion Guide For Parents For Coaches For Schools \(Also available in Spanish.\)](#)
- [CDC Signs and Symptoms of Concussion Poster](#)
- [CDC Concussion Quiz](#)
- [CDC Concussion Clipboard Sticker for Coaches](#)
- [CDC Helping Students Recover from a Concussion: Classroom Tips for Teachers](#)



WNBA New York City Liberty player Tina Charles coaches a young man wearing concussion goggles through an obstacle course at a sports safety event



Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz gets football into target as Rep. Kevin Cramer looks on

## Emergency Response and Cardiac Arrest

Though relatively rare, the number one killer of kids playing sports is sudden cardiac arrest. A Safe Kids [blog](#) reported that every three days, a young athlete dies from cardiac arrest, according to Dr. Anthony Rossi, Medical Director of the Pediatric Cardiac ICU at Miami's Children's Hospital. [According to coachsafely.com](#), it is important for schools to have emergency action plans for youth athletic events. That should include having an automatic external defibrillator (AED) on hand, close to the play (games and practices), and someone present who knows how to use them.

**AEDs for Schools and Rec Centers in Need.** There are foundations and organizations which provide AEDs less fortunate school districts. One is [Hopey's Heart Foundation](#), founded by WNBA player Tina Charles, who plays with the New York Liberty.

### Here's how to make the message interactive:

- This can be one of your most popular stations because the nurse at a local hospital can come and demonstrate how to perform CPR compressions (using hands to put pressure on the heart area) and how to use an AED.
- Check with the [local Red Cross](#) or the [American Heart Association](#) if they run a course to certify people for CPR. They may be on hand to sign up people interested in getting certified.
- Consider having a sports cardiac specialist available to answer questions.
- Have a school administrator or an athletic trainer at the station talk about the need to have an [emergency medical plan](#) (EAPs). The National Athletic Trainers' Association provides [expert information on EAPs](#).

### Hand-Outs and Information:

- [MomsTEAM tips for parents on CPR, AED](#)
- [MomsTEAM AED Basics](#)
- [American Heart Association Hands Only CPR Fact Sheet](#)
- [American Heart Association Hands Only CPR Fact Sheet \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Model Emergency Medical Plan from National Athletic Trainer's Association](#)
- [Screening for Sudden Cardiac Arrest Before Sports Activity from American College of Preventive Medicine](#)
- [UConn Corey Stringer Institute Guide to Emergency Action Plans](#)



Nurse from Children's National Medical Center in Washington, DC demonstrates AED use and compressions at a Capitol Hill event.

## Overuse Injuries



Kids may love to play their favorite sport. However, like with anything, too much of a good thing can be bad. Many young athletes are playing one sport year around, using the same muscles over and over again. This increases the potential for overuse injuries through heavily-repeated and similar movements. According to the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine, [they are defined as follows](#): “Overuse injuries, more subtle and usually occurring over time, are the result of repetitive micro-trauma to the tendons, bones and joints. Common examples include tennis elbow, swimmer’s shoulder (rotator cuff tendinitis and impingement), little League elbow, runner’s knee, jumper’s knee and shin splints. ‘Tommy John’ injuries are being picked up more and more in pro athletes and young ones.”

### Here’s how to make the message interactive:

- Set up mats and invite an athletic trainer to lead participants through simple stretches.
- Set up cones and lead participants through light warm-up exercises.
- Have an athletic trainer or another expert discuss the benefits of sports diversification. Set up a zone where participants can easily move from one sport activity to another, e.g. kicking a soccer ball, then tossing a football, then shooting a hoop.

### Hand-Outs:

- [Safe Kids Overuse Injury Tip sheet](#)
- [Safe Kids Overuse Injury Tip sheet \(Spanish\)](#)
- [American Medical Society for Sports Medicine Overuse and Burnout Infographic](#)
- [Stop Sports Injuries Overuse Injuries Tip sheet](#)



Certified Athletic Trainer teaches stretching exercises at Capitol Hill event.

## First Aid: Know the Basics

First aid is often the first line of defense when injuries happen on the field. Luckily, first aid is a skill that can be learned easily by everyone, including coaches, parents, and athletes. It is important to learn what is in a properly stocked first aid kit. Coaches will likely be the first to see an injury and should be especially prepared. In the end, by helping coaches be armed with the basic supplies and information they need on the sideline, certain injuries can be treated swiftly and effectively, helping athletes return to the game as quickly and safely as possible.

### Here's how to make the first aid message interactive:



- Display the supplies that should be in a first aid kit. An athletic trainer or school nurse can explain and demonstrate how to use the most commonly used components.
- Have a nurse administer first aid to common injuries using contents from the first aid kit. These “injuries” may be simulated on attendees.
- Set up a first aid quiz. On a table, arrange an empty first aid box surrounded by potential supplies of the kit, including some correct (band aids, gauze, antiseptic) and some incorrect (lollipop, photographs, light bulb).
- Have participants create the most complete and useful first aid kit possible using the components available and the information they learned from the other demonstrations.
- Have representatives from the Red Cross at the event so that coaches, parents, and youth athletes may sign up for first aid classes in their area.
- There are American Red Cross [on-the-go sports first aid kits](#) for athletes.

### Hand-Outs:

- [MomsTeam: What Should a First Aid Kit Contain?](#)
- [Little League First Aid Kit Recommendations](#)
- [Healthychildren.org Basic First Aid Guidelines](#)

## Hand-Outs on Sports Safety Generally

- [American Academy of Pediatrics on Sports Injury Tip Sheet](#)
- [Safe Kids Sports Safety Tips](#)
- [Safe Kids Sports Safety Infographic](#)
- [National Athletic Trainers' Association Sports Safety Checklist](#)

## Potential Invitees

The following are potential invitees, all key constituents:

- Parents, Grandparents, Caregivers
- Coaches, Athletic Trainers and Athletic Directors
- Non-Sports School Personnel—school nurses, teachers, administrators
- Sports journalists
- Medical Professionals, especially sports medicine, neurologists, pediatricians, orthopedic specialists, ER doc, sports cardiac specialist
- Especially children's hospital administrators

## Potential Venues

- School gym or field
- Pro- or college sports facility
- Children's hospital

## Potential Participants/Partners

- Pediatricians, primary care doc/residents and/or nurses
- Certified Athletic Trainers
- Orthopedic surgeons
- Concussion expert/neurologist

This event toolkit was developed by Safe Kids' public policy team, including Roshan Alemi, with assists from the Safe Kids' program group and summer 2014 advocacy interns Heather McCormish and Amanda Tu. Please remember to consult the ethics rules and counselors in developing such a public event.

For more information or for an introduction to the Safe Kids' coalitions near you, contact:

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[agreen@safekids.org](mailto:agreen@safekids.org)  
[safekids.org](http://safekids.org)

## Sample Talking Points on Sports Safety

- Getting involved in sports is one of the greatest parts of growing up. It was for me, it is for my kids. Not only are sports a fun way to get exercise, but they help build values like leadership and teamwork.
- 46 million kids participate in sports each year but 8,000 kids visit emergency rooms every day for sports-related injuries like concussions, sprained ankles, overused arms, dehydration, and many others.
- We all know that the concern about concussions especially has been growing more and more over the past few years and I'm sure this has weighed on the minds of many parents.
- But let's not let these injuries mean that our kids should stop playing sports. Rather, let's work together to educate ourselves and take the necessary steps towards the prevention and treatment of future injuries.
- At today's event, several stations have been set up at which you can learn important health and safety information. Your questions can also be answered by medical and athletic professionals.
- At the stations you will be able to learn about hydration, concussions, overuse injuries, CPR, and first aid exercises, among others areas.
- I can think of no more important a service I can provide to my constituents than resources to keep our kids safe and happy doing the things they love.

## PARTNERS

- [Safe Kids Worldwide](#)
- [American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [Safe States Alliance](#)
- [Children's National Medical Center](#)
- [National Athletic Trainers' Association](#)
- [MomsTeam](#)
- [American College of Preventive Medicine](#)
- [Children's Hospital Association](#)
- [National Council on Youth Sports Safety, Inc.](#)
- [Brain Injury Association of America](#)
- [Nat'l Association of State Head Injury Administrators](#)

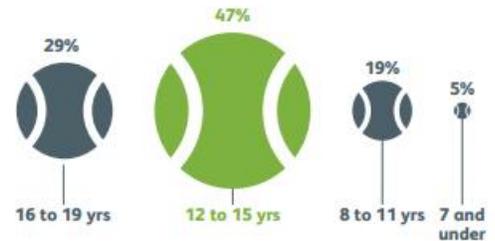
## Youth Sports Safety by the Numbers

from MomsTEAM and Safe Kids research

Just how serious of an issue is sports safety? These statistics, thanks to Safe Kids Worldwide and MomsTEAM can help shed some light onto the current situation:

- More than 46 million children participate in sports each year in the United States.<sup>1</sup>
- Approximately 8,000 children are treated in emergency rooms each day for sports-related injuries.<sup>2</sup>
- Rates of sports injury visits to ERs were highest in remote rural settings.<sup>3</sup>
- High school athletes suffer 2 million injuries, 500,000 doctor visits and 30,000 hospitalizations each year.<sup>4</sup>
- One in three children who plays a team sport is injured seriously enough to miss practice or games.
- There are three times as many catastrophic football injuries among high school athletes as college athletes.<sup>5</sup>
- Children ages 12 to 15 made up 47% of sports-related concussions seen in the emergency rooms.<sup>10</sup>
- 62 percent of organized sports-related injuries occur during practices.<sup>6</sup>
- Only 42 percent of high schools have access to athletic training services.<sup>1</sup>
- Ninety-six percent of Americans feel it's important for young athletes to be evaluated by a qualified health care professional before they begin playing sports.<sup>8</sup>
- In soccer, the rate of concussions among girls was 68 percent higher than the rate of concussions in boys, and in basketball the rate of concussions among girls was 293 percent higher than the rate of concussion in boys.<sup>9</sup>

Almost half of youth sports-related concussions occur in children ages 12 to 15 years old<sup>2</sup>



Safe Kids Worldwide, 2013