

## Sudden Cardiac Arrest and Lindsay's Law Information for the Youth Athlete and Parent/Guardian



- **Lindsay's Law** is about Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) in youth athletes. This law went into effect in 2017. SCA is the leading cause of death in student athletes 19 years of age or younger. SCA occurs when the heart suddenly and unexpectedly stops beating. This cuts off blood flow to the brain and other vital organs. SCA is fatal if not treated immediately.
- "Youth" covered under Lindsay's Law are all athletes 19 years of age or younger that wish to practice for or compete in athletic activities organized by a school or youth sports organization.
- Lindsay's Law applies to all public and private schools and all youth sports organizations for athletes aged 19 years or younger whether or not they pay a fee to participate or are sponsored by a business or nonprofit. This includes:
  - 1) All athletic activities including interscholastic athletics, any athletic contest or competition sponsored by or associated with a school
  - 2) All cheerleading, club sports and school affiliated organizations including noncompetitive cheerleading
  - 3) All practices, interschool practices and scrimmages
- Any of these things may cause SCA:
  - 1) Structural heart disease. This may or may not be present from birth
  - 2) Electrical heart disease. This is a problem with the heart's electrical system that controls the heartbeat
  - 3) Situational causes. These may be people with completely normal hearts who are either are hit in the chest or develop a heart infection
- **Warning signs** in your family that you or your youth athlete may be at high risk of SCA:
  - o A blood relative who suddenly and unexpectedly dies before age 50
  - o Any of the following conditions: cardiomyopathy, long QT syndrome, Marfan syndrome, or other rhythm problems of the heart
- **Warning signs** of SCA. If any of these things happen with exercise, see your health care professional:
  - Chest pain/discomfort
  - Unexplained fainting/near fainting or dizziness
  - Unexplained tiredness, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Unusually fast or racing heart beats
- The youth athlete who faints or passes out before, during, or after an athletic activity **MUST** be removed from the activity. Before returning to the activity, the youth athlete must be seen by a health care professional and cleared in writing.
- If the youth athlete's biological parent, sibling or child has had a SCA, then the youth athlete must be removed from activity. Before returning to the activity, the youth athlete must be seen by a health care professional and cleared in writing.
- Any young athlete with any of these warning signs cannot participate in practices, interschool practices, scrimmages or competition until cleared by a health care professional.

- Other reasons to be seen by a healthcare professional would be a heart murmur, high blood pressure, or prior heart evaluation by a physician.
- Lindsay's Law lists the health care professionals who may evaluate and clear youth athletes. They are a physician (MD or DO), a certified nurse practitioner, a clinical nurse specialist or certified nurse midwife. For school athletes, a physician's assistant or licensed athletic trainer may also clear a student. That person may refer the youth and family to another health care provider for further evaluation. Clearance must be provided in writing to the school or sports official before the athlete can return to the activity.
- Despite everyone's best efforts, sometimes a young athlete will experience SCA. If you have had CPR training, you may know the term "Chain of Survival." The Chain of Survival helps anyone survive SCA.
- Using an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) can save the life of a child with SCA. Depending on where a young athlete is during an activity, there may or may not be an AED close by. Many, but not all, schools have AEDs. The AEDs may be near the athletic facilities, or they may be close to the school office. Look around at a sporting event to see if you see one. If you are involved in community sports, look around to see if there is an AED nearby.
- If you witness a person experiencing a SCA: First, remain calm. Follow the links in the **Chain of Survival**:
  - ❖ Link 1: Early recognition
    - Assess child for responsiveness. Does the child answer if you call his/her name?
    - If no, then attempt to assess pulse. If no pulse is felt or if you are unsure, call for help "someone dial 911"
  - ❖ Link 2: Early CPR
    - Begin CPR immediately
  - ❖ Link 3: Early defibrillation (which is the use of an AED)
    - If an AED is available, send someone to get it immediately. Turn it on, attach it to the child and follow the instructions
    - If an AED is not available, continue CPR until EMS arrives
  - ❖ Link 4: Early advanced life support and cardiovascular care
    - Continue CPR until EMS arrives
- Lindsay's Law requires both the youth athlete and parent/guardian to acknowledge receipt of information about Sudden Cardiac Arrest by signing a form.

# Sudden Cardiac Arrest and Lindsay's Law Parent/Athlete Signature Form



**What is Lindsay's Law?** Lindsay's Law is about Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) in youth athletes. It covers all athletes 19 years or younger who practice for or compete in athletic activities. Activities may be organized by a school or youth sports organization.

**Which youth athletic activities are included in Lindsay's law?**

- Athletics at all schools in Ohio (public and non-public)
- Any athletic contest or competition sponsored by or associated with a school
- All interscholastic athletics, including all practices, interschool practices and scrimmages
- All youth sports organizations
- All cheerleading and club sports, including noncompetitive cheerleading

**What is SCA?** SCA is when the heart stops beating suddenly and unexpectedly. This cuts off blood flow to the brain and other vital organs. People with SCA will die if not treated immediately. SCA can be caused by 1) a structural issue with the heart, OR 2) a heart electrical problem which controls the heartbeat, OR 3) a situation such as a person who is hit in the chest or a gets a heart infection.

**What is a warning sign for SCA?** If a family member died suddenly before age 50, or a family member has cardiomyopathy, long QT syndrome, Marfan syndrome or other rhythm problems of the heart.

**What symptoms are a warning sign of SCA?** A young athlete may have these things with exercise:

- Chest pain/discomfort
- Unexplained fainting/near fainting or dizziness
- Unexplained tiredness, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Unusually fast or racing heart beats

**What happens if an athlete experiences syncope or fainting before, during or after a practice, scrimmage, or competitive play?** The coach MUST remove the youth athlete from activity immediately. The youth athlete MUST be seen and cleared by a health care provider before returning to activity. This written clearance must be shared with a school or sports official.

**What happens if an athlete experiences any other warning signs of SCA?** The youth athlete should be seen by a health care professional.

**Who can evaluate and clear youth athletes?** A physician (MD or DO), a certified nurse practitioner, a clinical nurse specialist, certified nurse midwife. For school athletes, a physician's assistant or licensed athletic trainer may also clear a student. That person may refer the youth to another health care provider for further evaluation.

**What is needed for the youth athlete to return to the activity?** There must be clearance from the health care provider in writing. This must be given to the coach and school or sports official before return to activity.

All youth athletes and their parents/guardians must view the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) video about Sudden Cardiac Arrest, review the ODH SCA handout and then sign and return this form.

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Parent/Guardian Signature

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Student Signature

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Parent/Guardian Name (Print)

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Student Name (Print)

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Date

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Date

## **Lindsay's Law Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

We have received a number of questions regarding the implementation of Lindsay's Law. Please see below for frequently asked questions and their answers.

### **Q1. To whom does Lindsay's Law apply?**

A1. Ohio law, Revised Code 3313.5310, "Lindsay's Law," applies to the following:

- (a) Any school operated by a school district board of education; (b) Any chartered or nonchartered nonpublic school that is subject to the rules of an interscholastic conference or an organization that regulates interscholastic conferences or events.
- (2) As used in this section, "athletic activity" means all of the following:
  - (a) Interscholastic athletics;
  - (b) An athletic contest or competition that is sponsored by or associated with a school that is subject to this section, including cheerleading, club-sponsored sports activities, and sports activities sponsored by school-affiliated organizations;
  - (c) Noncompetitive cheerleading that is sponsored by school-affiliated organizations;
  - (d) Practices, interschool practices, and scrimmages for all of the activities described."

Lindsay's Law (Revised Code 3707.51) also applies to a: "Youth athlete" [which] means an individual who wishes to practice for or compete in athletic activities organized by a youth sports organization" [see below].

### **Q2. Who in the community must participate in Lindsay's Law training?**

A2. Ohio law (Revised Code 3707.51) defines a youth sports organization as: "a public or nonpublic entity that organizes an athletic activity in which the athletes are not more than nineteen years of age and are required to pay a fee to participate in the athletic activity or whose cost to participate is sponsored by a business or nonprofit organization." If this describes your organization, then your coaches, parents and youth athletes all must complete the Lindsay's Law requirements as described at <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/landing/Lindsays-Law.aspx>.

### **Q3. Are out of state teams required to do this?**

A 3. Any team participating in athletic competition in Ohio must comply, regardless of where the athletes live.

### **Q4. Who has access to the Ohio Department of Education's Learning Management System (LMS) to complete the sudden cardiac arrest training?**

A4. Only individuals who have an active license issued by the Ohio Department of Education may access the LMS to complete the training video and related materials through their Department of Education SAFE accounts.

### **Q5. How do volunteer coaches for youth athletics complete the certification test without signing up for a SAFE account?**

A5. Individuals including coaches, parents/guardians and youth athletes may access the required training videos and handouts through the Ohio Department of Health website at <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/landing/Lindsays-Law.aspx> .

**Q6. Will the course on the ODH website print out a completion certificate so that we will have proof that coaches have taken the course?**

A6. No, the training resources on the ODH website do not provide a certificate of completion.

**Q7. I have Ohio Department of Education credentials, but am still having difficulty accessing the training through my SAFE account. What do I do?**

A7. The Ohio Department of Education suggests that any individuals having difficulty accessing the LMS review the video and related materials on the Ohio Department of Health website. As with all other requirements listed on the Coaching Permits webpage, local school districts are responsible for verifying completion of training. Licensure e-signers will need to provide an electronic signature verifying that each applicant has met all training requirements before the permit may be issued. You may also contact the ODE Office of Licensure directly if you need more assistance at 614-466-3593 or by email [Educator.Licensure@education.ohio.gov](mailto:Educator.Licensure@education.ohio.gov) .

**Q8. What are the training requirements for scholastic coaches?**

A8. Ohio law (Revised Code 3313.5310) states: “No individual shall coach an athletic activity unless the individual has completed, on an annual basis, the sudden cardiac arrest training course approved by the department of health.”

The approved training includes (1) viewing the coach video and (2) reading the coach handout found at <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/landing/Lindsays-Law.aspx> . Training must be completed annually.

While the handouts and training videos for parents/youth athletes and coaches are similar, they are not identical. The resources for the coaches include the information shared with the parents/youth athletes and include responsibilities of the coaches.

**Q9. What are the training requirements for community youth sports organization coaches?**

A9. Ohio law (Revised Code 3707.58) for youth sports organizations states: “No individual shall coach an athletic activity organized by a youth sports organization unless the individual has completed, on an annual basis, the sudden cardiac arrest training course approved by the department of health.”

The approved training includes (1) viewing the coach video and (2) reading the coach handout found at <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/landing/Lindsays-Law.aspx> . Training must be completed annually.

While the handouts and training videos for parents/youth athletes and coaches are similar, they are not identical. The resources for the coaches include the information shared with the parents/youth athletes and also include responsibilities of the coaches.

**Q10. How often each year must a parent and youth athlete complete the training?**

A10. Ohio law (Revised Code 3313.5310) for scholastic parents/youth athletes states: “A completed form shall be submitted each school year ...for each athletic activity in which the student participates in an athletic activity.” **Please note: effective September 29, 2017, a completed form**

**shall be submitted each school year as defined in 3313.62 of the Revised Code, in which the student participates in an athletic activity.**

Ohio law (Revised Code 3707.58) for youth sports organization parents/youth athletes states: “A completed form shall be submitted each calendar year for to each youth sports organization that organizes an athletic activity in which the youth athlete participates.” **Please note: effective September 29, 2017, a completed form shall be submitted each calendar year to each youth sports organization that organizes an athletic activity in which the youth athlete participates.**

**Q11. Who collects and holds the signed forms?**

A11. The school or youth sports organization is responsible for documenting that all coaches, parents and youth athletes have complied with the requirements of Lindsay’s Law. They are not to be submitted to the Ohio Department of Health.

**Q12. Can we use electronic signatures?**

A12. Ohio law (Revised Code 1306.06) states: “If a law requires a signature, an electronic signature satisfies the law.”

**Q13. The video for the course does not appear to be closed captioned. Will the video be provided in other languages?**

A13. YouTube will automatically caption the video. When you click on the link and the video starts playing, look in the lower right corner of the player and click on the "cc" button and it automatically starts the closed caption.

If you prefer to view the closed caption in a language other than English, click on the settings icon on the YouTube video and click on the Subtitles/CC link. This will generate a list of languages from which you may choose.

Lindsay’s Law handouts are available in English only.

**Q14. Do the coaches have an obligation to learn the medical histories of the players?**

A14. Lindsay’s Law does not require coaches to obtain the medical histories of youth athletes and/or their family members. If coaches become aware of warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest, then they must remove the youth from participation and refer the youth athlete and family to be cleared for participation.

**Q15. Are community youth athletic programs required by Lindsay’s Law to have an AED at their site?**

A15. Lindsay’s Law does not have requirements for AEDs.

**Q16. Is there any clarification you can provide on how to deal with the young children and this law?**

A16. Ohio law (Revised Code 3707.58) states that Lindsay’s Law applies to youth sports organizations defined in Ohio Revised Code 3707.51 in which: “athletes are not more than nineteen years of age.” The law does not provide a lower boundary for age. Your organization may wish to consult with an attorney for recommendations on how to meet the requirements of the law.

**Q17. What if a league or association is doing nothing to comply with Lindsay's Law? Is there a reporting procedure or agency that a parent may contact?**

A17. Lindsay's Law did not include a mechanism for enforcing compliance.

**Q18. Can I put a direct link to your site in my materials?**

A18. Yes. The home for the up-to-date resources for Lindsay's Law is <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/landing/Lindsays-Law.aspx>.

**Q19. The Lindsay's Law training states that SCA is the leading cause of death among student athletes under 19 years of age. Is this accurate?**

A19. Confusion may arise because SCA is the leading cause of SUDDEN death in youth athletes-- not all causes of death. In other words, motor vehicle crash deaths are more common than SCA, but cardiac arrest is the most common cause of sudden death in athletes (not in athletic activities). A reference for this may be found at *Maron et al. Sudden Deaths in Young Competitive Athletes Analysis of 1866 Deaths in the United States, 1980-2006 Circulation. 2009; 119:1085-1092.*