

NEWS RELEASE

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Mercy Health Donates Guardian Caps to Paducah City Schools

Mercy Health, in conjunction with Mercy Health Foundation Lourdes, has donated Guardian Caps to Paducah City Schools in time for the upcoming school year. The donation will provide for nearly 300 of the protective devices to be used by the school system's student athletes to mitigate the effects of repetitive impact on the playing field.

Guardian Caps, a padded, soft-shell cover that fits over the helmet, are currently utilized by more than 100 colleges and 1,000 high schools to reduce impact during collisions. Paducah City Schools are the first in the region to have the protective equipment, with Mercy's donation providing a cap for each football player in grades third through 12th. The caps augment an existing helmet to make it flexible and soft, therefore more effectively managing energy.

Mercy Health – Lourdes Hospital neurologist Niranjan Siva, M.D., said the additional protection of the caps is important in light of the science and the national conversation concerning sports-related head injuries. "Playing any sport will always come with some element of risk, but from a protection standpoint we should always be doing everything we can for our children," Dr. Siva said. "What we hope to accomplish by this donation is to help make the sport safer for our community's student athletes."

"The research is clear when it comes to the link between brain trauma and repetitive, collision impact," Dr. Siva noted. "With the Guardian Caps, we reduce the impact when contact is made." Studies have demonstrated the soft-shell technology added to the outside of a hard-shell football helmet can reduce impact forces by up to 33 percent. "When you think about football, that 33 percent reduction on each contact adds up significantly over the course of a football career," Dr. Siva said.

Mercy Health representatives presented the Guardian Caps to students and school officials July 30 at Paducah Tilghman High School's football field.

For additional information concerning Mercy Health visit Mercy.com.

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*Lourdes is part of **Bon Secours Mercy Health**, one of the top 20 health systems in the United States and part of the top performing quartile of Catholic health systems for lowest cost per case for patient care. For nearly 200 years, the historical founders of Bon Secours Mercy Health have been providing care to those in need. This quality care is*



provided by more than 57,000 employees serving communities throughout Florida, Kentucky, Maryland, New York, Ohio, South Carolina and Virginia. The health care ministry provided care for patients more than 10.3 million times in 2017 through its network of more than 1,000 care sites, including 43 hospitals, more than 50 home health agencies, hospice agencies, and skilled nursing and assisted living facilities. Consistent with its commitment to serve each patient with dignity, Bon Secours Mercy Health provides nearly \$2 million per day in community benefit. The Mission of Bon Secours Mercy Health is to extend the compassionate ministry of Jesus by improving the health and well-being of its communities and bring good help to those in need, especially people who are poor, dying and underserved. For more information, visit www.bsmhealth.org.