



# Mental Health Toolkit for High School Athletes



## Why is it important to be mindful of our Mental Health?

1. Our **mental and emotional** well-being can have a significant impact on our athletic and academic performance, injury risk, and recovery after injury.
2. Fear, worry, stress, anxiety, frustration, or sadness—among many other emotions—are **normal, human responses** to events in our lives.
3. When these emotions become **overwhelming** and start **impacting the ability to function** day-to-day, it is essential to assess for mental health concerns.

## What can I do to improve my mental health?

1. Get sufficient sleep
  - **Recommended in adolescents:** 8-10 hours/night
  - **Insufficient sleep leads to** increased risk of infection or illness, difficulty focusing or concentrating, decreased learning and memory, decreased mood and motivation, decreased athletic and academic performance, increased injury risk, impaired recovery after injury
  - **Top Sleep Tips**
    - Avoid strenuous exercise or activity close to bedtime
    - Limit screens close to bedtime and silent mobile devices when sleeping
    - Try to go to bed and wake up at a consistent time
2. Manage Stress
  - Being overwhelmed and stressed can affect athletic and academic **performance**
  - Increases **injury** risk
    - Injuries, when they do occur, also increase stress which can impair recovery and lengthen the return to sport
  - **Wellness strategies to reduce stress**
    - Staying active and exercising
    - Spending time outdoors
    - Sleeping well
    - Avoiding overtraining and overcommitting yourself
    - Fueling your body properly (nutrition, hydration, avoiding caffeine)
    - Prioritizing and managing your time
    - Implementing relaxation, mindfulness, and/or meditation techniques

## What are the warning signs of mental health concerns?

- **Depression**
  - Persistently feeling sad, empty, hopeless, tearful, or irritable
  - Loss of interest in activities, especially those that used to be enjoyable
  - Significant changes in weight, appetite, sleep, concentration, fatigue, or energy
  - Feelings of worthlessness or guilt
  - Unexplained aches, pains, or physical symptoms
  - Suicidal thoughts



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- **Anxiety**
  - Feeling constant dread or worry about multiple events or activities (work, home life, sports, school performance, etc...)
  - Feeling restless, irritable, on edge, jumpy, or tense
  - Significant changes in sleep, concentration, fatigue
  - Pounding heart, sweating, shortness of breath, nausea, or upset stomach
  - Avoidance and/or fear of certain situations
- **Recognize these warning signs early:** If you or someone you know (teammate, friend, classmate, athlete) is showing these warning signs, **support them and seek help** from a mental health professional, coach, athletic trainer, parent, or other adult you trust
- **Screening tools** for you or someone you know:
  - Multiple screening tools for different mental health concerns: <https://screening.mhanational.org/screening-tools/>
  - <https://www.helpyourselfhelpothers.org/>
  - Symptom checklist for youth: <https://screening.mhanational.org/screening-tools/youth/>

## Resources

### Behavioral Health Resources

<i>Name</i>	<i>Description</i>
<b>Suicide Prevention Lifeline</b>	Call 988
<b>Crisis Text Line</b>	24/7 live support by text: Confidential support Text TALK or MYLIFE to 741-741 Call 988
<b>Sexual Assault &amp; Abuse Hotlines</b>	Call (800) 656-HOPE (4673); (800) 230-7526 Website: <a href="http://rainn.org">rainn.org</a>
<b>Teen Line (Peer Support Hotline)</b>	Call (800) TLC-TEEN (6-10pm Pacific time zone) Text TEEN to 839863 (6-9pm Pacific time zone) Email & message boards: <a href="http://teenlineonline.org/talk-now">teenlineonline.org/talk-now</a>
<b>LGBT Youth Hotlines</b>	<u>Trevor Line:</u> Website: <a href="http://thetrevorproject.org">thetrevorproject.org</a> Call (866) 488-7386 (24/7) Text START to 678678 (Mon-Fri, 12-7pm Pacific time zone) <u>LGBT National Youth Talkline:</u> Website: <a href="http://glnh.org">glnh.org</a> Call (800) 246-7743 (Mon-Fri 1-9pm, Sat 9am-2pm Pacific time zone)
<b>National Eating Disorder Association</b>	(800) 931-2237 (8:30am-4:30pm Pacific time zone) Website: <a href="http://nationaleatingdisorders.org">nationaleatingdisorders.org</a>
<b>Suicide Prevention Resource Center - Adolescents</b>	Website: <a href="https://www.sprc.org/populations/adolescents">https://www.sprc.org/populations/adolescents</a> Provides resources related to adolescents
<b>Youth Crisis Lines</b>	California: 800-843-5200; Website: <a href="http://www.youthcrisisline.org">www.youthcrisisline.org</a>



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## Phone Applications

<b>Phone Applications for Mindfulness/Meditation</b>			
<i>Application Name</i>	<i>Device Compatibility</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Calm	Android & iOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guided and unguided mindfulness meditation</li> <li>• Various lengths of time for practice</li> <li>• Includes breathing exercises</li> </ul>	Free
Breath2Relax	Android & iOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stress management education</li> <li>• Coaching on belly breathing (diaphragmatic breathing)</li> </ul>	Free
Healing Buddies Comfort Kit	iOS only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guided skills practice for pain and nausea</li> <li>• Helps identify feelings</li> <li>• Program suitable for school-aged children</li> <li>• Explanation of application and concepts targeted to children</li> <li>• Discussion of different coping techniques (belly breathing, relaxation, imagery, positive self-talk)</li> <li>• Parent information to support children with stressors</li> <li>• Encourages parent participation and advocacy</li> </ul>	Free
Headspace	Android & iOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guided meditation with animation</li> <li>• Exercises introduce each concept (meditation, guided imagery, &amp; more)</li> </ul>	Free trial, monthly fee
Smiling Mind	Android & iOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guided meditation for ages 7 to adult</li> <li>• Different program for each age group (i.e., 13-15, 16-18)</li> <li>• Includes breathing exercises and daily mindfulness</li> <li>• Lengthy silences require focus on the users' part</li> </ul>	Free
Stop, Breathe & Think	Android & iOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guided relaxation and mindfulness activities including meditation, breathing, yoga, guided journaling, &amp; more</li> <li>• Activity recommendations personalized to how you feel on a given day, based on daily check-ins</li> </ul>	Free
Insight Timer	Android & iOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library of guided meditations, calming music, yoga classes, &amp; more</li> <li>• Targets sleep, anxiety, and stress</li> <li>• Live events also available to stream</li> </ul>	Free
Healthy Minds	Android & iOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combination of podcast-style lessons and both seated and active meditations</li> <li>• Teaches skills to help improve emotional well-being</li> </ul>	Free

<b>Phone Applications for Anxiety and Depression</b>			
<i>Application Name</i>	<i>Device Compatibility</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Mindshift	Android & iOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps track anxiety triggers and situations</li> <li>• Contains relaxation exercises and coping strategies</li> <li>• Ability to tag favorite categories</li> <li>• Provides concrete examples to address situations</li> <li>• Choice of male or female voice</li> </ul>	Free



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<b>Phone Applications for Anxiety and Depression (continued)</b>			
eQuoo	Android & iOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobile game to teach psychological skills to help cope with emotional and mental stressors</li> <li>• Focuses on resilience, personal development, interpersonal relationship skills, and skills for coping with anxiety and depression</li> </ul>	Free
Sanvello	Android & iOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinically validated techniques for reducing stress and treating anxiety and depression</li> <li>• Daily mood tracking, coping tools, techniques, weekly check-ins</li> <li>• Includes techniques from Cognitive Behavioral Therapy</li> <li>• Different levels of membership including therapy sessions at highest level</li> </ul>	Free trial, then self-pay +/- insurance coverage
<b>Phone Applications for Sleep Hygiene</b>			
<i>Application Name</i>	<i>Device Compatibility</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Cost</i>
CBT-i	Android & iOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources from Cognitive Behavioral Therapy</li> <li>• Provided education on good sleep hygiene practices</li> <li>• Has relaxation tools such as guided imagery, diaphragmatic breathing, and progressive muscle relaxation coaching</li> </ul>	Free

### **Online Tools**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Description</i>
Kaiser Permanente Guided Imagery Podcasts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://healthy.kaiserpermanente.org/southern-california/health-wellness/podcasts">https://healthy.kaiserpermanente.org/southern-california/health-wellness/podcasts</a></li> <li>• User friendly and easy access: download or stream online</li> <li>• Audible and visual options</li> <li>• Podcasts available for different concerns: pain, sleep, stress, anxiety, relaxation, &amp; more</li> <li>• Suitable for adolescents</li> <li>• Variable podcast lengths ranging from a couple minutes to an hour</li> </ul>
Pain Management Network Relaxation Techniques and Mindfulness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/chronic-pain/painbytes/pain-and-mind-body-connection/relaxation-techniques-and-mindfulness">https://www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/chronic-pain/painbytes/pain-and-mind-body-connection/relaxation-techniques-and-mindfulness</a></li> <li>• Step by step structured guidance to build relaxation techniques and mindfulness</li> </ul>
Mental Health America Youth Information & Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://screening.mhanational.org/youth/">https://screening.mhanational.org/youth/</a></li> <li>• Articles and Podcasts on common mental health issues and topics affecting adolescents and young adults</li> </ul>
UC San Diego Center for Mindfulness Guided Audio & Video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://medschool.ucsd.edu/som/fmph/research/mindfulness/programs/mindfulness-programs/MBSR-programs/Pages/audio.aspx">https://medschool.ucsd.edu/som/fmph/research/mindfulness/programs/mindfulness-programs/MBSR-programs/Pages/audio.aspx</a></li> <li>• Guided activities of various lengths including meditation, yoga, body scans, mindful movement</li> </ul>



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## References

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