



**Rhode Island Interscholastic League (RIIL)
Athletic Directors' Breakfast**

November 17, 2023

His contagious laugh and smile warmed our hearts.

His genuine compassion for others was a gift to all.

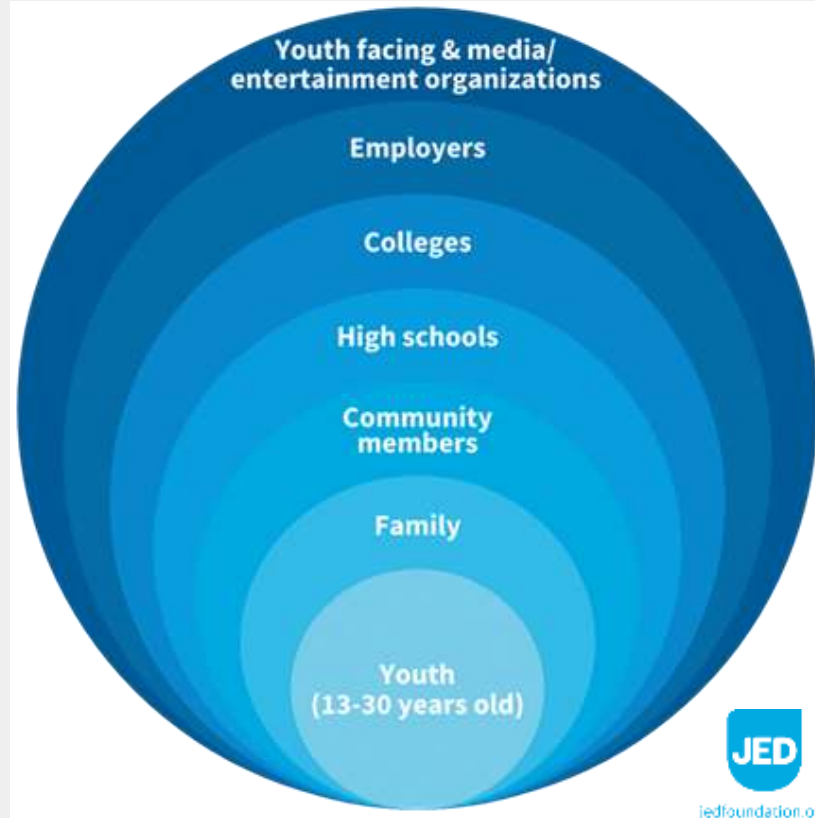


Katie – Kyle – Lauren

Collectively We ALL Need To Create an Environment of Hope & Security

EDUCATION

- ✓ **Learn symptoms** to look for in troubled youths.
- ✓ **Learn how to have conversations** with those you are concerned about.
- ✓ Know **what resources are available** and where to find them.
- ✓ **Find Treatment** – therapy, medications, cognitive behavioral techniques; lifestyle changes.



*We all need to play a role in promoting positive mental health, and creating a **non-judgmental, empathetic, caring, and supportive school culture.***

TALK MORE OPENLY

- ✓ *Mental illness does not equal mental weakness!*
- ✓ *Mental illness does not represent a personal failure!*
- ✓ **Never be ashamed** to ask for help...without hesitation!
- ✓ **Empathize** with those who struggle – they are not broken beyond repair, or isolated from peers.

Complementary Solutions to a Comprehensive Strategy

*Evidence-based for 4 key stakeholders - students, faculty, administrators, and parents;
Addressing 7 critical domains of focus.*



Peer support chapters (32 in 3 states!)

Students elevating their voices to change the conversation around mental health. **MSC; No Smit; Bishop Hend**



Mental health survey

to gauge students' attitudes about mental health, help-seeking, and stigma perception.



Prevention through education.

Young Adult Speakers, parent and teacher training, mindfulness.



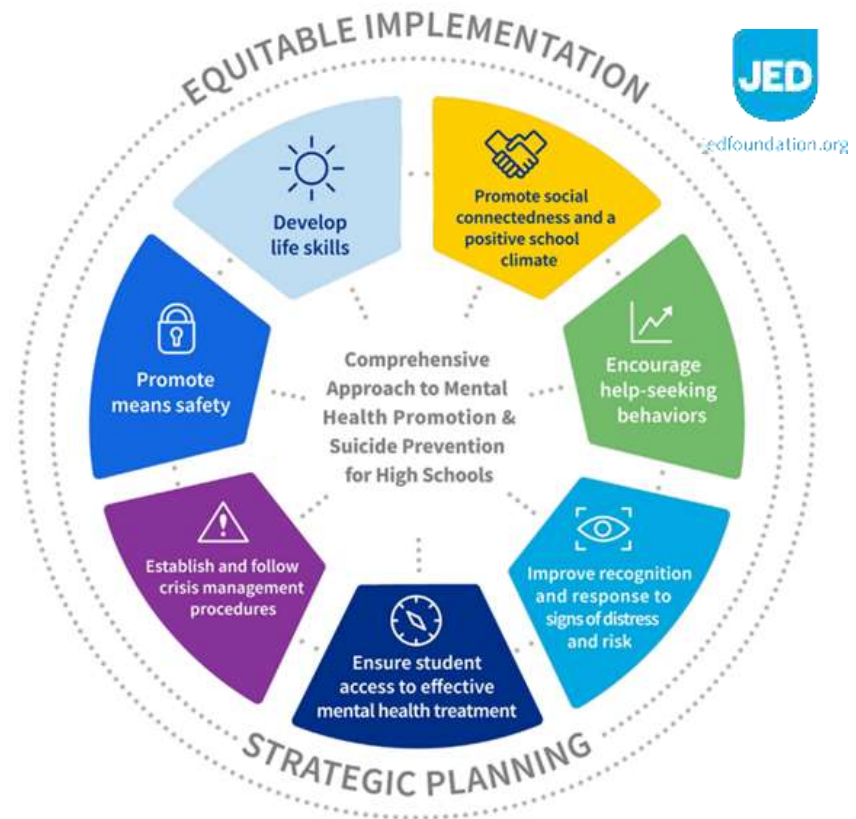
Suicide prevention, intervention

and postvention trainings. Trauma-informed and crisis response trainings.



Suicide prevention workshops for

students, faculty, and parents. Risk factors, warning signs.



Comprehensive roadmap/blueprint strengthening campus-wide programs, and policies to support mental health and prevent suicide. **Grounded in MTSS and CDC WSCC model.**



What Does KyleCares Do?

Introductory Meetings (1 hour)

Typical participants

Superintendents, Principals,
Adjustment Counselors, Wellness
Coordinators, Psychologists, AD's

Each school's needs are unique

based on quantity of students,
demographics, budget, and
existing programs and policies

- **Connecting** schools with mental health resources and service providers
- **Facilitating** long-term, comprehensive strategies to address student mental health
- **Funding** school-based mental health education, awareness, and suicide prevention programs

Our Impact Since 2019:



Use Case: Mount Saint Charles Academy

- Working closely with Director of Counseling Lisa Tenreiro, school Principal Julie Beauvais, and others
- **KyleCares awards \$4,700 in grants to school**
 - \$2,000 to help start student-led Active Minds Chapter
 - \$2,000 towards student and parent presentations
 - \$700 toward mental health literacy training for coaches.



Key Points:

You never pay KyleCares a dime. **We are looking to GIVE YOU money.**

Flexible Grant Request Process.

Checks written to service provider “on behalf of your school”.

Initial meetings are **1-hour**.

Typical participants – Superintendents, Principals,
Wellness Coordinators, Counselors, Athletic Directors.

Contact Information: jjohnson@kylecaresinc.org or **508-878-3990**

Addressing Mental Health Through Athletics

The Boston Globe

Athletes are by no means immune or more resistant to depression.

Recent suicides have sparked a national conversation of



- Reach teens where they spend the majority of their time.
- Athletes are often the **last to seek help.**
- **Male students** become more engaged when AD's & coaches are involved.
- Student-athletes sometimes best **leaders to help change culture.**
- **Athletic Directors and coaches** can play a significant role in helping to create the supportive culture; recognize athletes who might be struggling.

Addressing Mental Health Through Athletics

Balancing normal teen challenges such as **studies, personal relationships, part-time jobs, social media**, societal unrest (school violence, racism, politics, etc.) is hard enough!

Athletes' challenges on top of those can become overwhelming!!!

- **Competing at a high-level** in sports
- Pressure from **parents**
- **Win-at-all cost** coaches
- **Self-imposed pressure** to be the best
- **Self-identify as an athlete**, but struggling with injury, playing time

NEW HAMPSHIRE
UNION LEADER

**A YEAR-LONG MENTAL HEALTH
AWARENESS JOURNEY**
**'Burnout is real': Student athletes'
mental health is not a game**



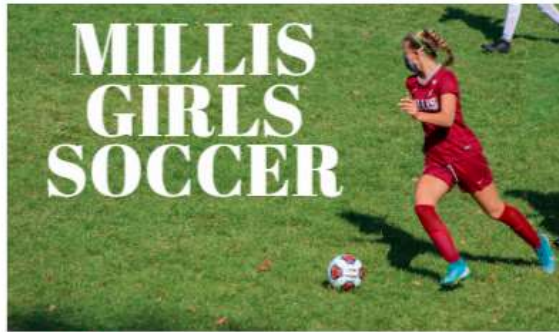
KYLECARES – WECARE Awareness Campaign

Key Objectives:

- Encourage student/school action locally; part of broader league-wide, statewide movement.
- Expand the KyleCares brand
- Develop statewide awareness via a “plug-n-play” template
- **Generate open conversation**
- **Encourage help-seeking** behavior, without shame or hesitation
- **Promoting positive school culture** and destigmatize mental health
- Encourage athletes to let down their guard if they are struggling
- Encourage school “leaders” to play their role in changing the school culture



Examples of Athletic Teams Taking the Lead on Mental Health Awareness



Setup a 50/50 GoFundMe page for a dual-purpose

- raise money for the soccer program
- raise money for a charity
- raised \$5,000 in just two weeks
 - ✓ half went into the program for new uniforms
 - ✓ half went to KyleCares.

They used it as an opportunity for **team bonding** and to **“give back” to their community** for something bigger in life than just a sporting event.

North Attleboro Girls Volleyball

The team takes time during their season each year to do something for charity and held a car wash.

The amount of money raised is secondary in importance to normalizing the discussion around mental health, and getting kids, parents, coaches, and all adults more comfortable talking about mental health, and better educated around it.

They raised \$1,000 for KyleCares.



Example of Athletic Directors Taking the Lead on Mental Health Awareness

After attending the MIAA Educational Athletics Summit in October 2022, students from four schools felt compelled to start an Active Minds Chapter at their school.

Their Athletic Directors are acting as their chapter's advisor while helping to "grow courageous leaders".



Examples of Athletic Departments Taking the Lead on Mental Health Awareness

“Our presentation from Andrew was excellent and well-received by the student-athletes and coaches that attended. Many athletes have approached me who were thankful for the opportunity, and several of my coaches have remarked that it has started an important conversation with their athletes that is continuing.”

-Sara Martin, Athletic Director

During Mental Health Awareness Month activities in May they focused on the mental health of their student-athletes.

Former collegiate athlete and Minding Your Mind speaker addressed 180 athletes and 10 coaches/staff members about “Finding Your Way to Mental Health & Resilience”.

It’s so important for student athletes who are balancing school, part-time jobs, sports, a social life, and the pressures that come with competitive sports, to keep their mental health in-check, and ask for help if needed!

Plans are underway to continue open conversations and awareness led by the school’s Athletic Leadership Council when they return in the fall.



Example of Athletic Department Taking the Lead on Mental Health Awareness



- Organized Dual Valley Conference Leadership Conference, focused on Social-emotional Learning
- Starting a new Active Minds Chapter
- Scheduled “Just Talk About It” presentation for fall coaches
- Every fall sports team has a home game designated for mental health awareness
 - green ribbons on uniforms or stickers on helmets
 - speech before the game
 - 50/50 raffles.



Nipmuc vs Hopedale - Volleyball



Nipmuc vs Uxbridge – Field Hockey



Nipmuc Cross Country Team





Tri Valley League

Student Leadership Conference – mental health-focused for 120 student-athletes



Examples of Athletic Leagues & Conferences Taking the Lead on Mental Health Awareness

Hockomock League

Attleboro
Canton
Foxboro
Franklin
King Philip
Mansfield



Milford
North Attleboro
Oliver Ames
Sharon
Stoughton
Taunton

- ✓ **Hanging banners** in every school's gymnasium
- ✓ **Mental Health Week** in January – raise awareness at sporting events across the league

Hockomock League – Mental Health Week





Girls Basketball Game vs Cranston East

Green Out!!!

JV @4:45 Varsity @6:30

All proceeds will be
donated to Kyle Cares and
to our very own Active
Minds Chapter here at
Mount!





KYLECARES

The Kyle Johnson Foundation



KyleCares and the MIAA

Proactively Advocating for Mental Health Awareness

Spring Championship Games





- ✓ Student **Mental Health Summit**, January 12th @ RIC
- ✓ **PA Announcements and videoboard or LED courtside signage rotation at State Championships** for Basketball, Volleyball, Ice Hockey, and Lacrosse.
- ✓ Allowing KyleCares to introduce partners/solutions with you!



Supporting Athletes' Mental Health: A Team Effort

with Dr. Kimberly O'Brien



- Clinical Social Worker
- Research Scientist
- Harvard University ('00), **co-captain of National Championship** hockey team in 1999.
- **Unlimited Resilience**, provides *telehealth therapy for athletes*, and all therapists are current/former athletes



Support Goals Athletes [GET STARTED](#)

Telehealth therapy,
for athletes by
athletes.

Connect with sports-motivated, licensed
therapists to achieve your goals.



Coaches Mental Health Literacy Training



About the Training

- **1-hour virtual program** for athletic coaches and PE/Wellness teachers
- Delivered by a **mental health clinician** and a **coach**
- **Evidence-based** and vetted by former **Duke University coach Joanne McCallie**
- Coaches will learn
 - how to **include mental health** as part of the team's culture
 - how to **identify when athletes need referrals** for mental health
 - how to **manage mental health** on the field/court
 - how to **take care of their own mental health**
 - and much more!



Mental Health Collaborative

is a nonprofit organization that provides evidence-based workshops on the 4 components of mental health literacy: *obtaining & maintaining good mental health, understanding mental illnesses, decreasing stigma, and knowing when, where, and how to get help.*

**Please contact your administrator for information
on how to attend the training**

mentalhealthcollaborative.org

How Can You Help?



Introduce KyleCares to your leadership peers for evidence-based solutions
Encourage help-seeking behavior by athletes
Encourage your leaders to lead the change in culture; start Active Minds chapters
Train your coaches in mental health literacy
Prioritize wellness/self-care in Ath. Dept mission statement. Mental Health Matters
Send students January 12th to Teen Mental Health Summit
Mental Health Awareness Games - ribbons, decals, pre-game
KyleCares- <u>YourSchoolCares</u> Awareness Campaign

Shining a spotlight on an **urgent public health issue**.
There is no greater issue facing teens and young adults in the U.S. today.