



**BACK TO
SPORTS**



Facilitator Guide





BACK TO SPORTS



The National Football League and the American Heart Association are teaming up on Back to Sports, a program that promotes physical activity and safe sport participation among youth. Participating in sports helps kids get the physical activity they need to stay healthy. The goal of Back to Sports is to help keep kids safe, healthy and having fun while playing the sports they love.

We need facilitators like you to lead successful meetings for parents and guardians. This guide will help you get started. These topics are addressed:

- What is Back to Sports
- How to plan a meeting (detailed checklist included)
- How to promote a meeting
- How to access the Back to Sports Toolkit, including printable signage and other materials
- Tips for promoting and sustaining sports safety year-round

Thank you for your commitment to improve the culture of sports for our youth.

We hope you'll find the toolkit helpful as you continue to encourage safe, fun sports participation in your community!

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Introduction

Why Back to Sports?

According to a 2008 survey, more than 44 million kids in the United States played organized sports, which helped them achieve physical activity and fitness recommendations to stay healthy.¹ Children who are physically active have a better chance of becoming healthy adults with lower risk factors for developing chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, osteoporosis, obesity and type 2 diabetes.² Unfortunately, as we age, physical inactivity becomes more common. The prevalence of physical inactivity is high in both adults and children, making it more important than ever that kids stay active.³

Physical activity and sports participation offer more than just health benefits for kids. Studies show that children may perform better academically if they get enough physical activity.⁴ Kids that play sports may also have the opportunity to meet new friends, learn important life skills such as teamwork, leadership, time management and goal setting.⁵ As kids participate in sports, we also need to make sure they stay safe and have fun. Raising a physically active generation is critical to improving the health of *all* Americans.

What is Back to Sports?

Back to Sports is a program created by the American Heart Association (AHA) and the National Football League (NFL) to educate parents about youth wellness and basic sports safety. This will help keep kids safe, healthy and having fun while they play the sports they love. Topics include concussion awareness, prevention of heat-related illnesses and dehydration, cardiac arrest and proper response, prevention of pediatric overuse injuries, and benefits of sports participation.

The American Heart Association and the NFL are working together with other organizations that share an interest in improving the health and safety of all youth. The Back to Sports content was developed using the most relevant evidence-based science to date from the American Heart Association and our strategic alliance members including the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA), Korey Stringer Institute (KSI), and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Back to Sports is increasing awareness of the benefits of sports participation. Playing sports is a positive way for children to achieve the recommended 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity daily, while addressing key safety concerns. Goals of the program include:

- 1—Increase public awareness about youth sports safety to help parents and guardians make informed decisions about participation and understand the health risks of physical inactivity.
- 2—Educate parents, caregivers, coaches and others about health and how to recognize, respond and prevent sports safety issues such as concussions, heat-related illnesses, dehydration, cardiac arrest and pediatric overuse injuries.
- 3—Provide ongoing resources and education for parents and caregivers, teachers, coaches, youth sports leagues and others.
- 4—Provide credible, easy-to-understand information.

Back to Sports Mini-Grant Program

A mini-grant program has been established to engage and support athletic trainers to serve as facilitators and sports safety experts to deliver sports safety information at Back to Sports meetings. The resources and materials provided through this program give athletic trainers everything they need to conduct Back to Sports meetings. Whether you are a new applicant or a previous Back to Sports mini-grant recipient, there is a mini-grant to support you. There are two levels of mini-grants available — Tier 1 (new applicants) and Tier 2 (returning recipients). Materials in Spanish are available upon request.

¹ National Council of Youth Sports (2008). Report on Trends and Participation in Organized Youth Sports: Market Research Report. Accessed at <http://www.ncys.org/pdfs/2008/2008-ncys-market-research-report.pdf> on June 7, 2016

² U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2008. *Physical Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee report*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

³ Physical Activity Council (2016). *2016 Participation Report*. Accessed at <http://physicalactivitycouncil.com/PDFs/current.pdf> on June 22, 2016.

⁴ CDC. *The Association Between School-Based Physical Activity, Including Physical Education, and Academic Performance*. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2010.

⁵ Dworkin JB, Larson R, Hansen D. Adolescents' accounts of growth experiences in youth activities. *J Youth Adolesc*. 2003;32:17-26. Accessed at <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A%3A1021076222321> on June 2, 2016.

Mini-Grant Benefits	Tier 1 Mini-Grants (new mini-grant recipients)	Tier 2 Mini-Grants (past mini-grant recipients)
Digital BTS Toolkit	X	X
Printed BTS Toolkit	X	
BTS Parent Handbooks	X	X
BTS Writing Pens	X	X
CPR in Schools Training Kit™	X	
BTS Pre-Promotional Poster	X	X
BTS Spanish Materials (optional)	X	X
Honorarium	X	
American Heart Association Support	X	X

Athletic trainers may apply for the mini-grant program by completing the appropriate registration form at heart.org/BacktoSports. Athletic trainers must review and agree to the basic grant requirements before applying. Mini-grant applications will be accepted until all grant funds have been used up. Visit heart.org/BacktoSports to learn more.

Facilitating a Meeting

Who is the Facilitator?

Athletic trainers lead Back to Sports meetings. It's a natural fit. Back to Sports supports the fundamental goal of every athletic trainer to promote sports safety for their athletes. Athletic trainers are involved in the full spectrum of sports safety and response management — from prevention to emergency care to rehabilitation — and they must be knowledgeable about many sports-related safety topics. This makes athletic trainers ideal for delivering sports safety information. Back to Sports is a great fit for early-career, secondary school-based and clinical practice athletic trainers.

Other qualified professionals can support the athletic trainer, too. These people include team physicians, nurses and registered dietitians along with experienced sports professionals like coaches, athletic directors and athletes.

With Back to Sports, athletic trainers can help make sports and recreation participation safer for kids. There are more benefits, too, like:

- Increasing athletic trainers' visibility and positioning as the sports safety authority in their communities.
- Increasing awareness about the important role athletic trainers play in schools and communities. Attendees may become advocates for the profession.
- Providing free high-quality resources that promote youth sports safety.

Facilitator's Role

By facilitating a meeting, you'll help educate adults about important habits and skills that can help keep youth athletes safe. The facilitator delivers the youth wellness and sports safety information and creates a positive learning experience.

All you need to facilitate a meeting is a computer with Internet access, projector, screen and the Back to Sports Toolkit. As a facilitator, you'll:

- Organize, promote and prepare for the meeting.
- Present the information with guidance from the talking points, supplemental videos and presentation slides.
- Pass out the Back to Sports Parent Handbook or handouts to attendees.
- Share your meeting successes and complete a short facilitator post-survey.

Facilitating a Meeting

The Back to Sports Toolkit guides you from start to finish with the most up-to-date, evidence-based sports safety and response information. The turn-key presentation slides, script and supplemental videos give you the key messages, while your experience and knowledge of sports and sport-related injuries help this information come to life.

Not comfortable presenting? Don't worry! You'll do the teaching guided by the ready-to-go slide presentation and videos. You can include other qualified professionals as content experts, too. Plus, we have tips to help you present the information in an engaging way. Other toolkit materials such as planning tips, signs, flyers and sample communication templates will help you prepare for the meeting. To review a complete list of toolkit materials, refer to page 7. To access these materials, visit heart.org/BackToSports.

Target Audience

Back to Sports is geared to parents and guardians of upper elementary, middle and high school aged students who participate or are considering participation in sports.

Meeting Types

The sports safety information from Back to Sports can be covered during a stand-alone Back to Sports meeting or incorporated into a pre-existing parent meeting.

- **Pre-existing Meeting.** We recommend incorporating the sports safety information into a pre-existing parent meeting in order to maximize attendance and exposure to the information. Parents and families have busy schedules, so it makes sense to catch parents and guardians in a place they will already be.
- **Stand-alone Meeting.** If you decide to have a stand-alone Back to Sports meeting, consider adding an RSVP to your invitation flyer so you can gauge the expected turnout. It's also a good idea to find support from other groups (such as coaches, parent organizations, and/or local youth league administrators) to help promote your meeting to your intended target audience.

Meeting Formats

Back to Sports can be delivered in two ways: as a single meeting or a series of meetings. Both formats can be effective. Let's take a closer look at each format in terms of content, length and sample presentation outlines.

Stand-Alone Sample Meeting Outline

A stand-alone Back to Sports meeting typically lasts 75-90 minutes. Each topic takes about 10 minutes. Topics can be organized to fit your specific needs. A minimum of three sport safety topics must be covered, but more can be added. Topics must include concussion awareness and cardiac arrest with CPR skills.

- Introduction
- Common sports safety myths
- Sport safety topics
 - Concussion awareness
 - Prevention of heat-related illnesses and dehydration
 - Cardiac arrests and proper response
 - Hands-Only CPR or Child CPR with breaths including attendee practice
 - Prevention of pediatric overuse Injuries
- Keeping sports fun
- Take the pledge
- Conclusion

Series Sample Meeting Outline

Each series meeting should last 30-45 minutes. You will offer multiple meetings to cover at least three sports safety topics including concussion awareness and cardiac arrest with CPR skills. Each topic will take about 10 minutes. Topics can be organized to fit your needs. Offering a Back to Sports series lets the facilitator pick what sport safety topics to cover and when. It also allows the presentation to fit within another pre-scheduled meeting. The following table provides an example of a meeting series. You may find that you prefer to offer two meetings or additional meetings to cover the topics.

Series Meeting Outline Example. This can be customized based on the total number of meetings you plan to facilitate and how many topics you select to cover per meeting.

Series #1 – Fall	Series #2 – Winter	Series #3 – Spring
Introduction	Introduction	Introduction
Common Myths	Common Myths	Common Myths
Concussion Awareness	Cardiac Arrest	Prevention of Heat-related Illnesses & Dehydration
Keeping Sports Fun	CPR Skills Practice	Prevention of Overuse Injuries
Take the Pledge	Keeping Sports Fun	Keeping Sports Fun
Conclusion	Take the Pledge	Take the Pledge
	Conclusion	Conclusion

Back to Sports Toolkit

The digital Back to Sports Toolkit includes all the educational materials, signs and flyers you need to promote and host a successful meeting. You can download and print them at heart.org/BackToSports.

Facilitator Materials

- Facilitator Guide
- Facilitators' Training Course
- Presentation Slides, Script and Frequently Asked Questions for each sports safety topic
- Youth Sports Safety Videos
- Sign-In Sheet

Educational Materials

- Parent Handbook
- Parent Handouts

Invitation Flyers and Posters

- Customizable Invitation
- Customizable 8.5" X 11" Pre-Promotion Poster
- Customizable 11" X 17" Pre-Promotion Poster
- Banner Graphic, Low Resolution (for social media)
- Banner Graphic, High Resolution (for print and professional websites)

Meeting Signage

- Directional Arrows
- 8.5" X 11" Signs
- 11" X 17" Signs
- Check-In Sign

Certificate

- Customizable Volunteer Thank-You Certificate

The CPR in Schools Training Kit™

The CPR in Schools Training Kit empowers students and adults to learn the core skills of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) in under 30 minutes. It also teaches automated external defibrillator (AED) skills and choking relief. The portable, reusable kit can train hundreds of students and adults.

The kit was developed by the American Heart Association, the leader in CPR and first aid training programs. It reflects the latest science from the 2010 American Heart Association Guidelines for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Emergency Cardiovascular Care.



Facilitating a Meeting

Each CPR in Schools Training Kit includes 10 Mini Anne Plus® inflatable manikins, 10 kneel mats with carry bags, 10 practice-while-watching training DVDs, a hand pump for manikin inflation, 2 mesh collection bags, replacement parts and more. The CPR in Schools Training Kit includes a detailed Facilitator Guide to help you plan your training, lesson plans and many online resources. No previous CPR training experience or certification is necessary to conduct the CPR demonstration and training session. Step-by-step instructions along with a video are provided in the CPR in Schools Training Kit.

For pricing information, please visit heart.org/CPRinschools. This kit is free to facilitators awarded the Tier 1 mini-grant. All other facilitators interested in bringing this kit to their school or organization can find more information by visiting heart.org/CPRinSchools.

How to Use the CPR in Schools Training Kit

As you prepare to use the CPR in Schools Training Kit, follow the tips and teaching suggestions in the Facilitator Guide included in the training kit. The American Heart Association recommends that all attendees practice on the manikins, even if it's just for 1-2 minutes. This short session lets you introduce the kit and share how you (or your school/organization) plan to use it in the future. This can help turn parents and guardians into advocates. Consider allowing interested adults to check out a kit to help train a youth league. You could also use this time to promote an upcoming CPR training.

There are two CPR methods that can be taught depending on the target audience:

- For meetings with parents and guardians of elementary schools, train the attendees using conventional CPR, that is, providing breaths with chest compressions. This method is appropriate to teach adults who have children that have not reached puberty (children 13 and under).
 - Please note, Hands-Only CPR immediately following cardiac arrest has been shown to be as effective as conventional CPR in the first few minutes of the rescue. However, if those responding are unwilling or unable to provide breaths, Hands-Only CPR can be given to infants and children in cardiac arrest. Hands-only CPR is not appropriate for victims of drowning, drug overdose or people who collapse due to breathing problems.
- For meetings with parents and guardians of middle and high school kids, train attendees using the Hands-Only CPR method. This is an appropriate method for teens and adults.
- If your meeting will include parents and guardians from elementary through high school, due to limited time, train them using the Hands-Only CPR method.

Here are a few more implementation tips to keep in mind:

- For groups of 20, pair two people on each of the 10 manikins. As one person practices, the other can watch the technique and provide supportive feedback. Then have attendees switch.
- For meetings with more than 20 attendees, consider these suggestions:
 - Get more CPR in Schools Training Kits. Borrow from other schools, seek funding from school parent organization or booster clubs, or reach out to local corporations to help buy more kits.
 - Set up 10 manikins and review the CPR skills with all adults in a lecture style. Then cycle through adults in groups of 10 for individual practice on the manikins. All adults should practice the skill first-hand, even if it's just for one or two minutes.
 - Set up 2-3 stations for the last 15-20 minutes. If you set up 3 stations, each station would last about 4-5 minutes with 1 minute to rotate. Two stations would be about 7 minutes each with 1 minute to rotate. One of these stations should be CPR skill practice. Ideas for the other stations include: a sports safety discussion, AED demonstration, ask an expert, take the pledge, etc. You'll need volunteers to help if you run stations.
- If you have a group of 50 plus people, demonstrate the CPR skills during the presentation, then invite attendees to stay after the meeting to practice on the manikins. Recruit a few volunteers who know CPR to help walk attendees through the steps and answer questions. Having volunteers will free you up to answer Back to Sports questions at the end of the meeting.



- Before you play the CPR practice video, remind attendees to follow along. Let them know that the video will walk them through the CPR technique. Participate alongside your attendees and walk around to assist if needed.
- Ensure you have all the manikins set up, ready to go and positioned so no one feels like they are in the “spotlight.” Stop the video once your attendees have had multiple opportunities to practice. Ask attendees to reflect on their hands-on practice with questions such as: What did you find most challenging? What surprises you most about giving compressions, etc.?

Share Your CPR Training Success

By the year 2020, the American Heart Association aims to train 20 million people in the lifesaving skills of CPR. And, we want to double the out-of-hospital bystander CPR rate from 31 percent to 62 percent. We can achieve these goals but only with your help! The Community CPR Tracker is an online tracker that has been created to show how many people have been trained in CPR to date.

Everyone can participate in the tracker because it's free and easy to use. Just visit the tracker and record your activity. Recording your activity only takes a few minutes. Visit the tracker at heart.org/communitycprtracker.

Meeting Equipment

In addition to the materials provided in the Back to Sports Toolkit, the equipment on this list will help your meeting run smoothly:

- 1-2 table(s) (6') for check-in
- Computer
- Internet access to show the videos, remote control and a screen big enough for all participants to see
- A room where you and videos can be heard and enough space to move around and practice CPR if using the manikins
- Speakers and downloadable Bee Gees *Stayin' Alive* song to play during the practice portions of the CPR training (optional — only if using CPR in Schools Training Kit)
- Microphone or wireless mic
- Name tags for presenters
- A chair for each attendee

Optional Equipment:

- Name tags for attendees
- Multiple microphones or wireless mics for each presenter
- Healthy snacks and water for attendees (see page 11 for more information)

Room Set-Up

Any experienced speaker or instructor will agree that room set-up is a key to a successful meeting.

Here are some tips:

- Set up the check-in table right outside the room if space allows. Make sure to recruit volunteers to help make check-in go smoothly. Have multiple sign-in forms to keep participants moving.
- If serving healthy snacks, place them in the back of the room on 1-2 tables.
- Make sure all participants can see and hear the presentation slides, speaker and videos.
- If you're not using an auditorium, set up chairs in traditional rows facing the big screen.
- Check on the room temperature. Many schools/organizations turn off air and heat at certain times, so be sure to make prior arrangements for what you need.
- If using the manikins from the CPR in Schools Training Kit, ideally they should all face the same way, with their heads lining up with the manikin's head in the video. This makes it easier for participants to follow along. Allow enough time to set up the manikins.
- It's best for you (and any other presenters) to position yourself at the front of the room. Leave yourself enough space to present comfortably.

Facilitating a Meeting

Back to Sports Volunteers and Presenters

Teamwork helps! Invite volunteers to help you plan and execute the meeting. Here are some sample responsibilities for volunteers:

- Help plan the logistics – organize the date, time and location; complete facilities requests, etc.
- Greet attendees and help at the registration station.
- Shop for snacks and bring them to the meeting. Put out and monitor the snacks.
- Take pictures at the meeting (make sure to follow your school/organization photo policies).
- Prepare signage from the Back to Sports Toolkit.
- Help set up and clean up.
- Promote the meeting (see pages 13 and 14 for promotion ideas).
- Secure drawing prizes (optional).
- Send emails to volunteers, special guest speakers, etc.
- After the meeting, encourage adults to get involved and take the pledge.

Meeting Volunteers and Their Roles

These people can serve as volunteers and help promote youth wellness and safety all year:

- **Administrators:** An enthusiastic and supportive administrator such as a principal, director and/or athletic director is vital to promoting youth wellness and safety year-round. Ensure your administrator is part of the meeting planning and approves all facilities, meeting dates, etc. Working with administrators is a great way to promote the work you do. They can also review site emergency plans, etc.
- **School Nurse:** The school nurse is an excellent resource and can help promote safety procedures and policies. The nurse may help implement school-wide youth wellness and safety goals and may be able to provide a network that benefits meeting planning and sustainability.
- **Physical Education Teacher:** PE teachers can help promote youth wellness and serve as an excellent resource. Consider inviting a physical education teacher to lead an activity break and/or review youth wellness information, especially promotion of physical activity and sports.
- **Coach:** An experienced and knowledgeable coach is trained to help youth athletes develop their skills in a positive, supportive environment and should know local safety policies and laws related to sports. Coaches can help secure volunteers (players and/or other coaches, team doctors, etc.) to join events if needed and can serve as a special guest speaker. They can also help promote the meeting by strongly recommending that parents attend the meeting. Coaches and athletic directors may also suggest pre-existing parent meetings where Back to Sports might be a good fit.
- **Parents and Guardians:** Ask them to help you plan logistics, send emails, secure snacks, manage the grant requirements, etc. During the meeting they can run registration, set up snacks, help set up and clean up, hang signs, hand out materials and supervise small children. After the meeting, they can also help ensure emergency policies are in place and advocate for positive and safe sports and play environments.
- **Students/Players:** Involving students and athletes in the planning of a meeting can help generate excitement and encourage them to help spread the word about the importance of physical activity and sports safety. They can serve as ambassadors and role models. Depending on age, they can help with set up, clean up, picture taking, distributing materials, registration, etc.
- **Other Health Professionals:** Health professionals from your local community may be happy to volunteer their expertise at a meeting and/or provide future support. A hospital or medical clinic may have specialists (e.g., neurologist, cardiologist, physical therapist and/or clinical staff that treat specific sport injuries) who can be invited as special guest speakers. Local colleges and universities may have professors in athletic training and/or student athletic trainers who may also be interested in joining your meeting. Others community members to consider could include a team physician, CPR trainer, college level head coach or even an athlete.

If you decide to use a special guest speaker, reach out early to check their availability. Then share the presentation and talking points for their specific sports safety topic. Make sure to tell them how long you want them to present.

Sample email invitations and other volunteer and presenter communication templates are available in the digital Back to Sports Toolkit at heart.org/BackToSports. Feel free to customize and use these templates when recruiting and communicating with volunteers and presenters.

Healthy Beverage and Snack Guidelines

Providing healthy beverages and snacks at the meeting is a great way to draw a crowd and reinforce the importance of good nutrition for young athletes — and adults! Reach out to the school's parent organization and/or booster clubs to see if they can supply healthy refreshments or ask local businesses for snack donations. Here are some ideas:

Beverages

- Offer water or sparkling water instead of soda.
- Offer 100% fruit juices with beneficial nutrients, like orange and grapefruit.
- Garnish pitchers of water with citrus or cucumber slices or provide citrus wedges in a bowl.
- Serve unsweetened iced tea or coffee.

Snacks

- Fresh fruit — apples, bananas, berries, cantaloupe, grapes, melon, oranges, pineapple
- Fruit tray or fruit kabobs
- Apple sauce, unsweetened
- Dried fruits (with little or no added sugars) — apples, apricots, blueberries, cranberries, raisins
- Fresh vegetables — bell peppers, broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, celery, cherry tomatoes, edamame, snap peas, zucchini
- Whole-grain crackers
- Baked whole-grain pita chips
- Dips — try hummus, salsa, guacamole, bean dip, nut butter, baba ganoush, yogurt and other “light” dips
- Roasted or raw nuts (unsalted or very lightly salted) — almonds, hazelnuts, peanuts, pecans, pistachios, walnuts
- “Build Your Own Trail Mix” bar — dried fruit, unsweetened if available (raisins, blueberries, dates); nuts (almonds, peanuts, pecans, walnuts); seeds (pumpkin, sunflower); cereal (whole grain and not sugared or frosted). Skip the chocolate and candy.
- Yogurt (fat-free/low-fat)
- Pretzels or hot pretzels cut in pieces (unsalted or lightly salted)
- Light popcorn (unsalted or lightly salted)
- Rice cakes — look for whole-grain/brown rice
- Graham crackers (preferably whole-grain)
- Whole-wheat bagels — mini or cut in fourths, with non-fat/low-fat cream cheese
- Cheese (nonfat/low-fat/light) in individual portion packs

Remember, not all attendees will take one of everything. You don't need to buy one of everything for each attendee unless you're just purchasing one particular snack. Variety is nice!

Nutrition Standards for Beverages

- Water (plain, sparkling and flavored) — no more than 10 calories per serving
- Fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk and milk alternatives (soy, almond, etc.) — no more than 130 calories per 8 fl. oz.
- Juice — 100% fruit or vegetable juice (or juice and water)
- No added sugars/sweeteners (except non-nutritive sweeteners)
- No more than 120 calories per 8 fl. oz. (preferred serving size), 150 calories per 10 fl. oz., or 180 calories per 12 fl. oz.
- Other beverages — no more than 10 calories per serving

Nutrition Standards for Snacks (except plain nuts and nut/fruit mixes)

- No more than 200 calories per label serving
- Choose items with the lowest amount of sodium — no more than 240 mg of sodium per label serving (preferably no more than 140 mg)
- Zero grams trans fat per label serving and no products containing partially hydrogenated oils
- No more than 1 gram of saturated fat
- No candy (sugar-free mints and gum are OK)
- No regular chips (lower salt/sodium baked chips and pretzels are OK)

Nutrition Standards for Plain Nuts and Nut/Fruit Mixes

- Choose products with the lowest amount of sodium — no more than 140 mg of sodium per label serving
- Preferred serving size for plain nuts is 1 oz. but no more than 1.5 oz.

How to Hold a Successful Meeting

Back to Sports Planning Guide

Your job as a facilitator has five main steps. By planning your meeting early and following these steps and the timeline, you can have a successful meeting. A detailed checklist following these steps is on pages 16 to 18.

Step 1 Get Started – 8-12 weeks before confirmed meeting date.

Allow ample time to plan and prepare. It will take time to secure meeting materials and arrange facilities and volunteers.

- Download and review the Facilitator Guide.
- Complete the Back to Sports Facilitator Training Course.
- Determine your meeting format and style – do you want one meeting or a series? See page 6 for more information.
- Complete these forms (grantees only):
 - Grant Agreement Form
 - Meeting confirmation and material order form
- Set meeting date or dates if conducting a series. Determine meeting time(s) and location(s). *Communicate with school administrators, coaches, parent organizations and other stakeholders to ensure the date, location and time are open.*
- Reserve facilities. Follow administration guidelines to reserve facilities.
- Begin recruiting volunteers to assist with meeting logistics and one or more special guests to serve as presenters (optional). See page 10 for more information.

Step 2 Promote It – Minimum 4-6 weeks before meeting

Review the Back to Sports Toolkit and use these tools to promote your meeting.

- Prepare the promotional materials from the Back to Sports Toolkit (pre-promotion posters, signage, etc.).
- Customize and distribute the meeting invitation.
- Make sure to receive administration approval before distributing materials.
- Promote your meeting using the communication templates and sample messages in the digital Back to Sports Toolkit at heart.org/BackToSports. See page 13 for promotion tips.

Step 3 Plan It – Minimum 2-4 weeks before meeting

Review and prepare for the presentation.

- Confirm final meeting logistics:
 - Confirm the facilities reservation.
 - Secure equipment and technology needs.
 - Send meeting logistics and reminders to volunteers (if applicable).
 - Send the presentation script and talking points to presenters (if applicable).
 - Order and secure healthy snacks and water for attendees (optional). See page 11 for healthy snack and beverage guidance.
- Download and review the presentation slides and script.
- Prepare the meeting materials. Secure handouts and signage. Refer to the digital Back to Sports Toolkit for printable copies of these materials.

Step 4 Conduct It – Day of meeting

Arrive early for set-up and have a great meeting.

- Arrive at least 90 minutes early to set up.
- Welcome participants and ask them to sign in and take a Back to Sports Parent Handbook or handouts.
- Present Back to Sports using the presentation slides and supplemental videos.
- Capture the meeting with pictures (follow school/organization photo policies).
- Encourage attendees to promote safety year-round and take the Back to Sports Pledge online.

How to Hold a Successful Meeting

Step 5 Wrap It Up – Allow 1-2 weeks after the meeting to complete

Complete post-meeting tasks.

- Gather sign-in sheets to return to the American Heart Association (grantees only).
- Complete the facilitator post-meeting survey and share pictures.
- Send thank-you notes to volunteers and school administrators. Refer to the digital Back to Sports Toolkit at heart.org/BackToSports for a sample template.
- Communicate your meeting's success to key stakeholders.
- Create a plan to promote youth wellness and safety all year long. See page 15 for ideas.

How to Promote Your Meeting

It's important to promote your meeting. To maximize the number of adults in attendance, reach out to parent groups, booster clubs, coaches, athletic directors and local youth league administrators to help you promote your meeting(s). Asking others to help promote your meeting will increase attendance and free you to focus on preparing for your presentation(s).

Adding Back to Sports information to an already pre-scheduled parent or guardian meeting is recommended. Identifying an already scheduled meeting, such as a pre-season parent sports meeting or an elementary parent meeting, will help guarantee that you will have attendees for your meeting.

Here are some more ideas to help reach parents and guardians of upper elementary, middle and/or high school kids:

- If you work in a school, reach out to your feeder schools. For example, work with an elementary school's parent organization to facilitate a presentation during one of their regular scheduled meetings.
- Work with the middle school booster club to host a pre-season meeting in the fall and/or spring.
- Facilitate a Back to Sports presentation during a coach's pre-season sports-specific parent meeting.
- Facilitate a Back to Sports meeting and invite the parents of all the athletes you serve or select a specific group of athletes. Make sure to get the coaches' and administrators' support – they can help encourage parent/guardian attendance.
- If your school allows, consider inviting other community schools, especially if they don't have access to an athletic trainer.
- If you work in a clinical setting, focus on inviting parents of a school, district, youth sports league or the broader community. Work with administrators and coaches so they can help encourage attendance and promote the meeting(s).

Once you have identified others who can help you promote your meeting, provide them with the appropriate messaging. Refer to the communication tools and templates in the Back to Sports Toolkit at heart.org/BacktoSports for guidance. As you develop your promotion plan, keep these tips in mind:

- If your meeting is closed (only open to select teams, schools, individuals, etc.), don't promote on social media or on your school/organization's website. When it's over, you may want to post follow-up messages about it and its successes.
- If your meeting is open to the public, it is OK to promote it widely. The more you promote, the more successful your meeting will be!
- Be sure to collect photo permissions before posting any pictures from the meeting.



How to Hold a Successful Meeting

The promotion activities listed below are strongly encouraged and are the recommendations for all mini-grant recipients.

Make sure you:

- 1—Distribute invitation flyers – electronic or printed. Mini-grant recipients must send a copy of their customized invitation to **BacktoSports@heart.org**.
- 2—Hang the Pre-Promotional poster. Mini-grant recipients must take a picture and send it to **BacktoSports@heart.org**.

Then select at least 3 of these promotion activities:

- Work with a special group (such as a parent group or coaches) and the athletic director or youth sport league director to promote your meeting. Ask them for help distributing invitation flyers.
- Spread the word using social media.
- Post an announcement on your school/organization website.
- Add an announcement in a school newsletter.
- If your school/organization has voicemail, send a message or reminder of the upcoming meeting.

Tips to Conduct a Successful Meeting

Experienced facilitators offer these tips and advice:

- Prepare thoroughly. The meeting goes better when you're prepared. Read the guide, complete the facilitator training course and review the presentation in advance.
- Enlist volunteers to plan and/or assist you at the meeting. Giving logistical tasks to others will let you focus on delivering the presentation.
- Test your equipment before the meeting. This includes the computer, speakers, microphones, manikins for CPR skill practice and any other electronic devices you are using. This gives you time to fix anything that is not working prior to the meeting.
- Get to the meeting early and make sure everything is set up before participants arrive. Put participants at ease by talking with them as they come in.
- During the meeting:
 - Be enthusiastic; it's contagious.
 - Ask attendees to silence their phones.
 - Start the meeting by thanking everyone for their time and reviewing the agenda. Let attendees know there will be several interactive segments (including CPR skill practice if using the CPR in Schools Training Kit).
 - State how long the meeting will be and point out where the restrooms are.
 - Let attendees know whether they should ask questions during the presentation or save them till the end.
 - Follow the slide presentation and activities. See the script for guidance.
 - At the end of the meeting, thank attendees for participating. Encourage them to take the online Back to Sports pledge.

Stay focused and keep the meeting on track. This gives participants the best chance to learn the necessary sports safety information. Also, it's polite to start and end on time. Keeping the meeting on track respects everyone's time.

Common Questions During Meetings

Frequently asked questions have been included in the messaging and talking points. Make sure to review them at **heart.org/BackToSports** before the meeting. If you can't answer a question, refer the inquirer to the Back to Sports website.

If people have specific questions about the American Heart Association and NFL, please contact **BackToSports@heart.org**.

Promoting Sports Safety Year-Round

As a leader in youth wellness, you can help build the value of sports and make a commitment to promoting sports safety in your community. Involving your school wellness committee, booster clubs and/or your school's parent organization is a great way to start building your network. Here are a few suggestions to help promote a sports safety culture:

- Facilitate more Back to Sports meetings. The materials in the Back to Sports Toolkit and the CPR in Schools Training Kit can be used more than once! The digital toolkit provides printable attendee handouts and other resources you may need if you choose to facilitate more than one meeting. Visit heart.org/BackToSports for information about grant funding.
- Encourage adults to take the online Back to Sports Pledge.
- Create sports safety and response tips and post them on bulletin boards around locker rooms.
- Create safety and response messages and reminders for coaches to post in program materials.
- Share supportive tips to parents and guardians via newsletters.
- Ensure that coaches and staff are trained on CPR and AED use.
- Ensure that children who participate in physical activity, physical education and sports are properly supervised by qualified and competent teachers and coaches. Make sure proper background checks are conducted.
- Establish an athletic health care team that ensures appropriate medical care is provided to all participants. The National Athletic Trainers' Association recommends that this team include a physician, administrator (e.g., coach, athletic director), staff medical personnel (e.g., school nurse) and an athletic trainer to serve as the coordinator.
- Create a subcommittee to review safety policies and practices.
 - Review and practice emergency response plans such as cardiac arrest, heat- and cold-related emergencies, weather (lightning) policies, environmental conditions, etc.
 - Assign staff to maintain safety equipment (batteries, AEDs, etc.).
- Educate students and staff about hygiene practices and dangers of communicable diseases. Caution students about sharing clothing, equipment and other personal items.
- Check to ensure athletes have appropriate equipment and that it fits properly.
- Work with schools to make positive changes and apply for NATA's *Safe Sports School Award* (secondary schools only). Visit [NATA.org](https://nata.org) for more information on the Safe Sports in School recognition program.
- Encourage fellow professionals, parents and guardians and stakeholders to register for access to the Back to Sports materials and resources.

If you need more information or resources, please visit heart.org/BackToSports or contact BacktoSports@heart.org.

Good luck planning your Back to Sports meeting and promoting youth wellness all year long.



Planning Timeline and Checklist

This checklist will help facilitators plan and conduct a Back to Sports (BTS) meeting from start to end.

Task	Description	Estimated Time	Complete
Step 1: Get Started (8-12 weeks in advance)			
Read Facilitator Guide	Guide to planning a successful meeting	30 minutes	
Complete required forms (grantees only)	Grant Agreement and Meeting Confirmation and Material Order forms <i>Meeting Confirmation and Material Order form must be completed at least 4 weeks before your meeting date.</i>	15 minutes	
Complete Facilitator Training Course	15-20 minute overview of BTS program and content	30 minutes	
Determine meeting format and type.	Determine meeting format and type. Refer to page 6 in Facilitator Guide for more information.	15 minutes	
Set meeting date(s), time(s) and location(s) and reserve facility.	Communicate with school administration, coaches, parent organizations and other stakeholders to ensure date, location and time are open. Follow administration guidelines to reserve facilities. Follow school/organization recommendations for reserving facility.	Allow 1 week to get approval	
Recruit volunteers (optional)	Volunteers can help save you time. Consider engaging parents and guardians and/or staff members to assist you with planning and day-of-event tasks. Refer to volunteer information in Facilitator Guide (page 10).	Allow 1 week for volunteers to respond to your request	
Recruit special guest speakers (optional)	Determine if you would like to invite any special guest speakers, e.g., head coach, team physician, registered dietitian, CPR trainer and/or athlete. Then reach out to determine their availability. Refer to volunteer information in Facilitator Guide (page 10).	Allow 1-2 weeks to gather responses and availability	
<p>TIP: Allow ample time to plan and prepare. It may take several days to hear back from volunteers so make sure you reach out early and follow up if you don't hear back.</p>			
STEP 2: Promote It (minimum 4-6 weeks before)			
Select promotion activities	Refer to page 13 in Facilitator Guide for promotion recommendations.	10 minutes	
Prepare promotional materials	Review and prepare promotional materials from the BTS Toolkit.	10-30 minutes	
Customize invitation flyer and promotional materials	Use the templates provided in the BTS Toolkit to customize your promotional materials. <i>Make sure to receive administration approval prior to distribution.</i>	15-30 minutes	
Distribute invitation flyers and promotional messages; hang promotional posters	Decide if your meeting will be open or closed. This will determine how you promote your meeting. Refer to the promotion information in the Facilitator Guide for suggestions (page 13).	Begin promoting as early as you can; at least 4 weeks in advance is ideal.	
<p>TIP: Reach out to others to help you promote your meeting. Parent organizations, youth sport league directors, coaches and athletic directors can all help encourage parents to attend and help distribute flyers. Consider inviting local media to the meeting. Inquire with school/district communication specialists/director for local media contacts. Refer to the communication tools and templates in the Back to Sports Toolkit at heart.org/BacktoSports for guidance.</p>			

Planning Timeline and Checklist

Task	Description	Estimated Time	Complete
Step 3: Plan It – Review and Plan for Presentation (allow at least 2-3 weeks)			
Confirm logistics	Confirm facilities and equipment needs, communicate with volunteers (tasks and arrival times), remind administrators of meeting, etc. <i>Make sure you reserve any technology equipment you may need and test it before the meeting date. Refer to sample volunteer communication messages in the digital Back to Sports Toolkit at heart.org/BackToSports.</i>	Allow 1 week	
Prepare signage and materials	Secure handouts, sign-up sheets and signage. Refer to the BTS Toolkit for printable copies of these materials.	30-60 minutes 2 weeks in advance	
Review presentation slides and script; prepare guest speakers	Focus on key messages and takeaways. If you have invited special guest speakers, share the presentation slides and tell speakers how much time they have to present.	1-2 hour(s) 1-2 week(s) in advance	
Secure snacks and beverages (optional)	Consider serving healthy snacks and water. Work with parent organizations, booster club and/or local food vendor (grocery) to receive donated water and healthy snacks.	2-3 weeks in advance	
TIP: Consider reaching out to a parent volunteer, student, etc. for logistics help. This will save time and allow you to focus on preparing for the presentation.			
STEP 4: Conduct It (Day of meeting)			
Arrive early and set up	Refer to set-up checklist in Facilitator Guide to help ensure everything is ready to go.	90 minutes before start time	
Greet attendees	Greeting attendees warmly and with a smile helps create a positive learning environment and makes everyone feel welcome.	30 minutes before start time	
Register attendees	Assign volunteers to run the registration table. Attendees sign in on the BTS sign-in form. Have attendees sign a photo release if you plan to take pictures. At the end of the meeting, grantees need to make a copy of the sign-in form and send it to BacktoSports@heart.org	30 minutes before start time	
Distribute Parent Handbooks or handouts	Distribute BTS handouts/handbooks at the registration table as attendees sign in.	30 minutes before start time	
Conduct meeting	Conduct the meeting using the BTS presentation materials.	60-75 minutes	
Take pictures	Assign a volunteer to take pictures of presenters, attendees, CPR skills training, etc. Invite local media to come and help you capture the meeting.	Throughout meeting	
Close the meeting	Encourage attendees to take the pledge and share their feedback.	2 minutes	
TIP: Recruit volunteers to assist you, especially with registration and refreshments. Volunteers can also help capture the meeting by taking pictures while you are presenting.			

Planning Timeline and Checklist

Task	Description	Estimated Time	Complete
STEP 5: Wrap It Up (within 1-2 weeks after meeting)			
Return sign-in sheet to AHA (grantees only)	Grant recipients only. The sign-in sheet can be found in the digital Back to Sports Toolkit. You may need to make several copies of the sheet depending on the estimated number of attendees.	10 minutes	
Send thank-you emails and/or volunteer certificates	Thank special guest speakers and volunteers. Refer to Facilitator Guide for sample templates.	30 minutes	
Communicate success to key stakeholders	Write meeting summary and distribute to key stakeholders. Communicate your meeting's success to promote your work and impact to administration, media, etc. Include pictures (only if you have releases), number of attendees, success stories and quotes.	30 minutes	
Post-meeting mini-grant recipient requirements only	Based on your registered meeting date, you will receive a survey to complete. You will also need to return a copy of your sign-in sheet and pictures to BacktoSports@heart.org	15-20 minutes Complete within 2 weeks of meeting	
Promote sports safety	Promote sports safety year-round. See Facilitator Guide for suggestions. Help ensure safe sports policies are in place.	Ongoing	
<p>TIPS: After the meeting, look for ways to sustain momentum and apply the information. Involving your school wellness committee, booster clubs and parent groups is a great way to start building your network. Revisit safety policies annually and ensure they are implemented. Share your knowledge with local youth sport leagues.</p>			



BACK TO SPORTS



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