Athletic Risk
Management – Part 1

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Overview of Discussion

♦ Myths and Realities

♦ Supervision and Responsibility

♦ Coaching Points
THE MYTHS AND
REALITIES OF
ATHLETICS AND SPORTS MANAGEMENT
MYTH – POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Avoid written policies and procedures. Too often they are used against you in court.
Written planning may be important for the rookies, but those of us with more experience can better use our time in other ways and can be more flexible in our practice planning and classroom instruction.
MYTH - PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

♦ Appropriate
♦ Provided
♦ Condition
♦ Worn
♦ Clean
♦ Discipline
♦ Code of Conduct
MYTH – ASSUMPTION OF RISK

Don’t discuss the possible dangers of an activity with the athletes. It will raise their fears and make it more likely that they will sue if injured.
Clearly Title the Document

Indicate that the participant is aware of and understands the dangers of the specific activity

The specific dangers to be anticipated in the activity should then be clearly explained.
MYTH – TRAINERS

We have a full time trainer in our school. This relieves our coaches of worries about first aid.
MYTH - MISMATCHES

In activities where physical contact is possible, I never allow coed participation. This avoids the possibility of a lawsuit due to a mismatch.
MYTH - CONDITION OF EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

If no one complains about the condition of equipment, a field(s), gym or notifies me of an unsafe condition, I am not likely to be held liable if an injury occurs.
All of our equipment is inspected before the season and the maintenance crew takes care of the facilities. Our coaches don’t have to worry about liability in those areas.
MYTH
ATTRACTIVE NUISANCE

No one can be expected to put away the portable goals, porta-pits, wrestling mats, or the heavy gymnastics equipment after each practice.
Sanity Saver
Always listen to good advice...
SUPERVISION
STUDENT SUPERVISION

♦ Genesis of all General Liability Claims
♦ Instances of Unsupervised Students Increasing in all Districts
♦ Negligent Supervision Claims
NEGLIGENT SUPERVISION CLAIMS

♦ School was cause of harm
♦ Student injured and no supervision was present
♦ Student injured and supervision was inattentive
STANDARD OF CARE

An administrator, coach or teacher is required to exercise the same level of care and supervision as a parent would in like circumstances (Loco Parentis)
Sanity Saver
Always look at where you're going...
COACHING ISSUES
Risk Management Strategies

♦ Be Proactive – Safety Must be a Priority

♦ Educate Yourself and Staff

♦ Good Working Relationships with other Departments

♦ Develop a Safety Plan
Risk Management Strategies

♦ Review the Philosophy, Goals and Objectives of Program

♦ Establish a Record Keeping System

♦ Conduct Pre-Season Meetings for Parents/Guardians and Coaches
PROGRAM FOCUS AREAS

♦ Management and Supervision
♦ Facilities and Equipment
♦ Medical Practices
PROGRAM FOCUS AREAS

♦ Proper Instruction/ Appropriate Activity
♦ Transportation
♦ Warnings
♦ Selection, Training and Supervision of Coaches
LEGAL DUTIES OF COACHES

♦ Duty to Plan the Activity
♦ Duty toSupervise
♦ Duty to Assess Athletes Readiness for Practice and Competition
LEGAL DUTIES OF COACHES

- Duty to Maintain Safe Playing Surfaces
- Duty to Provide Proper Equipment
- Duty to Instruct Properly
LEGAL DUTIES OF COACHES

♦ Duty to Match Athletes
♦ Duty to Condition Properly
♦ Duty to Warn
♦ Duty to Provide Emergency Care
COACHING ISSUES

♦ Failure to Control
♦ Supervision
♦ “No Blood - No Foul” Attitude
♦ Aggressiveness
♦ Civility
♦ Taunting
♦ F-U-N
CONTROL

Supervisors must maintain control of participants or teams at all times. They are expected to guide the actions of participants and to detect and correct inappropriate behaviors.
KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL SUPERVISION

♦ First and Foremost - You Are a Role Model!

♦ Stay Calm When Making Corrections

♦ Be an “Educator”
KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL SUPERVISION

♦ Know and Understand the Athletes’ Expectations
♦ Implement Corrections Consistently
♦ Interact Positively - You Set the Tone
READINESS

♦ Physical Exams
♦ Fitness
♦ Injury Exacerbation
♦ Trainer/Physician Clearance
♦ Instruction
♦ Skill Testing - Lead Up Activities
SPORTSMENSHP

Where have you gone?
“The measure of man is what he does with power”.

Pittacus
“Bullying is as old as childhood. Adults dismiss it as a playground rite of passage, but it is serious and can not be ignored.”

Source: *The Education Digest*, March 1993

We can also refer to this as establishing a **Power Dynamic**
CIVILITY, HARASSMENT & HAZING

- Peer-to-Peer
- Improper Actions
- Bullying/Taunting
- “Rites of Passage”
- Failure to Report
PARENT/GUARDIAN
CONDUCT

♦ Ground Rules
  – Establish
  – Communicate
  – Enforce

♦ Code of Conduct
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

♦ **NYSIR WEBSITE** - [www.nysir.org](http://www.nysir.org)

♦ ID – nysir

♦ Password - nysir
SUMMARY & QUESTIONS