



FOLLOW-UP NOTES AND Q&As

Webinar #44

Reported Increases in College Athlete Suicide and Other Mental Health Risks

The Drake Group Education Fund Webinar Series Critical Issues in College Athletics

Thanks for attending or registering for our January 16, 2025 webinar on critical issues in intercollegiate athletics. A regular feature of our webinar series is “Follow-Up Notes” which provides links to the recorded webinar, answers to questions from the audience which panelists did not have the time to address or those emailed to us from telephone participants, and information on our next webinar. Questions may be slightly revised to be more generic or to combine similar questions.

1. Webinar #44 RECORDING

In case you missed any part of the January 16 webinar, you may access the recorded video here:

***“Reported Increases in College Athlete Suicide and
Other Mental Health Risks”***

[ACCESS RECORDING HERE](#)

2. UNADDRESSED QUESTIONS FROM WEBINAR ATTENDEES

Following are answers to questions from the audience symposium that panelists did not have time to address. Responses are from The Drake Group Education Fund (TDGEF) and The Drake Group experts and/or panelists. Answers include any panelist or attendee responses from the chat area deemed helpful. General comments by attendees not phrased as questions are not included.

Q1: I am a athlete at a D-III college and we have a very beneficial program called the mental fitness community. We meet once every other week with a professional that has an hour-long session to help us become stronger mentally when it comes to our sport and also outside of sport. How can a program like this be implemented at more institutions?

A1: Learn more about this model program [HERE](#).

Q2: As an athletic administrator, student-athletes have a network of people around them. It is important that we train our coaches to refer. The coaches are in constant communication and observation of their SAs. While the number of professionals to help them does not match the number of student-athletes, what are some best practices that we can use to better guide us in creating better internal institutional support?

A2: See, for example:

- Chronicle of Higher Education Report: [The Future of Campus Safety](#) (\$179) Contents include mental-health services that strengthen a college's safety net.
- [NCAA D-III Leaders Pass Measure to Provide Mental Health Training for All Coaches and ADs](#)

Q3: Do college athletes have more stress than the average student who must work extra to afford college?

A3: Generally, yes. [Researchers have identified a combination of stressors and time constraints unique to college athletes](#) that enable many to draw this conclusion. Also, there are significant barriers that inhibit many athletes from accessing mental health services, such as gender, race, perceived stigma, peer norms, and service ability. In addition, researchers have suggested that “future research should seek to examine facilitators of and barriers to collegiate athletes’ mental health and substance abuse (MHSU) programs using a more dyadic approach, such that athletes and stakeholder perceptions and behaviors are measured in tandem” ([Moreland, et al. 2018](#)).

Q4: What are some resources suggested during the session?

A4: See:

- [Call or text 988](#) – national suicide & crisis lifeline
- [Courage First Athlete Helpline](#) – immediate helpline and info on other helplines and resources
- [QPR Institute](#) – suicide prevention training programs
- [Suicide Prevention Resource Center](#) - in-person trainings, online courses, webinars, and other virtual learning experiences
- [SAMSA National Helpline for Mental Health, Drug, and Alcohol Issues](#) - free, confidential, 24/7, 365-day-a-year treatment referral and information service (in English and [Spanish](#)) for individuals and families facing mental and/or substance use disorders.

Q5: Is there a way for employees to receive either short-term assistance or be assessed and referred to experts in their area of struggle (i.e. addiction, anxiety, mental health disease)?

A5: Employee assistance programs (EAPs) are readily available for many employees. The [Center for Workplace Mental Health](#) explains the various types of voluntary EAPs that may be provided by an employer. The trouble here is that college athletes are [not currently considered employees](#), and therefore do not have access to such programs. There are some who believe that situation should change, and others who believe athletes becoming employees is an [inevitability](#).

Q6: What training is available for mental health professionals who wish to serve the athletics community?

A6: See the following resources:

- The [Alliance for Social Workers in Sport](#) (ASWIS) offers a free field education manual
- [Certified Clinical Sports Social Work Institute](#) (CCSSWI) prepares licensed social workers to prepare them to serve the sports industry

3. OUR UPCOMING WEBINAR SCHEDULE

Mark your calendars to join us for our next scheduled TDGEF webinars:

Webinar #45	Increasing Black Male Football/Basketball Player Graduation Rates	Feb. 20, 2025	THURSDAY 2:00-3:30 pm ET
Webinar #46	Investigative College Sport Journalism: Where art thou?	Mar. 20, 2025	THURSDAY 2:00-3:30 pm ET
Webinar #47	2025 Allen Sack National Symposium: Advancing Integrity in College Sport	Apr. 10, 2025	THURSDAY 9:00am-3:30 pm ET
Webinar #48	Confronting College Sports Affordability	May 15, 2025	THURSDAY 9:00am-3:30 pm ET

4. ACCESS RECORDINGS OF PREVIOUS WEBINARS

[CLICK HERE](#) to see the table of contents of The Drake Group Education Fund Video Library for recordings of all 44 previous webinars including the full proceedings of the 2022, 2023, and 2024 Allen Sack National Symposia.

5. QUESTIONS ABOUT THE DRAKE GROUP EDUCATION FUND

The Drake Group Education Fund (TDGEF) is the 2-year-old 501(c)(3) non-profit education sister organization of The Drake Group (TDG) whose mission is to ensure that the promise of college athletics is realized for all stakeholders. TDGEF produces *The Allen Sack National Symposium on Integrity in College Sports* and the *Critical Issues in College Sports Webinar Series*, conducts fact-based research on intercollegiate athletics and develops position papers and other educational materials that influence public discourse on current issues and controversies in college sport. To access a full library of print and video educational materials on current issues in intercollegiate athletes, visit www.thedrakegrouppeducationfund.org. All educational materials are available free of charge. If you believe The Drake Group Education Fund is doing good work, please also consider making a tax-deductible donation to support our webinars, educational research, and programs. You can donate to support what we do [HERE](#).

The Drake Group (TDG), a sister organization to TDGEF, was founded in 1999, and is a 501(c)(4) non-profit organization whose mission is to educate policymakers and advance legislative initiatives that foster academic integrity and athlete well-being in intercollegiate athletics. For the most current information on The Drake Group and college athletics related bills being considered by Congress, visit TDG [HERE](#). TDG needs volunteers to contact their senators and representatives to advance collegiate athletics reform legislation. Learn about legislation and [VOLUNTEER/JOIN HERE](#).

6. THANKS TO OUR WEBINAR #44 PANELISTS



AARON MILLER, M.Sc., Ph.D., CPCC, ACC, MODERATOR, educator, author, podcaster, career coach, and cultural consultant. He is also a Lecturer in the Departments of Kinesiology at CSU East Bay, St. Mary's College, and San Jose State, and creator/host of the podcast, *The Power of Sports*. Miller has authored 4 books: *Discourses of Discipline: An Anthropology of Corporal Punishment in Japan's Schools and Sports*; *Buying In: Big-time Women's College Basketball and the Future of College Sports*; *Basketball in Japan: Shooting for the Stars*; and *Beyond the Black Clubs: A Youth Sports Manifesto for Japan and Abroad (with Atsushi Nakazawa)*. He has been a Visiting Scholar at Stanford University and a Visiting Professor at Waseda University. Miller received his B.A. from the University of California Los Angeles and M.Sc. and Ph.D. from Oxford University.



CATHERINE BEACH, M.A., MPH, National Program Manager, *Courage First Athlete Helpline*. The *Helpline* is a partnership between the ChildHelp National Child Abuse Hotline and the Foundation for Global Sports Development. Beach holds a Master's in Clinical Psychology from Pepperdine University and a Master's of Public Health from California State University, San Marcos. She was an Associate Marriage and Family Therapist in both Arizona and California and has worked in child welfare and family counseling for over a decade. She has been a presenter at the Alliance for Social Workers in Sports Summit, the Arizona Athletic Trainer's Association Conference, and the Arizona School Counselor's Conference, among others. Catherine assisted in abuse prevention and education research with the U.S. Center for SafeSport and is the former Chair of the Maricopa County Child Abuse Prevention Council.



RICK ECKSTEIN, Ph.D., Professor of Sociology, Villanova University. Dr. Eckstein's teaching, research, and advocacy interests focus on the commercialization, commodification, and corporatization of youth and college sport – with an emphasis on girls' and women's sports. He is the author of *How College Athletics are Hurting Girls' Sports: the Pay to Play Pipeline*, is a noted public speaker on such topics as college admissions advantages for recruited athletes and how such policies perpetuate social inequalities, and he was a featured speaker on *HBO Real Sports*. He is currently co-producing a research-based documentary series entitled, *Beyond Stigma: Mental Health in Women's College Sports*, which explores the systemic elements of college sport that increase emotional distress among college athletes. He received his B.A. from Marietta College and holds a Ph.D. from SUNY, Stonybrook.



KATIE STEELE, LMFT, Executive Director, Athletes Mental Health Foundation. Steele is a Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist, Co-Founder of Thrive Mental Health (an outpatient mental health clinic in Bend, Oregon) and co-author of *The Price She Pays: Confronting the Hidden Mental Health Crisis in Women's Sports from the Schoolyard to the Stadium*. She is deeply committed to ensuring sports are an enriching experience for youth that elevates their mental health and well-being. She is an advocate for changing the framework of sport and mental health and preserving the health of the athlete -- more fulfillment, longevity in the game, and development of characteristics that will benefit them for their entire lifetime. Steele is also a former NCAA runner at the University of Oregon and Florida State.



KENYATTA WALKER, Associate Director, Cox Communication Academic Center for Student-Athletes, Louisiana State University. Walker is an active member of the National Association of Academic and Student-Athlete Development (N4A), Women Leaders in College Sports (WL), and the Minority Opportunities Athletic Association (MOAA). Formerly, Walker served as the Associate Athletic Director of Academics and Senior Woman Administrator at Alabama A&M, the primary academic advisor for multiple sport programs at Prairie View A&M, an academic coordinator at the University of West Virginia, and an athletic academic advisor and tutor coordinator at Alabama State. Walker earned her bachelor's degree in Political Science with a minor in Sociology from Georgia Southwestern State and another BA and a Masters from Alabama State.