

Creating a Culture of Mental Wellness in High School Sports & Activities

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A little about me . . .



**GEORGIA
HIGH SCHOOL
ASSOCIATION**

True or False . . .

- Limited sleep has a moderate relationship with mental health challenges.
 - FALSE
- Almost 2/3 of college student-athletes felt that their teammates take mental health concerns seriously while only 1/2 felt their coaches take mental health concerns seriously.
 - TRUE
- Self-reported mental health concerns overall are lower now than 2020, but still higher than 2019.
 - TRUE
- 50% of both male and female student-athletes reported feeling overwhelming anxiety in the last month.
 - FALSE

NCAA Student-Athlete Well-Being Study

May 2022



RESEARCH

a Center | 5/24/2022 12:00:00 PM | Greg Johnson

Mental health issues remain on minds of student-athletes

Mental Health Concerns During COVID-19 Pandemic

(Comparing men's sports participants responding "yes, within the last month" between 2018-2019 ACHA-NCHA data and 2020-2021 NCAA data)

	NCHA 2019	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
Felt overwhelmed by all you had to do	51%	79%	78%	78%
Felt mentally exhausted	49%	70%	66%	71%
Felt sad	29%	66%	57%	57%
Felt very lonely	27%	61%	48%	43%
Felt things were hopeless	19%	53%	47%	38%
Felt overwhelming anxiety	22%	47%	44%	45%
Felt overwhelming anger	17%	43%	32%	31%
Felt so depressed that it was difficult to function	14%	28%	24%	24%

■ Green indicates a decrease of 5 percentage points or more from Fall 2020
 ■ Yellow indicates an increase of 5 percentage points or more from Fall 2020

Note: The spring NCAA survey asked, "As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, have you..." The 2020 spring survey was in the field approximately a month after the pandemic led to the cancelation of winter and spring championships (Mar. 12, 2020) and the closure of most campuses. The fall 2020/2021 NCAA and ACHA-NCHA surveys asked, "Within the last month, have you..." The fall 2021 survey was in the field Nov. 17-Dec. 13, 2021. Spring 2020 survey N=15,148 men's sports participants; Fall 2020 survey N=8,799 men's sports participants; Fall 2021 survey N = 3,137 men's sports participants; ACHA-NCHA survey N=3,441 NCAA men athletes.

Mental Health Concerns During COVID-19 Pandemic

(Comparing women's sports participants responding "yes, within the last month" between 2018-2019 ACHA-NCHA data and 2020-2021 NCAA data)

	NCHA 2019	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
Felt overwhelmed by all you had to do	73%	93%	93%	94%
Felt mentally exhausted	67%	86%	85%	88%
Felt sad	46%	87%	80%	78%
Felt overwhelming anxiety	41%	71%	72%	72%
Felt very lonely	41%	77%	67%	58%
Felt things were hopeless	29%	71%	66%	52%
Felt overwhelming anger	22%	50%	41%	36%
Felt so depressed that it was difficult to function	20%	39%	38%	36%

■ Green indicates a decrease of 5 percentage points or more from Fall 2020

Note: The spring NCAA survey asked, "As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, have you..." The 2020 spring survey was in the field approximately a month after the pandemic led to the cancelation of winter and spring championships (Mar. 12, 2020) and the closure of most campuses. The fall 2020/2021 NCAA and ACHA-NCHA surveys asked, "Within the last month, have you..." The fall 2021 survey was in the field Nov. 17-Dec. 13, 2021. Spring 2020 survey N= 22,472 women's sports participants; Fall 2020 survey N= 16,100 women's sports participants; Fall 2021 survey N = 6,663 women's sports participants; ACHA-NCHA survey N=6,433 NCAA women athletes.

Mental Health Concerns During COVID-19 Pandemic

(Percentage of Participants Who Endorsed "Constantly" or "Most Every Day")

	Men's Sports			Women's Sports		
	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
Felt overwhelmed by all you had to do	31%	27%	25%	50%	51%	47%
Experienced sleep difficulties	31%	18%	19%	42%	28%	28%
Felt mentally exhausted	26%	21%	22%	39%	39%	38%
Felt very lonely	22%	12%	11%	33%	21%	16%
Felt a sense of loss	21%	8%	8%	31%	13%	11%
Felt sad	17%	11%	11%	31%	22%	19%
Felt overwhelming anxiety	14%	11%	12%	27%	29%	29%
Felt things were hopeless	11%	10%	6%	16%	16%	10%
Felt overwhelming anger	11%	6%	6%	11%	8%	8%
Felt so depressed it was difficult to function	7%	5%	6%	9%	9%	9%

■ Green indicates a decrease of 5 percentage points or more from Fall 2020

Sources: NCAA Student-Athlete Well-Being Studies (2020 and 2021).

NFHS Strategic Plan: Student Mental, Emotional and Physical Wellness

BELIEF → Education-based athletics and performing arts/fine arts activities promote physical, mental and emotional wellness during the most important time of a young person's life.

CHALLENGE → The variety and nature of education-based programs differ greatly relative to accessibility, allocation of resources, defined purpose, leadership, organization, and measured outcomes.

OPPORTUNITY → The NFHS can provide national guidance through development of educational programs and resources, support for research on wellness issues, collaboration and advocacy efforts, and the creation of opportunities for shared learning.

NFHS Strategic Plan- Focus Areas

Today's presentation to address . . .

- “Expand educational resources that address mental, emotional and physical wellness of everyone involved in education-based programs (students, coaches, officials, administrators, etc.)”
- “Continue risk minimization efforts within the NFHS rules-writing process (public-facing educational component, evidence-based focus, expertise, approach to cultural components)”
- “Explore collaborative efforts with other organizations”

With a regular consideration of inclusivity and multiculturalism

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#1 Educational Resources

Understanding Wellness

Wellness is an active process through which people become aware of, and make choices toward, a more successful existence — National Wellness Institute

Model of Wellness



Exploring Social & Emotion Dimensions: Psychological Wellness (Ryff, 1989)

Self-Acceptance

Positive attitude toward the self; acknowledgment and acceptance of multiple aspects of self, including good and bad qualities

Positive Relations with Others

Warm, satisfying, trusting relationships with others; concern for the welfare of others

Autonomy

Self-determination and independence; the ability to resist social pressures to think and act in particular ways, regulate behavior from within

Environmental Mastery

Sense of mastery and competence in one's environment; the ability to control a complex array of external activities and leverage opportunities

Purpose in Life

The possession of goals and a sense of direction; the feeling that there is meaning to life

Personal Growth

Feelings of continued development; openness to new experiences; realization of one's potential and perceived improvement in self over time

How do we define mental health?

Mental Health ≠ Mental Illness

American Psychological Association

A state of mind characterized by emotional well-being, good behavioral adjustment, relative freedom from anxiety and disabling symptoms, and a capacity to establish constructive relationships and cope with the ordinary demands and stresses of life.

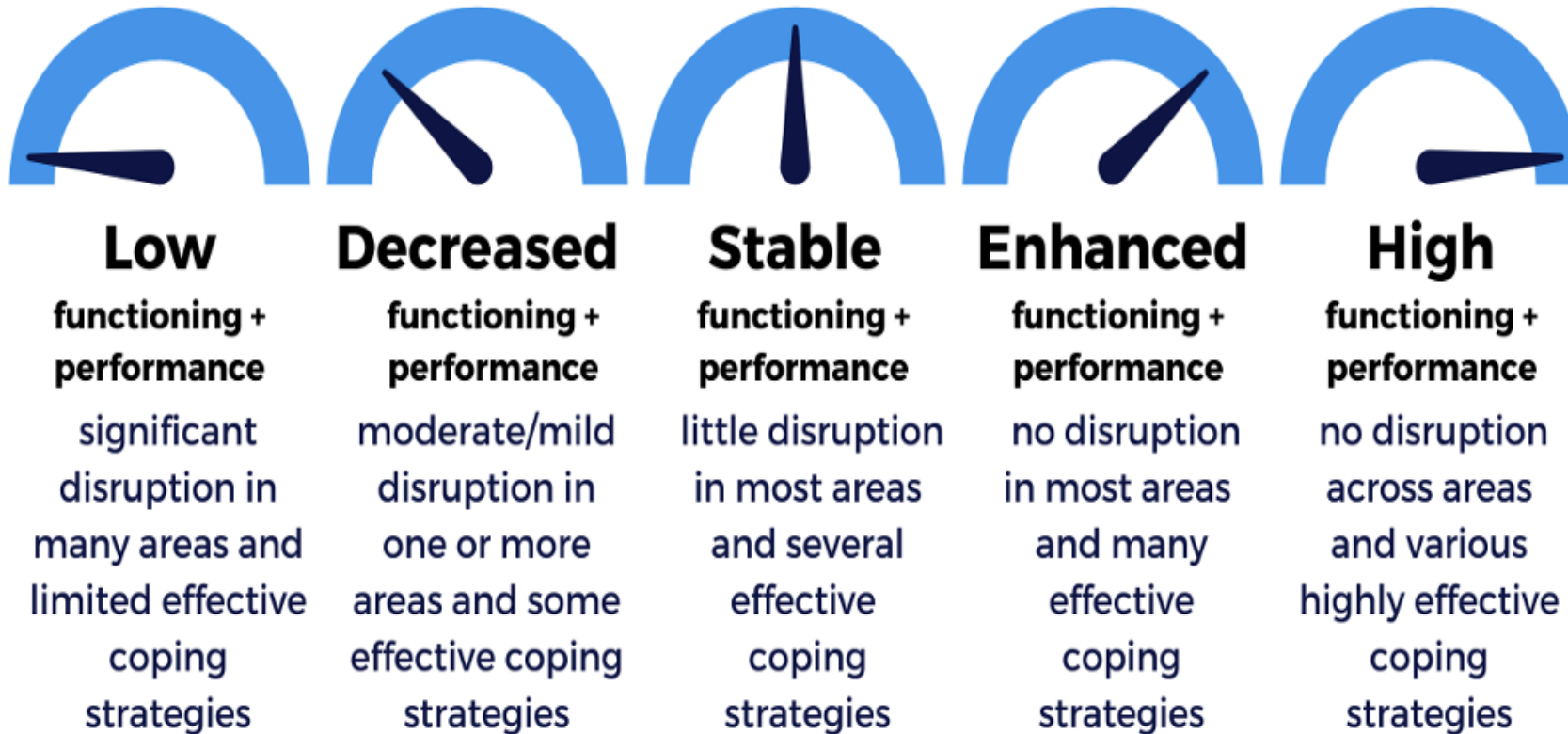
World Health Organization

A state of well-being in which people can realize their own potential, cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and are able to contribute to their community.

NCAA Sport Science Institute

Mental health is a part of, not apart from, athlete health. Mental health exists on a continuum, with resilience and thriving on one end of the spectrum and mental health disorders that disrupt a college athlete's functioning and performance at the other.

AASP has developed a spectrum of mental wellbeing and mental performance



How prevalent are mental health conditions among athletes?



Only **10% of college athletes** with mental health symptoms seek professional help.



Up to **35% of elite athletes** suffer from a mental health crisis at some point in their career which may manifest as stress, eating disorders, burnout, or depression and anxiety.

How can you apply this to your state association

...

What information do you think is needed most to your stakeholders?

Which stakeholders should you target next?

What has not worked in increasing education around mental health?

What has worked in increasing education around mental health?

How can you be sure your efforts address diversity, equity and inclusion within your association?

A blue ribbon graphic with a 3D effect, featuring a dark blue shadow on the left side. The ribbon is horizontal and contains the text "#2 Risk Minimization" in white.

#2 Risk Minimization

Risk Minimization



Early detection of challenges-
Listening, looking, asking



Stigma reduction



Providers: who are they, how
do we find them, when do we
need them

Early Signs



LOOK



ASK



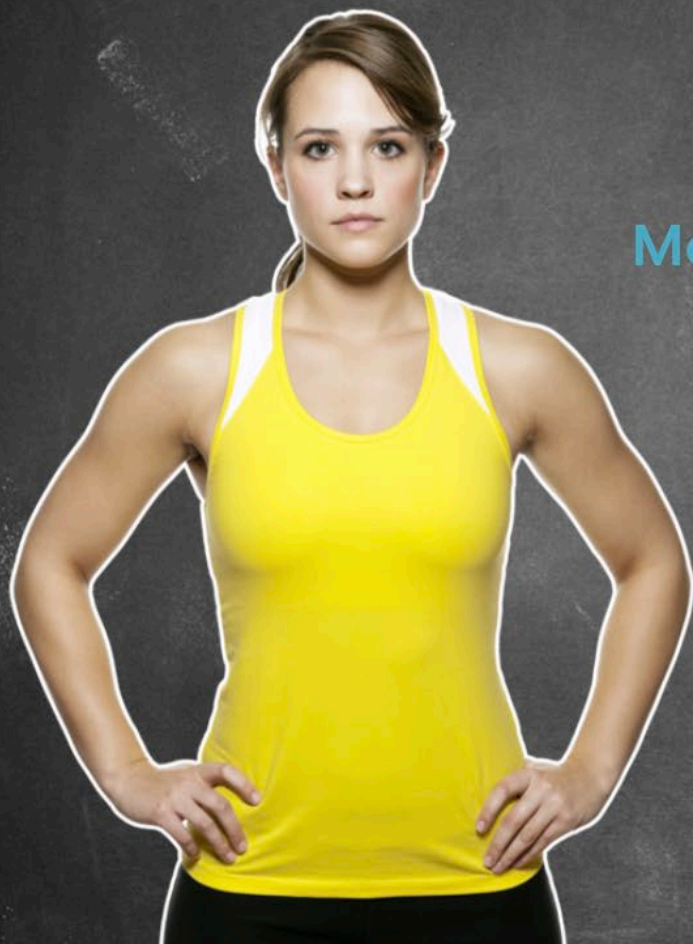
LISTEN

SPORT SCIENCE
INSTITUTE™

Mental Toughness vs. Mental Wellness

Untreated mental illness and distress are invisible injuries

Sometimes there's a negative stigma regarding mental illness



Mental Toughness



Untreated Mental Illness



CLICK NEXT TO CONTINUE

How can we support athlete mental wellness and reduce the stigma?



Continue having conversations about mental wellness to make communication around the topic part of daily life



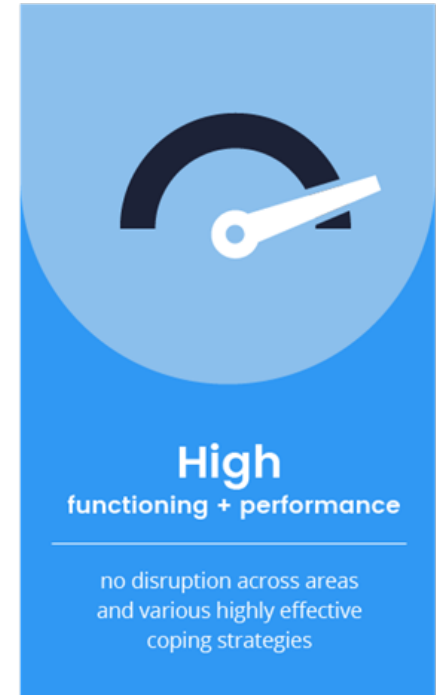
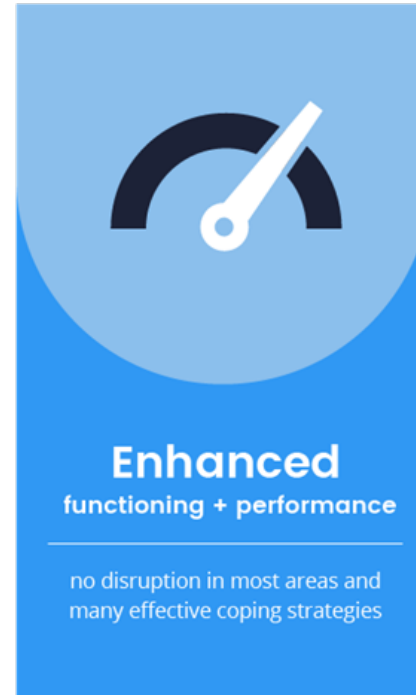
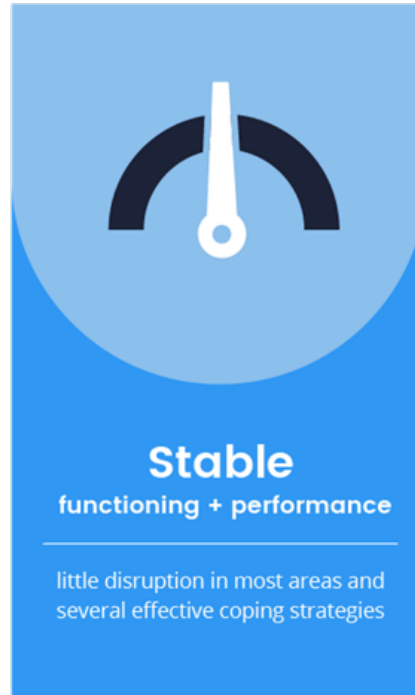
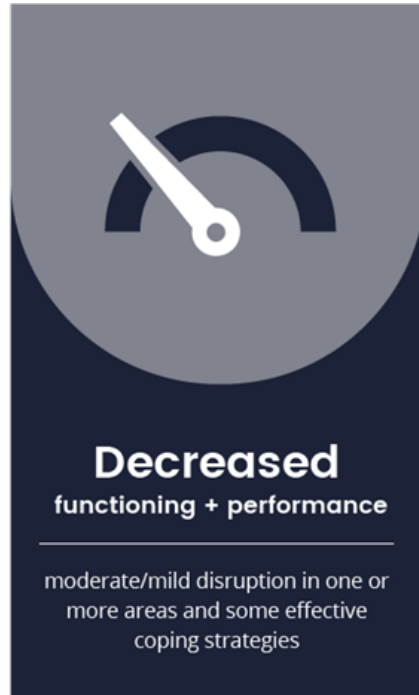
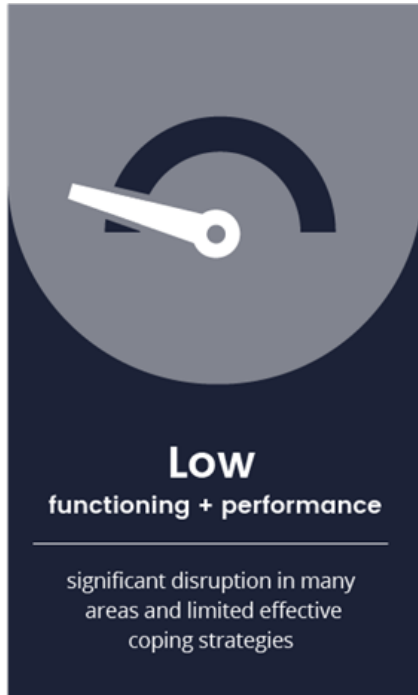
Highlight resources that offer support for athletes such as meditation apps, school and community counseling centers, nonprofits and community groups



Provide proactive solutions that support wellness such as optimal recovery (diet, rest, sleep), meditation, and support networks

How to identify the right provider

PERFORMER



PROVIDER

Clinically Trained* Certified Mental Performance Consultant®
OR
Licensed Mental Health Provider
(Psychologist, Psychiatrist, LMFT, LPC, LCSW)

Certified Mental Performance Consultant®



The logo is circular with a blue border. Inside, it says "CERTIFIED" at the top, "AASP • CSA" in the middle, and "CMPC" in large letters. Around the bottom edge, it says "MENTAL PERFORMANCE CONSULTANT".

Risk Minimization



Sports medicine professionals

How can
you apply
this to your
state
association

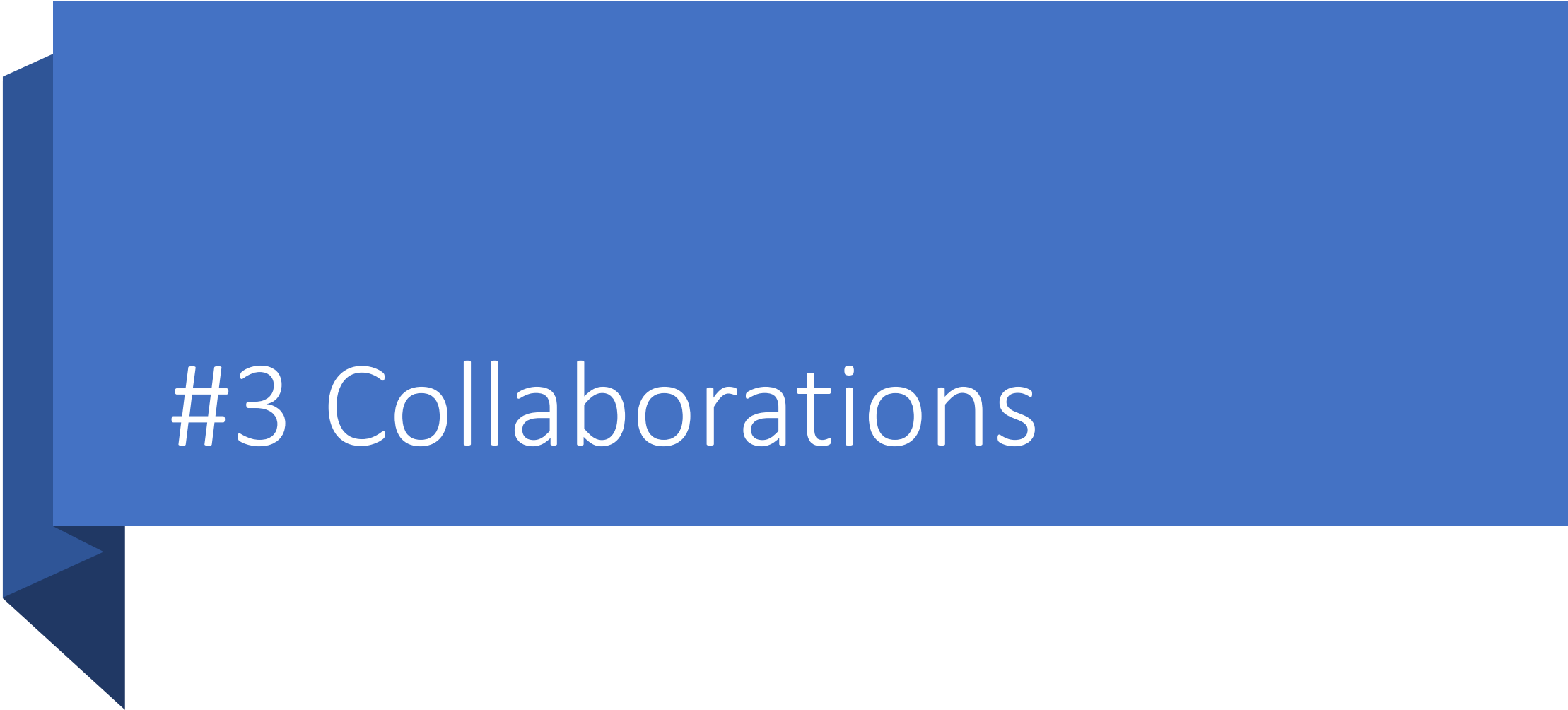
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What areas of risk minimization do you want to address next?

Who should be involved in the conversations?

What concerns do you have about tackling this?

What resources do you need to move forward?



#3 Collaborations



AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION



UNITED STATES CENTER FOR
COACHING EXCELLENCE



Collaborations



Association for Applied Sport Psychology

The premier association that ensures every performer has the resources to strengthen their inner edge through the advancement and application of excellence in mental performance and mental health.

Mental Performance

Mental performance refers to the use of psychological, self-regulatory, or life skills by athletes or performers to optimize their performance, involvement, enjoyment, or personal development in their performance domain.

Mental Health

Mental health is a state of psychological, emotional, and social well-being that allows for productive behaviors, fulfilling relationships, and resilience, ranging on a spectrum with thriving and mental wellness on one end and impaired functioning and mental illness on the other end.



What AASP does

Sport and performance psychology practice utilizes a combination of individual and group consulting or counseling, depending on the needs of the client.

Performing Consistently

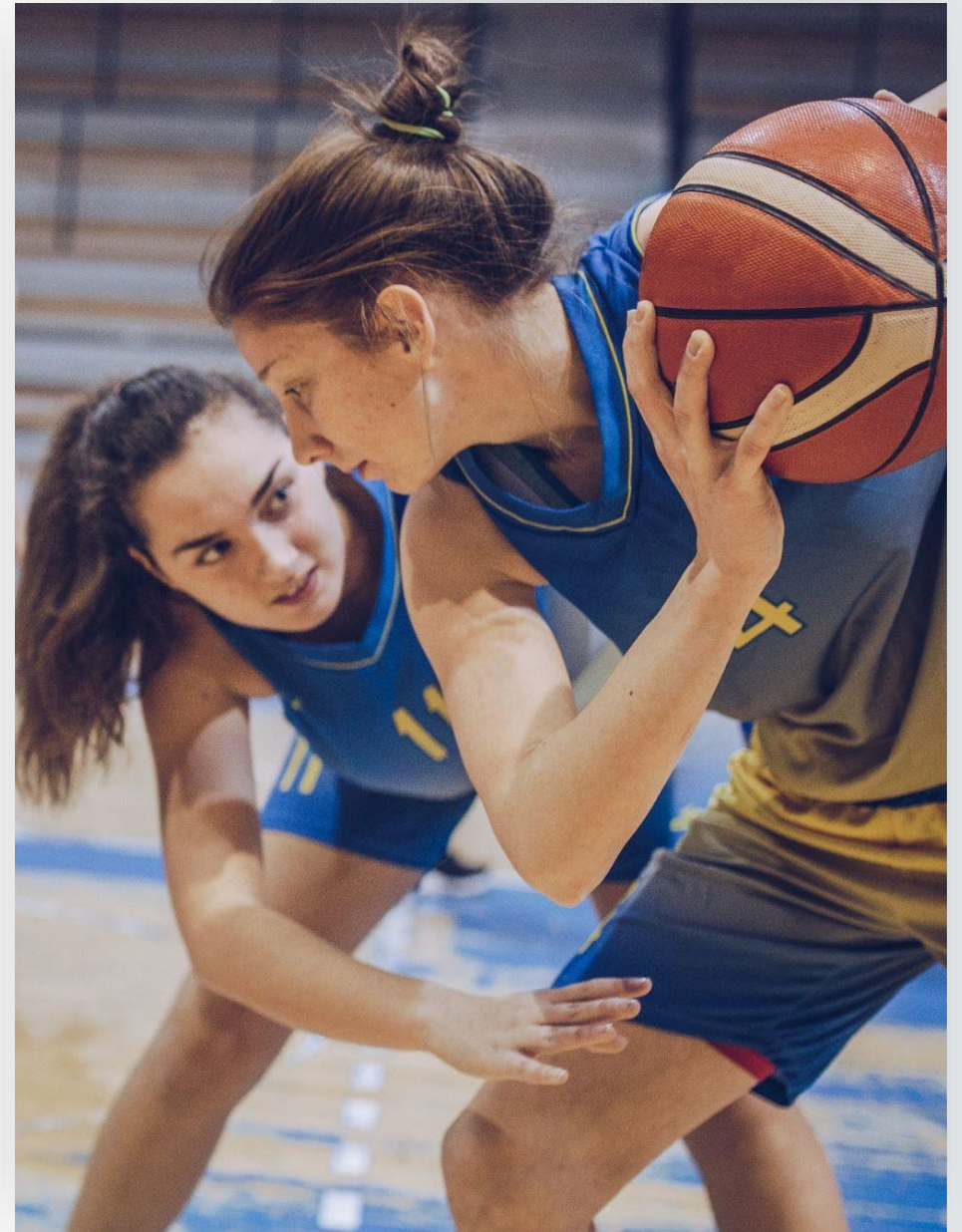
Although there are many potential intervention targets (e.g., goal setting, concentration, motivation, relaxation, imagery), the general objective is to teach mental skills necessary to perform consistently.

Evidence-Based Approach

Effective practice also involves the use of evidence-based approaches and methods and includes a consideration of relevant cultural variables that may be impacting one's experience.

The Ability to Thrive

Achieving peak performance involves more than reaching peak physical fitness. Potential isn't realized by chance and natural ability is only part of the equation. By seeing performers in the fullness of who they are and ensuring they have the resources to sharpen their mental edge, we don't just strengthen their ability to perform, we strengthen their ability to thrive.



The CMPC® Certification

“Yes, we help people perform better, but ultimately it can be life altering...and giving people the tools to thrive is fantastic.”

–Shannon Baird, PhD, CMPC KBR/1st Special Forces Group

Certification as a Certified Mental Performance Consultant® (CMPC) demonstrates to clients, employers, colleagues, and the public at large that an individual has met the highest standards of professional practice, including completing a combination of educational and work requirements, successfully passing a certification exam, agreeing to adhere to ethical principles and standards, and committing to ongoing professional development.

Find a CMPC

appliedsportpsych.org/certification/cmhc-directory/



A few more resources . . .

- [NCAA panel on mental health](#)
- [NCAA coach mental health interactive video](#)
- [Mental health resources for student-athletes](#)
- [AASP Find a Consultant](#)

How can
you apply
this to your
state
association

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Who are you already collaborating with around mental health?

Who can you add to these collaborations?

What are 2 specific next steps for you to take?

What are potential barriers for your next steps?

NFHS Strategic Plan- Focus Areas

- “Expand educational resources that address mental, emotional and physical wellness of everyone . . .”
- “Continue risk minimization efforts within the NFHS rules-writing process”
- “Explore collaborative efforts with other organizations”

With a regular consideration of inclusivity and multiculturalism

THANK YOU!

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