

Making the case for supporting the return of all sports in accordance with COVID-19 protocols

Presented by the Let Them Play CA

February, 2021



LET THEM PLAY CA

#LETTHEMPLAYCA

A QUICK GLANCE AT WHY YOU SHOULD SUPPORT THE RETURN OF YOUTH SPORTS

1

RESUMING SPORTS IS SAFE

Consistently studies and data show that playing and practicing sports results in little to no transmission when COVID-19 safety protocols are in place.

2

KIDS ARE IN A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

The social emotional issues of not playing are far worse than getting COVID-19. Failing classes, dropping out of school, drug use, mental health deterioration, suicide ideation, death by suicide.

3

KIDS ARE STILL PLAYING

Only those who can afford the expensive out of state travel and those who choose to play "underground" (unsafe, uncontrolled). The inequity is huge.

4

YOUTH ARE NOT COVID-19 SUPER SPREADERS.

Children 17 and under have shown to have a lower rate of transmission than adults.

5

COVID-19 IS MILDER IN CHILDREN THAN ADULTS

Of children with COVID, only .8% have been hospitalized and .08% have died (n=9 in CA). More die from influenza in a typical year (n=15 in CA in 2018/2019).

6

NEARLY EVERY OTHER STATE IS PLAYING ALL SPORTS

Over 43 states have been safely playing all sports since August 2020. Even Washington, New York, Nevada, and Illinois have approved all sports. Per the NFHS, COVID-19 transmission during athletics is "relatively rare".

Dr. Monica
Gandhi, an
infectious
disease
expert at
UCSF

"My reading on this is it is essential we turn our attention to the collateral effects on children that prolonged closures cause," she said. "Sports are an important part of school activity, and study after study has found that if safety measures are in place, transmission does not occur to a high degree." She goes on further to say that "Many studies show that if transmission occurs among students, it's occurring to children mostly at home and not within the activity they're doing".

ASSUMPTION #1

Resuming
sports is unsafe

Untrue

There is no data showing that playing or practicing sports is unsafe when following COVID-19 safety protocols.

What is
unsafe?

NOT playing

Why is
not
playing
unsafe?

Kids have lost structure, lost their reasons to be in school, lost their support systems, and are giving up hope. The results are devastating.

Playing anyway without COVID-19 safety protocols

Failing classes

Dropping out of school

Drug use

Mental health deterioration

Death by suicide

ALARMING YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

ACCORDING TO UCSF BENIOFF CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

66%

INCREASE IN SUICIDAL CHILDREN

75%

YOUTH NEEDING TO BE HOSPITALIZED FOR THEIR MENTAL HEALTH

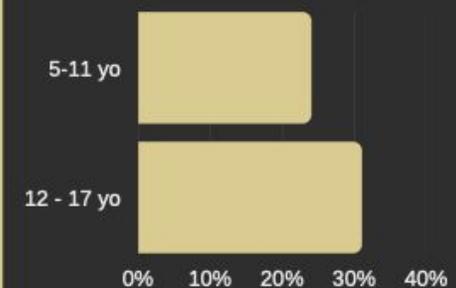
ACCORDING TO LET THEM PLAY CA SURVEY (N=2000)

74%

YOUTH HAVE NEWLY DIAGNOSED CLINICAL ANXIETY

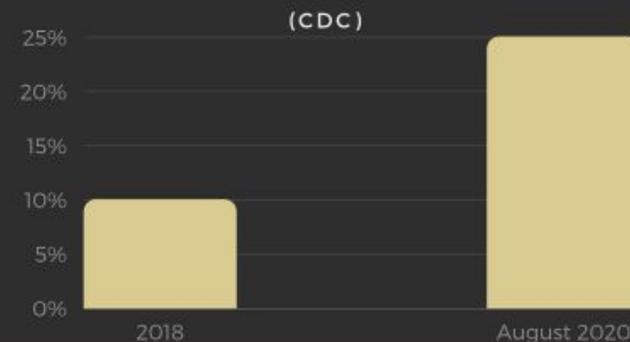


1 IN 4 YOUTH HAVE CONSIDERED SUICIDE SINCE MARCH 2020 (LTPCA)



INCREASE IN MENTAL HEALTH RELATED VISITS TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM SINCE APRIL 2020 (CDC)

YOUNG ADULT SUICIDE IDEATION



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN RESEARCHER TIM MCGUINE, PHD

"THE GREATEST RISK TO STUDENT-ATHLETES IS NOT COVID-19. IT'S SUICIDE AND DRUG USE."

CDC Suicide Data

DEATH BY SUICIDE INCIDENCE RATES
WILL NOT BE RELEASED UNTIL 2022 BY
THE CDC. BUT REPORTS ARE ALREADY
ALARMING.

19

YOUTH DEATHS BY
SUICIDE IN LAS VEGAS
SINCE MARCH 2020

9

COVID-19 RELATED
YOUTH DEATHS IN THE
ENTIRE STATE OF
CALIFORNIA SINCE
MARCH 2020

UCSF BENIOFF CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL
PHYSICIANS RELEASED A STATEMENT IN
JANUARY, 2021

"CHILDREN ARE GENERALLY NOT AT
RISK OF SEVERE HEALTH
CONSEQUENCES FROM COVID-19."

Humboldt County should be very concerned because our youth are at higher risk for mental health problems

Humboldt County has the highest Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) score in the state (75%).

Our youth also lack access to mental health care, which is even more of a problem with the absence of teams and coaches.

LET THEM PLAY CA HEALTH STATS

BASED ON RESEARCH AND LET THEM PLAY CA PARENT SURVEY • 1928 RESPONSES

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PLAYCA.ORG

SINCE THE LOCKDOWN BEGAN...

Over 1/2 of **11-17 YEAR OLDS** reported having **THOUGHTS OF SUICIDE** or **self harm** more than half or **NEARLY EVERY DAY** of the previous two weeks.
(Sept. 2020)

Sources: Youth Data 2021, Mental Health America
mhanational.org

CDC Report finds that **1 IN 4** young adults considered **SUICIDE** due to Coronavirus Pandemic

77,470 youth reported frequent **suicidal ideation** (Jan.-Sept. 2020)

SOURCES: YOUTH DATA 2021, MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA, MHANATIONAL.ORG

308 KIDS ARE RECEIVING MENTAL HEALTH THERAPY

116 KIDS ARE TAKING PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION

74% OF KIDS SHOW SIGNS OF ANXIETY

66% OF CHILDREN SHOW SIGNS OF DEPRESSION

121 CHILDREN WANT TO HURT THEMSELVES

Youth athletes current fears & stressors:

- Missing friends & teammates
- Fear of no college recruitment
- Fear of missing their final season

335 parents have difficulty obtaining mental health therapy for their children due to waitlists or a shortage of providers

97% of parents believe their child would have **improved** their mental and physical health with return to **organized sports**

37% of children have an unhealthy relationship with food (binging, withholding food, overweight, underweight, eating disorder)

MENTAL HEALTH PEDIATRIC ER VISITS INCREASED BY 24% (children ages 5 to 11) and **BY 31%** (children ages 12 to 17) from 2019 to 2020 (CDC)

YOUTH SPORTS

report fewer mental health problems, lower depression, less anxiety, less suicidal ideation & attempts.

(Maximizing the Benefits of Youth Sport. (2013). Journal of Physical Education)

DANGEROUS EATING DISORDERS

are being made worse by Covid-19 isolation. Many children's hospitals are seeing eating disorder admissions double since before the pandemic.

CYBER CRIME

Internet crimes against children that are focused on sexual exploitation have increased more than three times since the pandemic began.

(District Attorney Summer Stephan, January 6, 2021)

LOCKDOWN AND ITS *IMPACT* ON STUDENT - ATHLETES

THESE NUMBERS REPRESENT CHANGES SINCE THE PANDEMIC SHUTDOWN ON 3/12/20

1,612
STUDENT-ATHLETES ARE
ACADEMICALLY INELIGIBLE

92%
OF COACHES STATE **ACADEMIC
INELIGIBILITY**
IN STUDENT ATHLETES
HAS **INCREASED**

372 STUDENT-ATHLETES
**DROPPED
OUT** OF SCHOOL

91%
OF COACHES STATE THERE IS AN
INCREASE IN STUDENT ATHLETE
DROP OUTS

13 STUDENT-ATHLETES ARE
LEAVING US DUE TO
VIOLENCE/DEATH
IN THEIR COMMUNITY

89%
OF COACHES STATE THERE IS AN
INCREASE IN STUDENT ATHLETES
LEAVING US DUE TO
VIOLENCE/DEATH
IN THEIR COMMUNITY

95 STUDENT-ATHLETES HAVE
JOINED A GANG
DUE TO THE PANDEMIC

89%
OF COACHES STATE THERE IS AN
INCREASE IN STUDENT ATHLETES
JOINING A GANG

41 STUDENT-ATHLETES ARE
NOW **EXPECTING
A CHILD**

88%
OF COACHES STATE THERE IS AN
INCREASE IN STUDENT ATHLETES
EXPECTING A CHILD

37 STUDENT-ATHLETES
HAVE BEEN
INCARCERATED

85%
OF COACHES STATE THERE IS AN
INCREASE IN STUDENT ATHLETE
INCARCERATIONS

ASSUMPTION #2:

Restricting
sports at the
state level
means kids
aren't playing

FALSE - SOME KIDS
ARE STILL FINDING
WAYS TO PLAY

BUT NOT ALL KIDS

YOUTH SPORTS HAVE BECOME
THE SPEAKEASY OF COVID-19

BUT ONLY FOR KIDS IN URBAN AREAS
(UNLIKE HUMBOLDT AND DEL NORTE
COUNTY)

&

FOR KIDS WITH FAMILY SUPPORT AND
FINANCIAL MEANS

THESE UNDERGROUND SPORTS
HAVE FEWER SAFETY PROTOCOLS

THIS IS HAPPENING ALL
OVER THE STATE IN PARKS,
ON PRIVATE LAND, AND ON
TRIBAL LAND.

THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE ARE LEAVING CALIFORNIA EACH WEEKEND TO PLAY SPORTS

8 BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL TOURNAMENTS WERE HELD IN ARIZONA THE WEEKEND OF FEBRUARY 13-14, 2021



155 teams of 194 were from California

3 softball tournaments in Bullhead City, Arizona

47 teams of 50 were from California

1 softball tournament in Lake Havasu, Arizona

119 teams of 192 were from California

3 baseball tournaments in Glendale, Arizona

28 teams of 34 were from California

1 baseball tournament in Yuma, Arizona

3 4 9

TEAMS

7,000 players, coaches, and parents traveled outside of the state to Arizona this weekend for just two sports

Equity does
not exist in
local youth
sports
without the
schools
playing

NOT EVERYONE CURRENTLY
HAS THE SAME
OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY

PRIVATE SCHOOLS ARE CURRENTLY
FORMING THEIR OWN LEAGUES
ACROSS THE STATE.

KIDS WITH PARENTS WHO CAN AFFORD IT
PLAY "TRAVEL SPORTS", PAY FOR PRIVATE
TRAINERS, AND LEAVE THE STATE OR FIND
MEANS TO PLAY WITHIN THE STATE.

IN HUMBOLDT AND DEL NORTE
COUNTIES, BEING MORE
REGIONALLY ISOLATED, KIDS DO
NOT HAVE THE SAME ACCESS TO
PLAY "UNDERGROUND" SPORTS AND
LEAGUES.

YOUTH FROM LOWER
SOCIO-ECONOMIC FAMILIES
ARE IMPACTED AT A
DISPROPORTIONATELY
HIGHER RATE

FAMILIES WITH FINANCIAL MEANS
ARE BREAKING COVID-19
GUIDELINES AND STILL PLAYING
AND PRACTICING.

SPORTS ARE THE REASON SOME ATHLETES
WANT TO GO TO COLLEGE. FOR MANY, IT
IS THEIR ONLY WAY THROUGH SPORTS
SCHOLARSHIPS.

THIS IS GREATLY IMPACTING OUR
YOUTH'S MENTAL HEALTH WHEN
THEY SEE THEIR COUNTERPARTS
FROM AROUND THE STATE STILL
PLAYING AND THEY SEE NEARLY
EVERY OTHER STATE PLAYING HIGH
SCHOOL SPORTS AS WELL. THEY
KNOW THESE KIDS HAVE
OPPORTUNITIES THAT ARE BEING
DENIED TO THEM. THEY KNOW
PLAYING COLLEGE SPORTS IS NOW
LESS OF A CHANCE FOR THEM.

Education based athletic programs would bring more equity to sports and result in safer playing conditions

ALL STUDENTS WOULD HAVE ACCESS TO ATHLETICS WITHOUT ANY FEES OR FINANCIAL BURDEN.

THERE WOULD BE ACCOUNTABILITY BY ALL PARTIES - ATHLETIC DIRECTORS, COACHES, PRINCIPALS - TO FOLLOW CDPH AND COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDELINES.

COVID-19 SAFETY PROTOCOLS WOULD BE UPHELD AND ENSURED.

EVERY HIGH SCHOOL COACH IS HIGHLY QUALIFIED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING CIF MANDATED TRAININGS: CPR/FIRST AID, CONCUSSION PROTOCOL, SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST, HEAT ILLNESSES, AND THE BASIC FOUNDATIONS IN COACHING.

BOTTOMLINE

Our athletes and our communities will be safer playing organized school sports following COVID-19 safety protocols.

ASSUMPTION # 3:

Kids are
COVID-19
super
spreaders.



LOWER RATE OF
TRANSMISSION THAN
ADULTS

UCSF BENIOFF CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL
PHYSICIANS RELEASED A STATEMENT IN
JANUARY, 2021

"SINCE MARCH 2020, WE HAVE
LEARNED THAT YOUNG CHILDREN ARE
NOT THE PRIMARY DRIVERS OF
COVID-19 TRANSMISSION. WE HAVE
ALSO LEARNED THAT CHILDREN ARE
GENERALLY NOT AT RISK OF SEVERE
HEALTH CONSEQUENCES FROM
COVID-19."

ASSUMPTION # 4:

Kids are going
to get really
sick or even
die

COVID ITSELF HAS
SHOWN TO BE FAR LESS
PHYSICALLY IMPACTFUL
TO CHILDREN

.8%

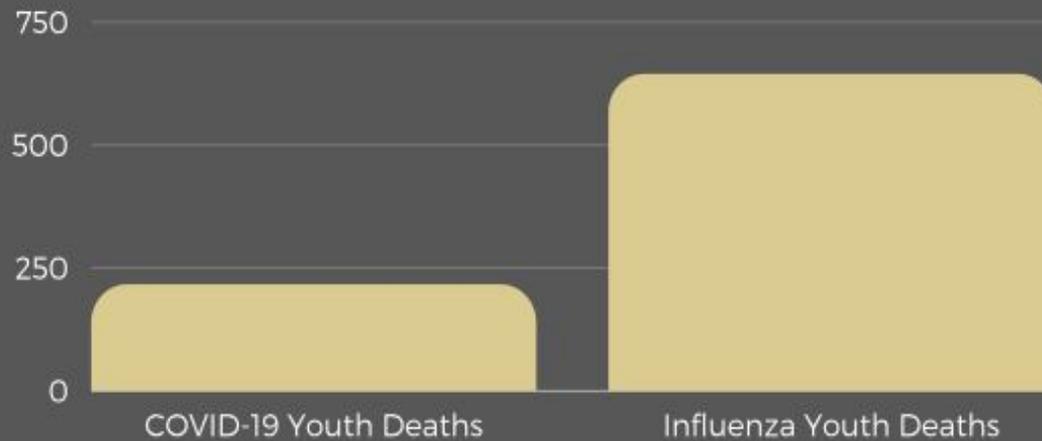
OF CHILDREN WITH
COVID NATIONWIDE,
11,129 (.8%) HAVE BEEN
HOSPITALIZED SINCE
MAY 2020 (CDC)

.01%

.01% OF CHILDREN WITH
COVID-19 HAVE DIED IN
THE UNITED STATES

COVID-19 (MARCH 2020-PRESENT)
VERSUS INFLUENZA (2017/2018 FLU
SEASON) RELATED YOUTHS DEATHS

(CDC)



"CHILDREN ARE GENERALLY NOT AT RISK
OF SEVERE HEALTH CONSEQUENCES FROM
COVID-19." UCSF

THERE WERE 6 MORE INFLUENZA RELATED
CHILD DEATHS IN 2018/2019 THAN THERE
HAVE BEEN COVID-19 RELATED DEATHS IN
CALIFORNIA (CDC)



ASSUMPTION
5:

There are no organized high school youth sports anywhere in the United States (and California is just like all other states)

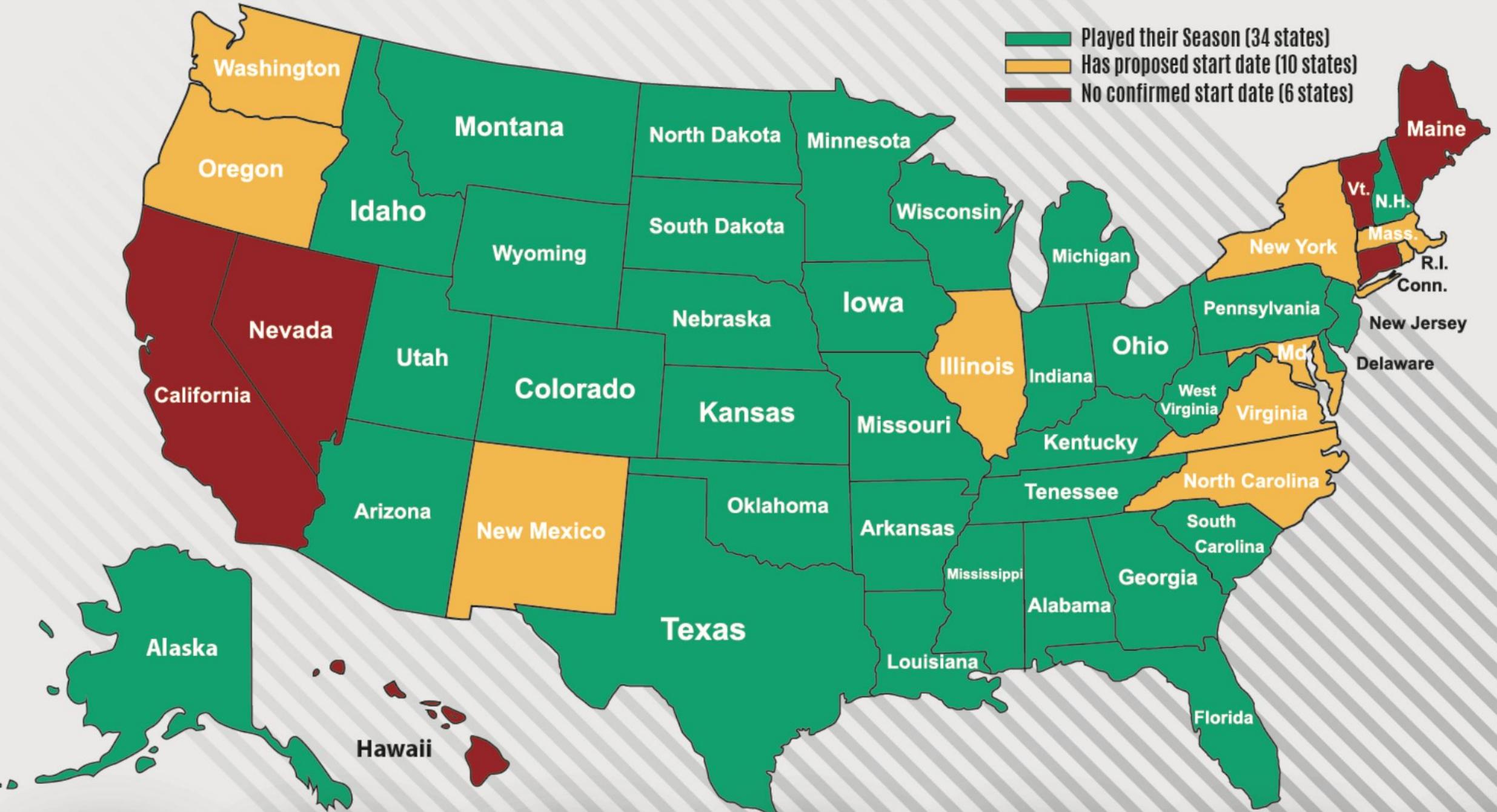
FALSE

Over 40 states have been safely playing sports since August 2020 - even indoor sports like basketball.



Graphic By: Ryan Escobar

NATIONWIDE HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL COVID DATA



COVID-19
transmission
rarely
happens
during
training and
games when
protocols are
followed.

California is last to open,
so we benefit from the
data and science from
other states playing

VERY LITTLE COVID-19 TRANSMISSION HAPPENS WHILE PLAYING OR PRACTICING

99.6%

IN MICHIGAN, 6000+
(99.6%) FOOTBALL
PLAYERS TESTED
NEGATIVE DURING THE
SEASON

1

90,000 SOCCER
PLAYERS WERE STUDIED
FOR 2.5 MONTHS FROM
124 CLUBS IN 34 STATES.
THEY FOUND ONE
COVID-19
TRANSMISSION FROM
PRACTICE.

.05%

IN CALIFORNIA, 11
POSITIVE CASES FROM
PRACTICE IN 21,000
ATHLETES ATTRIBUTED
TO FOOTBALL PRACTICE

99.5%

NEARLY ALL COVID
CASES AMONG
ATHLETES WERE
ATTRIBUTED TO
OUTSIDE OF SPORTS

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH
SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

"THE MAJORITY OF SPORTS-RELATED
SPREAD OF COVID-19 APPEARS TO
OCCUR FROM SOCIAL CONTACT, NOT
DURING SPORTS PARTICIPATION."



COVID-19
sports
protocols
exist for us
to use

The California Interscholastic Federation (CIF), the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) with guidance from their Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC), & the Humboldt Del Norte League all have protocols already in place for the safe return of all youth sports.

On February 2, 2021, the National Federation of State High School Associations eliminated the COVID-19 risk level assignments

The NFHS eliminated their COVID-19 tier based sports system created in May 2020 informed by 9 months of observation, data, and science.

“Knowledge of the virus that causes COVID-19 has evolved. We have increasingly recognized that transmission depends upon multiple factors that cannot be easily accounted for by simply dividing sports into three distinct categories of risk.”



NFHS
replaced the
tier system
with Five
Guiding
Factors to
Playing High
School
Sports (Feb
2021)

"We have to be concerned about transmission of the virus first and foremost, we must also consider the mental health of students who have been unable to play sports thus far this year."

1. Community infection rates main predictor of youth cases.
2. COVID-19 transmission during athletics "relatively rare".
3. Non-contact sports show lower rates of COVID-19 infection than those in contact sports.
4. Masks indoors = outdoor sports transmission rates
5. COVID-19 transmission comes from social contact, not during games or practice.



We are at a critical juncture.

Based on what we are hearing from our athletes, we foresee if all youth sports, regardless of the risk level tier assignment, are not approved by the end of February, many kids will make the choice to start playing underground.

Other kids, especially of the high school age, who do not have this option due to financial and/or regional constraints, will give up hope. Based on what we know already about how children are responding when they give up hope, this will likely translate to worse grades in school, more drop outs, and worsening mental health.

50 elected bipartisan officials (38 assembly members and 12 senators) in the State of California have signed the Let Them Play Resolution

We the undersigned are resolved that youth sport competition is essential during the COVID pandemic in the state of California.

Whereas, COVID-19 response policies in the state of California have disrupted and canceled youth sport competitions. This cancellation of school and sports has had profound negative impacts on the physical and mental health of adolescent athletes. The American Academy of Pediatrics states:

"Re-engaging in sports activity with friends has both physical and psychological health benefits for children and adolescents. Participating in sports allows youth to improve their cardiovascular health, strength, body composition, and overall fitness. Mentally, youth may experience benefits from the increased socialization with friends and coaches as well as from the return to a more structured routine. These psychological and physical benefits can help support their developmental growth. Exercise also has immune system benefits." *COVID-19 Interim Guidance: Return to Sports - American Academy of Pediatrics*; and

Whereas, According to the [Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans](#), youth need at least 60 minutes a day of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity to stay healthy. Rather than only watching sporting events on television, young people should participate in age-appropriate sports or games; and

Whereas, Studies show that social relationships have short- and long-term effects on health, for better and for worse, and that these effects emerge in childhood and cascade throughout life to foster cumulative advantage or disadvantage in health. [Social Relationships and Health: A Flashpoint for Health Policy](#); and

Whereas, The Department of Health & Human Services developed the [National Youth Sports Strategy](#), which called for a national strategy to increase youth sports participation; and

Whereas, Sports participation provides numerous benefits in addition to helping youth be more physically active. Benefits can include higher levels of perceived competence, confidence, and self-esteem; improved life skills, such as goal setting, time management, and work ethic; reduced risk of suicide and suicidal thoughts and tendencies; the opportunity to develop social and interpersonal skills, such as teamwork, leadership, and relationship building; and improved concentration, memory, school attendance, and academic performance. We know that when youth are engaged in sports, their life outcomes are [more positive and bright](#). They have increased graduation rates, higher wages, greater self-confidence and are better at working with others. US Department of Health & Resources "[HHS Releases First Federal Strategy to Increase Youth Sports Participation](#)" and

Whereas, Youth sports are open in over 40 states. Currently, in California wealthier families are still participating in youth sports by leaving the state. This results in two things:

- Widening the opportunity gap for economically disadvantaged where most cannot afford to participate at the club levels. Club sports can cost \$2K - \$20K yearly.
- Increasing COVID spread to their communities; and

Whereas, Public school sports is the only affordable option for many families and offers opportunities not found elsewhere; and

Whereas, California has led the nation for years in the number of high school athletes; with 814,000 participating in 2019. [California High School Sports Participation at All-Time High for Seventh Consecutive Year](#)

Whereas, Lack of High School sports has impacted our athlete's ability to compete for College Scholarships. There are reports of local students being denied the opportunity to compete as the colleges are concerned about potential late season injuries that would impact the start of their season; and

Whereas, Our kids are suffering from self-harm, depression, suicide, and gaming addictions. The state health department has not done anything to intervene in this crisis. ~~Instead~~ the state has continued to change policy, hence creating even more disappointment and deepening emotional injuries. We need our kids back to living healthy lives again. Exercise and organized sports are widely recognized as powerful antidepressant and anti-anxiety interventions; and in many instances an escape for kids in abusive and toxic environments; and

Whereas, Sports enable an athlete to expend energy and time. Our families continue to deal with untold hardships at home having an outlet for their student athletes will indirectly benefit the entire family; and

Whereas, The experts and scientists support our claim that we are experiencing an increase in depression amongst our kids. Suicide is the worse event leading from depression. Johns Hopkins Children's Hospital [Returning to Youth Sports After the Coronavirus Crisis](#): "In the medical literature we have studies that show that injured athletes suffer from increased rates of depression and anxiety when they are unable to play their sport. Now we know that this is a much different situation, but we can expect similar responses in athletes who are dealing with the lack of training and the uncertainty that the COVID-19 crisis has created."; and

Whereas, The report of 3 teen suicides, in Orange County, within the week of CIF's postponement announcements are alarming. An 11 year old attempted suicide in Carlsbad, his mother reported he was depressed from being isolated. In July, Orange Unified School District lost a high school freshman to suicide the day that summer sports were cancelled. It made national news when a 11 year old in San Joaquin was lost to suicide during a Zoom class. We will not have complete data from the CDC on the numbers of suicide for 2 years. Emergency rooms are reporting unprecedented numbers in attempts and psychologists are reporting unprecedented numbers in office visits and first time visits.

Whereas, The governor has remained mute on the subject for months, first promising a new guidance then reversing his decision; and

Whereas, The youth of California do not have a union like the teachers, actors, directors, contractors, grocery store workers, etc; therefore be it

100 California doctors signed a letter in support of the immediate return to youth sports



California Physicians Call for Return to Sports for Children

January 29, 2021

Long term shutdowns of youth sports in California have gone on for too long. It is time to allow children to safely participate in their sports and extra-curricular activities. Our young athletes celebrate that California's strictest Stay At Home Orders were just lifted. However, the current tiered guidance still prohibits some of the most popular sports from being played until case counts decrease to a level that could take many months to reach. This could effectively eliminate many seasons and some sports, such as baseball and softball, stand to miss two years in a row of high school play. We feel this is a deeply flawed plan and know that with safety protocols children can and should return to sports now.

Youth participation in sports during the COVID19 pandemic is actually beneficial to communities as a whole. Fortunately, we have data from 40 other states that are allowing children to safely participate in sports over the past 9 months. These facts are extremely encouraging and support sports to open in California now. A University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health study examined 30,000 high school athletes and concluded that 14-17 year olds who participated in high school sports actually had lower rates of COVID19 than all other 14-17 year olds in that community. This study revealed out of 30,000 athletes only 1 case out of the 271 cases of COVID19 in athletes was contracted from sports participation. The vast majority of cases were from household contacts. The University of Wisconsin study also found no particular sport showed higher rates than any other sport, once again questioning the tiered system.

Children are at extremely low risk to their health from COVID19. In fact, riding in a car to his/her practice or game poses more of a risk to their health than COVID19. In over 1,000,315 hours of high school football workouts in California, there have been zero hospitalizations and zero deaths from COVID19.

Furthermore, depression, obesity, suicide, and anxiety have skyrocketed in our youth in significant part due to the lack of sports and activities. As physicians, we are seeing startling increases in rates of mental health issues since March 2020. In fact, the CDC reports a 24% increase in Emergency Room visits due to mental health issues in 5-11 year olds and a 31% increase in ER visits for mental health issues in 12-17 year olds from March 2020-October 2020 compared to 2019 data. We are also seeing alarming increases in rates of childhood obesity due to lack of physical activity and sports. In addition, sports participation helps to combat anxiety, depression, social isolation, suicidal ideation and weight gain. Moreover, sports participation helps improve school attendance, academic achievement, and future success in college and beyond.

Prohibiting a healthy activity such as sports participation has caused harm to our state's children. Not only have mental health problems increased, but there are also troubling increases in athletes who now have failing grades, are becoming screen addicted, are dropping out of school, joining gangs or becoming teenage parents. California's athletes are being denied opportunities that high school athletes in other states are still able to pursue. We are confident that it is now time to return to play. It is clear that sports improve the well-being of children of all ages and for decades communities have encouraged our youth to participate in sports as a way for them to have a structured, supervised outlet for their energy. Children of all ages need this structure even more during this difficult time.



Physicians see the harm that not allowing sports is causing California's youth on a daily basis and we urge state leaders to allow sports to safely reopen immediately for the health and well-being of our youth.

Sincerely,

Anna K. Mendenhall, MD, FAAP, lead author
Carrick Adam, MD
Laurie Bernard Stover, MD, FAAP
Anne Marie Birkbeck-Garcia, MD
Shawn J. Bissonnette, MD
Julie S. Block, MD, FAAP
Sonja K. Brion, MD, FAAP
Amy K. Bremner, MD
Patricia Cantrell, MD, FAAP
Christina Carlton, MD, FAAP
Keri Carstairs, MD, MBA, FACEP, FAAP
Nancy Clementino, MD, FAAP
Stuart Cohen, MD, FAAP
Garry Crummer, MD
Michael de Boisblanc, MD, FACS
Amy Daniher, MD
Gustavo A. Delgado, MD
Kimberly Dickson, MD
Matt Dickson, MD
Timothy W. Dwyer, MD
Guia Escuro, MD
Rita J. Feghall, MD
Elena Fishman, MD, FAAP
Deborah Franzon, MD, FCCM
Monica Gandhi, MD, MPH, Infectious Disease UCSF
Shakha Gillin, MD, FAAP
Scott Hadley, MD
Neil G. Harness, MD
Brian D. Hopkins, MD
Eustratia Hubbard, MD
Pooya Javidan, MD, FAAOS
Irvin Kaufman, MD
Lauren Kearney, MD
Arash Kermanshahi, MD, FAAOS
V. Don Kirtland, MD
Peter Kruk, MD
Yong Kwon, MD, FAAOS



Anne E. Matich, MD
Daniel Metsch, MD, FAAP
Randy Metsch, MD, FAAP
Alexander D. Miller, MD
Connie B. Miller, MD
Michael Michlitsch, MD, FAAOS
Natalie Muth, MD, MPH, FAAP, FACSM
Dori Mortimer, MD, FAAP
Veronica Naudin, MD, FAAP
Matthew Pecci, MD, ABFM
Brett Peterson, MD
Lisa A. Phillip, MD
Robert Powell, MD, FAOS
Charles F. Preston, MD, FAAOS
Nithin Reddy, MD, FAAOS
Nathan Rendler, MD, FAAP
Stuart Rubenstein, MD, FAAP
Valerie Rubin, MD, FAAP
Michael Ryan, MD, FAAOS
Lawrence Schwartz, MD
Amy Steinhoff, MD, FAAOS
Chris Stenger, MD, FAAOS
Gary M. Taff, MD, FACEP
Kuangkei Tai, MD, FAAP
Lori Taylor, MD, FAAP
Kamei Tolba, MD, FAAP
Laurie J. Tyrrell, MD
Brian Tyson, MD
Arny Yashar, MD, FAAOS



American Academy of Pediatrics:

COVID-19 INTERIM
GUIDANCE:

Return to Sports

(Dec 2020)

“Re-engaging in sports activity with friends has both physical and psychological health benefits for children and adolescents. Participating in sports allows youth to improve their cardiovascular health, strength, body composition, and overall fitness. Mentally, youth may experience benefits from the increased socialization with friends and coaches as well as from the return to a more structured routine. These psychological and physical benefits can help support their developmental growth. Exercise also has immune system benefits.”

LTPCA



Created by
local LTPCA
members

Let Them Play CA is a nonprofit, grassroots organization formed in January 2021 with over 61,000 members.

We support and advocate for the return of all youth sports in the State of California.

We hope you will agree with the consistent and powerful evidence and support our student athletes return to play when Governor Newsom and the CDPH approve sports.

Sources (most were accessed February 6-8, 2021 with the final sources accessed on February 10):

- <https://downloads.aap.org/AAP/PDF/AAP%20and%20CHA%20-%20Children%20and%20COVID-19%20State%20Data%20Report%201.28.21%20FINAL.pdf>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/burden-averted/2017-2018.htm#table1>
- <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2020/12/we-now-know-how-much-children-spread-coronavirus/>
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