

NCAA Coach Well-Being Study

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Resources and Recommendations

If you or a student-athlete you support is feeling isolated or facing other mental health challenges during this time, **please seek help through your campus health center or other campus resources devoted to mental health.** There are a number of national resources that could be helpful to you, some of which can be found here:

NCAA Sport Science Institute

Mental health resources and recommendations shared [here](#).

SAMHSA's National Helpline

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Helpline provides free, confidential, 24/7, 365-day-a-year treatment referral and information service for individuals and families facing mental and/or substance use disorders. **Call 1-800-662-4357 (HELP) or text your zip code to 435748 (HELP4U)** to find help near you.

SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline

The Disaster Distress Helpline provides 24/7 crisis counseling and support to individuals experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters. **Call or text 1-800-985-5990** to connect with a trained crisis counselor.

BIPOC

For Black, Indigenous and coaches and students of color, **the Steve Fund and Crisis Text Line** provides 24/7, free and confidential support for mental health and well-being. **Text STEVE to 741741.**

LGBTQIA+

The **LGBT National Hotline** provides support for all ages to speak on various issues including coming out, relationship concerns, bullying, workplace issues, suicide and much more. **Call 888-843-4564** Monday through Friday from 4 p.m. to midnight ET or Saturday from noon to 5 p.m. ET, **email help@LGBThotline.org or chat with an online peer-support professional [here](#).** For LGBTQ+ students, **the Trevor Project** provides 24/7 counseling for crisis intervention and suicide prevention. **Call 866-488-7386, text START to 678678 or message a counselor online [here](#).**

Suicide Prevention

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for individuals in distress. **Call or text 988 or chat [here](#).** A list of international suicide hotlines is available [here](#).



NCAA Coach Well-Being Study

Recent NCAA studies have been undertaken to better understand the mental well-being of student-athletes. The results, which showed the unique struggles faced by student-athletes over the past couple years, raised questions about how NCAA coaches are supporting student-athletes during this time while also caring for their own mental health. What impact do changes in recruiting and roster management during the pandemic have on their jobs? What support is desired by coaches to help them navigate the challenges they and the athletes on their teams face? Over 6,000 head and assistant coaches across all three NCAA divisions answered a short survey with the primary findings shown below. The full report can be accessed [here](#).

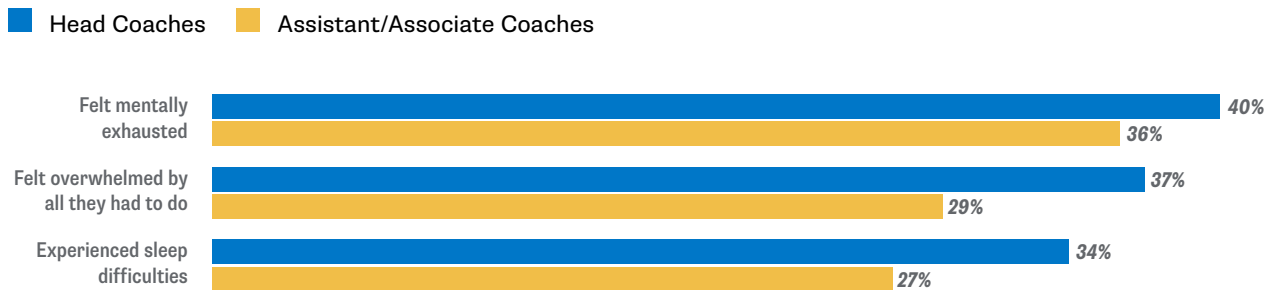


Coaches have felt substantial and unique pressures in their jobs over the past several years, manifesting in high levels of stress and mental exhaustion.

Similar to data from NCAA [student-athletes](#), and the [U.S. population at large](#), many coaches currently report relatively high rates of mental health difficulties. Contributing factors include pandemic-related circumstances, roster management challenges, an evolving transfer landscape, concerns about their job and athletics department budgets, and dealing with personal situations (e.g., financial worries, childcare challenges). One-third of coaches reported mental exhaustion, feelings of being overwhelmed by all they had to do, and sleep difficulties on a near-constant basis.

Coaches' Mental Health Concerns

(Percentage of NCAA Coaches Responding “Constantly” or “Most Every Day,” All Divisions)



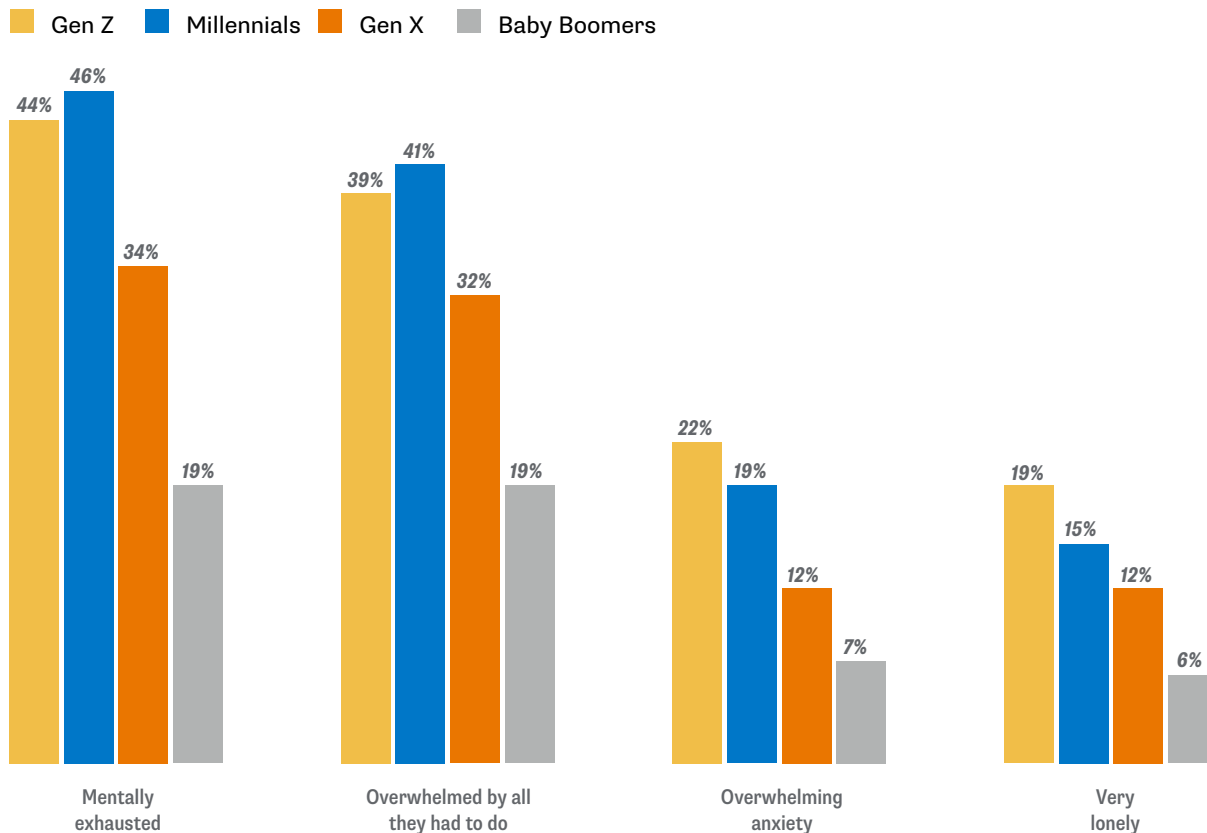


Young coaches in particular reported higher rates of mental health concerns.

Coaches aged 40 or younger reported higher rates of mental health concerns than older coaches. Forty-six percent reported near constant mental exhaustion as compared to 31% in older generations. Additionally, similar to what we see in the student-athlete population, women, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and people of color) and those on the queer-spectrum reported higher rates of mental health concerns.

Coaches' Mental Health Concerns

(Percentage of NCAA Coaches Responding "Constantly" or "Most Every Day" by Generation, All Divisions)



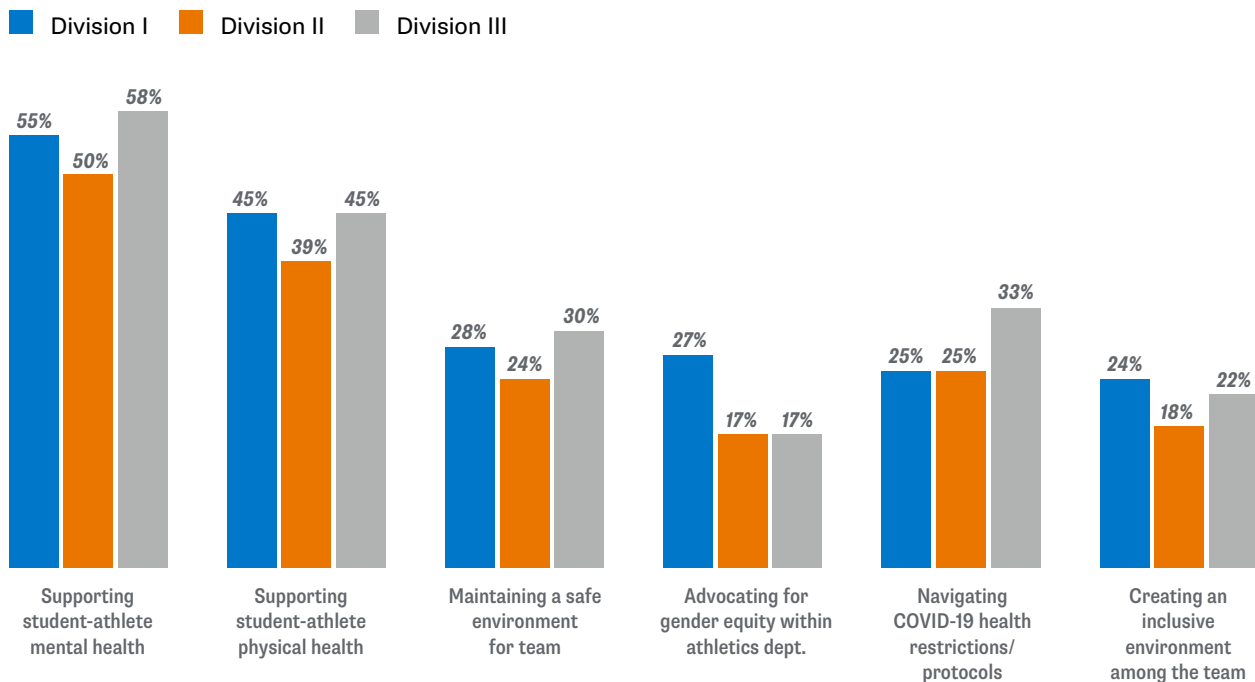
Note: Includes all coaches (head, assistant, associate and other) in the sample. 269 Gen Z (born 1997-2012) coaches, 2,690 Millennial (born 1981-1996) coaches, 2,000 Gen X (born 1965-1980) coaches, and 624 Baby Boomer (born 1946-1964) coaches participated in the survey.



Coaches are more concerned than ever about student-athlete mental health and how they can provide support.

More than 80% of coaches reported spending more time discussing mental health with student-athletes than they did pre-pandemic. These coaches also indicated that the top issue facing the team they coach was supporting student-athlete mental health.

Head Coaches' Level of Concern About Issues Facing Team
(Percentage of NCAA Head Coaches Responding "Very Concerned" by Division)



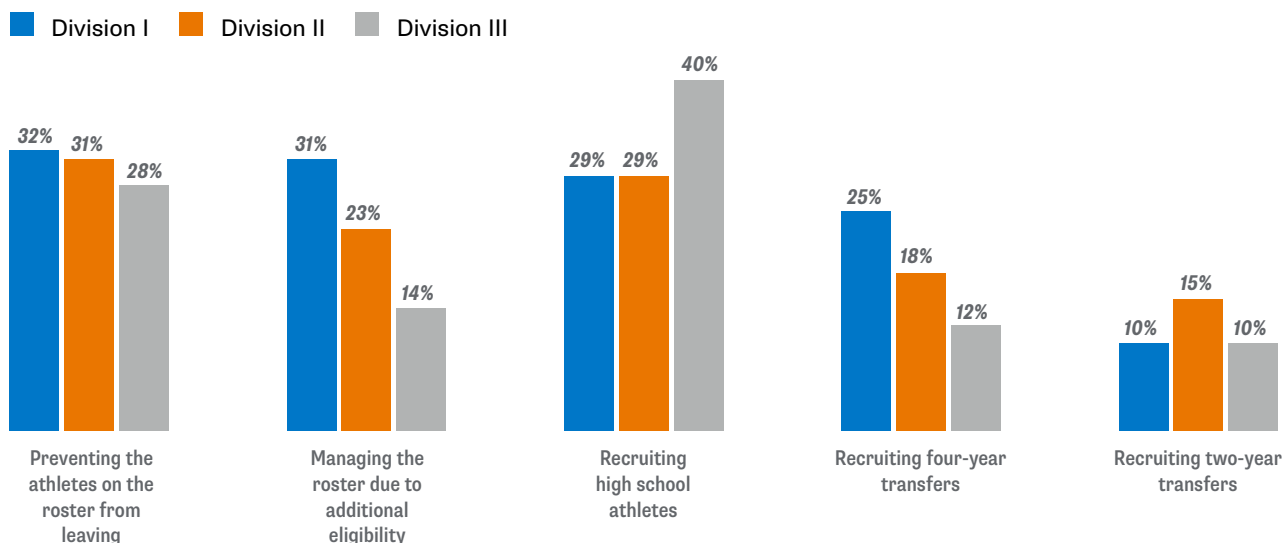


Recruiting and roster management have become especially challenging for coaches in many sports.

When asked about roster management, nearly one-third of head coaches across NCAA division were very concerned about the possibility of players transferring away from the team. Simultaneously, 25% of coaches in Division I, 18% in Division II and 12% in Division III reported high levels of stress related to the perceived need to recruit four-year transfers into their programs. Division I head coaches expressed the most concern about roster management issues that resulted from additional eligibility granted during the pandemic.



Head Coaches' Level of Concern About Recruiting and Roster Management Issues
(Percentage of NCAA Head Coaches Responding "Very Concerned" by Division)





Coaches want their schools to understand the changing nature of their jobs, the personal challenges confronting them and the support mechanisms that they need to be healthy and successful.

Coaches would like access to mental health resources for their own use.

"I would like the same resources as student-athletes, in terms of mental well-being." - Division I Men's Soccer Assistant Coach

"As coaches, the expectation is for us to be available for student-athlete crises 24/7. While at the same time there is not consistent concern for our emotional and physical well-being." - Division II Women's Lacrosse Head Coach

The pressure to 'win now' and budget cuts have fueled concerns about job security.

"...fighting for job and survival every year, despite graduating great individuals and character with zero transferring out. Have good culture, yet it is always under scrutiny. Wonder if I should leave and start over somewhere else often. My entire staff feels the same way." - Division I Men's Tennis Head Coach

"I struggle with job security. Being on year-to-year contracts can be very concerning when so much of our job safety is in the hands of people 18-22 years old... Coaching while afraid of losing your job is a terrible way to feel." - Division III Softball Head Coach

Coaches want a salary that aligns with a living wage and seek to hire more assistants to help shoulder the increased workload.

"I have my bachelor's and master's degrees and seven years of collective softball experience. And yet, a first year schoolteacher in [my state] is making \$10k more per year than I am." - Division I Softball Assistant Coach

"Hire more people to take away some of the duties that keep me from giving that time to my athletes' well-being." - Division III Baseball Head Coach

Addressing gender and racial inequities and bias would improve conditions for women and BIPOC coaches.

"I don't believe there is pay equity at my institution. As a female coach I get paid less than my other full-time male counterparts. Our facility has needs that are not addressed." - Division II Swimming and Diving Assistant Coach

"Being a Black coach in predominately white spaces is hard and is something that I believe that many don't take into consideration. There are no real check-ins for coaches of color in white spaces of what their experience is like. It almost just feels that the assumption is that all of our experiences are the same and that is not the case." - Division I [Women's Sport] Assistant Coach

Athletics departments can support their coaches by appreciating their hard work and seeking their input.

"Communicate, ask for our opinion and hear us. Include and respect us." - Division I Softball Head Coach

"Support coaches. There is so much pressure on coaches to win, have big roster sizes, keep all your student-athletes happy and keep everyone at your school. We have provided many resources to the student-athletes (which is fantastic), and it would be great to also support the coaches with resources and understanding." - Division II Women's Basketball Head Coach

"Have better communication and work-life balance. Just need to be able to spend more time with my family." - Division II Baseball Assistant Coach



For more detailed, division-specific information, including a collection of coach comments about challenges coaching and recruiting during the pandemic, areas where coaches perceive student-athletes need support and how athletics departments can better support coaches, please see the [full report](#).

Methodology

The NCAA Coach Well-Being Study (Spring 2022) was an online survey examining coach mental well-being and how coaches are adapting to current recruiting and roster management challenges. The survey was designed by NCAA Research and was the first to be administered broadly to NCAA coaches. The survey was a 10-minute, confidential, online survey designed using QuestionPro survey software that could be taken via phone, tablet or computer. The survey opened March 2, 2022, and closed April 17, 2022. All NCAA head coaches were sent a survey link to participate and were encouraged to share the survey with their staff. National coaches associations were also made aware of the survey and encouraged coaches to take part. In all, 6,113 coaches representing all NCAA-sponsored sports completed the survey. See full slide deck for a detailed look at response rates by coach position, division, gender identity and race.



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