



# athletes' minds matter

Originally, the Josh Anderson Foundation, Our Minds Matter (OMM) was founded by Lauren Anderson in 2012 in honor of her younger brother Josh, who died by suicide in 2009 at the age of 17. OMM is a nonprofit working toward a day when no teen dies by suicide by partnering with schools to implement teen-centered mental health clubs that improve student wellness and positively impact school culture.

## what is athletes' minds matter?

In 2020, two student leaders & athletes (Kelsey and Daniel Isman) created the Athletes' Minds Matter (AMM) concept: Bring the mental health conversation to locker rooms and create a space for student athletes to build connection and resilience. We know that student athletes are busy and often cannot join another club, so AMM comes to them right on the field, court, or pool.

The OMM club model has a decade of research that shows a positive impact on teen mental health, and our AMM activities are an adapted version of this curriculum designed with athletes in mind.

Captains, coaches, and athletic department staff can incorporate short & fun mental health exercises into regular team routines to increase mental wellness, build connection, and foster leadership skills in student athletes that will stay with them long after the final buzzer.

## why it matters: adolescent mental health is a national crisis

**in 2023, 4 in 10 (40%) of students had persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness**

**suicide is the third leading cause of death amongst American teenagers**

**1 in 5 student athletes have anxiety or depression**

**student athletes struggle with disordered eating at a higher-than-average rate**

**you can make a difference.**

**Whether your school has an OMM club or not, you can bring AMM to your student athletes today!**

# simple activities for stronger teams

As a coach or team captain, you're always looking for ways to strengthen your team. Athletes' Minds Matter gives you a bank of easy-to-use activities to support your athletes' mental well-being, right in your existing routine.

These activities are designed to be a **mental warm-up or cool-down**. They take just **5-10 minutes** to complete and come with clear, step-by-step instructions.

Our activities help your team:

- **Build Stronger Connections:** Foster a sense of belonging and trust among teammates.
- **Increase Healthy Habits:** Develop key coping skills for managing stress and pressure.
- **Promote Help-Seeking:** Start conversations about mental health & asking for help.
- **Foster Inclusivity:** Create a welcoming and supportive environment for everyone.

## ready to get started?

- 1** Connect with other coaches, captains, or athletic staff to get on the same page about making this a priority for your team. As you know, teamwork is just as important off the field!
- 2** Select an activity from our [Athletes' Minds Matter activity bank](#) and decide who will facilitate: it can be a coach, a team captain, or another leader. All you need is your phone or a printed copy to use the instructions right on the field, court, or gym.
  - We recommend reading them ahead of time and deciding which activities you'll do at each practice at least a week in advance. Stay ready so you don't have to get ready!
- 3** Make it part of your routine. Just like muscle memory, prioritizing mental health is something you have to show up for day after day. Talk to your athletes about why it's important, and take 5 minutes at every practice to do an AMM activity while they're warming up or cooling down.
  - Plus, you can adapt any activities to fit your team's needs, connect with other teams for even more community-building, and even work together with your school's OMM club (or start one!)
- 4** Watch as your team builds trust and belonging, your athletes become more resilient, and the teens you care about thrive.

- Access the Athletes' Minds Matter curriculum at [ourmindsmatter.org/athletes-minds-matter](https://ourmindsmatter.org/athletes-minds-matter)
- Tap into the full OMM curriculum by connecting with your school's club

- No OMM club at your school and want to start one? You can apply at [ourmindsmatter.org/start-a-club/](https://ourmindsmatter.org/start-a-club/)
- Questions? Contact us at [program@ourmindsmatter.org](mailto:program@ourmindsmatter.org)