



What should an appropriate response be if a student-athlete has expressed an intent, plan of suicide, or attempted suicide? Treat the behavior or threat seriously and potentially dangerous. Coaches should not assume the severity of these actions or characterize these expressions as a means of gaining attention.

Refer the individual to a mental health professional that can then evaluate the student-athlete. Going to the nearest hospital or emergency room may be appropriate.

A coach's quick response to a student-athlete can show that their mental health and life are serious matters. It is far better to be cautious when seeking professional assistance for the student-athlete and sharing support with the individual.

Names and contact information of referral resources should be readily available. Research and plan options before needing them. Familiarize yourself with the school or system protocols to guide your response. Always notify the parents or guardians of any threat to a student-athlete's mental health or if there is any danger of harming themselves.

If you are concerned a student-athlete is a danger to themselves, do not leave them unattended. Remain with them until a mental health evaluation is completed.

The Jason Foundation has many programs and resources for coaches, educators, youth workers, parents, and students available at no cost. These programs are available for education and to help guide in assisting at-risk youth. Visit jasonfoundation.com to learn more.

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