



US Lacrosse Emergency Action Plan Guidelines for Youth Lacrosse Programs Introduction

- Serious injuries can occur during lacrosse practices or games.
- We live in an era of increased public awareness of sports related injuries and an assumption that injuries will be properly cared for. Local Lacrosse Organizations (LLOs) and Tournament Operators must ensure the preparedness of the organization for handling emergency situations.
- It is important that administrators, staff, and coaches are prepared to respond to emergency situations. Preparing for emergency situations involves the development of an Emergency Action Plan (EAP). The EAP includes, but is not limited to, the proper coverage of events, maintenance of appropriate emergency equipment and supplies, and utilization of appropriate emergency medical personnel.
- All youth lacrosse organizations and events should have an individualized EAP that is published, is site specific, is available onsite, and is updated at least annually.
- Standard of care: <http://www.nata.org/sites/default/files/EmergencyPlanningInAthletics.pdf>
- Part of the duty owed to the children and families participating in a youth lacrosse organizations and events is supporting “prompt and adequate emergency services”.
- Concept of *foreseeability* - the organization and event administrators and the members of the sports medicine team must question whether an emergency has a reasonable possibility of occurring during the sport activity in question

Article

Best-Practice Recommendations for Youth Sport Leagues

<http://natajournals.org/doi/pdf/10.4085/1062-6050-52.2.02?code=nata-site>

Elements of an Emergency Action Plan

The EAP should include, but is not limited to, the following elements:

- (a) Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) Response Plan should include steps to take should a cardiac injury be suspected on the field or in the viewing areas. The plan should be made in coordination with local emergency responders.
<http://circ.ahajournals.org/content/120/6/518.full> and
http://www.nata.org/sites/default/files/Preparing_SCA_review_Drezner.pdf and
<http://www.sca-aware.org/schools/cardiac-emergency-response-plan-for-schools>
- (b) Local contact information for the organization’s Concussion Management Plan should be included in the overall document, with sections on response to head injury and follow-up highlighted for quick access. Guidelines are published to assist local organizations on working with local healthcare professionals to develop a plan.
<https://www.uslacrosse.org/safety/concussion-awareness>
- (c) For both indoor and outdoor facilities a plan to respond to sudden weather emergencies is an essential preparedness tool. Weather Emergency Plan should consider the local climate and could include snow emergency, tornado, hurricane, as well as thunderstorms and lightning.



<http://www.natajournals.org/doi/pdf/10.4085/1062-6050-48.2.25> and
<http://www.nata.org/sites/default/files/EmergencyPlanningInAthletics.pdf>

- (d) Depending on the climate of the event venue and season, a heat stress plan should be part of the emergency action planning effort. Humidity, sun intensity and air temperature, affect the need for a heat stress plan, but it is safe to say that if the temperature is over 80 degrees Fahrenheit, a plan should be developed and it can vary depending on the environmental conditions. A Heat Stress Response Plan should be based on the recommendations from NATA, local healthcare professionals, and the Korey Stringer Institute.
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC164365/>
- (e) Personnel Roles and Responsibilities
 - Maintenance of equipment responsibility
 - Coaches
 - Officials
 - Organization designated Safety Coach
 - Board members
 - Parents
 - Athletes
 - Local responder contact
 - Notification, warning, and communication procedures
 - Means for locating family members in an emergency
 - Emergency response procedures
- (a) Equipment needed
 - General requirements, not included in specific plans
- (b) Venue specific issues
 - Home and away contests
 - Maps
 - EMS access point
 - Key and access to nearby equipment and facilities
- (c) Emergency care facilities
- (d) Documentation/Forms
- (e) League/resource specific
- (f) Educating organization administrators, coaches and parents

Steps for Developing an Emergency Action Plan

1. Establish a board level leadership position focusing on safety, Safety Coach.
2. Establish a board level procedure for annual review of EAP practices.
3. Reach out to available community resources, including healthcare providers and emergency services.
4. Review EAP Guidelines and Sample Plan from US Lacrosse.
5. After reviewing EAP Guidelines, incorporate information from your LLO or event into the USL Sample Plan and have it reviewed by local healthcare providers.



6. Educate staff and volunteers (including coaches, game day staff, officials, etc.) on the up-to-date EAP.
7. Place copies of the EAP in visible/accessible locations for all coaches, game day staff, officials, parents, etc. to read and review.

Steps for Implementing an Emergency Action Plan

1. The LLO leadership or Tournament Operator must designate and train enough people to assist in the safe and orderly emergency evacuation.
2. The LLO leadership or Tournament Operator should review the plan with all volunteers (including coaches, game day staff, officials, etc.) when the initial plan is developed, if changed, and annually thereafter.
3. The organization should review the EAP with each person with responsibility when initially assigned to a specific task and when their actions or responsibilities change in the plan.
4. Effective plans often call for retraining person with plan responsibility regularly and include drills in which volunteers can practice implementing and executing their responsibilities.
5. Educate your volunteers about the types of emergencies that may occur and train them in the proper course of action.
6. Once the emergency action plan is completed, review it carefully with staff and volunteers (including coaches, game day staff, officials, etc.) and post it in an area where it can be easily accessed.
7. In addition, if the EAP relies on assistance from local emergency responders such as the fire department, police, paramedics, or other outside responders, review and coordinate with these organizations. This ensures the LLO or Tournament Operators is aware of the capabilities of these outside responders and that they will know what the LLO or Tournament Operator expects of them.

Summary

The primary key to a successful emergency plan is that it includes clearly defined leaders for each situation and well established communications systems connecting required resources during an emergency event. The specific plans recommended for inclusion address high risk scenarios and require some specific planning. Local conditions may require additional specific plans.

Communication with required resources should go beyond a call to 911 during an emergency. It is important to communicate with local emergency responders and healthcare providers prior to needing them in an emergency. Most pre-plan for a variety of emergency situations and will appreciate and welcome the contact prior to a needed response. This communication should be refreshed annually as organization and responder leadership often changes.