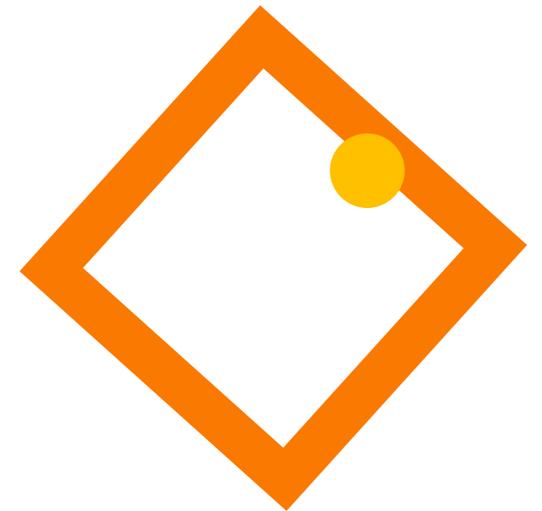
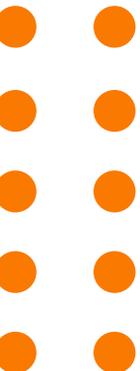


PRACTICE WHAT YOU PREACH:  
COACHING OUR COACHES ON HOW TO HANDLE MENTAL HEALTH EMERGENCIES



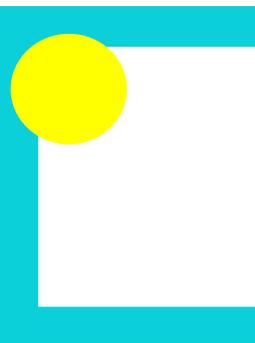
MELISSA LOMAS-DEAFENBAUGH  
PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY & EDUCATION  
MELISSA.LOMASDEAFENBAUGH@PEPPERDINE.EDU





# ABSTRACT :

- The purpose of this psychological intervention is to equip athletic coaches at the competitive, high school, and college levels with the knowledge, training, and tools to effectively handle mental health emergencies involving athletes or other coaches.
- Coaches work directly with the athletes so that they can be the first line of psychological support for athletes and other coaches.
  - This intervention is designed to teach coaches various techniques and methods over a period while they integrate this knowledge into their daily coaching routine.
- Certified sports psychologists are great resources, but performance psychologists will also be necessary for the overall success of the intervention.





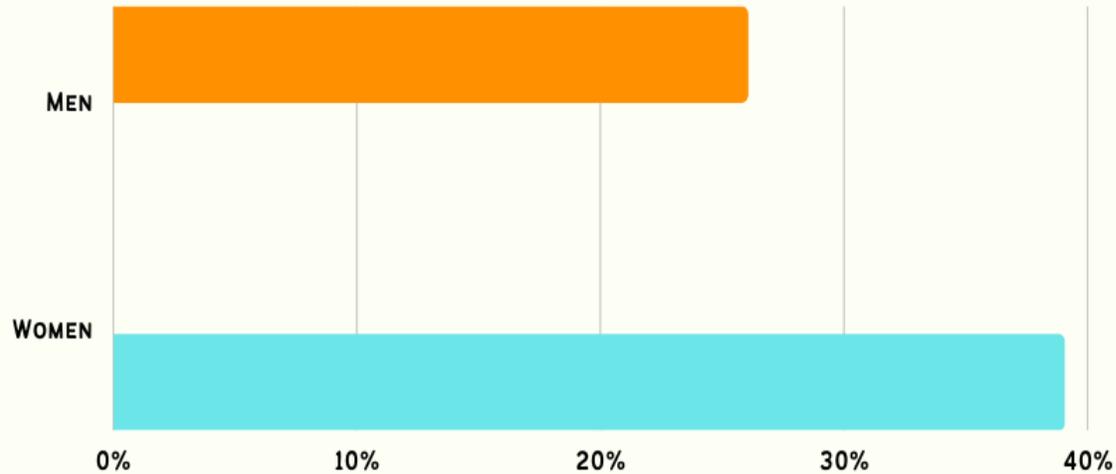
# BACKGROUND & RATIONALE:

The research focuses on the need for mental health support and behavioral intervention training for Divisions I, II, and III NCAA coaches, staff members, and athletes. Research about mental health crisis interventions regarding college athletes and their coaches is available but relatively minimal. Sport psychology is an approach that uses psychological knowledge and skills to address optimal performance and well-being of athletes, developmental and social aspects of sports participation, and systemic issues associated with sports settings and organizations. Interventions specific to sport psychology are designed to assist athletes and other sports participants (e.g., coaches, administrators, parents) from a wide array of settings, levels of competition, and ages, ranging from recreational youth participants to professional and Olympic athletes to master's level performers (APA, 2022). It is imperative to understand the difference between sport psychology and performance psychology and how they can rely on one another to create effective intervention plans for collegiate athletes.

- **Mental health crisis:**
    - Any situation in which a person's behavior puts them at risk of hurting themselves or others and prevents them from being able to care for themselves or function effectively in the community (NAMI, 2018).
    - An athlete or a coach's community consists of their team and teammates.
    - Interventions are essential to effectively address mental health issues with an athlete, multiple athletes, or the coaches.
  - **Interventions:**
    - Generally, any action intended to interfere with and stop or modify a process, as in treatment undertaken to halt, manage, or alter the course of the pathological process of a disease or disorder (APA, n.d.).
- 

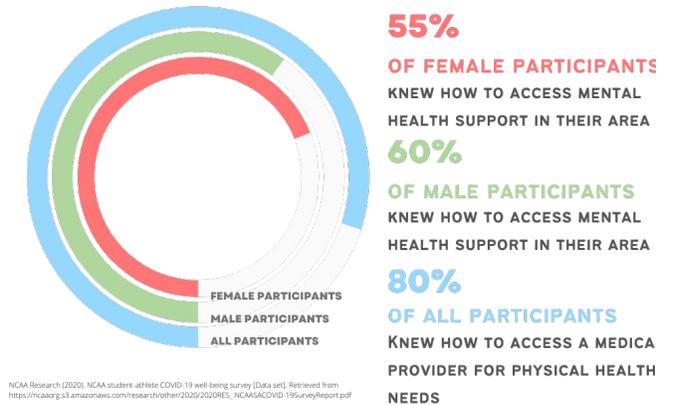
# STATISTICS

## REPORTED FEELING "MENTALLY EXHAUSTED" ALMOST "EVERY DAY" OR "CONSTANTLY"

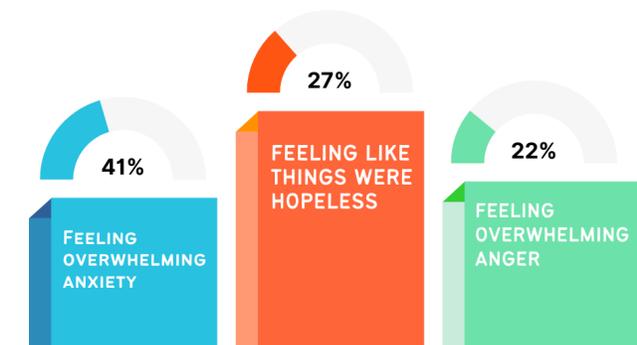


NCAA Research (2020). NCAA student-athlete COVID-19 well-being survey [Data set]. Retrieved from [https://ncaaorg.s3.amazonaws.com/research/other/2020/2020RES\\_NCAASACCOVID-19SurveyReport.pdf](https://ncaaorg.s3.amazonaws.com/research/other/2020/2020RES_NCAASACCOVID-19SurveyReport.pdf)

## ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS VS PHYSICAL HEALTH NEEDS



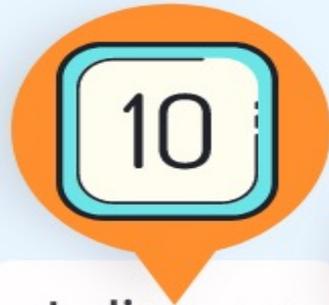
## POSSIBLE SIGNIFICANT FACTORS THAT COULD BE INDICATIVE OF A FUTURE MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS FOR ATHLETES.



# CURRENT LITERATURE

2017

A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF INTERVENTIONS TO INCREASE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING AWARENESS IN ATHLETES, COACHES, AND OFFICIALS WAS PUBLISHED



studies were included from the 1216 studies retrieved.



were comprised of coaches or service providers



was comprised of officials



was comprised of athletes



was comprised of a combination of coaches and athletes

While the review resulted in some positive results, it was concluded that more well-designed controlled intervention studies are required to acquire more accurate and in-depth results.

# PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This intervention plan includes:

- Training our coaches on mental health issues
- How to talk to their athletes
- Behavior modification exercises
- Crisis intervention skills
- Helping them understand triggers and warning signs so they can assess the need for a more skilled clinician to get involved.

*Mental health education and training are necessary for the entire organization, not just the athletes;* therefore, we need to equip head coaches, managers, and owners with these skills so they can help their athletes and their coaching staff.

## TARGET CONSUMERS

Competitive sports organizations, including, but not limited to:

- Competitive youth sports organizations
- Middle school and high school athletes and the coaching staff
- College and university athletes and the coaching staff.

*However, we will focus on NCAA athletics for this study, including Division I, II, and III.*

# PROGRAM COMPONENTS



**GROUP 1**  
Head coach  
Assistant coach



**GROUP 2**  
Student-Athletes

## Study Participants

## Inclusion Criteria

different male and female sports are represented

**50%**

Participants would include a coach(es) from at least 50% of the sports offered at each college or university within Divisions I, II, and III and student-athletes from at least 50% of the sports offered at their college or university. This is necessary for both male and female sports. Both genders must be represented equally.

- Must be the head coach or assistant coach for their respective schools for at least one complete season.
- If both coaches are participating, then both coaches must meet this requirement.
- Must be in good standing with their respective college or university.
- Must note whether they have received previous training related to the mental health of their athletes.
- Must be an athlete that has played one entire season at their respective college or university.
- Must be in good academic standing at their respective college or university
- Must be at least 18 years old

# PROGRAM COMPONENTS



## Exclusion Criteria

- Any coach or student-athlete who intends to transfer to a different university or college or retire within the year.
- Student-athlete who can participate in the survey but will not be current athletes during the intervention training period
- Coaches who can participate in the survey but cannot be present for the intervention training.

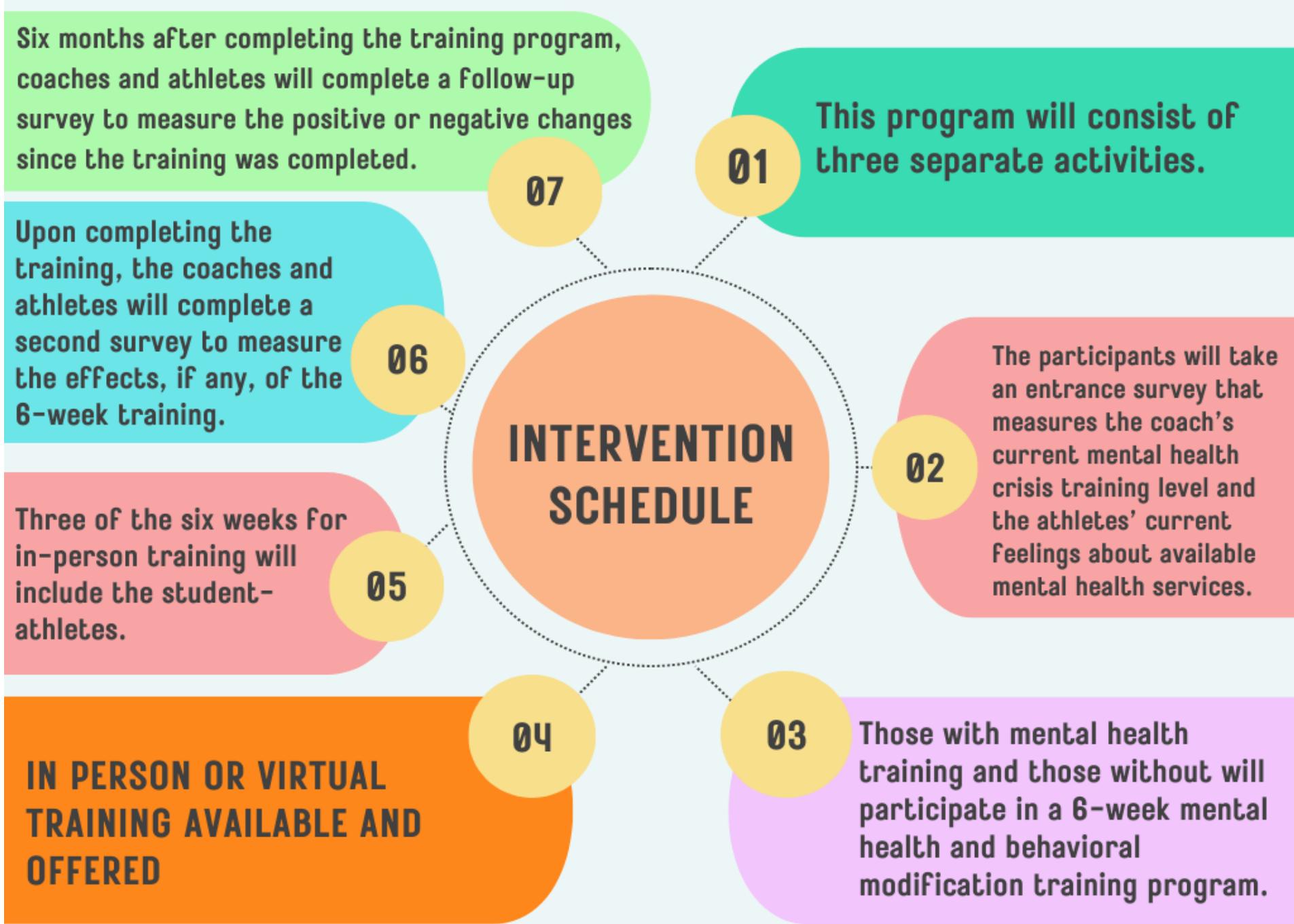
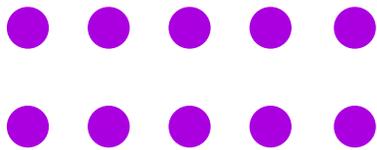
## Sample Recruitment



Once our sample size represents 50% of the male and female sports from each participating college or university, we will open the corresponding surveys to the coaches and student-athletes via a secure link that requires a unique password for each participant.



# PROGRAM SCHEDULE OF INTERVENTIONS



Using the data collected, we can accurately measure the positive and negative effects that professional mental health and behavioral modification training will have on NCAA athletes.



PROGRAM

1

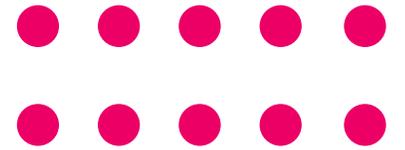
NCAA coaches who complete this 6-week behavior intervention training program will feel more comfortable talking to their athletes, knowing they have been trained to help them.

2

NCAA coaches and staff who complete this 6-week behavior intervention training program will feel more confident noticing signs and symptoms of a mental health crisis.

EVALUATION

PLAN



3

Student-athletes participating in three weeks of behavior intervention training programs will trust their coaches to help them through an emotional issue without judgment.

HYPOTHESIS

4

Student-athletes participating in the behavior intervention training program will feel more comfortable confiding or trusting their coaches to listen to their emotional or behavioral concerns without fear of negative consequences.

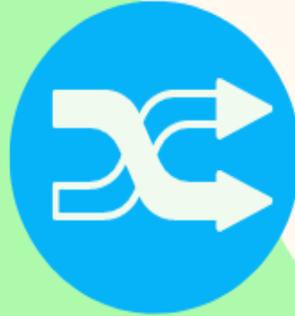




# PROCEDURES



Since the inclusion criteria require at least 50% of male and 50% of female sports to be represented by each participating school a quasi-experimental methodology is necessary. To accurately collect data from the participating colleges or universities, the percentage of teams or sports being represented must be uniform throughout the intervention program.

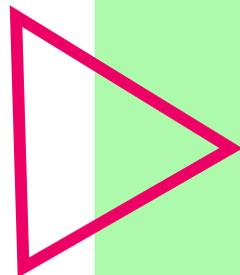


While we could randomly select the colleges and universities, we cannot randomize how many sports are represented from each school.



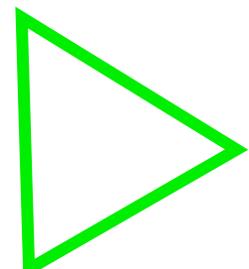
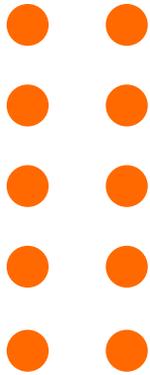
Using surveys at various intervals will allow us to gather data that can be tracked from various implementation points. :

- Before the 6-week training program, surveys or focus groups
- Directly after the 6-week training program
- Six months after the training program is completed





# STAKEHOLDERS



# OBVIOUS & NONOBVIOUS STAKEHOLDERS

## ATHLETES

They stand to gain or lose the most from this program. Suppose we cannot gather sufficient evidence proving that mental health crisis intervention training is necessary. Competitive athletes may still be at risk or even higher risk of suffering a mental health crisis.

**MAIN**

## COACHES COACHING STAFF

Coaches from programs that already implement mental health training are necessary for creating a baseline for the programs that do not offer any training.

**APPARENT**

## Colleges/ Universities' Presidents and Athletic Directors

If the data provides evidence that this training can increase awareness, intervention rates, and use of available services, then these organizations can use that to recruit athletes.

**SIGNIFICANT**

## PARENTS

If the data supports the program, parents can trust these coaches to understand their child, not only as an athlete but as a human being.

**LESS  
OBVIOUS**