

PANTHER COMMITTED



LIVE A LIFE OF EXCELLENCE

PROGRAM HISTORY

The Athlete Committed program was created in response to a tragic incident that occurred in 2009 involving local high school student athletes and underage drinking. In the aftermath, community leaders, coaches, and school officials came together to develop a proactive solution to prevent similar tragedies. Butte County Behavioral Health Prevention Unit partnered with Chico Unified School District in 2010 on the implementation of the Athlete Committed Program at Chico High School and Pleasant Valley High School, in an effort to address the risks associated with youth substance use.

The Athlete Committed Program is a comprehensive prevention program based off of the national program *Life of an Athlete* - developed by John Underwood. John's expertise and training reaches far beyond high school athletic programs. A former NCAA All-American, International-level distance runner and World Masters Champion, John has coached or advised more than two dozen Olympians including many World and Olympic Champions, as well as numerous college and professional athletic teams. He holds three International Olympic Solidarity diplomas for coaching and has been a crusader for drug-free sport at all levels.

"We know that positive lifestyles including getting enough sleep, choosing nutritious foods and abstaining from the misuse of substances have a great impact on wellness and quality of life. Life of an Athlete Human Performance Project aims to help educators, parents and community members provide a safe and healthy school climate where youth are supported in making positive lifestyle choices every day. Through the Life of an Athlete program, youth leaders are empowered to influence their school climate by holding themselves and their teammates to high standards for their behavior. Life of an Athlete Human Performance Project has been implemented by more than 700 colleges and universities and thousands of schools in thirty-nine states. This innovative program is designed to create culture change within athletic populations through policy change and peer and adult mentorship, ultimately positively impacting the community as a whole. The ultimate goal is to affect an entire community through education-based athletics."

John Underwood
Human Performance Project - Life of An Athlete





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PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Code of Conduct: A comprehensive code includes clear character-based expectations of student athletes, as well as clear consequences to any code violation.

Mandatory Parent/Athlete Code Meetings: This meeting provides the opportunity to review the elements of the code of conduct and educate the athletes and parents/guardians on the impact of substance use (alcohol, tobacco and other drugs), sleep, nutrition, training/recovery, stress/mental health, stigma and harassment on peak performance.

Team Meetings/Break-Out Sessions: Provides space to ensure the coach personalizes the message, teammates hold each other accountable to the team goal, and expectations for participation are reinforced. This includes choosing and building strong team leaders and creating a culture of high expectations among teammates.

Athlete Leader Training: Training a core group of athletes to be "experts" in the Athlete Committed Program content. These athletes provide cross-age presentations, Code Night presentations, and trainings at conferences.

Athlete Committed Club Meetings: Athlete Committed hosts weekly lunchtime meetings to educate student athletes on important topics such as nutrition, sleep, training, recovery, mental health, character, and substance use prevention. These meetings also include planning for athletic competitions, post-game events, and weekend activities—all while promoting a positive team culture and attitude.

Activities and Events: Throughout the year, Athlete Committed hosts a variety of events designed to promote healthy competition, positive team culture, and substance-free fun. Activities include dodgeball competitions, capture the flag games, 3-on-3 basketball tournaments, halftime challenges, and community service opportunities. These events provide student-athletes with fun, safe, and meaningful ways to connect with one another.

Pre/Post Athlete Evaluation: Athletes complete Pre- and Post-Surveys, administered before and after the season. This survey provides the opportunity to measure perception, attitude and beliefs among athletes.

ENCOURAGE YOUR STUDENT TO JOIN US EVERY TUESDAY AT LUNCH IN ROOM J-218 ON THE CHICO HIGH SCHOOL CAMPUS. THIS CLUB IS A VALUABLE OPPORTUNITY FOR ATHLETES TO CONNECT WITH LIKE-MINDED PEERS AND DEEPEN THEIR COMMITMENT TO THEIR SPORT, THEIR TEAM, AND THEMSELVES.



IF YOU CHOOSE TO BECOME AN ATHLETE, YOU SHOULD LIVE THE LIFE OF AN ATHLETE. WAKE UP EVERY DAY WITH A PURPOSE OF WORKING TOWARD YOUR GOAL. TRAIN YOUR MIND, YOUR BODY AND YOUR SPIRIT, SO THAT WHEN YOUR FINEST DAY COMES, YOU CAN KNOW THAT YOU HAVE DONE ALL THAT IS POSSIBLE TO PREPARE AND BE AT YOUR BEST.

CHOOSE YOUR DESTINY: TAKE OWNERSHIP

How important is your athletic career? Are you focused? Are you doing anything that prevents you from achieving your goals?

Choose your destiny—A destiny of excellence. The more you think about it, talk about it and write about it, the more you increase the chance of it happening.

Dedication really is worth its weight in Gold (Silver and Bronze too).

Surround yourself with positive people, places and things. Refuse to associate with any person, place or thing that keeps you from your goals. There is more of a chance you will drink or smoke if you are hanging out with people who are drinking and smoking.

BOTTOM LINE: MAKE IT YOUR CHOICE

Do not let other people choose if or when you will drink alcohol. Make that choice for yourself. Choose a life of excellence and a life of peak performance; don't let alcohol keep you from reaching your full potential. Your team is behind you, your school is behind you and your community is behind you! If athletes and teams do not unite to eliminate underage drinking, the result may be lost dreams, lost futures, lost hope and lost lives. The success of your entire athletic career will depend on it... What have you agreed to?

We respect people and programs for more than the fact that they win games, rather that they do everything in a way that has class and respect. That sets them apart from others. We admire EXCELLENCE! Your character is reflected most by whom you choose to be with. Choosing not to drink isn't enough—make the choice not to be in the presence of youth who are drinking.

BE A GOOD ROLE MODEL FOR YOUNGER ATHLETES—THEY WATCH YOU AND WAIT FOR THE DAY TO WEAR YOUR JERSEY. TEACH THEM HOW TO BE ATHLETE COMMITTED AND A CHAMPION.

SUBSTANCE USE & PERFORMANCE

Chemical health is crucial for optimal performance. Tobacco/vaping, drugs and alcohol have short- and long-term effects that can interfere with your ability to live your most optimal life. Teen brains are in a critical phase of development, and the misuse of chemicals can increase the risk of developing a substance-use disorder as adults.

Substance use can impair academic and sport performance, including impaired reaction times. For example, alcohol reduces performance potential by as much as 15–30% in high school athletes.

Athletes who drink are twice as likely to become injured as non-drinkers and alcohol decreases the protein synthesis for muscle fiber repair.

Alcohol greatly increases the release of cortisol (the stress hormone) and disturbs REM sleep time, reducing the body's recovery ability.

Alcohol increases the time for recovery of androgenic training hormones (up to 96 hours –4 days).

Substances impact our ability to regulate and control emotions, which may impact our mental health and relationships.

PRIORITIZE SLEEP

Sleep is one of the most significant predictors in performance—athletically, academically and behaviorally.

With 10 hours of sleep per night, athletes will experience significant improvements in performance—they will perform quicker, more accurately and with better focus.

Blue light (from cell phones, computers, and televisions) significantly impacts the brain's ability to transition from wake state to sleep.

Allow two hours free from electronics prior to bedtime.

The average amount of sleep for young people is approximately 6 hours and 20 minutes per night—while young people really need 9–10 hours of sleep per night to function at full capacity.



ONE NIGHT OF DRINKING WILL
ERASE 2 WEEKS OF TRAINING
EFFECT



STRESS & WELLNESS

Athletes are dealing with a great deal of stress to perform in competition, in school, and in social situations which can increase risk of substance use/mental health symptoms. Stress and mental health issues need to be identified early to ensure supportive services are made available.

Stress is the body's physical or psychological response to events like a big test or an injury. It's a natural reaction that can be both helpful and harmful—boosting focus and alertness, but also disrupting sleep, weakening the immune system, and affecting overall health. Our bodies manage stress physically, mentally, and through our actions.

Our moods can be a constant roller coaster of positive and negative feelings and emotions. Taking the time to understand and reflect on how you are feeling at any given moment and the reaction that it brings up is important. Your mood and mindset are major factors in your ability to perform optimally.

Self-awareness is the ability to know and understand your own body, emotions, and surroundings. This understanding enhances your mood and mindset and gives you the ability to navigate your thoughts, feelings, and attitudes in any circumstance. Self-awareness is a practice and will help you become more resilient and persistent.



CHARACTER

Character reflects how you treat people. Are you fair, thoughtful, sensitive, respectful and polite?

Encouraging young people to do the right thing— even when nobody is watching.

Recognizing that it is an honor and a privilege to play sports in high school.

Being courageous enough to stand up to athletes with negative behaviors and attitudes.

Being a dependable leader in all areas of life— school attendance, getting to practice on time, and following through with your commitments.

Being a positive role model through good citizenship, commitment to a healthy lifestyle, positive athletic and school behavior and setting a good example for others.

NUTRITION & PERFORMANCE

PRE-COMPETITION: For an athlete to perform at their best, it is important to eat a high-carb, moderate protein, low-fat meal three hours before training or competing, followed by a snack every hour.

DURING COMPETITION: Athletes lose 10% of their overall performance for every 2% they are dehydrated. Athletes must stay hydrated during competitions. Preventing dehydration is a key to sustained performance, especially when competing for long periods of time and in multiple events in a day. During competition, athletes should stay hydrated with at least 10 oz. of a water/sports drink mix in a 50/50 ratio.

POST-COMPETITION: Nutritional recovery should occur immediately after competition. Waiting after training to take in nutrients causes a lost training effect. When a workout is done, training is not done. Until an athlete recovers from the stress of training, their muscles cannot adapt properly.

- Take in 4-6 oz. of a sports drink (glucose mixed with water in a 50/50 ratio). This will release insulin to refuel depleted muscles.
- Take in fast protein (liquid form) such as protein drink, protein shakes, or yogurt. It is easier for the body to use liquid forms of protein than solid forms such as a protein bar.
- Take in 75g of carbohydrates. This is important to prevent muscle damage.
- Within one hour eat a nutritional meal. The plate should be filled 1/2 with fruits or vegetables, 1/4 with lean protein, and 1/4 with complex carbohydrates.

BULLYING & HARASSMENT

Athletes are expected to show respect, sportsmanship, fairness and self-control. Athletes have a responsibility to not only ensure that they do not engage in any bullying or harassment, but also to ensure that they are not a silent bystander. They must be willing to do the right thing always. And, to look out for others who may need their support. Athletes must possess high levels of communication and be willing to confront any behaviors of concern – including bullying, verbal or physical harassment, written harassment or hazing type behavior.



PARENTS ARE PREVENTION

One of the most influential factors during a child's adolescence is maintaining a strong, open relationship with a parent. When parents create supportive and nurturing environments, children make better decisions. Though it may not always seem like it, children really hear their parents' concerns, which is why it's important that parents discuss the risks of using alcohol and other drugs.

About 10 percent of 12-year-olds say they have tried alcohol, but by age 15, that number jumps to 50 percent. Additionally, by the time they are seniors, almost 70 percent of high school students will have tried alcohol, half will have taken an illegal drug, and more than 20 percent will have used a prescription drug for a nonmedical purpose. The sooner you talk to your children about alcohol and other drugs, the greater chance you have of influencing their decisions about drinking and substance use.



Show you care about your child's happiness and well-being. Young people are more likely to listen when they know you're on their side. Try to reinforce why you don't want your child to drink—not just because you say so, but because you want your child to be happy and safe. The conversation will go a lot better if you're working with, and not against, your child.

Show you're a good source of information about alcohol. You want your child to be making informed decisions about drinking, with reliable information about its dangers. You don't want your child to be learning about alcohol from friends, the internet, or the media—you want to establish yourself as a trustworthy source of information.

Build your child's skills and strategies for avoiding underage drinking. Even if your child doesn't want to drink, peer pressure is a powerful thing. It could be tempting to drink just to avoid looking uncool. To prepare your child to resist peer pressure, you'll need to build skills and practice them.



TALKING TO TEENS ABOUT ALCOHOL

Show you disapprove of underage drinking.

Over 80% of young people ages 10-18 say their parents are the leading influence on their decision to drink or not drink. So they really are listening, and it's important that you send a clear and strong message.

Show you're paying attention and you'll notice if your child drinks. You want to show you're keeping an eye on your child, because young people are more likely to drink if they think no one will notice. There are many subtle ways to do this without prying.



"Talk. They Hear You."®

Underage Drinking Campaign

Learn more about the risks and dangers of underage drinking and other drug use by visiting

www.talktheyhearyou.samhsa.gov

THE PREVENTION UNIT

The Prevention Unit (Butte County Behavioral Health) coordinates with Pleasant Valley and Chico High Schools to facilitate annual Fall, Winter and Spring Code Nights for student athletes and their parents and supports the implementation of an annual workshop for coaching staff. In addition, the Prevention Unit also facilitates weekly Athlete Committed (club) meetings on each campus, hosts monthly pro-social events, creates a variety of student athlete leadership opportunities throughout the year, hosts the annual Athlete Committed Photoshoot for student-athlete representatives and provides cross-age presentations to junior high students.

The Prevention Unit also provides Brief Intervention sessions to athletes facing substance use code violations as a component of the restorative justice model. Brief Intervention is limited to 3 sessions and provides opportunity for staff to provide education, engage students to explore motivation to change behaviors and provide referrals to additional supports as needed. Brief Intervention is an evidence-based strategy proven effective at promoting positive health outcomes.

For more information about Athlete Committed and/or additional programming provided by the Prevention Unit, please give our Chico office a call 530-891-2891 or visit our website at www.butteyouthnow.org.

ANNUAL PHOTOSHOOT

We invite coaches to nominate student-athletes to be featured in our annual Athlete Committed photoshoot. These athletes should uphold the core values of the program and serve as positive role models on and off the field. The selected student athletes will be highlighted in Athlete Committed posters, toolkits, social media, and other media materials. They will represent the spirit of the program to their peers, school community, and incoming students.





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NCAA Substance Misuse
Prevention Toolkit



Butte Youth Now Website



"Tips for Teens" Fact
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FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL (530) 891-2891

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WWW.BUTTEYOUTHNOW.ORG

