

Q&A with Allyson Weldon, Ph.D.

By Physical Therapist Jessica Ciborek

Our Sports Rehab and Sports Medicine team are thrilled to welcome Dr. Allyson Weldon to Akron Children's Hospital. Dr. Weldon will be filling a longtime void in our department as our first sports psychologist. She comes from Linden Behavioral Pediatrics and Family Health Services of Erie County. Dr. Weldon emphasized how grateful she is to have the opportunity to be a pediatric sports psychologist, as Akron Children's is the only hospital in the area that focuses on sports psychology for kids and teens.

Q: What do you hope to bring to Akron Children's Hospital?

A: I hope to continue to normalize mental health services, especially in sports. I think it's important for our young athletes to know that it is OK to seek out help if they are struggling emotionally, whether due to an injury or performance-related difficulties. I am here to help them overcome these challenges and develop into the best players they can be.



Q: What do you love the most about working with athletes?

A: What I love most is seeing the passion athletes have for their sports really come back to life as they progress through therapy. Being a former athlete myself and having had to sit on the sidelines due to injury, I know what it's like. I know the frustration they feel and the range of emotions they go through. I love being able to help an athlete through these tough times; it is something that I wish was available to me when I was having to go through it myself.

Q: Other than being an excellent sports psychologist, what are some other hobbies/interests you have?

A: I absolutely love to watch sports, especially hockey. I love being outside and just messing around with a soccer ball – juggling, passing, drills, just the little things. I also love spending time with my family.

Q: What aspect of your job do you take pride in the most?

A: This is a hard question to answer, but I would say that I take most pride in truly being able to empathize with my patients. Being able to relate with my own firsthand experiences has really allowed me to fully understand, relate and empathize with my patients.

Recent research tells us that mental health issues have been on the rise over the past few years, especially in the pediatric population. How many kids do you know who play sports? How many kids do you know who have suffered some sort of injury? How many of these kids may struggle with some sort of mental health issue related to the demands of their sport? The answer is several, and we are ecstatic to have Dr. Weldon on board, filling the missing puzzle piece in our collaborative plan of care. [Click here](#) to read more about her.