



*CRUCIAL*  
***CATCH***  
*INTERCEPT CANCER*

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**Youth & High School Football**  
**Participant Toolkit**

[youthcrucialcatch.org](http://youthcrucialcatch.org) | 1.800.227.2345



## UNITE to save lives!

Since 2009, the National Football League (NFL) and the American Cancer Society (ACS) have teamed up in the fight against cancer.

Each year, youth and high school football teams from across the country have done their part to raise funds and help the NFL in their efforts. We invite schools, leagues, intramural clubs, and community athletic organizations to unite with the NFL and join Youth Crucial Catch to raise funds to beat cancer. Teams around the country have already signed up to participate.

Don't sit on the bench. Join us to help fight cancer!



## What is Crucial Catch?

The NFL partners with the American Cancer Society through its impactful Crucial Catch initiative focusing on early detection, education, and access to lifesaving screening to detect cancer early, when it may be easier to treat.

Youth Crucial Catch funding supports the American Cancer Society's Community Health Advocates implementing Nationwide Grants for Empowerment and Equity (CHANGE) program. CHANGE promotes health equity and addresses early detection disparities through community-based prevention programs that increase access to cancer screenings. Today, health care centers in all 32 NFL club markets receive CHANGE grants to provide outreach and education, as well as increased access to cancer screenings and potentially lifesaving resources.

**While we're seeing significant declines in the overall cancer mortality rate, prevention is now more important than ever, especially in underserved communities.**



**650K**

cancer screenings  
since 2012



**1.2M**

patients impacted  
since 2009



**\$27M**

raised  
since 2009

**More than 200K cancer deaths/year could be averted by eliminating socio-economic disparities. We have more work to do.**



## 2023 Season

Each year, we take intentional steps to make Crucial Catch even more impactful. Program efforts have been expanded to include all cancers, with NFL teams supporting cancer-fighting initiatives that specifically impact their own community.

Participating teams will extend the reach of the NFL's nationwide platform through local grassroots efforts focused on promoting cancer screening, honoring cancer survivors, and planning special in-stadium or pre-game events in partnership with the American Cancer Society.

### Sign Up; Next Steps

Sign up, recruit others, and fundraise. Here's how to start:

**Step 1:** To sign up: Register online at [youthcrucialcatch.org](https://youthcrucialcatch.org). Start a team, and start fundraising. We'll equip you with all the online tools you need.

**Step 2:** Designate a Youth Crucial Catch game by selecting a fall home game as your Crucial Catch cancer awareness game.

**Step 3:** Challenge other teams to sign up, or create friendly competition within your school by forming different teams.

**Step 4:** Identify a player captain and a community captain (parent or other influential individual) to assist in leading the efforts and driving fundraising success.

**Step 5:** Contact your local coaches' association to help spread the word and maybe even partner on a project.



# Participate to Help Intercept Cancer

## Sample Planning Timeline

May – July

August – October

December – January

### Spring and summer

- Designate a date for your Youth Crucial Catch game to be held in the fall.
- Form a committee of students, parents, and supporters to plan activities leading up to and at the game. Set a fundraising goal. Aim high!
- Hold a kickoff meeting to plan fundraisers and awareness activities. Assign tasks to committee members.
- Reach out to the coach of your game's opposing team to engage them as well.
- Recruit local businesses in the community to sponsor your game.
- Plan fundraisers leading up to the game.
- Engage faculty and administration to gain support for your efforts.

### Start of school through Game Day

- Promote your event via social media, school/league newsletters and websites, posters, and news releases. Ask team and committee members to share widely!
- Hold pledge drives, T-shirt sales, Wall of Hope activities, etc., to raise funds and promote your event.

### Post-event

- Complete the offline donation form, located in this toolkit, and mail any cash and checks to:  
American Cancer Society  
Attn: Youth Sports  
PO Box 2438  
Kennesaw, GA 30156
- Notify [youthcrucialcatch@americancancer.org](mailto:youthcrucialcatch@americancancer.org) that you have mailed in all funds, and provide feedback on your game.

## Media involvement

- Local media love a great story. Your team's support for ACS and the NFL may be just what they're looking for.
- Template media releases and photo alerts are available at [youthcrucialcatch.org](http://youthcrucialcatch.org). Your team can use these to announce Youth Crucial Catch Game Day details and invite media coverage.



## Game-day engagement ideas:

**Game Day Shirts** – Design a shirt to sell as a fundraiser for everyone to wear on game day. Work with a local print shop and try to earn 50% from every shirt sold. See if they offer online ordering as well!

**Emails to Fans** – Reach out to your school’s alumni and fan base ahead of time, asking them to donate and telling them how.

**Admission & Concession Sales** – If there is a charge to watch the game, add \$1-\$2 to the fee and/or donate a portion of concession sales to ACS. Be sure to consult with your ACS partner to ensure compliance with any applicable regulations.

**Wall of Hope** – Create a Wall of Hope by providing Crucial Catch football-themed donation cards and displaying them in the gym or other common areas.

**Halftime Activities** – During halftime, invite fans to make a donation to ACS and participate in a contest such as kicking a field goal or throwing the longest pass.

**Silent or Live Auction** – During the game, auction homemade meals or desserts, a prime parking pass, student artwork, or items donated from local businesses in the community.

**Luminaria** – Sell and decorate small paper bags in honor or memory of those affected by cancer. Display them with a candle or glow stick at your game. Hold a special ceremony during halftime to celebrate and remember loved ones impacted by cancer.

**Sponsorships** – Ask local businesses to sponsor your event by making a donation directly to ACS or by matching any funds raised by your team.

**Beat the Clock Challenge** – Put 60 seconds on the clock and have the cheerleaders or other volunteers pass buckets collecting donations as the clock counts down. Ask local businesses to match the amount raised. You can also use a time that correlates with a cancer fact in your state, such as “Every ## seconds, someone in (State) will be diagnosed with cancer.” Find cancer facts at [cancer.org/research](https://www.cancer.org/research).

**Rivalry Game** – Partner with a rival team and designate your game as the Youth Crucial Catch game. Host a fundraising competition in the weeks leading up to the big game. Announce the winner at halftime.

**Pledge Donations** – Have athletes, students, and other participants collect donations from family and friends in support of ACS. You could also host a “pledge-a-thon” for the number of touchdowns, sacks, field goals, or other important plays during the game.

**“Color-Out” Game** – Encourage fans to wear apparel in a specific color representing a particular cancer (gold for childhood cancer, pink for breast cancer, purple for all cancers). Partner with a local vendor or hospital to provide T-shirts, wristbands, or shakers for a suggested donation.

**50-50 Raffle** – Funds raised by a raffle can be added to the total amount raised in support of the designated Youth Crucial Catch game. Be sure to comply with any applicable raffle regulations.

Have fans or family members of players **create posters** to be displayed at the game.

Honor cancer survivors on the field during the **national anthem**.

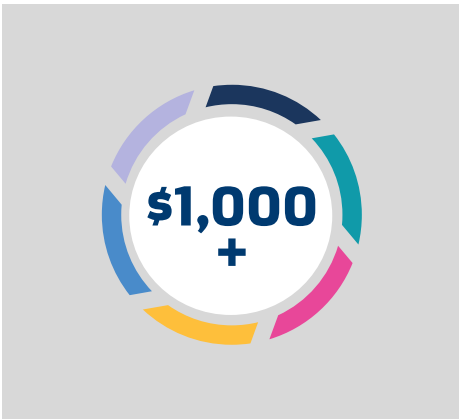


# YOUTH CRUCIAL CATCH INCENTIVES

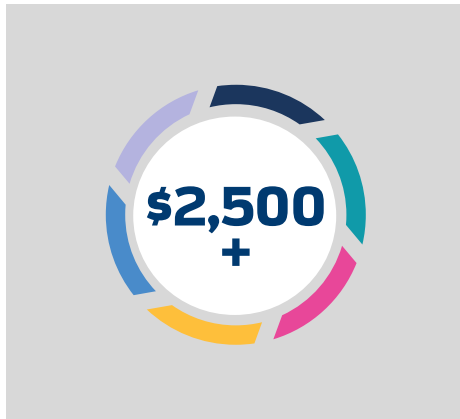
- Participating teams will receive office NFL helmet decals (pending availability) and fundraising tools.
- Participating teams will receive an official Youth Crucial Catch digital banner (printing of banners will be at the expense of each team).
- Participating teams will receive a social media graphic to promote on their social media channels.



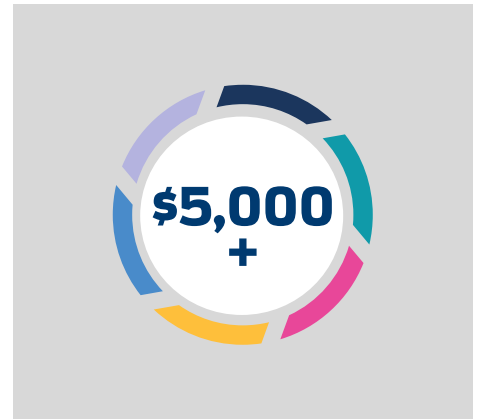
## PRIZES



**\$1,000+** – recognition on cancer.org/crucialcatch, plus personalized NFL thank-you letter signed by the league Commissioner



**\$1,000+** – prize elements, plus official NFL Crucial Catch football



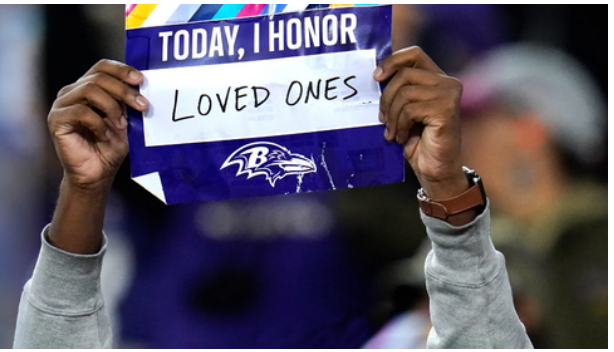
**\$2,500+** – prize elements, plus social media recognition from the NFL on their social channels



**\$5,000+** – prize elements, plus an in-person OR virtual appearance by an NFL player, legend, or influencer (depending on location and schedule availability), and an official NFL Crucial Catch recognition plaque



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## Spirit Award Challenge

Schools participating in the Youth Crucial Catch (YCC) initiative will have an additional chance to be recognized through the new Youth Crucial Catch Spirit Award Challenge. This challenge will give schools an additional opportunity to receive top Youth Crucial Catch prizes and recognitions.

As part of this challenge, we will reward one team each year for their demonstrated school spirit and passion for the cause. The top school will win cool NFL prizes. All you have to do is:

1. **Create an original event or fundraiser** at your school to raise awareness and show your support of Youth Crucial Catch. Examples include planning a Cancer Awareness Day, holding a car wash with donations going to Crucial Catch, hosting a Spring Fling with a fundraiser to fight cancer, etc.
2. **Share event details** by submitting a one-page overview of your school's Youth Crucial Catch cancer awareness event. Did your event honor someone with cancer or a survivor? Can you capture some testimonials showing your team's passion for the event and for the fight against cancer? How many people attended? Did you share flyers or other information before or at the event? Feel free to include photos and/or video from the event.
3. **Post videos or photos on social media** and tag [@americancancersociety](#) and [@nflinthecommunity](#). Tell us how many people liked your social media posts and share a screenshot of the social post(s) engagement.

It's that easy! We can't wait to hear and celebrate what you are doing for Youth Crucial Catch this year!

### Spirit Award Challenge criteria includes:

- Most creative and engaging event concept + successful execution
- Most creative content/social media post (photo/video)
- In-depth detail of one-pager
- Most engagements on social media

The challenge will be live for schools to participate until Super Bowl Sunday, February 11, 2024. Schools have until this date to host their event and submit results to the American Cancer Society at [youthcrucialcatch@cancer.org](mailto:youthcrucialcatch@cancer.org). The American Cancer Society and the NFL will review and evaluate each school's submission and announce the winner of the Youth Crucial Catch Spirit Award Challenge two (2) weeks following the Super Bowl.





# Youth Sports Offline Donation Form

## Organizer Information

Team name: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Captain's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Captain's email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Please Indicate Your Donation Amount Below:

\$500     \$250     \$100     \$50     \$25     Other Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

## Contact Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Please indicate your team's affiliated sport/campaign below:

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Baseball/Softball (Hope At Bat)<br>SK: E4V3QB | <input type="checkbox"/> Football (Crucial Catch)<br>SK: RWMMHC      | <input type="checkbox"/> Officials vs. Cancer<br>SK: FAV4EY          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basketball (Coaches vs. Cancer)<br>SK: GHES7S | <input type="checkbox"/> Hockey (Hockey Fights Cancer)<br>SK: U9U3CV | <input type="checkbox"/> Soccer (Red Card Cancer)<br>SK: 7DXTYG      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Field Hockey<br>SK: HCRDXZ                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Lacrosse (Stick It To Cancer)<br>SK: MCAF8L | <input type="checkbox"/> Volleyball (Spike Out Cancer)<br>SK: 7DXTYG |

## Thank you so much for your contribution!

Please mail this completed form, along with your check, to the American Cancer Society at the address below.

American Cancer Society  
ATTN: Youth Sports  
P.O. Box 2438  
Kennesaw, GA 30156

*The American Cancer Society cares about your privacy and protects how we use your information. Your information will help us better serve your needs of your community, and we do not sell your information to third parties. For questions about our privacy policy, please visit [cancer.org](https://www.cancer.org).*