



**The Jason Foundation, Inc.**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Coaching Minds Changing Lives: New National Resource Empowers Coaches to Support Student-Athletes' Mental Health**

HENDERSONVILLE, Tenn., September 24, 2025 – The Jason Foundation (JFI), Acadia Healthcare, and the American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) have partnered to launch *Coaching Minds Changing Lives* (CMCL), a groundbreaking initiative designed to equip coaches, athletic personnel, and colleges with resources to support student-athletes facing mental health or substance use challenges.

For many student-athletes, a coach is the first person they confide in during times of distress—whether due to personal loss, academic pressure, or emotional challenges. While some collegiate programs have dedicated mental health teams, many coaches feel unsure of how to respond. CMCL bridges that gap, offering expert advice, reassurance, and actionable guidance.

Through CMCL, coaches now have access to a direct National Resource Line, enabling them to connect with clinical advisors who can provide insight tailored to their unique situations. A coach can speak with an advisor to discuss concerns, receive recommendations on next steps, and, when necessary, get help locating appropriate mental health or addiction services.

“The Jason Foundation is proud to collaborate with Acadia Healthcare and the AFCA to provide coaches across the nation with resources to help our student-athletes who may be struggling with mental health issues,” remarked Clark Flatt, President of JFI.

“Coaches often serve as trusted mentors and first responders when a student-athlete is struggling,” said Craig Bohl, Executive Director of the AFCA. “CMCL ensures they never have to navigate these critical moments alone.”

“It can be difficult for people experiencing mental health challenges – particularly youth and young adults – to seek help, due to stigma or fear that their concerns will not be addressed appropriately. This new resource meets them where they are and helps us empower coaches across the country to support those who may not otherwise get the assistance they need,” added Dr. Stephanie Eken, Chief Medical Officer of Acadia Healthcare.

CMCL is not a crisis hotline and should not be considered a substitute for individual or group counseling, emergency services, or school-based mental health services.

#### About the Organizations

The Jason Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to fighting the “Silent Epidemic” of youth and young adult suicide through educational programs for young people, educators, parents, and other community groups. Since its inception, The Jason Foundation has never charged a school, family, or community for using its programs or materials. For more information, visit their website. [www.jasonfoundation.com](http://www.jasonfoundation.com)

The American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) was founded in 1922 and currently has more than 11,000 members around the world ranging from the high school level to the professional ranks. According to its constitution, the AFCA was formed, in part, to “maintain the highest possible standards in football and in the coaching profession” and to “provide a forum for the discussion and study of all matters pertaining to football.” For more information about the AFCA, visit [www.AFCA.com](http://www.AFCA.com).

Acadia is a leading provider of behavioral healthcare services across the United States. As of June 30, 2025, Acadia operated a network of 274 behavioral healthcare facilities with approximately 12,100 beds in 39 states and Puerto Rico. With approximately 25,000 employees serving more than 82,000 patients daily, Acadia is the largest stand-alone behavioral healthcare company in the U.S. Acadia provides behavioral healthcare services to its patients in a variety of settings, including inpatient psychiatric hospitals, specialty treatment facilities, residential treatment centers and outpatient clinics.