

School-based athletic trainers through Children's Wisconsin help student-athletes stay healthy and active

Children's Wisconsin provides licensed athletic training services to nearly 30 high schools across southeastern Wisconsin, including 24 in Milwaukee County, bringing sports medicine expertise directly to students. In partnership with schools, Children's Wisconsin's licensed athletic trainers help prevent, assess and treat injuries, provide rehabilitation and sideline medical coverage, and connect students with additional care when needed. Services also include concussion baseline testing, strength and conditioning education, CPR training and education and more. Athletic trainers also provide community education on injury prevention, emergency response and ways to help kids and teens participate in sports safely.

Ella, 18, is a recent graduate of Rufus King High School. When she was 8, her orthodontist noticed her jaw was loose and referred her to the Children's Wisconsin Genetics Clinic, where specialists diagnosed her with Hypermobile Spectrum Disorder (HSD), a connective tissue condition that causes loose joints. After years of physical therapy at Children's Wisconsin to strengthen and stabilize her joints, Ella joined cross country and track and field in high school. When she experienced stress fractures and other orthopedic challenges, she was able to turn to the Children's Wisconsin athletic trainer based at her high school.

Ella shares: "Being in sports and rigorous classes, I found that having the athletic trainer at school made it easier to be assessed. Because I experienced so many stress injuries, I was often paranoid that every sore muscle I felt was the start of a stress fracture. By having Children's athletic trainers easily accessible, I was reassured that my soreness was not an injury. This was not only convenient but gave me peace of mind because I didn't have to wait weeks to get an appointment; I was able to just walk downstairs to the athletic trainer's room."

Schools help support Children's Wisconsin's ability to offer licensed athletic trainers through funding and use of school facilities. Additional costs are covered by philanthropic support, including from Bader Philanthropies, and Children's Wisconsin community benefit investment.

Having athletic trainers in schools helps connect immediate injury care with ongoing treatment. When additional care is needed, trainers can help establish coordinated care plans with other specialists to get student-athletes back to their activities safely.