



WHITE PAPER

Why connecting athletes with each other across campuses is an effective support model for mental health and wellness

Abstract

This paper explores the use of technology as a tool to connect student athletes with one another, anonymously, across campuses to help improve their mental health and wellness. It discusses the many advantages of this approach, including improved communication, increased access to resources, and the ability to form meaningful connections with other athletes. It also examines the potential drawbacks of the approach, such as privacy concerns and the potential for negative interactions. Lastly, it provides recommendations for how to effectively support student athletes' mental health and wellness using this approach.

Introduction

Student athletes are often in a unique position. On one hand, they are expected to maintain their grades and academic performance, while on the other hand they are expected to excel in their sport. This combination of demands can put a lot of strain on student athletes, and can lead to physical, emotional, and mental health issues. In order to support student athletes' mental health and wellness, it is important to provide them with access to resources and support from other athletes. One way to accomplish this is to connect student athletes with each other across campuses. By using technology, student athletes can easily communicate with and form relationships with other athletes from different universities. This can be beneficial for many reasons.

Access to More Diverse Community Provides Benefit

Connecting college athletes across campuses offers a number of benefits when it comes to mental health and wellness. First and foremost, it allows athletes to have access to a larger network of support. Athletes who are in different programs across different schools may have different experiences and can provide each other with different perspectives on their struggles and successes. It also provides a network in which finding common ground is expanded. Student athletes may have different backgrounds, life experiences, and levels of comfort in discussing mental health. Access to a larger and highly diverse network of support can be invaluable to an athlete's mental health and wellness.

Reducing Isolation and Aloneness

Another benefit of connecting athletes across campuses is that it can help to reduce the sense of isolation that many athletes feel. College athletes often feel like they are alone in their struggles and that no one else could possibly be experiencing their same challenges, or understands what they are going through. Connecting athletes across campuses can help to alleviate this feeling of isolation by providing them with a larger support system. In addition, connecting college athletes across campuses can help to create a sense of community among athletes.

Potential Drawbacks and Challenges

There are certainly potential drawbacks to a peer community support model.

1. Privacy concerns: Today's tech savvy students want their privacy protected. Student athletes may be hesitant to share personal information in a group setting, especially if they do not feel the group is confidential.
2. Lack of trust: Trust can be difficult to build amongst group members, especially for those who may not be comfortable opening up to a group of strangers.
3. Risk of negative interactions: Especially in a group setting, there is a risk of some members being overly critical, judgmental, or unsupportive towards others.

4. Difficulty finding common ground: Student athletes may have different backgrounds, life experiences, and levels of comfort in discussing mental health, which could lead to difficulty finding common ground.

CONCLUSIONS

NDUR overcomes all of these challenges with conversations that are 100% anonymous, search and match filters to find other athletes with exactly the same experiences and challenges, and empowers student athletes to maintain a safe, secure and private environment.

To learn more about the NDUR community is changing the game in mental health and wellness support for student athletes, email our President and Chief Client Officer, Daphne Faldi: daphne.faldi@ndurforathletes.health

www.ndurforathletes.health