

Study Cites Cheering as Most Dangerous School Sport for Girls

Associated Press

Friday, August 22, 2008



You've seen them smiling as they're being tossed high in the air at football and basketball games, but a new report points to a dark and dangerous side to cheerleading. Few states recognize cheerleading as a sport — an estimated 20 do — which means there is less oversight than sports such as field hockey, soccer and basketball.

Data compiled by the University of North Carolina's National Center for Catastrophic Sports Injury Research (NCCSI) cites 67 fatal or life-threatening injuries due to cheerleading since 1982, making it by far the most perilous sport for high school and college-age female athletes, Time.com reports. The study's author, Fred Mueller, cited increased competition and athletes willing to take greater risks as causes for the high incidence of injury, but warned that "there are definitely more accidents out there that we haven't even heard about yet," Time.com reported.

Cheerleading injuries also account for nearly two-thirds of severe school-sports injuries — yet the sport remains relatively unregulated despite an estimated 100,000 high school students participating in a variety of cheering squad activities, the Web site reported. Cheerleaders suffered more injuries than all other school athletes combined — about 65 percent of severe injuries on the high school level and 67 percent at colleges, the study reported.

Of the cheerleaders whose 67 catastrophic injuries were tallied in the NCCSI report, Jessica Smith considers herself to be "one of the lucky ones," Time.com reports. From 15 feet in the air, the Sacramento City College student looked on in horror as the teammate who was supposed to catch her lost his balance and fell backward. With no one to catch her, the then 18-year-old landed headfirst, breaking her back in two places. Doctors told her she was millimeters away from paralysis after the 2006 incident. "I'll never fully recover," says Smith, now a spokeswoman for the NCSF. "Everyone needs to ask themselves, 'Is cheerleading worth not being able to walk again?'"

1. In appropriate paragraph form, thoroughly summarize the data compiled by the University of North Carolina's National Center for Catastrophic Sports Injury Research. Compare and contrast the data provided severe school-sports injuries in Cheerleading with all other sports combined at the high school and collegiate levels of athletic competition. How may these results come to a surprise of many athletes?
(GPS – Grades 6 – 8: MRC a, d)
2. Approximately how many fatal or life-threatening injuries due to cheerleading were cited in the NCCSI report? Identify the numerical difference amongst states, which recognize cheerleading as a sport. About how many cheerleading injuries were reported annually in the report? Explain your reasoning using words, numbers, and/or pictures. **(GPS - Grade 6: M6P1 – M6P5; MRC; M6N1 a, d - g)**
3. Compare and order all of the numerical figures and their opposite addressed in the passage above on a number line. Identify and define what is meant by the absolute value of each number. Explain the benefits derived from organizing data in this specific format. Explain. **(GPS Grade 7: M7P1 – M7P5; MRC; M7N1a – d)**
4. At a 5.25 percent rate of growth, design an equation in slope intercept form ($y=mx + b$), graph, and table outlining the number of fatal or life-threatening injuries due to cheerleading since 1982 through the year 2034. Does this information represent a linear relationship? What inferences (i.e. positive or negative correlation, etc.) can be made regarding the relationship between the injury of Jessica Smith and cheerleaders familiar with her accident? For example, are injuries more likely to increase, decrease or remain unchanged as a result of increased awareness of incidents comparable to Jessica Smith? Explain your reasoning in paragraph form. **(GPS Grade 8: M8P1 – M8P5; M8A1a, e; M8A3e, f, g, h, I; M8A4c, f, g; M8D4a)**
5. Upon completion of this assignment, how far have we progressed through the 2008-09 series of *The Daughtry Times*®? Express your answer interchangeably as a fraction, decimal, percentage, and circle graph. **(GPS – Grade 6: M6N1f, g; M6D1c; Grade 7: M7D1f)**
6. Using contextual clues only, define the following italicized words: *perilous*, *incidence*, *unregulated*, *catastrophic*, and *paralysis* obtained from the passage above. Additionally, use each word in a complete sentence to demonstrate further comprehension. **(GPS – Grades 6 –8: MRC a, c, d)**

Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) adapted from georgiastandards.org. Standards specifically addressed in this edition are strategically aligned with the curriculum map and annotated adjacent to the respective grade level inquiry.

Copyright 2008. *The Daughtry Times*® Education through Integration™ All rights reserved. www.daughtrytimes.com
Contents of this document excluding the article itself, may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed in whole or part without the express written permission through a licensed agreement and is restricted to teacher-student use only.