



Virginia Medical and Sports Experts Come Together to Advance Lifesaving Measures for the State's High School Athletes

Korey Stringer Institute and local Athletic Trainers will convene dozens of medical and sports safety leaders at the Bons Secours training center in Richmond to advance policies proven to prevent sudden death in sports

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Richmond, Virginia – The Korey Stringer Institute (KSI), a national sports safety research and advocacy organization, will convene many of Virginia's foremost experts in medicine and sports this week to develop a policy roadmap to advance best medical practices proven to reduce sport-related deaths. The meeting will take place at the Bon Secours Training Center in Richmond, Virginia and assembled representatives from the Virginia High School League sports medicine advisory committee, the Virginia Athletic Trainer's Association, representatives from the McNair Foundation, sports medicine physicians, legislators and others to discuss heat acclimatization guidelines, cold water immersion for the treatment of exertional heat stroke, wet bulb globe temperature to monitor environmental conditions, sudden cardiac arrest, and strength and conditioning sessions.

Research has shown that nearly 90 percent of all sudden death in sports is caused by four conditions: sudden cardiac arrest, traumatic head injury, exertional heat stroke, and exertional sickling. It has also been shown that adopting evidence-based safety measures significantly reduces these risks and can save lives. According to KSI's research, [states only mandate an average of 53% of policies proven to reduce these deaths](#) and Virginia currently mandates 57.4% of the best practice policies.

Virginia is focused on advancing policies in four key topic areas: Heat acclimatization guidelines, exertional heat stroke preventative measures and treatment, access to AEDs, and enhancing safety of strength and conditioning sessions. Policies that will be discussed during the meeting are proven to support athlete safety. For example, heat acclimatization policies require progressive introduction of equipment, contact and total practice duration. Where it has been mandated, heat illness has been reduced by 55% and CWI has saved 100% of heat stroke victims when utilized within 10 minutes of the heat stroke.

Danny Carroll, President-Elect from the Virginia Athletic Trainers Association (VATA)

“The VATA is excited to team up with KSI and other stakeholders within the state to tackle the health and safety issues that pose the greatest risk to our athletes. Many other states have taken this path to enacting measures to protect athletes from preventable tragedies and we want nothing more than the athletes in our state to be protected to the fullest extent”.

Marty McNair, Founder of The Jordan McNair Foundation

“Student athlete safety is the mission of our foundation. Partnerships among our organizations as well as the legislative representatives in Virginia is how we make the most impact. Baseline safety standards must be put in place in all states to keep our student athletes safe on all fields of competition.”

Since launching its “Team Up for Sports Safety” (TUFSS) campaign in 2017 to propel adoption of policies proven to reduce the incidence of catastrophic sport injuries for secondary school athletes, Virginia will be the 21st state that KSI will visit to work with state leaders to propel health and safety policy adoption forward.

KSI CEO Douglas Casa has been leading KSI since its inception in 2010 and has made athlete safety a focused effort of the institute. “We know that implementation of these important health and safety policies has dramatically reduced sport-related fatalities,” said Casa. “We are excited that Virginia is taking action to continue to improve its policies and become a leader in minimizing sport-related high school deaths.”

For more information about the Team Up For Sport Safety initiative, please visit ksi.uconn.edu.

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