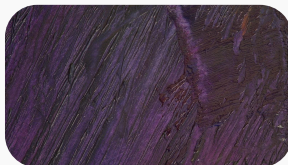
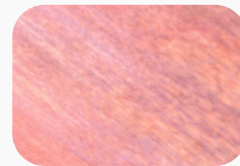


EFFECTIVE APPROACHES TO RECRUITING FEMALE STUDENT-ATHLETES



MEET THE TEAM



DENA
SCOTT, CMAA

FCTA Program Director
Texas A&M University

Former Athletic Director at
Fort Bend ISD

15 MS

12 HS

14,000 student athletes
500 coaches



JOLENE
FUGATE, CMAA

West Catholic Athletic League
Commissioner

Former Athletic Director at
Valley Christian HS, SJ



CELEBRATING WINS: LARGE OR SMALL



Participation in High School Sports Hits Record High in 2024-2025

3,539,596

"It is wonderful to see the interest in high school sports reach new heights," said Dr. Karissa Niehoff, CEO of the NFHS. "The immense value of high school sports is reflected in these impressive numbers. As high school students have consistently demonstrated their desire to play with their peers and represent their schools and community, state and school administrators have stepped up to offer more participation opportunities to meet that demand."

TEN MOST POPULAR GIRLS PROGRAMS

Schools		Participants	
Basketball	18,208	1. Track and Field – Outdoor	513,808
Track and Field – Outdoor	17,373	2. Volleyball	492,799
Volleyball	17,027	3. Soccer	393,048
Cross Country	15,836	4. Basketball	356,240
Softball – Fast Pitch	15,726	5. Softball – Fast Pitch	338,315
Soccer	12,516	6. Competitive Spirit	206,262
Tennis	12,175	7. Tennis	204,721
Golf	11,116	8. Cross Country	191,733
Competitive Spirit	8,465	9. Swimming & Diving	138,303
Swimming & Diving	8,357	10. Lacrosse	99,292

Data from '24-'25 school year

One of the Fastest Growing Girls Sports:

Girls Flag Football

FLAG FOOTBALL AS AN EMERGING SPORT

This fall the NCAA recommended that flag football for women be considered for inclusion in the Emerging Sports for Women program. If it gets approved, flag football would be very close to gaining NCAA Championship status, which would allow colleges and universities to launch official college flag football programs. This would include scholarship offers, media and NIL deals, and all of the other things that come with being an official college women's sport.

COLLEGE TEAMS ALREADY EXIST

Across the nation, there are already a lot of women's flag football teams, especially at the NAIA (who approved it in 2021) and NJCAA (approved in 2023) levels. These teams, according to NFLFlag.com, "are thriving, proving there's real demand at the collegiate level." There are currently 65 colleges that are already sponsoring flag football at the club or varsity level, with at least 20 more launching programs this spring. And of course, flag football is one of the most popular intramural sports at universities across the nation.

WHAT THIS MEANS

All three collegiate divisions must approve the proposal for it to move forward, it would be shocking if they didn't approve the recommendation, considering the momentum women's flag football has. A pipeline will be necessary to support a pro league, so the NFL has a vested interest in encouraging the NCAA to adopt the sport for women. For a sport to be considered for full championship status, at least 40 schools must sponsor it at a varsity level.



Sport	State	Sch.	Particip.
Flag Football	Alabama	112	1,596
	Alaska	14	416
	Arizona	101	3,003
	Arkansas	2	18
	California	697	19,921
	Colorado	71	1,972
	District of Columbia	15	235
	Florida	449	10,924
	Georgia	261	7,084
	Hawaii	60	1,021
	Illinois	199	4,022
	Maryland	52	1,266
	Michigan	43	946
	Mississippi	12	300
	Nevada	45	1,866
	New Jersey	165	4,184
	New York	214	5,048
	North Carolina	100	2,200
	Tennessee	120	2,786
	Utah	4	39

Data from '24-'25 school year

One of the Fastest Growing Girls Sports - Flag Football



TX: 200+ high schools will be participating this season. Partnership with the NFL and the Houston Texans and Dallas Cowboys made it a successful season. Will be sponsoring a state championship tournament.

CA: 793 high schools participated & 7 out of 10 CIF sections hosted sectional playoffs.



Did you know that girls face extra pressures to leave sport?

- 70% of girls say they don't feel they belong in sport due to gender stereotypes
- One in three girls report low confidence holds them back
- Only about 40–57% of girls report positive experiences in sport
- 63% of girls say they don't see enough female coaches or role models

KEY FACTORS TO FEMALE SPORTS PARTICIPATION

Lack of access



Why they drop out:

Girls have 1.2 million fewer opportunities to play high school sports than boys have.



Why they need to stay in:

Through sports, girls learn important life skills such as teamwork, leadership and confidence.

Safety & Transportation



Why they drop out:

Sports require a place to participate.



Why they need to stay in:

Girls active in sports during adolescence and young adulthood are 20% less likely to get breast cancer later in life.

Social stigma



Why they drop out:

Despite recent progress, discrimination of female athletes persists.



Why they need to stay in:

Sports are an asset to American families, fostering communication and trust between parents and children.



Why they need to stay in:

Girls' involvement with sports is related to higher levels of family satisfaction, in both single-parent and dual-parent families.



Why they drop out:

School sports budgets are being slashed every day, all across the country.

Cost

Decreased quality of experience



Why they drop out:

As girls grow up, the quality level of their sports experience may decline.



Why they need to stay in:

More than three-quarters of working women feel that sports participation helps enhance their self-image.



Why they need to stay in:

High school female athletes have more positive body images than non-athletes.



Why they drop out:

Today's girls are bombarded with images of external beauty, not those of confident, strong female athletic role models.

Lack of positive role models

FACTORS IMPACTING PARTICIPATION



Access



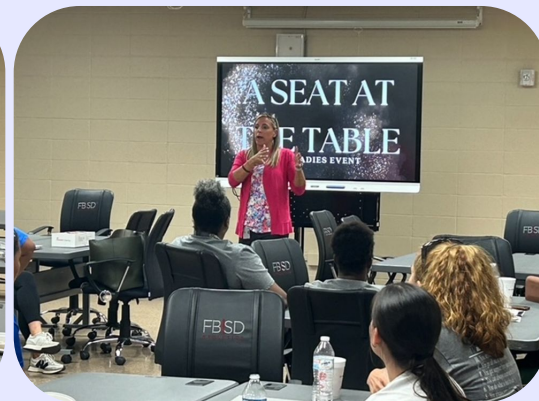
Support &
Cultural Factors



Coaching



Texas High School Coaches Association



“Seat at the Table” is a first-of-its-kind gathering designed specifically for women in the coaching profession, offering attendees the chance to connect with other coaches, share personal experiences, and participate in thought-provoking discussions around leadership, coaching, and career development.

SYSTEMIC AND SCHOOL-LEVEL SOLUTIONS



Ensure Equal
Opportunities and
Resources



Recruit and Train
Female
Coaches/Mentors



Offer Diverse Program
Options

GROWING THE PROFESSION OF COACHING



Student Coaching Seminars – **Short Clip**

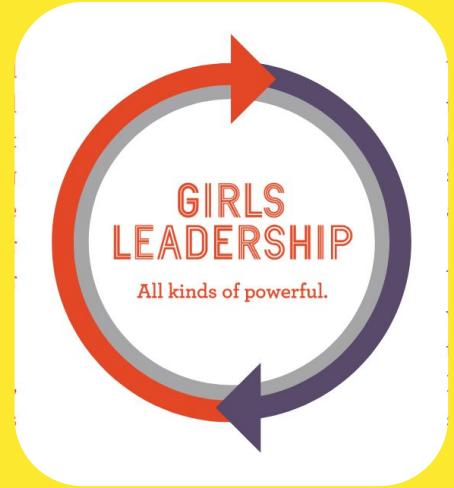
SYSTEMIC AND SCHOOL-LEVEL SOLUTIONS



Culturally Informed
Outreach



Implement Inclusive
Policies



Listen and Let HER
Lead!

STUDENT VOICE



Student Leadership Summit

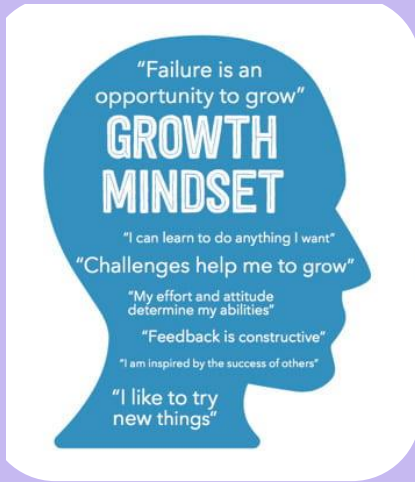


Zoe – National
Leadership
Summit

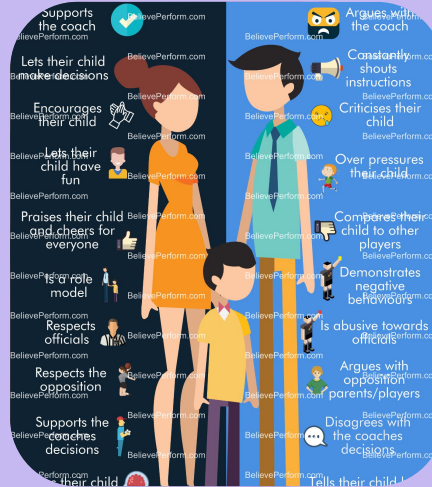


SALC meetings

INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY LEVEL SOLUTIONS



Foster a Positive Environment



Engage Parents and Caregivers



Provide Mentorship and Role Models

INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY LEVEL SOLUTIONS



Address the “Tough Stuff”



Build a Supportive Network



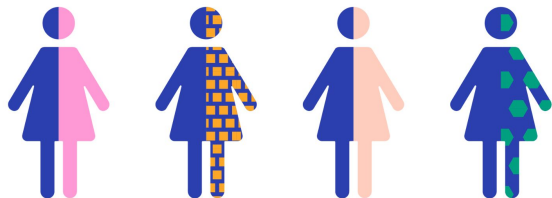
Listen and Let HER Lead!

GIRLS DROP OUT OF SPORTS AT

1.5x

THE RATE THAT BOYS DO BY AGE 14.

BY AGE 17, MORE THAN HALF OF GIRLS
WILL QUIT PLAYING SPORTS ALTOGETHER.

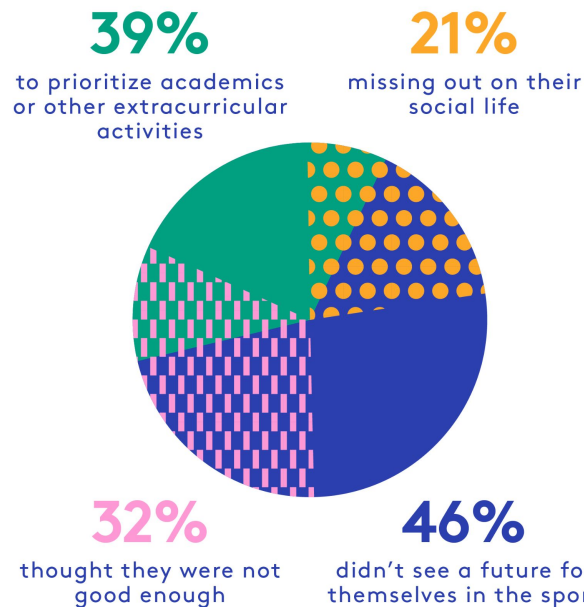


Q & A TIME

96%

OF FEMALE C-SUITE
EXECUTIVES PARTICIPATED
IN SPORTS AS TEENAGERS.

GIRLS' REASONS FOR DROPPING OUT



THANK
YOU!

Want to set girls up for success?
Keep them interested in high school
athletics!

Dena Scott

Dena.scott07@tamu.edu

832-541-6146

Jolene Fugate

jfugate@wcalsports.org

408-910-9299