



## Young Athletes Overuse Their Bodies and Strike Out Too Early

### ***Healthcare, Business Leaders and Professional Athletes Join Forces to Help Young Athletes Play Safe and Stay Healthy***

ROSEMONT, Ill., April 1 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Today, leaders in healthcare, wellness, safety and fitness came together to launch the STOP Sports Injuries campaign. The campaign will educate athletes, parents, trainers, coaches and healthcare providers about the rapid increase in youth sports injuries, the necessary steps to help reverse the trend and the need to keep young athletes healthy.

STOP Sports Injuries campaign highlights include teaching proper prevention techniques, discussing the need for open communication between everyone involved in young athletes' lives, and encouraging those affected to take The Pledge to become advocates for sports safety and take the preventative measures to keep kids in the game for life.

Sports injuries among young athletes are on the rise. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), high school athletes alone account for an estimated 2 million injuries, 500,000 doctor visits and 30,000 hospitalizations every year.

"Regardless of whether the athlete is a professional, an amateur, an Olympian or a young recreational athlete, the number of sports injuries is increasing -- but the escalation of injuries in kids is the most alarming," said Dr. James Andrews, president of the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine (AOSSM) and STOP Sports Injuries Co-Campaign Chair. "Armed with the correct information and tools, today's young athletes can remain healthy, play safe and stay in the game for life."

Orthopaedic surgeons are currently seeing two trends: a rapid rise in the number of youth sports injuries and a drop in the age of young athletes with overuse injuries. According to the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, every year more than 3.5 million children age 14 and younger are treated for sports injuries.

"The increasing number of youth sports injuries affects everyone involved in a young athlete's life -- coaches, parents, trainers and healthcare providers. We created the STOP Sports Injuries campaign to raise awareness about the problem and provide accurate information to keep the lines of communication open and ensure that young athletes stay healthy, stay on the field and stay out of the operating room," continued Andrews.

The high rate of youth sports injuries is fueled by an increase in overuse and trauma injuries and a lack of attention paid to proper injury prevention. According to the CDC, more than half of all sports injuries in children are preventable.

The STOP Sports Injuries campaign will feature public service announcements, a website with information about sport specific injuries, and The Pledge for athletes, parents, coaches, and healthcare providers to support. The campaign website and pledge are available at [www.stopsportsinjuries.org](http://www.stopsportsinjuries.org).

Supporting the STOP Sports Injuries campaign are the country's leading sports medicine organizations, along with professional athletes and business leaders who have signed on as members of the campaign's Council of Champions. This Council will help raise awareness about this growing epidemic of youth sports injuries. Some of the founding members of the Council include former Olympic champions Christie Rampone, Eric Heiden and Bonnie Blair; professional golfer Jack Nicklaus; NFL Hall of Fame quarterback Bart Starr; MLB baseball player John Smoltz; NFL Hall of Fame defensive end Howie Long; and Heisman Trophy winner Sam Bradford.

Council of Champions members and national launch spokesmen John Smoltz and Sam Bradford are familiar with the effects of sports injuries.

"My recent shoulder injury highlighted the importance of injury prevention, recovery, and communicating with my coaches, trainers and healthcare providers," said Heisman Trophy winner Sam Bradford. "I joined the STOP Sports Injuries campaign to share my experiences and encourage young athletes to join this important cause. It is important for kids to know that it is fun to play organized or recreational sports, but it's even more important for them to stay healthy while they play."

"As a baseball player and a father, preventing sports injuries to both me and my children is a priority. Having seen the benefits of good health and the setbacks of injury, we need to create a stronger awareness of the importance of proper techniques, open lines of communication, and encouraging safe play with athletes. This will keep young athletes healthy and in the game," said John Smoltz, former Major League Baseball (MLB) player. "The STOP Sports Injuries campaign sets out to give parents and athletes important tools to accomplish these goals and reduce youth sports injuries."

Healthcare organizations that are partnering on the campaign include the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine, American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Medical Society for Sports Medicine, National Athletic Trainers' Association, National Strength and Conditioning Association and SAFE Kids USA.

"The goal of this initiative is to slow, and eventually halt, the rising rate of injuries in young athletes so that these kids can become healthy adults who enjoy exercise, camaraderie and physical health for life. We support the STOP Sports Injuries campaign because when the parents, trainers, coaches and healthcare providers have the best information about injury prevention and treatment they all can work together -- and with the athlete -- to keep him or her safe," said John J. Callaghan, MD, president of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons.

"The American Academy of Pediatrics and its Council on Sports Medicine & Fitness is involved in the STOP Sports Injuries campaign because we believe this is a great way to get injury prevention information to the people that matter most, mainly the coaches and parents. In working with the other partner organizations as well, the campaign will have an established infrastructure on many levels to allow this important information to reach the intended target audience," said Andrew J.M. Gregory, MD, FAAP, FACSM, Executive Committee member, American Academy of Pediatrics.

"AMSSM is committed to injury prevention and the STOP Sports Injuries campaign is a perfect opportunity to join with other interested organizations to promote safe youth sports activity," said Kim Harmon, MD, President of the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine.

"The NATA is proud to support the STOP Sports Injury campaign. Prevention is the number one priority of athletic trainers! This initiative is a perfect complement to our injury prevention strategies and programs and will help ensure the health and safety of young athletes," said Marjorie J. Albohm, MS, ATC, President, National Athletic Trainers' Association.

"The National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) develops and presents the most advanced information regarding strength training and conditioning practices, and central to its mission is bridging the gap between the scientist and the practitioner in the field. The STOP Sports Injuries campaign fits directly with the mission of the NSCA since proper strength and conditioning practices play a major role in sports injury prevention. The NSCA is honored to contribute and collaborate with other organizations in the STOP Sports Injuries campaign to prevent athletic overuse and trauma injuries in youth," said John P. McCarthy, PhD, PT, FACSM, CSCS, NSCA Board of Directors and Sports Medicine Professional member, University of Alabama at Birmingham.

"We all want our kids to be active and healthy -- but this means keeping them safe too. We have joined the STOP Sports Injuries campaign to stem the growing tide of sports-related injuries seen in our youth today. Together we will reach parents, coaches and the young players themselves to ensure that they stay active, healthy -- and free from injury," said Mitch Stoller, president, SAFE Kids USA.

*The STOP Sports Injuries campaign was first initiated by the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine (AOSSM) and includes a comprehensive public outreach program focused on the importance of sports safety-specifically relating to overuse and trauma injuries. The initiative not only raises awareness and provides education on injury reduction, but also highlights how playing safe and smart can enhance and extend a child's athletic career, improve teamwork, reduce obesity rates and create a lifelong love of exercise and healthy activity. The campaign's message underscores the problems of youth overuse and trauma injuries and emphasizes the expertise of our coalition of experts, including the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, American Academy of Pediatrics, National Athletic Trainers' Association, National Strength and Conditioning Association, American Medical Society for Sports Medicine and SAFE Kids USA. For more details, visit [www.STOPSportsInjuries.org](http://www.STOPSportsInjuries.org).*

SOURCE STOP Sports Injuries

[Back to top](#)

RELATED LINKS

<http://www.stopsportsinjuries.org>

**Find this article at:**

<http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/young-athletes-overuse-their-bodies-and-strike-out-too-early-89673817.html>

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.