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**UW Health  
research study  
results show  
significant and  
alarming mental  
health impacts  
on school  
closures and  
sport  
cancellations**



**By** Travis Wilson

06/26/2020, 1:00pm CDT



Results from a much-anticipated research study led by Dr. Tim McGuine, a UW health researcher and member of the WIAA Sports Medical Advisory Committee, have been made public, painting a more complete picture of the impact of the school closures and sports shutdowns resulting from the coronavirus pandemic.



### **Dr. Phil's Divorce Settlement Has Finally Been Revealed**

With a stated objective of, "To identify how COVID-19 related school closures and sport cancellations in Wisconsin have impacted the health of adolescent athletes", the research study consisted of a short online survey of 3,243 adolescent athletes in Wisconsin, from 71 of the 72 counties in the state, regarding their feelings, emotions, and responses to the sport shutdown.

The findings show significant mental health, anxiety, and depression issues in the high school-aged population, and further emphasize the need for leaders at the state, local, and school levels to consider these issues when determining when and how to return to classroom instruction and extracurricular activities.

Of the more than 3000 participants, 65% reported anxiety symptoms, with 25% suffering moderate or severe anxiety.

Using historical data obtained from past research studies, the group determined that the rate of mild to severe depression increased from 31% to 68%. In the past 68% of respondents reported minimal or no depression, compared to just 32% in May of 2020.

Physical activity was down 50% in May of 2020 compared to past results. In scores around quality of life, the physical health score decreased from 91.7 to 82.6, the psychosocial health decreased from 90.4 to 76.2, and overall health decreased from 90.9 to 78.4.

The study estimates that 66,000 Wisconsin adolescent athletes are at risk for depression, with short-term effects of mental health disorders impacting students use of drugs and alcohol, staying in school, engaging with peers, and graduating from high school. Long term concerns of the mental health disorder increase can include impacting whether individuals go to college, extensive use of drugs and/or alcohol, and the ability to form meaningful relationships.

The study concludes, "Previous studies have demonstrated that prolonged quarantines can negatively impact mental health. Schools play an important role in providing access to mental health services for disadvantaged students. Medical providers, parents, and policy-makers must recognize the mental health strain the current pandemic is placing on adolescent athletes."

The WIAA will hold a video conference presentation for school superintendents and

select media members with Dr. McGuine and possibly other members of the WIAA's Sports Medical Advisory Committee on Tuesday to discuss the findings.

The full research study can be viewed below. Other researchers participating in the study include Kevin Biese MA, Scott B Hetzel MS, Stephanie Kliethermes PhD, Claudia L. Reardon MD, David Bell PhD, M. Alison Brooks MD & Andrew Watson MD.

## **UW HEALTH STUDY ON IMPACT OF SCHOOL CLOSURES AND SPORTS SHUTDOWNS**

### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**




Travis Wilson serves as the WisSports.net General Manager, Football Editor, and contributing writer for other parts of the site. Wilson was selected as part of the Sports 40 Under 40 list by Coach & AD Magazine and the National High School Athletic Coaches Association for 2019. The Wisconsin Football Coaches Association (WFCA) named Travis the 2015 recipient of the Dave McClain Distinguished Service Award. He currently serves on the WFCA Executive Board as the Website and Communications Director and is a member of the Executive Board of the Wisconsin Basketball Coaches Association. A graduate of Richland Center High School and Mount Mercy College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Travis was a three-

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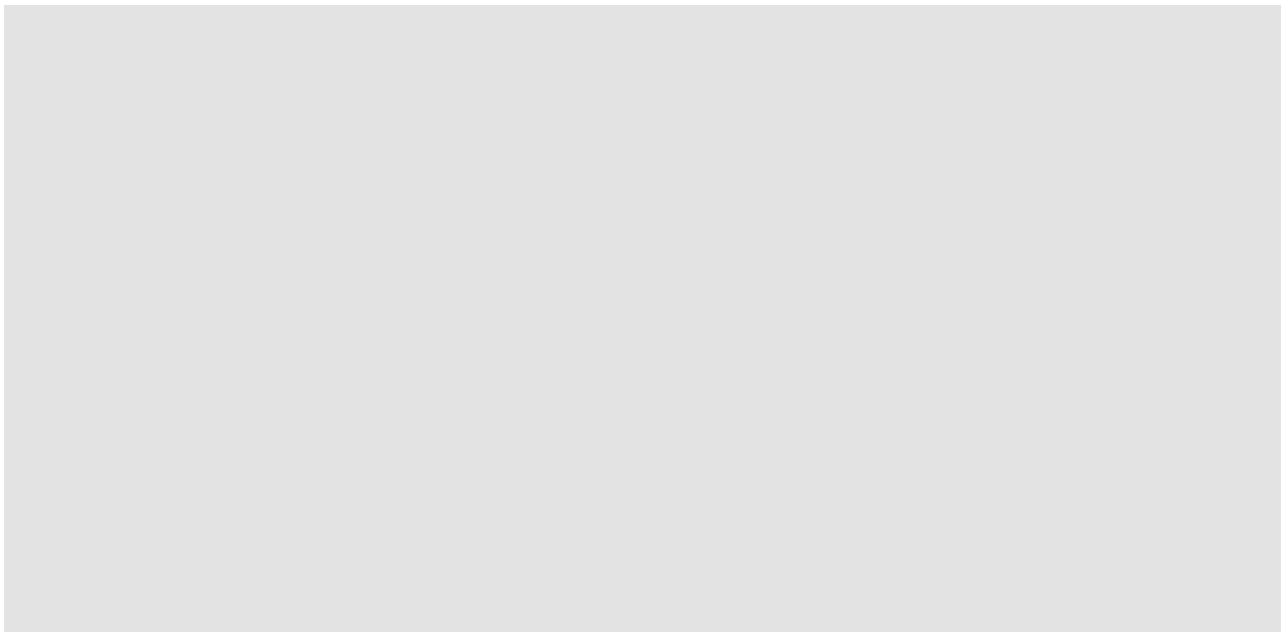


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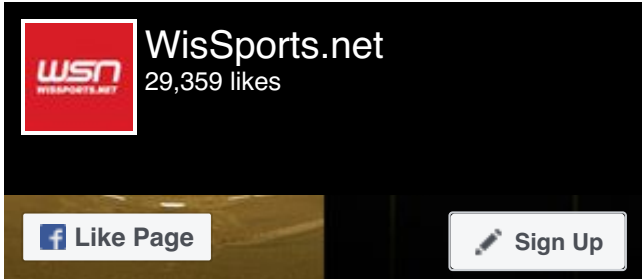
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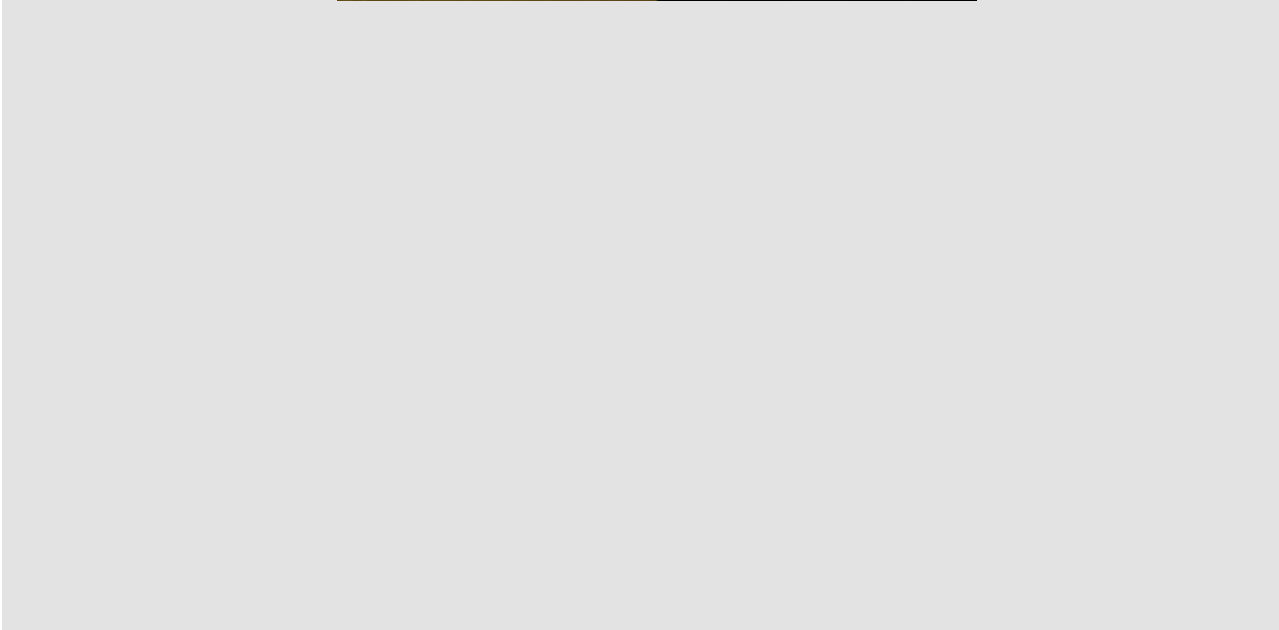
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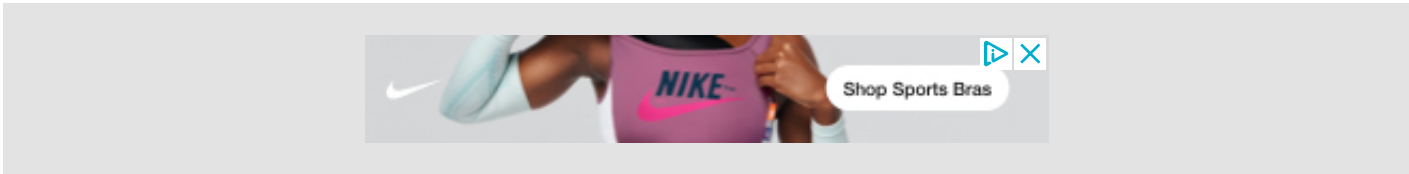


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