



# GETTING STARTED

## *Common Challenges and Solutions to Getting Started*

**⚠️ CHALLENGE: I don't have the time or resources to take this on.**

**✅ PROPOSED SOLUTIONS:**

- Over the long term, Life of an Athlete (LoA) works to reduce time spent reacting to a crisis when potential issues are identified and addressed before they are able to destroy team moral and unity.
- In the short term, the best way to implement LoA while avoiding placing burdens on staff is to form a diverse team to delegate roles and responsibilities.
- If possible utilize school board, athletic, prevention, or booster funds to provide stipend to an LoA advisor/designee<sup>1</sup>.

**⚠️ CHALLENGE: I find that people we need to get excited about implementing LoA don't see the purpose.**

**✅ PROPOSED SOLUTIONS:**

- LoA works to improve school climate, which ultimately has a positive impact on academics, substance misuse rates, and school engagement. Discuss these benefits of implementing LoA.
- Over the long term, LoA helps reduce time spent reacting to a crisis when potential issues are identified and addressed before they are able to destroy team morale and unity.

**⚠️ CHALLENGE: I find there is a lack of buy-in from school administration.**

**✅ PROPOSED SOLUTION:**

- If discussing the impact on school climate and benefits of taking a proactive approach isn't enough, have a trusted administrator from another school district discuss the positive impacts they have seen from LoA.

**Implementing a program without an evaluation component is much like competing without keeping score.**

Participating in evaluation allows implementers to:

- Document measurable outcomes and show successes
- Make adjustments if something isn't working as intended
- Seek additional funding

**⚠️ CHALLENGE: I find participation in the evaluation is too much of a burden.**

**✅ PROPOSED SOLUTION:**

- Utilize creative methods to distribute the surveys
  - Distribute the surveys through text message while on the bus
  - Bring a tablet to pass around the link to the electronic survey to be done on the bus ride, during practice, or after school waiting for practice or games.
  - Send the team to the computer lab
  - Incentivize participation in evaluation with:
    - Food
    - Clothing
    - Prizes