



What Is The Life Of An Athlete (LoA) Program?

- ❖ Life of an Athlete was created by John Underwood, a former Olympic trainer. It has been adopted in many schools across the country.
- ❖ The goal is to increase healthy lifestyles among youth, including the choice not to misuse alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.
- ❖ It is a school-based program that primarily targets student athletes as the entry point to change norms and create a positive school climate based on increasing healthy lifestyle choices.
- ❖ The curriculum teaches about adequate sleep, nutrition and abstinence from drugs and alcohol; a *whole health approach*.
- ❖ Information is presented to give youth increased knowledge about how health choices affect their bodies, and more specifically, their athletic performance.
- ❖ In New Hampshire, the program is coordinated by the NH Interscholastic Athletic Association and has been implemented in schools across the state since the fall of 2013.

The program is made up of **five components**, that when implemented together, will help reach the goal.

- **Codes of Conduct:** To make revisions to the student codes of conduct and create plans for enforcement which include the principles of Restorative Justice.
- **Pre-Season Meetings:** To involve parents and students in discussion of conditions for involvement with the program, expectations, philosophy, impact of alcohol and other drug use on performance and what it means to be an athlete.
- **Training for Coaches:** To engage coaches in understanding and promoting positive lifestyle choices (including alcohol and other drugs) amongst athletes. Includes workshops on how to send a message to the team and how to use student leaders to monitor team dynamics.
- **Youth Leadership:** To assist the coach in improving athletic performance and team unity through the promotion of healthy lifestyle choices among teammates.
- **Stakeholder Unity:** To create positive social norms across the community using media and marketing materials with key messages.

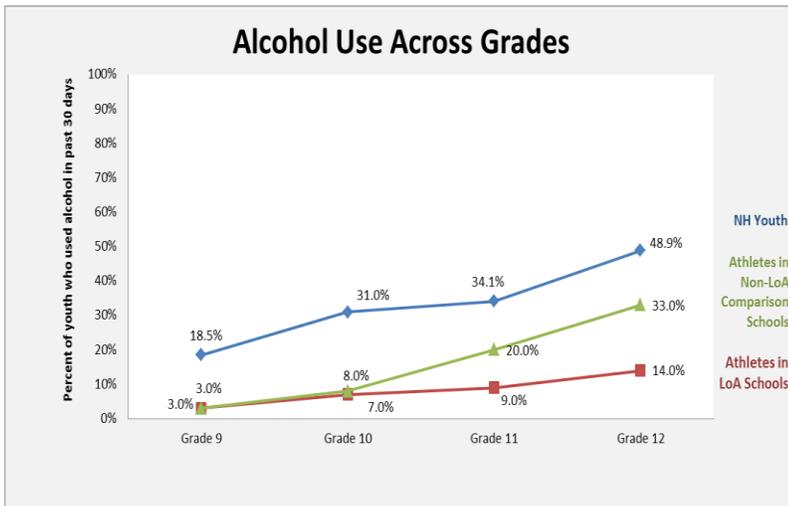


What Did We Find Out About The Outcomes Of The Program?

Statewide outcomes include:

- ❖ 44 schools implementing
- ❖ 3154 youth trained
- ❖ 440 coaches were trained
- ❖ Schools are adapting LoA to fit their unique school culture and spreading the program message beyond athletics.

Statistically significant *differences were shown in perceptions, knowledge and behavior* among youth in LoA programs compared to youth not in LoA programs.



For example, significantly **more youth in LoA programs compared to those not in LoA programs reported:**

- ❖ Alcohol use impacts training and can lead to injury
- ❖ Youth leaders avoid alcohol, tobacco and other drug use and they help team mates to also do so
- ❖ They avoid substances in order to maximize performance
- ❖ They do not use alcohol, tobacco or marijuana

Examples of what high school students from one school have done after a LoA training:

- ✓ Adapted the LoA training to conduct with middle school students as a way to mentor younger athletes on the importance of healthy choices.
- ✓ Created a birthday party fundraiser to raise funds which were used to support healthy team bonding activities.
- ✓ Used social media to distribute positive messages and hold healthy competitions such as recognition for the best workout of the week.
- ✓ Teammates offered a new student alternatives for having fun when she started posting information about partying.

“In Littleton we’ve made Life of an Athlete our own by changing it to “Life of a Crusader” and spreading the messages across the whole school.”
~ Greg Fillion, Athletic