



IOWA ATHLETIC TRAINERS' SOCIETY

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FOR RELEASE:

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Safety in Football

The Iowa Athletic Trainers' Society has organized a "Safety in Football Campaign" in order to promote increased safety in football in the State of Iowa. It is the goal of the "Safety in Football Campaign" to help each and every football team in Iowa identify ways in which they can lessen the risks of injury and keep the focus on the fun and camaraderie of football.

Beginning on Monday, August 27 culminating with the weekend of September 15, numerous high schools and colleges will be donning a small helmet sticker on the back of each player's helmet. The sticker represents the cumulative efforts of these schools and the Iowa Athletic Trainers' Society towards improving safety in youth football in the state of Iowa.

Football is one of the most popular sports among youth athletes, and it leads all other sports in the number of injuries sustained. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, "in 2007, more than 920,000 athletes under the age of 18 were treated in emergency rooms, doctors' offices, and clinics for football related injuries." According to the Korey Stringer Institute which researches sudden death in sport, 13 high school and one youth football players died during the 2015 football season.

Each year coaching staffs across the state spend numerous hours coaching, teaching, and mentoring football athletes on skill development, technique, and safety in the game of football. Unfortunately these efforts in themselves are not sufficient to mitigate the inherent risks of the sport. This is why athletic trainers are such vital components of safe and successful football teams. "Athletic trainers are highly qualified, multi-skilled health care professionals who collaborate with physicians to provide preventative services, emergency care, clinical diagnosis, therapeutic intervention and rehabilitation of injuries and medical conditions." – National Athletic Trainers' Association.

All across the state of Iowa, athletic trainers are providing their clinical skill and expertise each and every day to improve the overall health and safety of their athletes. According to a study conducted by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the presence of athletic trainers in the secondary schools lowers overall injury rates, improves diagnosis and return-to-play decisions,

and reduces the risk for recurrent injuries. In fact, the placement of athletic trainers in every secondary school that offers an athletic program is recommended by both the American Academy of Family Physicians and the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine.

However, even if a school or athletic association does not have access to the healthcare services of an athletic trainer, there are still simple steps that every program or association can put in place to improve safety in football.

- *Providing a properly and regularly maintained Automated External Defibrillator (AED) at all practices and games
- *Coordinating Venue-Specific Emergency Action Plans with your local Emergency Medical Services provider
- *Helping provide CPR/First Aid/AED Training for those who oversee youth athletes
- *Having immediate access to cold-water immersion tubs during periods of hotter and more humid climates
- *Enforcing current safety measures designed to eliminate head-first collisions

There are tremendous benefits for athletes who participate in football. These athletes have increased self-esteem, lower dropout rates in school, and demonstrate a stronger involvement in their school and community. It is the goal of the "Safety in Football Campaign" to help each and every football team in Iowa identify ways in which they can lessen the risks of injury and keep the focus on the fun and camaraderie of football.

To learn more about Safety in Football, visit <https://www.iowaats.com/>

To contact the IATS or to schedule an interview, contact Brad Floy President at: brad-floy@uiowa.edu

About Iowa Athletic Trainers' Society (IATS)

The Iowa Athletic Trainers' Society purpose is to advance the athletic training profession by enhancing professional and leadership abilities and by providing encouragement, mentorship and improvement of opportunities in the profession of athletic training in the State of Iowa. For more information on the IATS, visit <https://www.iowaats.com/>