Today’s piece was prepared by Emily Davis, MD, based on a NY Times story [Team Sports May Help Children Deal With Trauma](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/08/well/family/team-sports-may-help-children-deal-with-trauma.html).

Perri Klass, MD reports on the findings of a recent JAMA Pediatrics study, which demonstrated improved mental health outcomes associated with adolescent team sport participation for children who had experienced early life trauma (“ACEs”). The author discusses theory including social support and development of resilience, as well as mental health generally, in the sports medicine sphere. While overall the author is relatively balanced in reporting the study’s findings, the article focused more on the benefits of sport, rather than some of the risk factors for certain mental health conditions that sports participation might convey (e.g., eating disorders in certain athlete groups). While the author did briefly address it, presenting cross-sectional or cohort study data in the popular news is inherently challenging, as it is difficult to communicate the dictum of “correlation does not equal causation” as well as the nuances of mediator relationships and statistical analysis. This article clearly describes the basic take-home point of this study, but without numbers such as odds ratio or relative risk, it is difficult to interpret to what degree participation in sports impacts the children of interest in the study. The article did not discuss the nature of the sample, a nationally representative longitudinal cohort, or how the information on trauma exposure or subsequent mental health diagnosis was obtained, all of which may alter study interpretation. It also fails to raise questions about the challenging nature of the study design given the lead time in a real time setting between childhood trauma, adolescent sports participation, and adulthood, even when controlling for known confounders.

**RESOURCES ON TRAUMA:**

[The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](https://www.nctsn.org/) *Provides a broad swath of information/resources on the effects of childhood trauma, evidence-based interventions, and general approaches to trauma-informed care and systems*

[National Collegiate Athletic Association](http://www.ncaa.org/sport-science-institute/mental-health) *initiative on mental health of college age student-athletes with best practices, data/research, and educational resources*

And that’s today’s Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics: IN THE NEWS!