Returning to Youth Sports

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While COVID-19 has placed many youth sports seasons on hold, the absence of team play is affecting more than just team records.

Sports provide youth with opportunities for growth and development on and off the field such as training for a goal, learning to be a good teammate, coping with adversity and building resilience. But as youth sports teams prepare to return to play, recent nationwide spikes in virus transmission are threatening teams' ability to safely practice and compete.

If regions can contain COVID-19 outbreaks, there will still be many important health and safety factors to consider that could affect the structure of inter-team play. Could the impacts of the pandemic also provide teams with a unique opportunity to shift focus from competition to overall development and health promotion?

On July 22, 2020, PolicyLab hosted a virtual conversation entitled "Returning to Youth Sports Safely Amid COVID-19" with sports medicine pediatricians, infectious disease experts and sports personnel with on-the-ground experience who will discuss why resuming play is so important for kids and teens and how we can safely get players back on the field. The discussion was informed by Children's Hospital of Philadelphia's (CHOP) **return to youth sports reference guides** and new insights and data regarding risk of virus resurgence in the weeks ahead.

Panelists:

- **Susan Coffin, MD, MPH**, professor of pediatrics in the Division of Infectious Diseases at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and attending physician at CHOP
- **Katherine Easby MS, LAT, ATC**, athletic trainer in the Sports Medicine and Performance Center at CHOP
- **Matthew Grady, MD, FAAP, CAQSM**, sports medicine pediatrician in the Sports Medicine and Performance Center at CHOP
- **Christina Master, MD, FAAP, CAQSM, FACSM**, sports medicine pediatrician in the Sports Medicine and Performance Center, co-director of Minds Matter Concussion Program at CHOP
- **Jon Solomon**, editorial director of the Sports & Society Program at the Aspen Institute
- **David Rubin, MD, MSCE**, director of PolicyLab at CHOP *(moderator)*

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