



Sarah S. Anker, Suffolk County Legislator, Sixth District  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



MEDIA PRESS RELEASE:  
October 1, 2015

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## Legislator Anker Sponsors Sports Safety Forum *Educating to Protect Our Kids*



*From left to right: Mark Passamonte, Frank McCoy, Dan Nowlan, Rick Mercurio, Legislator Anker, Kym Laube (HUGS Director), Don Webster (Section XI Athletics), Jeremy Thode and Dr. Hayley Queller.*

**Shoreham, N.Y.** – Suffolk County Legislator Sarah Anker, in partnership with Shoreham-Wading River School District and Section XI Athletics, hosted a Youth Sports Safety Forum on Wednesday, September 30<sup>th</sup>, at the Shoreham-Wading River Prodel Middle School. The forum was an important educational resource for community sports officials and residents to learn about the best practices to keep their children safe as they participate in local athletic leagues.

In light of recent sports incidences, Legislator Anker believes it is vitally important to provide our residents with sports safety information from professionals. In October 2014, Shoreham-Wading River football player Tom Cutinella passed away after a serious head injury from colliding with another player. In May 2015, a Shoreham-Wading River high school sophomore was struck in the chest by a baseball while practicing in the batting cages at North Shore Little League. He was revived with an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) by off-duty police officer Sergeant John Cerato.



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“As a member of the community, the safety of our children is my top priority,” said Legislator Anker. “Sports are vital to our children’s quality of life and I will continue to work to ensure their safety on and off the field.”

Over the past year, Legislator Anker has been working with Shoreham-Wading River Superintendent Dr. Steven Cohen and Athletic Director Mark Passamonte to provide sports safety information to local parents and sports officials.

“The forum is a great way for youth coaches to have a better understanding of safety procedures at the high school level and what can be done at their level to make practices and contests safer,” said Mr. Passamonte.

A variety of speakers at the forum provided different perspectives on the issues plaguing young athletes in Suffolk County. The forum brought together medical experts such as physical therapist Frank McCoy and sports medicine physician Dr. Hayley Rintel Queller of St. Charles Hospital. Speakers also included community sports experts such as Long Island Lacrosse Hall of Famer Rick Mercurio and Center Moriches Athletic Director Jeremy Thode. Daniel Nowlan of Riddell Sports was also present to discuss equipment safety.

Frank McCoy, physical therapist and owner of Advanced S.P.O.R.T.S. in East Setauket, has over 18 years of experience in Suffolk County specializing in orthopedic injuries, injury prevention, post-operative and sports rehabilitation medicine. He spoke about the high rates of athletic injuries and stated that over 1.35 million children per year have serious sports-related injuries. He also spoke about the causes of repetitive stress injuries and the importance of injury prevention.

“We owe it to the young athletes of today and of the future to institute an injury prevention protocol that is geared towards keeping them healthier, injury free and on the field,” said Mr. McCoy. “How can we say no to helping our athletic programs enhance their training to reduce non-contact, preventable injuries.”

Legislator Anker’s Youth Sports Safety Forum gathered local resources and informative material to help educate parents and coaches about the best practices to keep young athletes safe. For more information about the forum, please contact the office of Legislator Anker at (631) 854-1600.

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