

To whom it may concern,

My name is Rachael Piche and I am not only a parent of an athlete but an RN as well, with over 7 years experience in critical care. I come to you with more knowledge than a lot of parents and I want to reach out to you with not only how changes have affected my child, but what I see as some good solutions for this summer season.

The end of this school year a lot has been asked of our kids. Ending school right after spring break, going online for class work and losing all spring school sports has taken its toll on all my kids. Not seeing their friends, family and team has taken an even bigger toll on them. My daughter Jordan plays softball competitively for PSA and this organization really is part of her family. This upcoming season would have been her first year of High School softball, and it is all she has talked about this whole school year. This is something she has worked all fall to prepare for and was hopeful to make Varsity as a Freshman. When the changes came to her season and school year she understood the reason she had to miss out on these activities, and she was willing to make sacrifices to help protect people like her grandparents and even herself. The message that was being told to all of us, kids included was, "2 weeks to slow the spread." This was to allow for hospitals to have enough supplies to care for the ill. We as a family embraced this and knew it was for the best. I can tell you as a nurse, my hospital is prepared. We are not overwhelmed and in fact we have less patients coming in and I have colleagues in other hospitals who have been laid off.

Somehow, over the last month the message has changed. The message we are now hearing is to stop summer sports, camps and other group events to prevent people from being ill. As a nurse, it is hard for me to wrap my head around this and to fully support this. You can not stop a virus from spreading and that was never the intention of this plan. With that said, simple changes do need to be made and if we do this the ball field can be safe. As a parent these are some suggestions that I see actually helping and letting the kids play ball.

1. Limit to spectators. Each child is allowed to have 2 guests and spectators need to spread out as they watch the players.
2. Concession stands must wear masks when serving food
3. Extra seats next to dug out for players, to allow for better separation
4. No handshaking prior to games

These are just some basic ideas but if you really think about the placement of the players on the field they are not in close contact for the majority of the time. Definitely not as close as I have had to be at Walmart shopping for my family.

At some point, we as adults need to realize that this was to slow the spread not stop a virus. We are making changes that are affecting our kids mental health, exercise and overall childhood that we as Kansas did not sign up for. Kids need to be out playing and spending time with loved ones. The kids did what we asked of them, we have slowed the spread and it is only right that we do right by them now and allow summer sports.

Thank you,
Rachael Piche