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## **National Action Plan to Ensure Athletes Safety Finalized at 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Sports Safety Summit**

*Leading Health Conditions of Youth Athletes Explored and Solutions Put In Place*

**BIRMINGHAM, AL** – February 12, 2013 –The National Center for Sports Safety participated in finalizing the inaugural “National Action Plan for Sports Safety” at the Fourth Annual Youth Sports Safety Summit in Washington, DC held last week. Proper education and protocols put in place were key factors outlined in the Action Plan, and will aid in preventing, treating and managing athletic injuries in youth athletes across the nation.

The National Action Plan is a new education initiative pioneered to improve sports safety, achieve appropriate medical care in secondary schools, understand the risks, and at the same time, bring to light the many benefits of playing sports. The Action Plan focuses on steps that will be taken to provide safety measures including personnel, equipment and prevention, and management of sports-related injuries. Elements of the plan include medical and emergency components of sports safety, legal and risk management issues, and official policies and statements on appropriate medical care for secondary schools and youth athletes.

Sponsored by the National Athletic Trainers’ Association (NATA), over 100 organizations form the Youth Sports Safety Alliance to keep youth athletes safe on and off the playing field. Summit attendees were from both national and state organizations, and included parent advocate groups, education and school administration organizations; health care and sports associations; state and federal policymakers; athletic/activity associations; and sports governing bodies.

The National Center for Sports Safety participated in finalizing two critical areas of the Action Plan including ‘Cardiac Events’ and ‘Dietary/Substance-Induced Conditions.’ The Birmingham-based non-profit (NCSS) educates coaches on the importance of sports safety and injury prevention through a sports first aid course, PREPARE. The PREPARE course, developed in 2002 by medical experts and professionals, is designed to educate coaches in all levels of youth sports including high school, middle school, and youth leagues. It facilitates the recognition of the signs and symptoms of potentially dangerous situations, and how to respond until a medical professional arrives on scene.

For more information about the NCSS or the PREPARE course, please visit [www.SportsSafety.org](http://www.SportsSafety.org) or call 866.508.NCSS (6277). To learn more about the Youth Sports Safety Alliance, visit [www.youthsportssafetyalliance.org](http://www.youthsportssafetyalliance.org).

***About the National Center for Sports Safety:***

Dr. Lawrence Lemak founded the National Center for Sports Safety in 2001 to promote the importance of injury prevention and safety on all levels of youth sports through education and research. The NCSS focuses on decreasing the number and intensity of injuries through developing and teaching sports-safety courses. The NCSS also collects, analyzes and researches injury data to improve safety practices.

***About the Youth Sports Safety Alliance:***

Since 2010, the Youth Sports Safety Alliance (YSSA) has worked to raise awareness, advance legislation and improve medical care for young athletes across the country. High school athletes suffer 2 million injuries, 200,000 doctor visits and 30,000 hospitalizations every year. The alliance is committed to reducing those numbers and improving the health and safety of our young athletes. The YSSA was founded by the NATA and now includes over 100 member organizations.