33% of athletes have been injured as the result of **dirty play** from an opponent.

28% of athletes agree that it is normal to commit hard fouls and play rough to ‘send a message’ during a game.

73% of athletes say they have been **yelled at by a coach**.

Of those, 40% of kids said that being yelled at by a coach made them want to quit playing a sport.
Strategies for Smart Play

- Set the ground rules at the beginning of the season. Coaches bring together parents and athletes before the season begins to agree on the team’s approach to prevent injuries.

- Teach athletes ways to prevent injuries. Proper technique, strength training, warm-up exercises and stretching can go a long way to prevent injuries.

- Prevent overuse injuries. Encourage athletes to take time off from playing only one sport to prevent overuse injuries and give them an opportunity to get stronger and develop skills learned in another sport.

- Encourage athletes to speak up when they’re injured. Remove injured athletes from play.

- Put an end to dirty play and rule breaking. Call fouls that could cause injuries.

- Get certified. Learn first aid, CPR, AED use and injury prevention skills.
Youth Sports Injury Phenomenon

Youth are particularly at risk due to:

- Improper technique
- Ill fitting equipment
- Training errors
- Coach / parental pressure
- Failure of early injury recognition
- Shift to single sport “specialization”
- Inherent musculoskeletal imbalance

These problems are magnified because the younger the athlete the more vulnerable they are to injury!!!
Youth Sports Injuries Are Now Occurring in Epidemic Proportions

- “Too much.....too fast..too soon”
- “Previously uncommon youth sports injuries are . . . . now common”
- 30 – 50% of all youth sports are secondary to overuse

Watkins, 1996
Baster – Jones 1993
Dalton, 1992
This Epidemic is Particularly Prevalent in Youth Baseball

#1 - There is an epidemic of increasing injuries to the throwing arm

5X since 2000

#2 - The number one risk factor is year-round baseball
70% of kids participating in sports drop out by the age of 13 because of

- Specialization
- Professionalism
  - I.E. pressure from coaches and parents

*These children lose the benefits of exercise, teamwork and healthy competition!*
Prevention of Youth Sports Injuries

• We all agree “the time is right” to make a major impact in prevention

• The AOSSM as a world leader in research and education has a unique opportunity to lead the way

*It is our responsibility to get involved*

- All of us!
Not an easy task!!!

How do we move forward?
AOSSM National Initiative

S.T.O.P. Program

Sports Trauma and Overuse Prevention
Keeping kids in the game for life.
The S.T.O.P Program

- The acronym S.T.O.P. stands for Sports Trauma and Overuse Prevention in youth sports

- Under the leadership of the AOSSM, this program has been implemented several years ago, as a comprehensive public outreach program focusing on the importance of sports safety – specifically as it relates to overuse and trauma injuries

- It focuses on:
  - Injury reduction
  - Highlighting how playing safe and without overuse can increase a young athlete’s career, improve teamwork, increase fitness and reduce obesity and create a lifelong love of exercise and health activity

- The goal is to keep our young athletes out of the operating room and on the playing field
The S.T.O.P. Program

- This national educational initiative includes
  - Public service announcements
  - Posters
  - DVDs
  - Brochures / fact sheets
  - Electronic newsletters
  - An interactive website
  - Other social media

- This program will have a national impact through various media outlets and partnerships

- However, a “grassroots” outreach is essential to the success of this “NATIONAL INITIATIVE”
We are focusing on the following youth sports both on the trauma side as well as the overuse side!

- Baseball & Softball
- Swimming
- Football
- Basketball
- Cheerleading
- Tennis
- Dancing
- Soccer
- Track & Field
- and Cross Country

- Volleyball
- Gymnastics
- Lacrosse
- Golf
- Rowing
- Martial Arts
- Skiing
- Wrestling
For the Implementation of this program:

• We will lean heavily on AOSSM’s orthopaedic sports medicine professionals and specialists!

• However this initiative will not be successful as an “I” situation but as a “we” program to include the cooperation of all of the major organizations involved in youth sports
Collaborative Partners

• The AOSSM has welcomed the collaboration & support by other organizations and has established a common set of parameters and expectations to ensure consistency in the recognition and contributions of its partners
Those Collaborative Partners Who Have Already Committed to the AOSSM’s STOP Program

- The AAOS
- The American Academy of Pediatrics
- The NATA
- The APTA and its Sports Section
- The American Medical Society for Sports Medicine
- The Safe Kids USA Program among others
Collaborative Partners

• We anticipate having many more organizations sign up under a formal collaborations agreement

• There are some 300+ Ortho clinics now involved!

• We are hopeful that the federal government and its leadership will take a responsible role to include a mandated federal restructuring for youth sports safety as well as financial support!