Youth Sports Through A Public Health Lens
Youths Sports Injuries as a Public Health Concern

• Youth sports by the numbers:
  – 44 million young people in organized sports
  – 800,000 youth lacrosse players
  – 7 to 10% growth per year for past decade, other team sports declining
Lacrosse - One Sport, Two Games

- Native American game – Creator’s Game
- European rules written in Montreal, 1856
- Men’s game grew and developed in Canada and Northeast, Mid-Atlantic US
- Women’s game grew and developed in Scotland and Mid-Atlantic US
- Rules diverge in 1933 with significant differences, Boys vs. Girls lacrosse
Lacrosse Injury Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GIRL’S RULES</th>
<th>BOY’S RULES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CONTACT</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive stick checking and body contact illegal</td>
<td>The rules limit but progressively allow stick checking &amp; body contact based on age level</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cross Checking illegal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Any contact to the head with a stick results in a yellow or red card (time -loss) penalty</td>
<td>Uncontrolled or forceful stick contact to the head illegal; minor, unintentional stick contact to the head does not result in penalty</td>
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<tr>
<td>All body checks and slashes with the stick are major fouls that result in a yellow or red card (time -loss) penalty</td>
<td>Body contact only legal when initiated below the shoulders, above the waist and from the front. Any contact made with an opponent’s head results in a time-serving, non- releasable penalty.</td>
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<td>EQUIPMENT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shallow pocket rule allows for easier ball dislodgement</td>
<td>Deeper pocket rule requires more aggressive checking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protective eyewear and mouth guards</td>
<td>Mouth guards required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft head gear and nose guards optional</td>
<td>Helmets meeting NOCSAE standard required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lightly-padded, close-fitting gloves optional</td>
<td>Arm pads, shoulder pads and protective gloves required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goalie: helmets meeting NOCSAE standard, chest protectors, throat protectors, mouth guards, gloves required; shin guards optional</td>
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- Youth Lacrosse injury rates
  - Boys 8.70 per 1000 athlete-exposures
  - Girls 3.38 per 1000 athlete-exposures
Why Play?

• Childhood obesity as a public health issue
• Best predictor of physical activity at age 70 is being a HS athlete
• CDC reports:
  – Helps build and maintain healthy bones and muscles, reduce the risk of developing obesity and chronic diseases, such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and colon
  – Reduces feelings of depression and anxiety and promotes psychological well-being.
• Personal growth opportunities of being part of a team.
• It’s fun!
Youth Sports Governance

• National Governing Bodies (NGBs), a variety of models and levels of control

• Types
  – Olympic sports
  – Traditional national sports
  – Growth sports

• US Lacrosse founded 1998 by merger
US Lacrosse Structure and Oversight

• National Chapter structure provides regional support through 64 chapters and growing

• Organizations that benefit from USL and its Chapters
  – Local and state youth leagues
  – Club teams from youth to grand masters
  – State high school associations
  – College varsity and club conferences
US Lacrosse Resources

- Sport Science and Safety Committee (SS&S)
  - Full time professional staff
  - Medical, clinical, research, and sport experts
  - Meetings, conference calls, Sports Medicine Symposium
  - Research funding and oversight
  - Subcommittee service
  - Advice and counsel
Lacrosse Rules

• Research, requested and needed
• Interactions with rules committees
  – US Lacrosse
  – NFHS
  – NCAA
  – Local adaptations
Certification of Officials and Coaches

- **Coach Education Program (3 levels)**
  - Game specific
  - Online education and test
  - Classroom/physical skills component
  - Positive coaching component

- **Officials Education Program (3 levels)**
  - Online education and test
  - On-field evaluation
Equipment

- Standards setting bodies
  - NOCSAE, ASTM International
- Research
- Design and manufacturing
Strategy Example

• Concussions in men’s lacrosse
• Research
• Rules changes,
  – Too much, won’t be used
  – Too little, won’t serve as deterrent
• Rule adoption and implementation
• Potential success and need for more data
Measuring Success

- IOM Report
  - Diagnosis, treatment, and recovery
  - Changing the culture
  - Improving safety standards and equipment
  - National injury surveillance system
- NCAA and NFHS data
- Youth sports data and studies
- Phone calls
Another Example

• Head injury in both games
• Public health education program for parents
  – Focus on parents, Heads-Up Lacrosse (CDC)
  – Three actions, certified coaches, certified officials, and use age appropriate rules
  – Support and encourage local implementation
• Empower consumers to advocate for change
A Third Example

- Injury reported
- Equipment tested
- Balls not meeting specification
- Rules not requiring specification
- Develop consensus
- Change the rules and give organizations lead time
Thank You

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For tickets and info visit WorldLacrosse2014.com