



# **LIFE OF AN ATHLETE**

**Program Manual**



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# LETTER FROM THE PROGRAM DEVELOPER

Dear Colleagues:

Thank you for joining me to promote healthy lifestyles through Life of an Athlete!

We know that positive lifestyles including getting enough sleep, choosing nutritious foods and abstaining from the misuse of substances have a great impact on wellness and quality of life. Life of an Athlete Human Performance Project aims to help educators, parents and community members provide a safe and healthy school climate where youth are supported in making positive lifestyle choices every day. Through the Life of an Athlete program, youth leaders are empowered to influence their school climate by holding themselves and their teammates to high standards for their behavior.

Life of an Athlete Human Performance Project has been implemented by more than 700 colleges and universities and thousands of schools in 39 states. This innovative program is designed to create culture change within athletic populations through policy change and peer and adult mentorship, ultimately positively impacting the community as a whole. The ultimate goal is to affect an entire community through education-based athletics. A comprehensive evaluation of the program is being conducted with the program as implemented in New Hampshire is underway. The results of the first year show positive effects among the participants compared to non-participants.

Sincerely,



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# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Member Schools:

It is with a great deal of excitement that we at the New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association are able to provide to all of our member schools a comprehensive program designed to maximize student athletic performance while changing cultural norms around substance use within our school. Life of an Athlete (LoA) and its five components provide a blueprint for success for our member schools and their student athletes, coaches and administrators.

The progress we witnessed during our first year of implementation has been nothing short of amazing. With over 40 percent of our member schools implementing aspects of the program, we have far exceeded our targets for year one. The reason for this incredible growth is quite simple; the need for this type of program has been there for quite some time and has never been greater in the state of New Hampshire than NOW. To empower our students through leadership opportunities and provide them with trusted and trained adult coaches who help guide their decisions regarding sleep, nutrition, drugs and alcohol, the LoA message and model are right on point. It is very important to note that due to the successes we have seen through our data, the LoA program has completed Phase I of the NH Service to Science process and received a "Promising Practice" designation for prevention from the Expert Panel. While this is certainly a feather in the cap of the program, the true measure of all of this hard work is developing healthier and more productive student athletes as they leave high school and enter the next phase of their lives.

As a former coach, teacher, and school administrator I cannot begin to stress how much of a difference this program can make in your school and community. At the very least I ask that you please take the time to read through our guides, visit the website ([www.loanh.org](http://www.loanh.org)), and reach out to us should you need additional information.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,



Jeffrey T. Collins  
Executive Director, New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association  
251 Clinton St.  
Concord, NH 03301



# PROGRAM DESCRIPTION



The Life of an Athlete (LoA) program is a comprehensive prevention program developed by Olympic Trainer John Underwood. LoA takes a proactive approach to improving school climate by coordinating all aspects of high school athletics, including coaches, athletic directors, administrators, parents, communities, prevention professionals and athletes themselves. The program is centered on Athletic Codes of Conduct, while Student Leadership, Engaging Coaches, Stakeholder Unity and Pre-Season Meeting support the enforcement of athletic codes.

LoA is evolutionary and ongoing. The program components can be implemented in the order that best meets the needs and readiness of the school community. Below is a diagram describing each component of the program.



## STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Identify and develop student team leaders who assist the coach in improving athletic performance and team unity through the promotion of positive lifestyle choices.



## ENGAGING COACHES

Engage coaches at all levels to understand and promote positive lifestyle choices among athletes, provide workshops on how to communicate to the team and utilize youth leaders to monitor team dynamics.



## ATHLETIC CODES OF CONDUCT

Bring a code of conduct from conceptualization to implementation and enforcement based on the principles of restorative justice, which includes strategies for fan behavior, parental issues and non-negotiable conditions for being part of an athletic team.



## STAKEHOLDER UNITY

Ensure all members of the community take a stake in improving lifestyle choices among youth.



## PRE-SEASON MEETINGS

Conduct seasonal meetings for parents and athletes to discuss conditions for involvement, expectations, philosophy, the impact of lifestyle choices on performance, and what it means to be an athlete.

# PROGRAM THEORY

Life of an Athlete (LoA) is based on the socio-ecological model of behavior change. The socio-ecological model is a widely recognized framework used to design public health promotion programs, prevention practices and interventions. The theory provides a basis for understanding the multiple influences or layers of influence that impact behavior.

An individual's behavior is influenced by their own knowledge, skills and attitudes. However, their close friends and family, where they spend their time and the people they spend it with, and the political and social culture of the community, state and nation in which they live, all influence behavior. This theory can be useful in designing prevention programs that aim to influence population-level behavior change as opposed to focusing on change only among a small group of individuals.

The table below demonstrates how LoA is designed to influence behavior at the individual and interpersonal, organizational and community levels.

LEVEL OF INFLUENCE	HOW DOES LIFE OF AN ATHLETE INFLUENCE BEHAVIOR?
Individual and Interpersonal	Pre-season meetings, student leadership, and training for coaches are designed to impact the interpersonal influence on individual behavior by providing knowledge and setting norms and standards among youth, their parents and coaches.
Organizational and Public Policy	In the LoA program, the review, strengthening and enforcement of Athletic Codes of Conduct serves as the fundamental influence; providing standards for the behavior of athletes at the organizational level; particularly the school-level.
Community	Stakeholder unity is designed to create support for positive lifestyle choices within the broader communities in which athletes live.



# HISTORY OF LIFE OF AN ATHLETE IN NEW HAMPSHIRE



LoA began in New Hampshire in the spring of 2012 when several school districts collaborated with local substance abuse prevention professionals to hire LoA program developer John Underwood to conduct presentations on the impact of lifestyle choices on athletic performance. After seeing the amount of excitement the presentations generated, a group of regional prevention professionals brought the New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association (NHIAA) and the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation (NHCF) together to discuss what it would take to bring this comprehensive prevention program to scale, statewide. This resulted in a 10-year funding commitment, which is almost unheard of in the non-profit sector.

The NHIAA immediately hired a prevention professional for the role of LoA Program Director to oversee state-wide implementation. The LoA Program Director spent the first six months working with the New Hampshire Center for Excellence and the Education Development Center to assess infrastructure and readiness, build capacity and design an evaluation before implementing LoA. During this time, all materials and surveys were reviewed to ensure they were culturally appropriate for the target audience. Additionally, work was done to ensure the program would be funded beyond the initial 10 years guaranteed by the NHCF.

Implementation and evaluation began in August 2013 with three state-wide trainings over four days for student athlete leaders, coaches, athletic directors, principals, school board members, school resource officers and prevention professionals. From there things really exploded. The LoA Program Director began working with the Prevention Task Force of the Governor's Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention, Treatment and Recovery, a public funding source for substance abuse prevention. They developed a presentation on how funding LoA through the NHIAA would benefit the state for the full commission, which in turn dedicated additional funding to LoA. Using the additional funding, the LoA staff at NHIAA were able to create another position for a Program Coordinator to focus on providing educational support in the schools, improving the depth of training available to schools, and developing and improving materials such as this manual, the coaches playbook, the Powerback Diet and the Captains Guide to aid implementation.

The NHIAA serves as the organizing entity for all NH schools interested in participating in LoA. The role of the NHIAA is to provide resources for participating schools and to facilitate high fidelity program implementation through training and technical assistance. As the program continues to grow and improve across the state, everyone at the NHIAA is excited and honored to have the opportunity to support positive change in NH through all the amazing and hard work done by member schools.

# LOGIC MODEL

The LoA program logic model depicts the theory of change for the program on the following page. It states that if the activities of the components are implemented: student leadership, engaging coaches, pre-season meetings, codes of conduct and stakeholder unity — improvements would be expected through increases in:

- Understanding among student athletes of the consequence of their lifestyle choices (nutrition, sleep, substance use)
- Positive lifestyle choices among student athletes
- Accountability among student athletes
- Effective communication among coaches
- Skills among coaches in promoting character development
- Support among the athletic community (coaches, athletic directors, administrators) of positive lifestyle choices, proper fan behavior and the role coaches play
- Effective communication among parents
- Support for the enforcement of student codes of conduct among student athlete leaders

Once the above changes in knowledge, skills and behaviors are seen, we expect:

- Norms of healthy behaviors in the student athletic community
- Decrease in substance use among athletes
- Decrease in substance use in the entire school community

# WHAT COULD IMPLEMENTING LIFE OF AN ATHLETE CHANGE?

This diagram shows the components of LoA, which lead to outcomes in the athletic and larger school community, which then lead to changes in substance use behaviors.



## Student Leadership

Youth leaders trained in the components of LoA, are involved in revisions to the code of conduct and serve as a liaison to the coach



## Engaging Coaches

Training is provided to coaches on topics including character development, wellness, codes of conduct, engaging youth leaders, and communicating with parents



## Pre-Season Meetings

Pre-Season meetings for athletes and parents include overview of LoA and expectations for athletic community (students, coaches, fans)



## Codes of Conduct

Revisions are made to the student codes of conduct and plans are made for enforcement



## Stakeholder Unity

Media marketing and education campaigns are designed to target all stakeholders (coaches, athletes, parents, fans)



Enforcement of student codes of conduct increase



Student athletes gain understanding of the consequences of lifestyle choices (including sleep, nutrition, substance use) on their health and athletic performance



The athletic community increases support of positive lifestyle choices, proper fan behavior, and the role of coaches



Student athletes increase positive lifestyle choices



Coaches increase effective communication with student athletes, youth leaders and parents



Parents increase effective communication with youth and coaches



Coaches increase skills in promoting character development and supporting positive lifestyle choices among student athletes



Youth leaders support enforcement of the codes of conduct and are able to confront their teammates about being accountable



There is a change in norms around substance use among the athletic community



There is a decrease in substance use among student athletes



There is a decrease in substance use among entire school community



## TRAINING AVAILABLE

In addition to this manual, John Underwood, who developed the program, is available to provide trainings for larger audiences. For more information contact: John Underwood, [junderwoodny@gmail.com](mailto:junderwoodny@gmail.com) or (518) 796-6337.

John Underwood will be visiting New Hampshire to deliver a series of three trainings to support the implementation of this program. For information about future trainings, please go to the NHIAA Life of an Athlete website: [www.loanh.org](http://www.loanh.org).

Life of an Athlete can provide free local trainings and presentations to student-athletes, coaches, administrators, public health professionals or anyone else interested in the program. The best way to schedule the trainings is to contact the NHIAA/LoA.

If you are interested in implementing the Life of an Athlete program in your school district or community, please contact the NHIAA at (603) 228-8671 or e-mail [lifefanathletenh@gmail.com](mailto:lifefanathletenh@gmail.com).

## ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

Life of an Athlete staff is available to assist with implementation. You can find web modules, LoA staff contact information and all of the documents included in this manual by going to [www.loanh.org](http://www.loanh.org). You can also find Life of an Athlete NH on social media.



[www.facebook.com/LifeofanAthleteNH](http://www.facebook.com/LifeofanAthleteNH)



[www.twitter.com/NHIAA\\_LOA](http://www.twitter.com/NHIAA_LOA)



[www.youtube.com/user/LifeofanAthleteNH](http://www.youtube.com/user/LifeofanAthleteNH)



[www.instagram.com/lifefanathletenh](http://www.instagram.com/lifefanathletenh)



[www.pinterest.com/LifeofanAthleteNH](http://www.pinterest.com/LifeofanAthleteNH)



# GETTING STARTED



# GETTING STARTED

## *Roles and Responsibilities*

The implementation of Life of an Athlete (LoA) as a statewide initiative in New Hampshire is coordinated by the NHIAA. The role of the NHIAA is to provide resources for participating schools and to facilitate high fidelity program implementation through training and technical assistance. The information below outlines the role of the NHIAA or coordinating entity and the school's role for each component of LoA.



### **Student Leadership**

The activities in the Student Leadership component of the program are designed to identify and develop student team leaders who assist the coach in improving athletic performance and team unity through the promotion of positive lifestyle choices.

#### **THE ROLE OF NHIAA**



- Hold statewide training for youth leaders
- Hold local trainings for students at individual high schools
- Hold regional trainings for students
- Facilitate a statewide student leadership committee
- Provide guidance for student ambassadors to support prevention initiatives that can be implemented locally
- Take students from across the state to the New England Student Leadership Conference

#### **THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL**



- Promote messages about positive lifestyle choices at their school
- Use the 5 C's of an Effective Leader document to choose youth leaders/team captains (see [www.loanh.org/for-coaches-and-athletic-directors/student-leadership/](http://www.loanh.org/for-coaches-and-athletic-directors/student-leadership/))
- Hold weekly Student Athlete Leadership Team (SALT) or Student Athlete Leadership Council (SALC) meeting
- Encourage team captains to hold team meetings to share knowledge gained at training
- Encourage students to follow LoA social media channels and be active on the site
- Incentivize participation in mentoring younger athletes



# GETTING STARTED

## *Roles and Responsibilities*



### Engaging Coaches

Train coaches at all levels to understand and promote positive lifestyle choices among athletes, include workshops on how to communicate to the team and utilize youth leaders to monitor team dynamics.

#### THE ROLE OF NHIAA



- Hold statewide trainings for coaches on lifestyle choices, modeling healthy behaviors and incorporating LoA messaging into regular discussions with the team
- Include brainstorming session for coaches at student leadership training to discuss team dynamics, leadership roles, modeling healthy behavior and promoting healthy messages to the team and throughout the school community

#### THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL



- Educate and inform coaches about positive lifestyle choices
- Educate coaches on positive role model behaviors
- Distribute Coaches Playbook
- Assess coach performance
- Encourage coaches to:
  - Use the 5 C's of an Effective Leader document to choose team leaders
  - Incorporate LoA messages at practice and games
  - Positively confront behaviors of concern



### Pre-Season Meetings

Conduct seasonal meetings for parents and athletes to discuss conditions for involvement, expectations, philosophy, and what it means to be an athlete.

#### THE ROLE OF NHIAA



- Give LoA overview presentation at pre-season meeting to educate parents, and athletes about the impact of lifestyle choices on performance
- Provide tools and ideas to implement an effective pre-season meeting

#### THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL



- Conduct pre-season meeting for athletes and parents
- Include messages of living healthy lifestyle and avoiding alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (ATOD)
- Have youth leaders present information on the policies and the impact of lifestyle choices on performance



# GETTING STARTED

## *Roles and Responsibilities*



### Codes of Conduct

Bring a code of conduct from conceptualization to implementation and enforcement based on the principles of restorative justice; includes strategies for fan behavior, parental issues, and non-negotiable conditions for being part of an athletic team.

#### THE ROLE OF NHIAA



- Review school's codes of conduct/athletic handbook
- Conduct policy meeting with school administration
- Present policy recommendations to school boards

#### THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL



- Send NHIAA the most current school code of conduct/athletic handbook for review
- Schedule a policy meeting with NHIAA
- Form a policy review committee
- Adopt LoA policies into school policies



### Stakeholder Unity

Ensure all members of the community take a stake in increasing positive lifestyle choices among youth.

#### THE ROLE OF NHIAA



- Connect school with local prevention organizations that may be good resources for students
- Present to local community groups on potential involvement with LoA in their community
- Provide materials for presentations that local stakeholders can use to present to groups in their community
- Conduct a statewide marketing campaign to include social and traditional media
- Provide web-based trainings to member schools for no cost

#### THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL



- Use the web-based trainings as an alternative for parents/guardians who cannot attend the pre-season meeting
- Use local LoA branding to promote healthy lifestyle
- Empower youth leaders to conduct local presentations to build support for the program among stakeholders
- Encourage local restaurants to offer healthy choice food varieties for athletes



# GETTING STARTED

## *Readiness to Implement Assessment*

The NHIAA Life of an Athlete (LoA) staff developed the Readiness to Implement Assessment for schools and/or communities to use as they start planning to implement LoA. The NHIAA and Athletic Director or LoA designee<sup>1</sup> complete the assessment together to help determine the best way to implement the program. Once the assessment is completed, the NHIAA and member school will develop a plan for implementing LoA to meet the needs of the individual school.

ACTIVITY	ALREADY EXISTING	NOT EXISTING	COMMENTS
<b>Student leadership</b>			
Is there a student athlete leadership group? -If yes, how often do they meet? (answer in the comment section to the right) -If yes, are student leaders talking about the importance of lifestyle choices to their teams on a regular basis? (answer in the comment section to the right)			
Are student leaders doing any type of mentoring activities with middle/elementary school?			
Did youth leaders attend a statewide student leadership conference in the past year?			
<b>Engaging Coaches</b>			
Are there educational/training/professional development opportunities for coaches?			
Did coaches attend a statewide LoA training in the past year?			
Are coaches talking to their teams about the importance of lifestyle choices on a regular basis?			
Are coaches encouraging student athletes to mentor younger athletes?			
Are coaches modeling healthy behavior?			
<b>Pre-Season Meeting</b>			
Does the school hold pre-season meetings? -If yes, are pre-season meetings mandatory for parents? -If yes, are pre-season meetings mandatory for student athletes? -If yes, are pre-season meeting held each season?			

<sup>1</sup>LoA designee is a person appointed by the Athletic Director, Principal, Superintendent and/or School Board to act as an advisor to oversee implementation of the program

ACTIVITY	ALREADY EXISTING	NOT EXISTING	COMMENTS
<b>Code of Conduct</b>			
Has the athletic handbook been reviewed by the athletic department and/or school board in the past year?			
Does the athletic handbook use the restorative justice model as defined by the LoA manual if there is a code infraction?			
Does the athletic handbook offer resources for students who may have a drug or alcohol problem?			
<b>Stakeholder Unity</b>			
Are there media outlets (traditional and social) for parents to find information?			
Are there media outlets (traditional and social) for students and coaches to post about their sport?			



# GETTING STARTED

## Implementing LoA in a School

The Life of an Athlete (LoA) program will positively impact the school and community culture by empowering and educating youth leaders on lifestyle choices. There are many approaches to begin implementation of LoA, but schools using the route pictured below have been successful. Implementing LoA promotes and supports healthy choices and discourages the use of substances.

### HOW TO IMPLEMENT LIFE OF AN ATHLETE

With an NHIAA High School





# GETTING STARTED

## *A Case Study*



Timberlane Regional High School's (TRHS) Athletic Director, Angelo Fantasia, attended a Life of an Athlete (LoA) training and was blown away by the messages and video presented because it provided information about the immediate impact of lifestyle choices and empowered youth to take ownership of a healthier lifestyle. Angelo immediately went back to the school and began sharing information from the training with his students and fellow educators. Health and physical educators and the Student Assistance Professional were excited to start sharing with their students the messages about the immediate impact of lifestyle choices on performance.

The TRHS team started educating student athletes about nutrition and sleep. They wanted to focus on celebrating all the positive things going on in the school rather than 'Mr. Fantasia catching the kids screwing up.' Once they had built some excitement, the TRHS team was able to start talking about some of the data related to the impact of substance misuse on athletic performance. By showing how alcohol and other drugs affects them right now, students began to take ownership of living a healthier lifestyle.

After the TRHS team had been implementing LoA for a couple years, the NHIAA received a grant from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation to bring LoA to the entire state. The TRHS team was able to receive technical assistance from the NHIAA to help with their locally-driven and locally-controlled LoA effort. That is when things really started to come together.

Angelo helped the NHIAA secure additional funding by participating in a presentation to the Governor's Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse. At that meeting there was a lot of discussion about the need to spread the program outside of athletics. Angelo left that meeting and started working with his team back at TRHS to roll out 'Life of an Owl' (named after the school mascot, the owl.) By linking LoA to their school mascot and school pride, the TRHS team was able to impact even more students and build a greater level of excitement.

With the additional funding Angelo helped to secure, TRHS was able to send coaches, youth leaders, and other administrators to annual statewide trainings. Additionally, the NHIAA worked with the TRHS team to set up a local training for youth leaders with a separate session for coaches. The NHIAA also reviewed TRHS' athletic codes of conduct and presented that to their policy group with recommendations for how the codes of conduct could be strengthened. The TRHS team was then able to work with the students to develop a video to show at the pre-season meetings about the codes of conduct and impact of lifestyle choices on performance.

Currently, Life of an Owl is really starting to take off, with athletes working collaboratively with other students involved with band, drama, and other clubs to improve the climate at TRHS. Additionally, the TRHS team is working with the NHIAA to conduct trainings for faculty during professional development day. Life of an Owl continues to grow and have a positive impact on school climate at TRHS.

*The TRHS team started educating student athletes about nutrition and sleep. They then incorporated education around alcohol and other drugs once they had established excitement for LOA.*



# GETTING STARTED

## *Common Challenges and Solutions to Getting Started*

**⚠️ CHALLENGE: I don't have the time or resources to take this on.**

**✅ PROPOSED SOLUTIONS:**

- Over the long term, Life of an Athlete (LoA) works to reduce time spent reacting to a crisis when potential issues are identified and addressed before they are able to destroy team moral and unity.
- In the short term, the best way to implement LoA while avoiding placing burdens on staff is to form a diverse team to delegate roles and responsibilities.
- If possible utilize school board, athletic, prevention, or booster funds to provide stipend to an LoA advisor/designee<sup>1</sup>.

**⚠️ CHALLENGE: I find that people we need to get excited about implementing LoA don't see the purpose.**

**✅ PROPOSED SOLUTIONS:**

- LoA works to improve school climate, which ultimately has a positive impact on academics, substance misuse rates, and school engagement. Discuss these benefits of implementing LoA.
- Over the long term, LoA helps reduce time spent reacting to a crisis when potential issues are identified and addressed before they are able to destroy team morale and unity.

**⚠️ CHALLENGE: I find there is a lack of buy-in from school administration.**

**✅ PROPOSED SOLUTION:**

- If discussing the impact on school climate and benefits of taking a proactive approach isn't enough, have a trusted administrator from another school district discuss the positive impacts they have seen from LoA.

**Implementing a program without an evaluation component is much like competing without keeping score.**

Participating in evaluation allows implementers to:

- Document measurable outcomes and show successes
- Make adjustments if something isn't working as intended
- Seek additional funding

**⚠️ CHALLENGE: I find participation in the evaluation is too much of a burden.**

**✅ PROPOSED SOLUTION:**

- Utilize creative methods to distribute the surveys
  - Distribute the surveys through text message while on the bus
  - Bring a tablet to pass around the link to the electronic survey to be done on the bus ride, during practice, or after school waiting for practice or games.
  - Send the team to the computer lab
  - Incentivize participation in evaluation with:
    - Food
    - Clothing
    - Prizes



# **STUDENT LEADERSHIP**





# STUDENT LEADERSHIP

## *Steps for an Athletic Director or LoA Designee<sup>1</sup> Implementing Student Leadership*

### STEP 1: RECRUIT YOUTH

Work with coaches to ensure youth leaders are chosen based on their leadership abilities rather than solely on their popularity by using the 5 Cs of an Effective Leader (Competence, Character, Civility, Citizenship, Chemical Health) to assess potential youth leaders.

### STEP 2: CONDUCT INITIAL MEETING

Meet with youth leaders to:

- Reinforce why they were chosen to be leaders on the team
- Stress the importance of setting and living up to a high standards for the entire team
- Work with youth to assess team dynamics

### STEP 3: CONDUCT TRAINING

Schedule a student leadership training with the NHIAA's Life of an Athletes (LoA) staff to review:

- The impact of lifestyle choices on performance
- How to address behaviors of concern
- How to regularly discuss lifestyle choices with teammates
- How to create messaging about lifestyle choices

### STEP 4: SEND YOUTH LEADERS TO STATE-LEVEL CONFERENCE

Use the 5 Cs of an Effective Leader to choose your team of students to send to the statewide student leadership conference.

### STEP 5: CONDUCT WEEKLY MEETINGS

Schedule weekly meetings for youth leaders from all sports to:

- Monitor the pulse of all teams
- Teach team dynamics
- Address team issues
- Discuss the impact of lifestyle choices
- Plan mentoring activities for younger athletes
- Plan community service projects
- Plan traditional and social marketing campaigns
- Allow for roundtable discussion



<sup>1</sup>LoA designee is a person appointed by the Athletic Director, Principal, Superintendent and/or School Board to act as an advisor to oversee implementation of the program



# STUDENT LEADERSHIP

## *Additional Tools and Resources*

Additional tools and resources for Student leadership can be found at <http://www.loanh.org/life-athlete-manual-documents/>.

**Some resources found on this page include:**

- Life of an Athlete's Captain's Guide
- The 5 Cs of an Effective Leader
- The Powerback Diet
- Healthy Recipes
- Weekly Meal Plans
- Sleep Manual
- Training Tips
- Training Youth Leaders Curriculum
- Student Leaders Scenario Sheet





# STUDENT LEADERSHIP

## *A Case Study*



Athletic Director Greg Fillion wanted to improve the school climate at Littleton High School (LHS). After attending Life of an Athlete (LoA) presentation Greg decided to bring the program to LHS.

Greg connected with the Student Council Advisor, Emily Platt, to help implement the Student leadership component of LoA. Greg and Emily decided to select kids from the student council to form a LoA sub-

committee. They started by using the 5 Cs of an Effective Leader document to identify five student athletes to kick off the committee. They started with a small group of focused sophomores and juniors who were excited about improving LHS. Initially, they met in the morning before school, but eventually moved it to every Friday for an hour over two lunch periods, giving the LoA sub-committee about 45 minutes of useful time.

Greg and Emily liked the idea of having criteria for leadership on teams. They focused on getting coaches to use the 5 Cs of an Effective Leader document to assess youth leaders. Initially, Greg met some resistance to changing the system for selecting team leaders. He explained, “I’m not telling you who you can have, I’m telling you who you can’t have (as leaders on your team)”. By stressing the value and benefit of choosing the right person for the job, Greg was able to start building buy-in for LoA and the materials. Also, as a result, Student Council and National Honor Society started using the 5 Cs of an Effective Leader document to guide leadership discussions and self-reflections.

Meanwhile, the LoA sub-committee became a Student Athlete Leadership Team (SALT) and expanded to include students from co-curricular activities such as drama, with several teachers taking an interest. Greg and Emily sent a team of students to the annual March Student Leadership Conference in Concord, NH, and shortly afterwards, had the LoA staff from the NHIAA up to LHS to train SALT. The students from SALT were so excited about some of the activities youth leaders were doing in other high schools, they asked if they could open up the gym two days per week at 6 a.m. to get an extra ‘zero hour’ work out in before school started. The first workout had over 20 participants, the second workout had over 50 participants and by the summer SALT requested they add a third day during the week. By the start of fall pre-season they had over 70 participants. The numbers dwindled a little as the season started and settled in at over 30 students per day.

SALT organized training for 8th graders based on the LoA training NHIAA staff did for them. The students worked together to create a schedule and topics tailored for 8th graders and ran the session, which was a mix of presentations and physical activities, handing out certificates at the end. SALT is planning to offer this twice a year during the fall and spring as both team building and mentoring opportunities.

Gavin was always an enthusiastic student, but he really matured both physically and emotionally from his involvement with SALT and zero-hour training. At Gavin’s annual physical in Concord, his doctor was blown away by the change and wanted to check out what he was doing for his own children. Gavin’s confidence has grown enormously through his participation in zero-hour training and SALT.

*“We have a lot of positive activities going on at LHS as part of our Life of a Crusader program.”*



# STUDENT LEADERSHIP

## *A Case Study*

Over the following year, student leadership started taking off in all different directions.

They were receiving training and providing input into the community:

- LHS created and trained a restorative justice committee to positively work with students who had violated the policy on taking ownership of and learning from their mistake(s). The committee was made up of the Athletic Director, Student Council Advisor, National Honor Society Director, two Guidance Counselors, Career & Tech Advisor and Co-Curricular Director.
- After the police chief's first attempt to pass a synthetic marijuana ordinance failed, he reached out to the LHS team to have the chair of the selectmen meet with the students from the LoA sub-committee.
- The school's internship director brought the local Chamber of Commerce director to talk about hiring practices related to social media. The intent was to prepare students for the fact that employers are not just looking at what they post, but when they post.

The SALT has been getting involved in numerous activities and using their LoA training:

- Created 'maroon outs' where all teams would be called on to support a team from their school that had a big game. The sense of comradery and school pride started taking root with students and some students even showed up in costume.
- Started the "Crusade to End Hunger", linking a community service project like a food drive to school pride for the "Littleton Crusaders".
- Started printing up trading cards of the LoA committee members to pass out while speaking to elementary school athletes. The student athletes agreed to live up to the standard they were presenting to the younger athletes and the younger athletes learned about the importance of healthy choices.
- Created a birthday party fundraiser where the LoA committee members conducted 90 minutes of activities for elementary school students followed by ice cream and cake in the café (with parents present and responsible at all times). Funds were used for healthy activities such as rock wall team bonding.
- Raised over \$3,000 for Special Olympics through the "Penguin Plunge".
- Used social media to distribute positive messages and hold healthy competitions such as workout of the week recognition.
- Created "power packs" - nutritious pre-game snacks prepared for the teams.
- A team was having an issue where there was disagreement about uniforms that bred negativity around the coach. This negativity spread into several different areas. Having learned about how negativity can impact team dynamics and performance, the team reviewed the 'My Coach Sucks' video and had a discussion about the impact of behavior ownership. There are currently no issues with negativity with that team.
- A new student started posting information on partying. Teammates offered her alternatives for having fun and invited her to hang out with them.

The LoA sub-committee currently has approximately 25 students with representation from every varsity team and several co-curricular activities. Greg and Emily are amazed at how much this has taken off and looking forward to see how the youth leaders continue to grow the program and improve school climate at Littleton High School.



# STUDENT LEADERSHIP

## *Common Challenges and Solutions to Implementing Student Leadership*

**⚠ CHALLENGE: I don't have anyone with the time to coordinate all this work.**

**✓ PROPOSED SOLUTIONS:**

- Student leadership reduces time spent reacting to a crisis when potential issues are identified and addressed before they are able to destroy team moral and unity.<sup>1</sup>
- It is important for schools to avoid staff becoming overburdened by forming a diverse team to delegate roles and responsibilities.
- If possible, utilize school board, athletic, prevention, or booster funds to provide a stipend to an Life of an Athlete (LoA) designee.<sup>2</sup>

**⚠ CHALLENGE: I have found that choosing captains is a popularity contest which works and nobody wants to change it.**

**✓ PROPOSED SOLUTIONS:**

- Stress the importance of selecting the right person to enhance:
  - Team dynamics
  - Team performance
  - Relationships between teammates and coaches
  - Leadership
- Use the 5 Cs of an Effective Leader to assess the team and choose leaders.

**⚠ CHALLENGE: I don't have a lot of buy-in or follow-through from the youth.**

**✓ PROPOSED SOLUTIONS:**

- Educate student athletes on compelling messages from the program on how the impact of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (ATOD) affects their performance right now, rather than later in life.
- Incentivize youth to get excited about Life of an Athlete:
  - Link to school pride by creating 'Life of (your mascot)' such as 'Life of an Owl' or 'Life of a Crusader'
  - Stress that participation reflects well on college applications
  - Offer food, clothing, prizes
  - Offer extra credit

<sup>3</sup>Black, D. R., Tobler, N.S., & Sciacca, J.P. (1998). Peer helping/involvement: an efficacious way to meet the challenge of reducing alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use among youth? *The Journal of School Health*, 68, 87-93. doi:10.1111/j.1746-1561.1998.tb03488.x)

<sup>4</sup>LoA designee is a person appointed by the Athletic Director, Principal, Superintendent and/or School Board to act as an advisor to oversee implementation of the program



# **ENGAGING COACHES**





# ENGAGING COACHES

## *Steps for Athletic Director or LoA Designee<sup>1</sup> to Engage Coaches*

### **STEP 1: RECRUIT COACHES TO BE CHAMPIONS**

Assess coaching staff and choose representatives to attend based on the following characteristics:

- Respect of peers
- Relationship with Athletic Director
- Student athletes' perception of coach as a role model
- Commitment to healthy lifestyles

### **STEP 2: TRAIN COACHES**

Send coaches to NHIAA annual training to learn about:

- Impact of lifestyle on performance
- Importance of being a positive role model
- Methods to positively confront behaviors of concern
- Process of utilizing the restorative justice model
- Tips to build and maintain teamwork and team unity

### **STEP 3: CONDUCT TRAINING**

Incorporate the content from NHIAA training into regular meetings with coaches including education and brainstorming on:

- Codes of Conduct
- Modeling healthy behavior
- Pre- and post-weekend messaging
- Addressing behaviors of concern

### **STEP 4: SEND YOUTH LEADERS TO STATE-LEVEL CONFERENCE**

Work to continuously improve the program by:

- Asking for and listening to coaches' feedback on Life of an Athlete (LoA)
- Asking for and listening to youth feedback on LoA
- Communicating feedback to the NHIAA

<sup>1</sup>LoA designee is a person appointed by the Athletic Director, Principal, Superintendent and/or School Board to act as an advisor to oversee implementation of the program



# ENGAGING COACHES

## *Additional Tools and Resources*

Engaging Coaches resources and tools can be found at <http://www.loanh.org/life-athlete-manual-documents/>.

### Some resources found on this page include:

- The Coaches Playbook
- The 5 Cs of an Effective Leader
- Coaches Checklist to Improve Lifestyle Choices
- Coaches Commitment
- Coaches Evaluation for Professional Improvement Plan
- Engaging Coaches Curriculum
- TEAM Coaching
- Selecting and Training Student Athlete Leaders
- Conflict Resolution Process

*“...Thank you for not quitting on me...and holding me accountable!!! The lessons that you taught me are the exact same lessons that I look back to when dealing with my own players. In speaking with two of my older players today, I was lucky enough to have them tell me, ‘we trust you coach...because of the way you coach and because we know you care.’ [It made me think] long and hard about what made them say that, and why I coach the way I do. Although I have had many great coaches, you have without question stood out as the coach who has left the biggest impact on me as a player, a coach, and a man. Thank you for teaching me that coaching is not just about winning and losing or X’s and O’s, but is about caring about your players, teaching them to be better people and doing the right thing... All too often it is easy to get lost in the pressure of games...recruiting and other [trivial details]. Because of what you...taught me I can always remember that having a positive mark on these young [athletes] is more important than anything else.”*

*-College coach to his high school coach*

# ENGAGING COACHES

## *A Case Study*



Krystyna Smith, athletic director at Somersworth High School (SHS), announced to all her coaches that the NHIAA would be bringing Life of an Athlete (LoA) program developer John Underwood to conduct LoA training. The main focus of the training would be to improve athletic and academic performance by focusing on the impact of lifestyle choices on athletic performance when addressing student athletes.

Steve Hodsdon, volleyball and track and field coach at SHS jumped at the opportunity. “I was amazed by the information presented by John Underwood,” Hodsdon said. “This is the exact program that we need in our school for our athletes to become more educated. We went “all in” at Somersworth on LoA after this presentation.”

After the training, Krystyna and her team of coaches approached the school board with the information, and they immediately approved a motion to begin implementing LoA at SHS and in their community.

That fall, Coach Hodsdon began implementing LoA with his girls volleyball team. Coach Hodsdon struggled to find time to talk to his athletes about LoA, because he was only with them for about two hours a day. He figured out the best way to begin providing information to his athletes was to give them each a copy of the Powerback Diet Plan. The athletes were able to read this nutrition guide at home and begin making healthy choices immediately. Once the athletes read through this short guide they immediately bought into LoA and began holding themselves accountable for their lifestyle choices related to sleep, nutrition, alcohol and other drugs. They learned about how the amount of food and liquid to put in their bodies, how much sleep they got and their commitment to remain drug-free allowed them to perform at optimal levels. They also learned about the importance of recovery techniques on their muscle repair.

After reading the Powerback Diet Plan the team decided that they would no longer stop for fast food after away games. Instead they would pack nutritious snacks for before and after the games according to the Powerback Diet Plan. “The girls often let me know they are eating and staying hydrated according to LoA recommendations by showing me their chocolate milk. Who knew that chocolate milk had so many benefits! This has made a big difference in preparing our athletes for the games and helping them recover after the games,” says Hodsdon. “A parent came up to me and asked if I could go over the Powerback Diet Plan with their daughter to help her make healthy choices. They had read through the booklet and knew how important it was.”

After establishing excitement for LoA by using the Powerback Diet booklet, Coach Hodsdon immediately started using LoA’s “5 Cs of an Effective Leader” to evaluate and pick team captains. As captains, student athletes must demonstrate character, civility, competence, chemical health, and citizenship. By evaluating team captains based on these different characteristics, Coach Hodsdon was able to pick the most effective leaders of his teams.

Coach Hodsdon now meets with his assistant coaches and current captains at the end of each season to use this document to evaluate captains for the upcoming year. After seeing the benefits and building excitement for LoA with his student athletes, Coach Hodsdon makes sure to incorporate messaging on healthy lifestyles into team meetings. On Friday afternoons, whether it is before or after a game or practice, he gives the captains time to talk to their teammates to make sure everyone is on the same page and making healthy choices going into the weekend. They all hold each other accountable, leading to success on and off the court.



# ENGAGING COACHES

## Common Challenges and Solutions to Engaging Coaches

**⚠ CHALLENGE:** Coaches say, “I don’t have the time to work on Life of an Athlete.”

**✓ PROPOSED SOLUTION:**

- Remind coaches that a small time investment will add value to a team.

Examples of these messages include:

- Making leadership a priority can have positive impacts on team performance. Leadership provides structure to the team and a plan for success.<sup>2</sup>
- Building strong, positive relationships will help solidify competitive results.
- Coaches have found that when they are able to work with their teams to deal with small issues, they end up preventing larger issues down the line, which actually saves time for them.

**⚠ CHALLENGE:** Coaches say, “I already have a great system in place.”

**✓ PROPOSED SOLUTIONS:**

Ask coaches some questions to get them thinking about how they define a great system such as:

- What is the most important thing that youth can gain by playing in sports?
- Are you looking at anything beyond wins and losses?
- What benchmarks are in place to help your athletes with their team goals?
- Are there expectations that consider lifestyle choices and team dynamics?

Remind coaches that in education-based athletics, we’re obligated to provide skills that will help our student athletes become productive members of society, not just focus on the X’s and O’s. Years later, those student athletes will look back on the relationships they formed and lessons they learned about life, not just the games they won.

**⚠ CHALLENGE:** Coaches say, “I find that substance misuse isn’t a problem until it surfaces.”

**✓ PROPOSED SOLUTION:**

- Have the coaches ask themselves:
  - Do other teammates know about issues that haven’t surfaced?
  - Does the way teammates behave impacts team morale and team unity?
  - Can other teams reach their full potential if they aren’t communicating?

**⚠ CHALLENGE:** Coaches say, “I feel Life of an Athlete lacks substance, it’s all over the place.”

**✓ PROPOSED SOLUTIONS:**

Although there are many components to LoA, it is important to ensure that it’s clear the role of the coach is focused on the following:

- **Team dynamics:** from rookies to veterans, starters to back up players; every member of the team is important. Understanding the dynamics of the team will make for a stronger unit.
- **Relationships:** regardless of what role they’re playing on the team, each and every kid needs to feel that the coach cares about them personally. Once a coach shows the student athletes that they care about them on and off the field, that they’re part of the team, then they’ll show their full potential.
- **Team goals:** teams almost always identify state championship as their goal, coaches should work to ensure team goals are attainable and have benchmarks, the season has to be worth something even if a team is out of contention.
- **Lifestyle choices:** coaches willing to discuss and address lifestyle choices show the team they are willing to tackle the tough issues to see the team reach their full potential.

<sup>2</sup>Lewis, T. F. (2008). An explanatory model of student-athlete drinking: the role of team leadership, social norms, perceptions of risk, and coaches’ attitudes toward alcohol consumption. *College Student Journal*, 42, 818–831.



# **PRE-SEASON MEETING**





# PRE-SEASON MEETING

## *Steps for an Athletic Director or LoA Designee<sup>1</sup> Conducting a Pre-Season Meeting*

### STEP 1: SEND A LETTER TO PARENTS

Send a letter to remind parents that the pre-season meeting is mandatory and covers:

- Impact of lifestyle choices on performance
- Codes of conduct
- Expectations
- Scheduling
- Eligibility
- Health information (concussion testing, health waivers, etc.)

### STEP 2: HOLD THE PRE-SEASON MEETING AND INCLUDE:

- Education for attendees on the effects of alcohol and drugs
- Survey data or student opinions of the use of alcohol and drugs of students
- Reminders to parents of their responsibility to model good behavior and communicate their disapproval of alcohol and drug use

### STEP 3: REVIEW THE CODE ALONG WITH EXPECTATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES FOR BEHAVIOR

- Take the time to review what is in the code
- Don't rely on parents to define the consequences for code violations
- State that the consequences are set to hold students accountable and that the consequences will be enforced for all violations

### STEP 4: COLLECT SIGNATURES

Read the signature line out loud, emphasizing that their signature is more than a cursory measure. It states that they have knowledge of the code, they understand the code, and they agree to the code.

- Be sure the parent/guardian, child and coach sign the code

### STEP 5: ESTABLISH PARENT/FAN EXPECTATIONS

- Being a positive role model helps create the best athletic experience possible
- Being a “team” fan, not a “my kid” fan
- Being respectful of what a student athlete says in any controversy, but acknowledging that it is normal for youth to slant the truth to their advantage in these situations in order to keep playing
- Showing respect for the opposing players, coaches, spectators and support groups
- Being respectful of all officials' decisions
- Not talking strategy before or after a game as it may contradict the coach's plans and strategies
- Praising student-athletes in their attempt to improve themselves as athletes and individuals
- Gaining an understanding and appreciation for the rules of the sport
- Recognizing and showing appreciation for an outstanding play by either team
- Teaching that success is experienced in the development of skills and that it's beneficial to feel positive about skill development during the season, regardless of the team's record
- Taking time to talk with coaches in an appropriate manner about a concern. It is important to remain respectful and follow the designated chain of command
- Supporting the alcohol, tobacco and other drug-free policies by refraining from the use of any such substances during athletic contests
- Supporting student athletes by holding them accountable for their commitment to non-use of substances as outlined in the Code of Conduct
- Not hosting parties that have alcohol or drugs or allowing student athletes to be at a party with alcohol or drugs

\* LoA designee is a person appointed by the Athletic Director, Principal, Superintendent and/or School Board to act as an advisor to oversee implementation of the program



# PRE-SEASON MEETING

## *Additional Tools and Resources*

Additional tools and resources for Pre-Season Meetings can be found at <http://www.loanh.org/life-athlete-manual-documents/>.

### Some resources found on this page include:

- Pre-Season Agenda Guidance
- Pre-Season Agenda Template
- Parent Code of Commitment
- Parents Role in Interscholastic Athletics
- Parenting Guide
- Article: Parenting Style Plays Key Role In Teen Drinking (NPR)
- Article: Hands-On vs. Hands-Off Parenting





# PRE-SEASON MEETING

## *A Case Study*



The Newport School District decided it wanted to implement Life of an Athlete (LoA) in the 2013-2014 school year but needed to find someone to help get the program started. Jeff Miller, a special education teacher and coach, expressed interest in the program and before he knew it, was participating at the LoA Statewide Implementers Training in Concord in March of 2014. At the LoA training, Jeff learned the different components of the LoA program and how lifestyle choices impact athletic performance. Jeff was compelled to put on a strong pre-season meeting to ensure

expectations were clear and that everyone understood the impact lifestyle choices have on performance.

In the summer of 2014, Jeff worked with Newport High School Athletic Director Doug Beaupre to organize a training for all of their coaches for the upcoming school year. This meeting was to introduce LoA, review program materials, and prepare for the pre-season meeting. The two administrators went over how to effectively pick captains on a team based on LoA's 5 Cs of an Effective Leader document, and expectations of leaders of their sports teams. The training was very well received by the coaches, and they enjoyed a nice BBQ as well! As part of LoA, team captains sign a pledge to commit to leading by example which means living a healthy, drug-free lifestyle.

As the school year got closer, Doug and Jeff sat down with the LoA materials they had received at the statewide conference. Their goal was to hold Newport High School's first-ever pre-season meeting for athletes and parents to learn about the logistics of the season and the importance healthy choices have on succeeding as an athlete. They used the materials to create an agenda and presentation for the pre-season meeting.

The night of the pre-season meeting there were so many people in attendance that some had to stand out in the hallway! Doug welcomed the athletes, parents and coaches and went over material such as scheduling, registration, family ID forms, and concussion protocol. Jeff then introduced the community to the LoA program, which they adapted to "Life of a Tiger" to incorporate their whole school community. After reviewing "Life of a Tiger" Jeff went over the impact of lifestyle choices on performance. The audience really responded to the scans that showed how different substances affect the brain.

"As I presented the material, the parents' and students' eyes lit up. Everyone was so fascinated with the information you could tell it really made them start thinking about what these substances do to your body. You could hear a pin drop in the cafeteria it was so quiet", said Jeff. "Life of an Athlete helps student athletes to learn proper nutrition, recommended sleep habits, lifestyle choices and helps them to treat their bodies with respect and understanding," he said. "It also offers coaches training to help coaches teach character development, how to effectively communicate expectations

*"We want to help our kids be as successful as they can be both on and off the field. Athletics seems like a logical and effective place to teach students and parents about healthy lifestyles and choices that can negatively affect every aspect of their lives."*

and properly address issues with students, parents, and even fans. Fans may not realize how much they affect student athletes. Most of our fans are family members and friends, and we want to let them know that their encouragement is much more important to the athletes than their thoughts about a bad call or a botched play," he said.



# PRE-SEASON MEETING

## *A Case Study*

After Jeff presented, each represented sports team broke into sub-groups to review the expectations for being part of the team and details of the season. The athletes and parents both signed the athletic contract at the end of these break-out meetings.

After the success of the first pre-season meeting, Doug and Jeff held a second in the winter. This was a more condensed version of the pre-season meeting because many student athletes at Newport participate in two or three seasons. They also gave the coaches more time in the break-out sessions. The extra time was very beneficial to coaches, because they were excited to meet the new athletes and parents. Moving forward after implementing LoA this year, Doug and Jeff plan to enhance the pre-season meetings by having their student athlete leadership team present the LoA material to their peers and parents. Doug and Jeff also plan on bringing in guest speakers such as successful alumni, college coaches, or a nutritionist. At each pre-season meeting, Jeff plans to incorporate different material into his PowerPoint presentations so athletes and parents are getting new messages at each event.

Doug, Jeff, and the group of 20 students at Newport High School who serve on their student athlete leadership team have been hard at work. They plan to participate in community service projects and create “Life of a Tiger” bulletin boards that will be featured in all different areas of the school. Through the pre-season meeting, the student athlete leadership team will continue to build support for “Life of a Tiger” and a commitment to a healthy lifestyle with parents and students.



# PRE-SEASON MEETING

## *Common Challenges and Solutions to Conducting Pre-Season Meetings*

**⚠ CHALLENGE:** I get very low attendance at my pre-season meeting(s).

**✓ PROPOSED SOLUTIONS:**

- Make meetings mandatory and offer an alternative for those who can not attend.
- Incentivize meetings with food.

**⚠ CHALLENGE:** I'm not sure where to start, when to schedule the meeting, and other logistics.

**✓ PROPOSED SOLUTIONS:**

- Schedule the meeting within the first week of practice.
- Avoid scheduling the meeting during other popular dates (compare dates and other schedules in community).
- Contact NHIAA/Life of an Athlete (LoA) to brainstorm ways to implement a pre-season meeting.
- Use Pre-Season Meeting Agenda template on the LoA website at [www.loanh.org](http://www.loanh.org).

**⚠ CHALLENGE:** I am not sure how to make sure all of my coaches use consistent messaging.

**✓ PROPOSED SOLUTION:**

- Prep all coaches and provide uniform speaking points for them that are easy to follow, by using LoA material provided on [www.loanh.org](http://www.loanh.org).

**⚠ CHALLENGE:** I get a lot of pushback from parents regarding the messages on lifestyles and the codes of conduct.

**✓ PROPOSED SOLUTIONS:**

- Emphasize “why” we are implementing this program:
  - To create a healthy environment for students
  - To empower students to make healthy choices
  - To empower students to lead in a positive direction
- Hand out educational materials during pre-season meetings and other meetings when parents may be involved.
- Use youth to present (either at the meeting or a pre-recorded video) on:
  - The impact of lifestyle choices on performance
  - The items parents/guardians and athletes are agreeing to by signing the codes of conduct



# **CODES OF CONDUCT**



# **CODES OF CONDUCT**

## *Steps for School Administration to Strengthen and Enforce Codes of Conduct*

### **STEP 1: REVIEW CURRENT CODES**

- Send current code of conduct to NHIAA for review.
- Form a policy committee made up of people such as athletic director, principal, students, coaches, school board members.
- The NHIAA will review the code and send back recommendations.
- Set up a time to review codes and recommendations with the NHIAA.

### **STEP 2: UPDATE CODES**

- Schedule a regular policy committee meeting to incorporate NHIAA recommendations into existing codes.
- Seek their feedback to improve the codes.
- Invite other stakeholders such as superintendent, school board members, parents, athletes, and coaches.

### **STEP 3: ADOPT CODES**

- Once the policy committee is satisfied with the revised codes, seek approval from school board or similar group to adopt them.

### **STEP 4: ENFORCE CODES**

Ensure violations are handled consistently and in accordance with the codes the policy committee has created.

- Educate all stakeholders on changes to the code of conduct and processes for enforcing them at pre-season meetings.
- Utilize NHIAA web-based educational resources if a student has a code infraction. Ensure that student and parent watch web-based trainings as a condition to return to play.





# CODES OF CONDUCT

## *Additional Tools and Resources*

Additional tools and resources for Codes of Conduct can be found at <http://www.loanh.org/life-athlete-manual-documents/>.

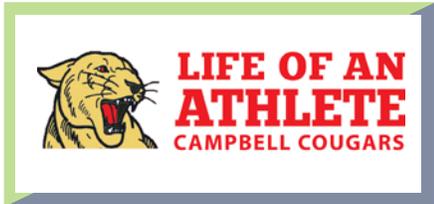
### **Some resources found on this page include:**

- Codes of Conduct Curriculum
- Addressing a Code Violation
- 12 Ways to Improve Your Code
- Codes Check List
- Model Policy Template
- LoA Social Discipline Window



# CODES OF CONDUCT

## *A Case Study*



Principal of Campbell High School (CHS) Laurie Rothhaus first heard about Life of an Athlete (LoA) when the regional prevention network coordinator from her area gave an overview of the program at a meeting. Laurie immediately was impressed with the program's comprehensive approach. Looking at the policy component of LoA, Laurie knew right away the program should be brought to the New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association (NHIAA), which maintains the rules for high school interscholastic competition. Having just been elected to the NHIAA council, Laurie worked with her regional prevention network

coordinator to connect the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation (NHCF) and the NHIAA so the program could be rolled out statewide.

As a result, the NHIAA hired staff to coordinate LoA. This included work on the policy component. It allowed staff to assess local school policies and present recommendations on a policy that meets in the middle between too punitive and too permissive. By moving towards a developmentally appropriate, education-based policy, schools are better able to serve their students.

A situation came up where the athletic policy was challenged. A student athlete was arrested out of town for allegedly dealing drugs just prior to the start of the season. Due to the fact that the season hadn't started and the school policy was not a year-round policy, the school district found itself dealing with concerned and frustrated parents. This is when the school district realized the policy needed to be updated. Superintendent of Schools Elaine Cutler and the school board, directed school administration to form a committee made up of community members, administrators, students and coaches to review recommendations and establish a 21st century policy that represents the core values of CHS: character, courage, respect, and responsibility.

The committee met two to three times per month for six months. Through passionate debate, they were able to dissect the recommendations, which led to a co-curricular policy that holds everyone to the same standard. It created an equitable policy that put athletes on par with all co-curricular students such as band, theater, chess club and other programs. After all the hard work, they were able to present a policy to the school board that fit with

LoA and honored the core values of CHS. Laurie was struck by the help NHIAA provided. "I very much appreciated the outstanding resource of the NHIAA going through this transitional time. All of the support the NHIAA provided the district made the transition smoother." she said. The LoA staff at the NHIAA was organized and responsive while being flexible enough to gain the local buy-in needed to move policy forward.

*"After getting an education-based, consistently and equitably enforced policy in place, we went on to win five championships because of the commitment these kids made to hard work and core values."*

# CODES OF CONDUCT

## *A Case Study*

Once the policy was in place, it was immediately tested. After a violation by a star player, the principal and athletic director had to meet with the player, parents and coach to discuss the co-curricular policy and explain that the student athlete would miss the championship game due to a Level One offense. The player was instrumental in getting the team to that point and as a result had difficulty accepting the consequence. The parents and the player were very upset but had to accept it because they had signed the policy stating they had knowledge, understanding and agreement.

In the end there were many lessons learned:

- The player texted everyone on the team to wish them luck the day of the game, ultimately putting team first and doing the right thing.
- The coach was grateful the policy was followed. He felt the administration backed him up when there was a problem.
- Other students learned to take CHS's core values seriously and worked hard to live up to the code.

Ultimately, that team won the state championship with a back-up player. CHS won five championships that year!

# **CODES OF CONDUCT**

## *Common Challenges and Solutions to Strengthening and Enforcing Codes of Conduct*

 **CHALLENGE:** I get a lot of push-back from the school board and/or parents when enforcing or changing codes of conduct.

 **PROPOSED SOLUTION:**

- Educate those who push back on the importance of strong codes and the role they play in upholding what is in the best interest of our youth.

 **CHALLENGE:** The policy recommendations from LoA are too punitive for my school.

 **PROPOSED SOLUTION:**

- LoA recommends policies that meet in the middle between too punitive and too permissive. The recommendations have been created with the focus being the restorative justice model which, rather than punitive models, actually help youth improve their behaviors. The restorative justice model strives to maintain a positive environment as students learn from their mistakes.

 **CHALLENGE:** I feel the policy recommendations from LoA are too permissive for my school.

 **PROPOSED SOLUTION:**

- LoA recommends policies that meet in the middle between too punitive and too permissive and:
  - Hold youth responsible for mistakes
  - Focus on taking advantage of an educational opportunity to learn from a mistake
  - Provide developmentally appropriate consequences
  - Provide support (counseling, treatment, etc.) when there are larger issues

 **CHALLENGE:** I find changing and adopting new codes of conduct is too time-consuming.

 **PROPOSED SOLUTIONS:**

- Form a team or committee to share the work.
- Ask for available assistance from the NHIAA.
- Utilize the Model Policy Template as a starting point.



# **STAKEHOLDER UNITY**





# STAKEHOLDER UNITY

*Steps for Athletic Director or LoA Designee<sup>1</sup> to Unify Stakeholders*

## **STEP 1: IDENTIFY COMMUNITY GROUPS AND BUSINESSES**

Strong partners may include:

- Restaurants
- Community-based organizations
- Media outlets

## **STEP 2: ENGAGE COMMUNITY GROUPS IN LOA-RELATED ACTIVITIES**

LoA-related activities may include:

- Creating Healthy “LoA” menu options
- Gaining sponsorships from food companies (healthy snacks)
- Promoting healthy messages
- Supporting teammates
- Supporting community service projects

<sup>1</sup>LoA designee is a person appointed by the Athletic Director, Principal, Superintendent and/or School Board to act as an advisor to oversee implementation of the program



# STAKEHOLDER UNITY

## *Additional Tools and Resources*

Additional tools and resources for stakeholder unity can be found at <http://www.loanh.org/life-athlete-manual-documents/>.

**Some resources found on this page include:**

- Stakeholder Unity Curriculum
- What Communities Need to Know
- Article: Yellow-Card/Red-Card
- Yellow-Card/Red-Card Template



# STAKEHOLDER UNITY

## *A Case Study*



Raymond Coalition for Youth (RCY) Executive Director Celeste Clark attended a presentation on Life of an Athlete (LoA) and came back excited to start working with the program. She knew getting the program to take off would require a lot of work. Before anything could change, RCY needed to get stakeholders enthusiastic about supporting changes.

Celeste started by bringing the program to the coalition's board which comprised a diverse group of community leaders including the superintendent of schools. The superintendent was able to bring in the high school principal and athletic director to present recommendations for revising the athletic codes of conduct to the school board, which ultimately passed.

The coalition used traditional and social media such as Facebook, Twitter, press releases, and public access television to promote the value of the revised codes. There were no questions when the updated policy was reviewed with parents during the pre-season meeting. The coalition received very good feedback about how the new policy now addressed issues of special privileges and favoritism.

“Although we were worried about how people would respond to the change in policy after all the work we did promoting the value of it and building support among stakeholders, people got behind the change”, Celeste said. “Ultimately, people just loved it. When you're engaging kids, it gives you something to highlight, which really goes a long way.”

Moving forward, the RCY will be incorporating LoA messages into regular community mailings. Additionally, the local recreational football league used the LoA materials developed by the NHIAA to implement LoA with 150 K-8 grade cheerleaders and football players. The RCY is working on ways to continue to build support with local stakeholders so the program can continue to expand and positively impact the entire community.





# STAKEHOLDER UNITY

## *Common Challenges and Solutions to Unifying Stakeholders*

**⚠ CHALLENGE:** I find it is challenging to bring community groups into school-based activities.

**✓ PROPOSED SOLUTION:**

- Promote the benefits of collaborating with community groups with messages such as:
  - Community groups bring time, resources, knowledge, and opportunities for students, and connections
  - Community members offer different perspectives which enhance the impact of Life of an Athlete (LoA)

**⚠ CHALLENGE:** I feel there is a lack of understanding among community members of why they should be involved (in other words, a generally low interest from community)

**✓ PROPOSED SOLUTION:**

- Promote the benefits of involvement to community members such as:
  - Communities are responsible for their youth
  - Positive public relations is an incentive for local businesses to get involved with LoA
  - Getting involved and promoting healthy choices with kids will lead to a healthier community



# **EVALUATION**



# EVALUATION

## *Steps for an Athletic Director or LoA Designee<sup>1</sup> to Participate in Evaluation*

### **STEP 1: PARTICIPATE IN SURVEY ADMINISTRATION**

- Implement pre- and post-season surveys for each season found on [www.loanh.org](http://www.loanh.org) with:
  - Student Athletes
  - Coaches
  - Athletic Directors

### **STEP 2: TRACK VIOLATIONS**

- Athletic Director or LoA designee<sup>1</sup> should submit a list of violations to LoA staff at the NHIAA, using the system you have in place or the LoA Codes Violations document found on [www.loanh.org](http://www.loanh.org) for the:
  - Fall
  - Winter
  - Spring

### **STEP 3: COMPLETE AN END-OF-YEAR FIDELITY CHECKLIST**

- Review the fidelity checklist every season to ensure the program is on track. At the end of the year complete the LoA fidelity checklist and submit it to LoA staff at the NHIAA.

### **STEP 4: RECRUIT FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS (OPTIONAL)**

- As requested, recruit participants for focus groups conducted by the NHIAA as part of continuous program improvement. Participants might include:
  - Athletic Director/LoA Advisor
  - Coaches
  - Student Athletes

<sup>1</sup>LoA designee is a person appointed by the Athletic Director, Principal, Superintendent and/or School Board to act as an advisor to oversee implementation of the program

## TIPS FOR DISTRIBUTING SURVEYS:



Send survey links to coaches and athletes via text message



Bring an iPad on the bus to/from games and have athletes and coaches fill out surveys



Have student athletes go to

<http://www.loanh.org/for-student-athletes/evaluation-surveys-youth/> to complete the survey



Send students through computer lab to do surveys

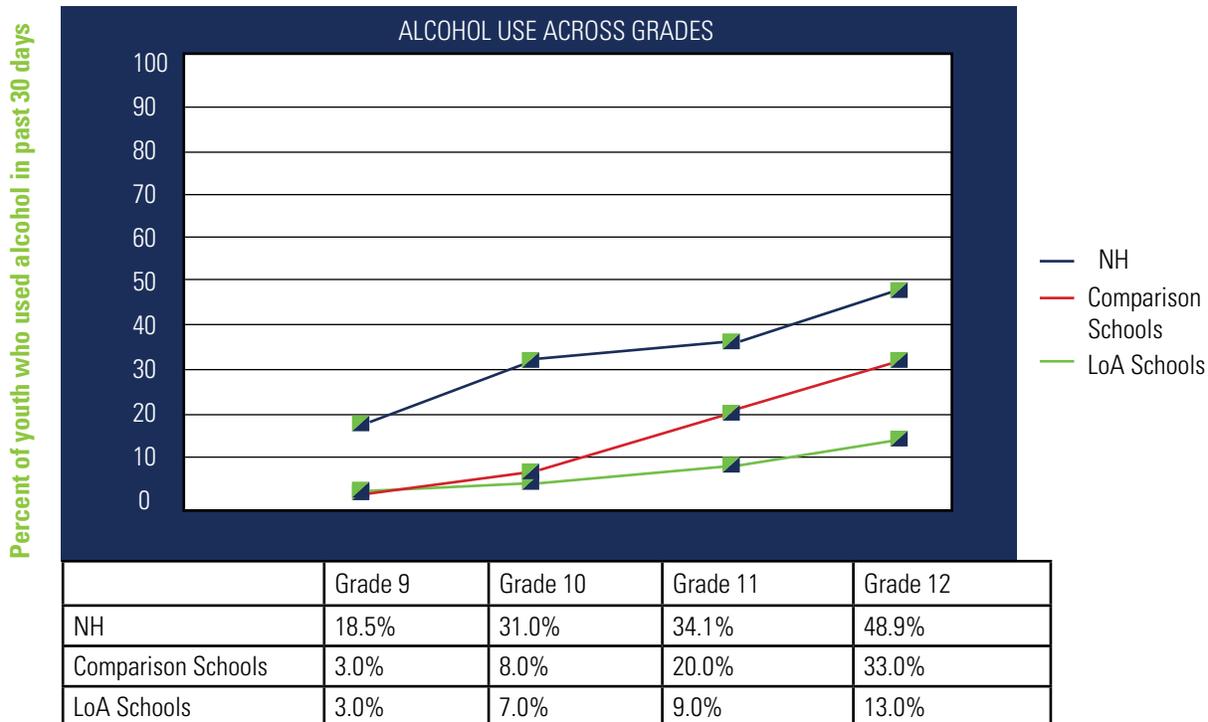
### *Key Points from Year One (2013-2014) Evaluation*

- 22 schools implemented all components in Year One (40 on track to do so in Year Two).
- 1,141 youth were trained.
- 323 coaches were trained.
- Schools are adapting LoA to fit their unique school culture and spreading the program message beyond athletics.

Statistically significant differences were shown in perceptions, knowledge and behavior among youth in LoA programs compared to youth not in LoA programs.

For example, significantly more youth in LoA programs compared to those not in LoA programs reported:

- Alcohol use impacts training and can lead to injury.
- Youth leaders avoid alcohol, tobacco and other drug use and they help teammates to do the same.
- They avoid substances to maximize performance.
- Lower use of alcohol, tobacco and marijuana.



## EVALUATION

### *Additional Tools and Resources*

Additional tools and resources for evaluation can be found at <http://www.loanh.org/life-athlete-manual-documents/>.

- LoA Youth Survey
- LoA Coaches Survey
- LoA Fidelity Checklist to Athletic Directors
- LoA Fidelity Checklist NHIAA
- LoA Fidelity Checklist Evaluators
- LoA Fidelity Checklist Prevention Professional
- Incentive Summary 14-15
- LoA Evaluation Report





# SUSTAINABILITY

## *Tips for Sustaining Life of an Athlete*



### SUSTAINING STUDENT LEADERSHIP

- Maintain regular weekly student leadership meetings
- Send students to local Life of an Athlete (LoA) trainings
- Send students to statewide trainings
- Encourage positive media messaging from students
- Ensure high school students are mentoring middle school & elementary school students



### SUSTAINING EFFECTIVE PRE-SEASON MEETINGS

- Establish a well-done agenda that can be carried over from season to season and from year to year
- Provide parents, athletes, and coaches with LoA resources/materials at these meetings
- Encourage parents and athletes to use the LoA web modules



### SUSTAINING ENGAGEMENT OF COACHES

- Incorporate discussion on healthy lifestyle choices into regular meetings with coaches
- Ensure coaches are having discussions on healthy lifestyle choices with their teams
- Encourage coaches to expand their education on sport and lifestyle choices



### SUSTAINING EFFECTIVE CODES OF CONDUCT

- Develop an athletic policy committee within your community
- Continually assess and change policies



### SUSTAINING STAKEHOLDER UNITY

- Encourage students to reach out to business
- Look for opportunities for students to get involved in the community
- Partner with community prevention programs to assist in implementation of LoA





# LIFE OF AN ATHLETE



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**SCAN TO FIND OUT MORE!**

