Oral Defense Announcement
University of Missouri – St. Louis Graduate School

An oral examination in defense of the dissertation for the degree
Doctor of Nursing Practice with an emphasis in Family Nurse Practitioner

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Youth Sports in a Pandemic Age

Date: July 7th, 2021
Time: 1:45 to 2:20 p.m.
Place: Remote

Abstract

Problem: Youth sporting events is a public health concern as infected youth with coronavirus disease 2019 may unknowingly spread the virus, as many show little to no symptoms (Zimmerman & Nigel, 2020). This project aimed to identify level of adherence to posted Youth Sports Guidelines, which were designed to mitigate the spread of virus at youth sporting events.

Methods: An observational descriptive design was utilized. Two observers tallied guideline violations by participants and spectators at six high-contact (basketball) and six low-contact (swimming) public high school youth sporting events.

Results: A total of 726 youth sport participants and 139 spectators were observed. Mean total number of violations were higher at high-contact events (145.33 ± 68.86) compared to low-contact events (87.50 ± 35.42). The majority of violations involved social distancing and mask violations. Low-contact sporting events had more social distancing violations compared to high-contact events, 391 and 253, respectively. High-contact sporting events had a significant higher number of mask violations compared to low-contact events, 414 and 120, respectively (alpha value of 0.05, \( p = .032 \)). No significant correlations were identified between violations to the guidelines at the observed youth sporting events and concurrent virus case rates.

Implications for practice: Results can guide future decision making related to youth sports, and by implication, other school-sponsored activities. Opportunities for educating the public by advanced practice nurses can improve adherence to health policies and thereby improve health outcomes.

Defense of Dissertation Committee
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