



For Immediate Release:
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**Who has already signed “The Pledge?” – Coach Gus Malzahn,
Coach Bill Clark, Coach Nick Saban**

*Youth, High School and College Coaches Sign Sports
Safety Pledge to Protect Players*

Birmingham, AL – November 6, 2014 – The National Center for Sports Safety (NCSS) along with a number of local college, high school, and youth coaches joined together today to launch a new Sports Safety Pledge aimed at curbing the number of sports related injuries throughout the U.S. by engaging coaches at all levels. The event took place today at the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame.

“Similar to The Birmingham Pledge created in 1997 to help raise awareness on equality and justice, we are reaching across the nation and asking coaches to sign the National Center for Sports Safety Pledge,” said NCSS Executive Director, Kathryn Gwaltney. “By signing this pledge, the coaches are committing to make their players’ health and safety a top priority in the protection of all athletes of all ages across the United States.”

The goal of NCSS, founded in 2001 by Dr. Lawrence Lemak, is to promote the importance of injury prevention and safety on all levels of youth sports by educating volunteers and coaches through NCSS sports safety courses and other NCSS resources and by increasing sports safety awareness. Referenced by Safe Kids USA, approximately 1.35 million children are seen in emergency rooms for sports-related injuries each year, which equates to one child every 25 seconds. According to NCSS, that does not account for sports injuries seen in primary care and specialist physician offices, physical therapy clinics, athletic training rooms and emergent care facilities. Many of these injuries could be avoided.

“We are truly honored by the wonderful response that we have received statewide from coaches with the college, high school and youth levels, in support of our Sports Safety Pledge,” said Kathryn Gwaltney. “We applaud the enthusiasm and commitment from such an esteemed group of coaches and look forward to the sports safety awareness that will result from this.”

Dr. Lawrence Lemak, said his vision for the organization is not only to offer a resource for education, but also to show coaches and parents the grave importance of sports safety training for parents, coaches and athletes. The goal of NCSS is to standardize the level of care available to athletes on and off the playing field. By educating youth coaches in sports safety techniques and skills, they will gain the knowledge and confidence to prevent and respond to injuries and emergency situations appropriately until professional help arrives.

“There is not one parent that would drop their child off at a local community pool if there was not a certified lifeguard on duty. That same standard of care should be observed on the playing field,” Dr. Lemak said.

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NCSS contact: Kathryn Gwaltney, Executive Director, 866-508-NCSS

About NCSS:

The National Center for Sports Safety, a non-profit organization, formed in 2001, was founded by Dr. Lawrence Lemak to promote the importance of injury prevention and safety on all levels of youth sports through education and research. The NCSS has developed many courses and resources for coaches, parents, and athletes, which educate on how to prevent common injuries, how to recognize symptoms of potentially dangerous conditions, and how to respond in emergency situations. Visit the NCSS at www.sportssafety.org