



Education for the Prevention of Sudden Cardiac Arrest and Death in Youth and Athletes

Dear Ellen,

On behalf of the KEN (Kids Endangered Now) Heart Foundation, we would like provide our written support and interest in being a part of **The Alliance to Address the Youth Sports Safety Crisis in America.**

The KEN Heart Foundation has had a vital role serving Northeast Ohio for nine years. It was founded after Ken suffered sudden death due to a cardiac arrest from an undiagnosed heart condition at a football minicamp at the local high school. I went on to be a co founder for the organization Parent Heart Watch and past Executive Director. I had served the organization since it's inception in 2005. I left my role in October to find a position that would provide more advocacy efforts.

The efforts of our organization have played a vital role in changing the OHSAA's PPE to be upgraded to the AMSSM and AHA recommended guidelines. We have been a part of the effort to Ohio Legislation HB 434 passed in 2004 that allocated 2.5 million in 2005 and 2007 for school defibrillators. Even though it has been written numerous times that it is a mandate, sadly it is not. Not for lack of trying. We have been working with Dr. Drezner the Research Chair and Kim Harmon the President for AMSSM on research providing them with online suspected cases of sudden cardiac arrest and death for several years.

Sudden cardiac death is the leading cause of death in student athletes and on school properties. It is widely agreed amongst those who are dedicated to saving young lives from SCA, that this largely preventable tragedy is grossly under-reported and under-estimated. This conflict in statistics is slowing down the process in the prevention efforts allowing for more innocent, seemingly healthy youth to die needlessly with each passing day.

The urgency of this issue is also greatly minimized when the data gleaned only represents athletes affected during a sanctioned event; this does not represent the true extent of sudden cardiac death (SCD) amongst all athletes, much less all youth. Most youth do participate in some type of sport, however, most youth that die from SCA do not do so during a sanctioned season or event. Affected athletes are also dying at school, while playing with friends, or at home, in their sleep, and are thus not accounted for in the most of the current data cited. Incomplete data leading to erroneous statistics hinder the advancements of save young lives.

Pro-active education and preventive measures are essential in order to reduce fatalities that are largely detectable and treatable conditions in athletes as well as all youth.

Sincerely,

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Co Founder

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