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Youth Sports Mission Statement

The purpose of the City of Santa Clarita's Youth Sports Program is to provide quality recreational sport experiences for the community's youth through a positive atmosphere that values sportsmanship, development, and fun.

Youth Sports Philosophy

The primary objective of the Youth Sports program is for children to have fun through recreational sports! Each child should have the same opportunity to participate in a recreational sports activity regardless of talent or ability. This values the individual and collective experiences of participants by providing a positive atmosphere that emphasizes sportsmanship and player development. Success is not reflected in the score or standings, but is achieved through effectively teaching the skills and strategies of the game as well as building the character and self-esteem of children participating in the program.

Youth Sports Volunteer Requirements

VOLUNTEER APPROVAL PROCESS

The highest priority of the City of Santa Clarita Youth Sports program is to protect our youth. All Youth Sports program volunteers (coaches, assistant coaches or volunteer parents) are required to:

- 1. Have a completed Volunteer Coach Application, Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Sanction Forms on file for the upcoming season.**
- 2. Pass a fingerprint screening and background check before assuming a volunteer role with a team.**
- 3. Wear a City issued, personalized badge to games and practices.**

Head Coaches are required to submit a list of team volunteers to the Youth Sports office. Any person or volunteer without a City issued, personalized badge is strictly prohibited from assisting with a team at practices or games. Only volunteers with proper identification will be allowed in designated player/coach boxes or on the team bench during games.

VOLUNTEER FINGERPRINTING INFORMATION

All Youth Sports program volunteers must complete a Volunteer Coach application and have fingerprints on file with the City of Santa Clarita for consideration as an approved volunteer in the Youth Sports program. All approved volunteers will receive a City issued, personalized badge and will be eligible to assist with Youth Sports teams. Any person or volunteer without a City issued, personalized badge is strictly prohibited from assisting with a team at practices or games and must go through the volunteer approval process.

Volunteers can make a fingerprint appointment (no walk-ins) by contacting the Youth Sports Office at (661) 250-3756 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Youth Sports

Role of the Coach

I. PURPOSE

As a coach of a youth athletic team, you have a tremendous influence on the life of each youth on that team. Next to the parent, you are probably one of the most important adults in the youths' lives. Each youth on the team looks to you for guidance and leadership. You will find yourself, at one time or another, in the position of being a father, a mother, a teacher, a friend, and a disciplinarian; and many times all of these on the same day -- your guidance effects the youths in all situations.

It is the intent of the City to ensure that games shall be conducted with good sportsmanship and fair play. It is our hope that the managers and coaches be the type of individuals who our society can point to as worthy examples for youths to follow.

II. CODE OF CONDUCT

A. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FOLLOWING:

1. A coach, assistant coach, parent, spectator or player shall not at any time lay a hand upon, push, shove, strike, or threaten to strike a referee, or they are subject to ejection from the game, as well as, any or all games left in the season.
2. A coach, assistant coach, parent, spectator or player shall not verbally abuse a referee or use profane, obscene, or vulgar language in any manner or at any time.
3. A coach shall not appear at any time in an intoxicated condition, smell of alcohol or have in his/her possession any alcoholic beverage.
4. For the conduct of his/her own spectators or rooters on either side of the playing area.
5. For the conduct of his/her players while they are on the field or sidelines.
6. For seeing that his/her assistant coaches and team helpers exhibit good sportsmanship before, during and after the game.
7. Win, lose, or draw, all coaches, assistant coaches and players will be required to show good sportsmanship by giving a cheer to the other team and shaking hands after the game.

Recreation Code of Conduct

CODE OF CONDUCT

The benefits of Recreation are endless - promoting health, building strong families, and creating a sense of community. To ensure the quality of programs and public safety, all program participants, parents, spectators, coaches, and volunteers must abide by this

Code of Conduct:

- All persons shall act with respect towards others; respect their privacy, and personal safety
- All persons shall treat and respect public and private property, City facilities, and equipment with respect
- Observe program rules and regulations at all times
- Behave responsibly, always exercising self-discipline
- Cooperate with or assist the City staff in maintaining safety, order, and discipline

NEVER TOLERATED AND REASON FOR IMMEDIATE REMOVAL

AND DISMISSAL:

- Abusive language or disrespect towards a staff member, volunteer, another participant, or member of the public
- Discourtesy or rudeness to a fellow participant, staff member, or volunteer
- Verbal, physical, or visual harassment of another participant, staff member, or member of the public of any kind
- Bullying or taking unfair advantage of any participant
- Possession or usage of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs on the City of Santa Clarita property, or reporting to the program while under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials such as firearms, weapons, or other similar items on City property
- Conduct endangering the life, safety, health, or well being of others
- Failure to leave the area in the condition in which you found it, including restrooms gym, hallways, and any other area used - this includes vandalism/graffiti
- Failure to follow any Department of Parks, Recreation, and Community Services policy or procedure

Coaches Code of Conduct

- I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my players ahead of a personal desire to win.
- I will praise my players just for participating.
- I will look for positives, and make a big deal out of them.
- I will stay calm when my players make mistakes, helping them learn from their mistakes.
- I will treat my players with respect, avoiding put-down, sarcasm, or ridicule.
- I will remind my players not to get down on themselves.
- I will remind myself, and my players, to laugh and keep a sense of humor.
- I will emphasize teamwork, and help my players to think “we” instead of “me.”
- I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players.
- I will remember not to take myself too seriously during the game.
- I will maintain a “fun is #1” attitude.
- I will remember that I am a youth coach, and that the game is for children and not adults.
- I will be a role model for good sportsmanship:
 - Winning without gloating
 - Losing without complaining
 - Treating my opponent and officials with fairness and courtesy

I. WetBulb Globe Temperature (WBGT)

- a. The WetBulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) is a measure of the heat stress in direct sunlight, which considers: temperature, humidity, wind speed, sun angle, and cloud cover (solar radiation). This differs from the Heat Index, which takes into consideration temperature and humidity and is calculated for shady areas.

WBGT Temp.	Outdoor Activity Guidelines
<82°F	Provide at least three hydration breaks per practice/game. (i.e. substitutions, timeouts, halftime or hydration breaks during practice)
82.2 – 86.9°F	Use discretion for intense or prolonged exercise. Provide at least 12 minutes of breaks during each practice/game. (i.e. substitutions, timeouts and halftime, or hydrations breaks during practice)
87.1 – 90.0°F	Provide at least 16 minutes rest breaks during each practice/game (i.e. substitutions, timeouts and halftime, or hydrations breaks during practice)
90.1 – 91.9°F	Practices and or games are permitted with additional hydration breaks. There must be 20 minutes of rest breaks distributed throughout the hour of practice /games. (i.e. substitutions, timeouts and halftime, or hydrations breaks during practice)
>92.1°F	No outdoor practices or games. Delay practices and games until a cooler WBGT is reached.

* The Outdoor Activity Guidelines are based on the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) Extreme Heat and Air Quality Policy, as mandated by the William S. Hart District (District). A petition was granted by CIF to the District to move from the category 2 to category 3. Modifications in this document align with City Sports programming.

II. Excessive Heat

- a. The National Weather Service issues an Excessive Heat Warning when there are conditions of a Heat Wave or Extreme Heat. Excessive Heat is defined as temperatures that reach a **Heat Index of 105 degrees**. The Youth Sports office will use the OSHA-NIOSH Heat Safety Tool (App) to access real-time heat index and hourly forecasts.

III. Unhealthy Air Quality

- a. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the Air Quality Index defines unhealthy air quality at 150 AQI or above. It is advised that everyone reduces prolonged or heavy exertion. The Youth Sports office will use the IQ AirVisual / Air Quality (App) to access real-time air quality.

IV. Game Cancellation

- a. The decision to cancel or postpone games due to heat or unhealthy air quality will be made at the discretion of the Youth Sports Supervisor using any one of the guidelines above. A game can be called off at any time, regardless of the inning, quarter, or period, if the conditions are unplayable. If there is no information from the Youth Sports Office, all games will proceed as scheduled. For any inquiries, please get in touch with the Youth Sports Office at (661) 250-3756 or youthsports@santaclarita.gov

Flag Football Disciplinary Sanctions

ACTION	SANCTION
- Two (2) Unsportsmanlike Conducts or One (1) Ejection in a single game - Aggressive confrontation with official, staff, coach, player or spectator <u>before or during</u> a game.	Removal from the game and facility One-week suspension including practices and games, with facility restrictions
Aggressive confrontation <u>after</u> a game with official, staff, coach, player or spectator.	One-week suspension, which includes restrictions on practicing and participating in games at the facility.
- Any aggressive confrontation, including two (2) Unsportsmanlike Conducts, following a one (1) game suspension - Threat or engagement in physical violence towards official, staff, coach, player, or spectator. - Physical/Verbal threat or abuse of a child.	Termination as Coach Participant's removal from the League Minimum two-week suspension, including practices and games, with facility restriction

Violations by a coach, player, or spectator may apply to ALL TEAMS associated with the program. If a person forfeits a game due to a disciplinary sanction, they will be immediately terminated as a coach. Individuals who receive a disciplinary sanction have the right to submit a written appeal within 48 hours of receiving notification of the sanction. Appeals will be heard by the Youth Sports Supervisor and Administrator. They have the responsibility and authority to interpret and enforce these sanctions on a non-negotiable, case-by-case basis. Until an appeal verdict is rendered, the disciplinary sanction shall be upheld.

The purpose of the City of Santa Clarita Youth Sports Program is to provide a fun, safe, and positive environment for all participants.

I agree to the above disciplinary sanctions and I understand that failure to abide by the Code of Conduct, or any serious violation of the rules and guidelines, may result in my removal, suspension, or termination as a volunteer coach.

Guidelines for Honoring the Game

The key to preventing adult misbehavior in youth sports is a youth sports culture in which all involved "Honor the Game." Honoring the Game gets to the ROOTS of the matter and involves respect for the Rules, Opponents, Officials, Teammates and one's Self. You don't bend the rules to win. You understand that a worthy opponent is a gift that forces you to play to your highest potential. You show respect for officials even when you disagree. You refuse to do anything that embarrasses your team. You live up to your own standards even if others don't. Here are ways that **parents** can create a positive youth sports culture so that children will have fun and learn positive character traits to last a lifetime.

Before the Game:

1. Make a commitment to Honor the Game in action and language no matter what others may do.
2. Tell your child before each game that you are proud of him or her regardless of how well he or she plays.

During the Game:

1. Fill your children's "Emotional Tank" through praise and positive recognition so they can play their very best.
2. Don't give instructions to your child during the game. Let the coach correct player mistakes.
3. Cheer good plays by both teams (this is advanced behavior!)
4. Mention good calls by the official to other parents.
5. If an official makes a "bad" call against your team? Honor the Game—BE SILENT!
6. If another parent on your team yells at an official? Gently remind him or her to Honor the Game.
7. Don't do anything in the heat of the moment that you will regret after the game. Ask yourself, "Will this embarrass my child or the team?"
8. Remember to have fun! Enjoy the game.

After the Game:

1. Thank the officials for doing a difficult job for little or no pay.
2. Thank the coaches for their commitment and effort.
3. Don't give advice. Instead ask your child what he or she thought about the game and then LISTEN. Listening fills Emotional Tanks.
4. Tell your child again that you are proud of him or her, whether the team won or lost.

Guide for a Successful Parents Meeting

1. Introductions – Introduce yourself to the parents and make sure you get their name and contact information. This could also be a good time for teammates to bond.
2. Discuss Objectives and Expectations – Share with your parents the philosophy of the program and explain your coaching philosophy and how it relates. Share your expectations and ask parents to share their expectations. Talk about playing time requirements, and how you will decide who plays what position.
3. Briefly explain the rules of the game as they relate to playing time and conduct of the spectators. You may want to provide a copy of the rules at this time. Be clear that this program focuses on positive sportsmanship and that unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated.
4. Practice Plan - Explain when/where you plan to conduct practices. Talk about what you expect from players during practices and how they can get involved in practice sessions.
5. Tell them where games will be played and when players should meet before games.
6. Recruit parents to help out with team tasks such as snack lists, communications and arranging team parties.
7. Hand out appropriate literature: Philosophy and Mission Statement, Parent Code of Conduct, Guidelines for Honoring the Game, etc.
8. Other items of discussion may include:
 - a. Car-pooling
 - b. Injuries
 - c. Illness

Mighty Mite & Junior Division Rules

I. BASIC CONCEPT OF THE GAME

The basic concept for the game of Flag Football is for the ball carrier to avoid bodily contact with the defensive player. The defense should attempt to remove the ball carrier's flag.

Flag Football is not tackle football; it is not power football. It is a different concept than power football in that the defense and offense strive by speed, quickness, and agility to defeat the opponent.

II. PRACTICES

Practices will be limited to a maximum of two practices per week and no longer than one hour per practice prior to the first game. Once the season has begun, practices will be limited to a maximum of two per week and no longer than one hour per practice. Teams will be given one guaranteed practice on a city permitted field per week.

III. REGULATION AND RULES OF PLAY

Conduct of Players, Coaches, Parents and Spectators

Any infraction of the rules shall be ordered by the referee to be corrected by the offending coach. Coaches shall at all times assist the officials with any conduct problems that may arise. If the situation is not corrected, the coach is then ejected from the park and the game shall be forfeited.

The referee is a representative of the City of Santa Clarita. No player, coach, assistant coach, parent, or spectator shall lay a hand upon, push, shove, strike, or threaten a referee. The referee has the power to order any individual(s) out of the park; if not complied with, the game shall be forfeited, and/or the Sheriff's Department will be called. Should a player, coach, assistant coach, parent, and/or spectator be ejected from the game because of the Unsportsmanlike conduct, he/she will not be allowed to attend the next game, or possibly any remaining games, his/her child is scheduled to participate in. Failure to abide by the Codes of Conduct or any serious violation of the rules and guidelines may result in the Disciplinary Sanctions of removal, suspension, or termination as a volunteer coach.

A. RULES OF PLAY

1. Equipment

- a. Tennis shoes, basketball shoes, or rubber molded cleat shoes must be worn. Metal spikes and shoes with removable spikes are prohibited.
- b. NO hard surface padding such as shoulder pads, elbow pads, hip pads, rip pads on arms, or helmets may be worn. If worn, kneepads must be worn underneath outer clothing. Players with hard casts will not be eligible to participate. Players wearing soft casts must have a doctor's note to participate. Jewelry, including earrings and/or any hard clip **must** be removed before the start of the game. Baseball type hats will not be allowed.
- c. Uniform Jerseys will be provided for each team and must be worn tucked into pants or shorts.
- d. Player's may not have the same color vertical stripe as the flags being worn.

- e. Friction-type belts and flags shall be provided and may not be altered in any way.
- f. Mighty Mites will be using Nerf football. Junior will be using a Pee Wee sized NFL ball.

2. Players

- a. Both offense and defense will consist of 6 players.
- b. If a player arrives with no jersey for the first week, a warning will be issued to the team. Week two and beyond, the penalty issued will be five yards forward from the starting spot for the opposing teams offensive drive.

3. Grace Period

- a. All games shall start at the scheduled starting time. In the event either team has less than 5 players ready to play, a 5-minute grace period from the official starting time will be permitted for such team to field 4 or 5 players. If said team cannot field the required players within the grace period, the game shall be forfeited to the other team; at which point players may be borrowed and the game played for practice. **Officials Must Officiate Practice Game.** If neither team can field the required players within the grace period, a double forfeit shall be declared. Games will not be rescheduled. **Games will only be rescheduled for City of Santa Clarita logistical reasons (no exceptions).**

4. Insurance

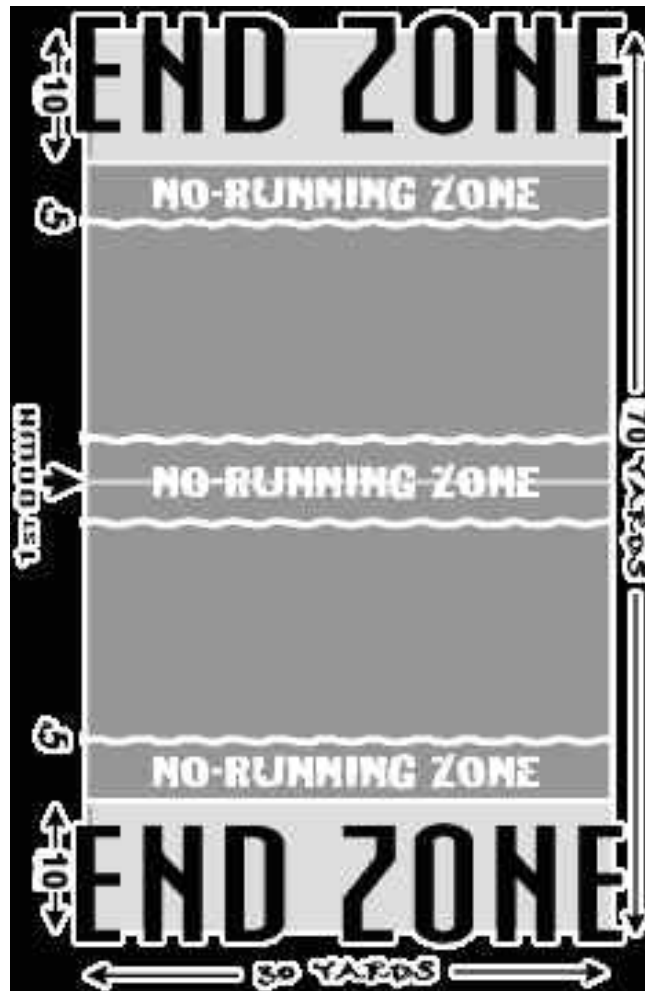
- a. No participant or coach will be covered by the City of Santa Clarita insurance.

5. Game Cancellation Policy

- a. The decision to cancel or postpone games due to heat, unhealthy air quality, or inclement weather will be made by the Youth Sports Supervisor. A game can be called off at any time, regardless of the inning, quarter, or period, if the conditions are unplayable. If there is no information from the Youth Sports Office, all games will proceed as scheduled. For any inquiries, please reach out to the Youth Sports Office.
- b. Games cancelled due to increment weather and/or field conditions will be rescheduled if time permits.

6. Playing Field

- a. The regulation dimensions of the NFL Flag Football Field is 30'x 70'. Only one coach may be present on the field to assist players in the Mighty Mite & Junior division ONLY. This coach must avoid all contact/interference with any play on the field. Not doing so may result in loss of on field privilege.
- b. Home Team will take the field on the side of the scoreboard. Away Team will take the field opposite of the scoreboard.



7. Inadvertent Whistle
 - a. In the case of an inadvertent whistle the Offense will have the option to either take the result of the play at the point of the blown whistle, or replay the down. *Note: If an inadvertent whistle occurs after an interception the intercepting team will receive the result of the play at the time of the whistle.*
 - b. If an inadvertent whistle occurs while the ball is in the air, the down will be replayed regardless of the outcome.

B. TIMING, TIE GAMES, SUBSTITUTIONS

1. Timing

- a. The scores table is responsible for time keeping (starting/stopping the clock) in all games in all situations.
- b. Game consists of four (4) ten (10) minute running time quarters.
- c. Each time the ball is spotted the offensive team has 35 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay of game penalty is enforced.
- d. The clock will not stop during the last two minutes in the Mighty Mite & Junior Division. The official shall notify the coaches and captains when approximately two (2) minutes remain in the half. If a player is hurt, the player must come out for one play and the injury will be an official time out.
- e. Teams may go to the sidelines between quarters and during timeouts.
- f. At the request of any player or coach, two (2) one-minute time out periods are allowed to each team in each half. Timeouts cannot be accumulated.
- g. A forfeit time of five (5) minutes after scheduled game time will be strictly enforced by the referee. However, a scrimmage will still be played with the official present.

2. Tie Games

- a. There is NO overtime in the Mighty Mite & Junior Division.

3. Substitutions

- a. Coaches must clear the bench every 5-minutes and at the end of each quarter. NO FREE SUBSTITUTIONS.
- c. The minimum playing time requirement for each player is (20) minutes per game.
Coaches must make every possible effort to distribute playing time as fairly and equitable as possible.

C. BALL IN PLAY, DOWNS, AND DEAD BALL

1. Putting the Ball in Play

- a. The winner of a pre-game coin toss will choose possession in the first or second half. If a team chooses to start with the ball in the first half, the opposing team will start with the ball in the second half. **No exceptions.**
- b. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
- c. **MIGHTY MITE ONLY** Interceptions will result in a change of possession and offense will start on offense's 5-yard line.

2. Ball in Play

- a. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four (4) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four (4) plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its own 5-yard line.

- b. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
- c. Pass interference is called by either team when any player movement beyond the line of scrimmage significantly hinders the progress of an eligible player's opportunity to catch the ball.
- d. A defensive player cannot intentionally draw an offensive player off-sides by jabbing his foot, or any other similar method.

3. Running

- a. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- b. Once the ball is handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- c. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player.
- d. The ball spot will be determined by where the ball position was when the flag was pulled.
- e. "No-running zones," located 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid all running situations. A run is a play that does not include a forward pass prior to crossing the line of scrimmage. **Note: Once a ball is spotted in the no-run zone, it will continue to be a no-run situation for the remainder of the 4-down series, regardless of penalties or any other loss of yardage resulting from play. (JUNIOR DIVISION ONLY)**
- f. **In the no-run zone, the ball must travel forward and beyond the line-of scrimmage to constitute a legal play.**

4. Receiving

- a. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage). Lateral passes are permitted limitless times, anywhere on the field. Offensive players may run down field with the ball carrier as long as they are not hindering the progress of any defender's opportunity to pull the ball carrier's flag.
- b. As in the NFL, only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
- c. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

5. Passing

- a. The quarterback has a seven-second "pass clock." If a pass is not thrown within seven seconds, the play is ruled dead with a loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the seven second rule is no longer in effect.
- b. **No quarterback runs.**

6. Formations

- a. Offense must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and up to five players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.

- b. The center must line up behind the line of scrimmage and must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave their hands.

7. Dead and Live Ball and Clock Stopping

- a. In all cases, after the ball has been touched and hits the ground, the ball is ruled DEAD. The ball shall be put in play where the ball hits the ground; except when the ball is tossed forward by the ball carrier, then the ball shall be put in play where the ball carrier lost possession.
- b. The "Spot" of the ball will be determined by where the ball was when the player's flag was pulled.
- c. If the ball is hiked and hits the ground, the ball will be spotted back to the original hiking spot and a loss of down will occur.

D. SCORING.

1. Touchdowns and Extra Points

- a. A touchdown shall be 6 points. A safety shall be 2 points. A conversion from the 5-yard line is 1 point. A conversion from the 12-yard line is 2 points. The placement of the conversion must be stated to the referee before the team breaks their huddle.
- b. Penalties that occur before the snap while attempting a 1 or 2 Point After Touchdown on the offense will result retrying the PAT. For a 1-point attempt, the penalty will result in the try at the 2-point line. For a 2-point attempt, the penalty will result in moving back five yards from the 2-point line.

Note: Intercepted extra point attempts may be run back for the corresponding point value of the **attempt: 1 or 2 points.**

2. Safety

- a. A safety is scored when an offensive player causes the ball to go behind his/her own goal line, and it becomes dead in his team's possession or when the ball carrier has his/her flag pulled in their own end zone. (2 points)

E. THE BALL CARRIER, BLOCKING, AND DEFENSE.

1. Offensive charging/hurdling/illegal contact

- a. The ball carrier shall strive to avoid having his/her flag pulled by the use of agility rather than power. Any attempt by the ball carrier to run over, charge, hurdle, or straight-arm a defensive player is illegal. The "running over" by the ball carrier will be judged based on a defender's established position. A hurdle is also called when the ball carrier jumps or dives forward to avoid their flag from being pulled.

2. Stopping the Ball Carrier and Loose Equipment

- a. In order to down the ball carrier, the opponent must pull either flag from the belt.
- b. Each player is responsible for not having loose clothing or equipment. All clothing must be tucked inside the pants so that the belts and flags

- will be visibly tight and worn at the waist level on each side.
- c. If, for any reason a flag falls off accidentally from the ball carrier, a tag with one or both hands on any part of the body will down the ball carrier.
 - d. The defensive player may not strip the ball from the ball carriers hands.
3. Flag Guarding
- a. In the event of a ball carrier is called for flag guarding after passing the first down marker, the team will be rewarded with the first down, and penalty yardage will begin at the point where the flag guarding occurred. If the player is called for flag guarding before the first down marker, the penalty yardage will begin at the point where the flag guarding occurred, and result in a loss of down.
4. Screening – Non Contact Blocking
- a. All screens must be set behind the line of scrimmage. Example: Center moving to stay between QB and rusher. Rusher must try to get around center without initiating contact. Illegal contact will be determined by the official.
 - b. **Once a ball carrier crosses the line of scrimmage, offensive players must make an effort to avoid the play (official's discretion).**
5. Defensive Roughness
- a. The defense cannot tackle, hold, block, trip, push, charge, or bump the ball carrier out of bounds.
 - b. If the last defensive player between the ball carrier and the goal is guilty of any of the above infractions, (6a) **the ball carrier may be awarded the score he/she would have attained if the foul did not occur** (at the discretion of the official).
 - c. A defensive player cannot tackle, hold, block, trip, push, charge, intentionally bump, push the quarterback out of bounds, or hit his arm while the quarterback is attempting to pass the ball.
6. Offsides
- a. Prior to the snap the Defense may not jump off-sides. No Defender may break the plane and jump off-sides and jump back. Once the plane is broken, the play will continue, and a coach can elect to take the penalty or accept the result of the play.
 - b. **Defense must line up behind the 7-yard cone prior to the snap. (MIGHT MITE DIVISION ONLY)**
7. Defensive Rushing
- a. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Defensive players are allowed to rush the quarterback with their hands up. Doing so may result in a penalty if an official deems contact was made with the rusher and quarterback. Making contact with the football while the ball is in the quarterback's hand may also result in a penalty. These

rules are implemented with the best interest in the quarterback's safety.

- b. Any number of players can rush the quarterback.
- c. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.

F. **Misconduct & Other Violations**

1. Coaches are responsible for the sportsmanlike conduct of their players, spectators, and themselves. Unsportsmanlike conduct such as yelling at the opposite team, and/or officials, derogatory comments, and foul language may be penalized by an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and/or removal from the game, as well as, any or all games left in the season. If the misconduct continues, the game can be forfeited. This will be determined on a case –by-case basis. If a coach or spectator is removed from the game, or a game is called because of their conduct, he or she will not attend at least the next game his/her child is to participate in. If the coach is removed from a game for any of these reasons, an assistant coach or parent will coach the remainder of the game. If an official is threatened or physically attacked by a coach or spectator, the game will be forfeited and that coach or spectator may not be allowed to coach or attend any of the remaining games. This includes any discussion friendly or not during and/or after the game.
2. If at any time during the game, an official has to stop play to address the conduct of a spectator, coach, assistant coach, or player, that team will be charged with a timeout. If that team has no timeouts remaining, an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty will be assessed to that team's bench.

I. BASIC CONCEPT OF THE GAME

The basic concept for the game of Flag Football is for the ball carrier to avoid bodily contact with the defensive player. The defense should attempt to remove the ball carrier's flag.

Flag Football is not tackle football; it is not power football. It is a different concept than power football in that the defense and offense strive by speed, quickness, and agility to defeat the opponent.

II. PRACTICES

Practices will be limited to a maximum of three practices per week and no longer than one and half hour per practice prior to the first game. Once the season has begun, practices will be limited to a maximum of two per week and no longer than one and a half hour per practice.

III. REGULATION AND RULES OF PLAY

Conduct of Players, Coaches, Parents and Spectators

Any infraction of the rules shall be ordered by the referee to be corrected by the offending coach. Coaches shall at all times assist the officials with any conduct problems that may arise. If the situation is not corrected, the coach is then ejected from the park and the game shall be forfeited.

The referee is a representative of the City of Santa Clarita. No player, coach, assistant coach, parent, or spectator shall lay a hand upon, push, shove, strike, or threaten a referee. The referee has the power to order any individual(s) out of the park; if not complied with, the game shall be forfeited, and/or the Sheriff's Department will be called. Should a player, coach, assistant coach, parent, and/or spectator be ejected from the game because of the Unsportsmanlike conduct, he/she will not be allowed to attend the next game, or possibly any remaining games, his/her child is scheduled to participate in. Failure to abide by the Codes of Conduct or any serious violation of the rules and guidelines may result in the Disciplinary Sanctions of removal, suspension, or termination as a volunteer coach.

A. RULES OF PLAY

1. Equipment

- a. Tennis shoes, basketball shoes, or rubber molded cleat shoes must be worn. Metal spikes and shoes with removable spikes are prohibited.
- b. NO hard surface padding such as shoulder pads, elbow pads, hip pads, rip pads on arms, or helmets may be worn. If worn, kneepads must be worn underneath outer clothing. Players with hard casts will not be eligible to participate. Players wearing soft casts must have a doctor's note to participate. Jewelry, including earrings and/or any hard clip **must** be removed before the start of the game. Baseball type hats will not be allowed.

- d. Uniform Jerseys will be provided for each team and must be worn tucked into pants or shorts.
- e. Player's may not have the same color vertical stripe as the flags being worn.
- f. Friction-type belts and flags shall be provided and may not be altered in any way.
- g. Minor will be using a Nike Junior or Wilson TDJ football. Major will be using a Nike Youth, Wilson Youth, or Wilson TDY football. Senior will be using a full-size football.

2. Players

- a. Both offense and defense will consist of 6 players.

3. Grace Period

- a. All games shall start at the scheduled starting time. In the event either team has less than 5 players ready to play, a 5-minute grace period from the official starting time will be permitted for such team to field 4 or 5 players. If said team cannot field the required players within the grace period, the game shall be forfeited to the other team; at which point players may be borrowed and the game played for practice. **Officials Must Officiate Practice Game.** If neither team can field the required players within the grace period, a double forfeit shall be declared. Games will not be rescheduled. **Games will only be rescheduled for City of Santa Clarita logistical reasons (no exceptions).**

4. Insurance

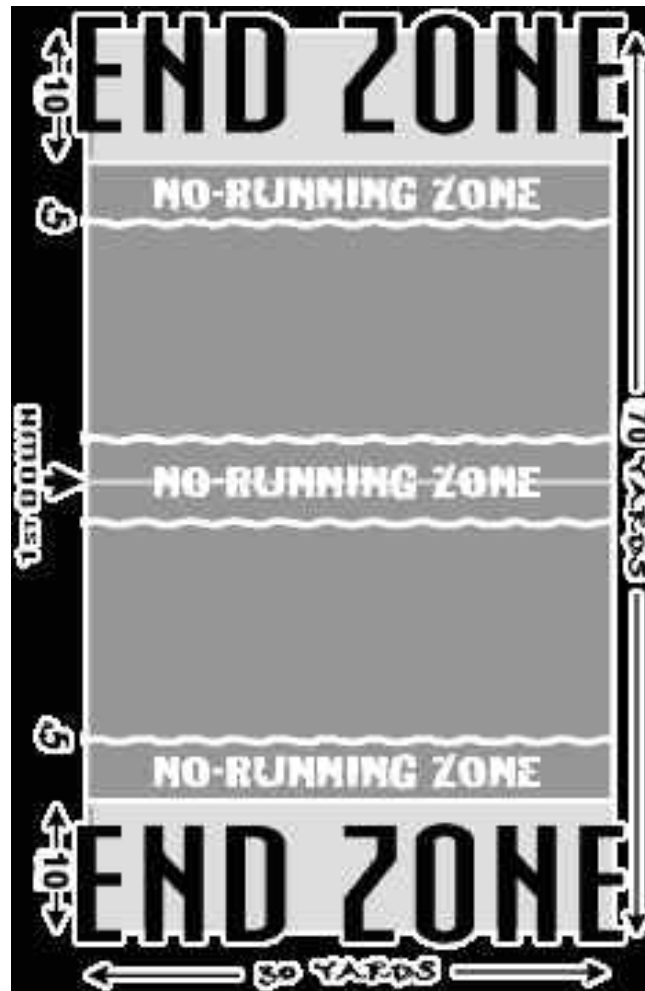
- a. No participant or coach will be covered by the City of Santa Clarita insurance.

5. Game Cancellation Policy

- a. The decision to cancel or postpone games due to heat, unhealthy air quality, or inclement weather will be made by the Youth Sports Supervisor. A game can be called off at any time, regardless of the inning, quarter, or period, if the conditions are unplayable. If there is no information from the Youth Sports Office, all games will proceed as scheduled. For any inquiries, please reach out to the Youth Sports Office.
- b. Games cancelled due to increment weather and/or field conditions will be rescheduled if time permits.

6. Playing Field

- a. The regulation dimensions of the NFL Flag Football Field is 30'x 70' with No-Running Zones 5-yards before Mid-field and the End Zone.
- b. Home Team will take the field on sideline opposite the cones. Away Team will take the field on the sidelines with the cones.



7. Inadvertent Whistle
 - a. In the case of an inadvertent whistle the Offense will have the option to either take the result of the play at the point of the blown whistle, or replay the down. *Note: If an inadvertent whistle occurs after an interception the intercepting team will receive the result of the play at the time of the whistle.*
 - b. If an inadvertent whistle occurs while the ball is in the air, the down will be replayed regardless of the outcome.

B. TIMING, TIE GAMES, SUBSTITUTIONS

1. Timing
 - a. The scores table is responsible for time keeping (starting/stopping the clock) in all games in all situations.
 - b. Game consists of four (4) ten (10) minute running time quarters.
 - c. Each time the ball is spotted the offensive team has 35 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay of game penalty is enforced.
 - d. The clock will stop on timeouts, delay of game penalties, and on a dead ball during the last two minutes of the 4th quarter. However, the

clock will not stop running if one team is ahead by 21 points or more. The official shall notify the coaches and captains when approximately two (2) minutes remain in the half. If a player is hurt, the player must come out for one play and the injury will be an official time out.

- e. Teams may go to the sidelines between quarters and during the timeouts.
 - f. At the request of any player or coach, 2 one-minute time out periods are allowed to each team in each half. Time outs cannot be accumulated.
 - g. A forfeit time of five (5) minutes after scheduled game time will be strictly enforced by the referee. However, a scrimmage will still be played with the official present.
2. Tie Games
- a. There is NO overtime during regular season games. If there is a tie at the end of a PLAYOFF game both teams will have one offensive series to score. This process will repeat until the tie is broken. Ball will start on the 5 yard No-Run zone closest to the end zone in which the offense is facing.
3. Substitutions
- a. Coaches must clear the bench every 5-minutes and at the end of each quarter. **For the last 5 minutes of the fourth quarter, coaches have FREE substitutions. (Every player must enter the game during the last 5-minutes)**
 - b. The minimum playing time requirement for each player is (15) minutes per game.
Coaches must make every possible effort to distribute playing time as fairly and equitable as possible.

D. BALL IN PLAY, DOWNS, AND DEAD BALL

1. Putting the Ball in Play
- a. The winner of a pre-game coin toss will choose possession in the first or second half. If a team chooses to start with the ball in the first half, the opposing team will start with the ball in the second half. **No exceptions.**
 - b. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5 yard line.
2. Ball in Play
- a. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four (4) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four (4) plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its own 5-yard line.
 - b. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
 - c. Pass interference is called by either team when any player movement beyond the line of scrimmage significantly hinders the progress of an eligible player's opportunity to catch the ball.

- d. A defensive player cannot intentionally draw an offensive player off-side by jabbing his foot, or any other similar method.

3. Running

- a. “No-running zones,” located 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid all running situations. A run is a play that does not include a forward pass prior to crossing the line of scrimmage. **Note: Once a ball is spotted in the no-run zone, it will continue to be a no-run situation for the remainder of the 4-down series, regardless of penalties or any other loss of yardage resulting from play.**
- a. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- b. Once the ball is handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- c. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player.
- e. The ball spot will be determined by where the ball position was when the flag was pulled.
- f. **In the no-run zone, the ball must travel forward and beyond the line-of scrimmage to constitute a legal play.**

4. Receiving

- a. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage). Lateral passes are permitted limitless times, anywhere on the field. Offensive players may run down field with the ball carrier as long as they are not hindering the progress of any defender’s opportunity to pull the ball carrier’s flag.
- b. As in the NFL, only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
- c. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

5. Passing

- a. The quarterback has a seven-second “pass clock.” If a pass is not thrown within seven seconds, the play is ruled dead with a loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the seven second rule is no longer in effect.
- b. **No quarterback runs.**

6. Formations

- a. Offense must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and up to five players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
- b. The center must line up behind the line of scrimmage and must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave their hands.

7. Dead and Live Ball and Clock Stopping

- a. In all cases, after the ball has been touched and hits the ground, the

- ball is ruled DEAD. The ball shall be put in play where the ball hits the ground; except when the ball is tossed forward by the ball carrier, then the ball shall be put in play where the ball carrier lost possession.
- b. The “Spot” of the ball will be determined by where the ball was when the player’s flag was pulled.
 - c. If the ball is hiked and hits the ground, the ball will be spotted at the point where it touched on the field. In the occasion of a ball being hiked into the endzone behind the offense, a safety will occur and the ball will be turned over to the opposing team.

D. SCORING.

1. Touchdowns and Extra Points

- a. A touchdown shall be 6 points. A safety shall be 2 points. A conversion from the 5 yard line is 1 point. A conversion from the 12 yard line is 2 points. The placement of the conversion must be stated to the referee before the team breaks their huddle.
- b. If at the beginning of the third quarter, or anytime thereafter, there is a 30-point difference in the score, the scoreboard shall be turned off and the teams will play out the time left on the clock.

Note: Intercepted extra point attempts may be run back for the corresponding point value of the **attempt: 1 or 2 points.**

2. Safety

- a. A safety is scored when an offensive player causes the ball to go behind his/her own goal line, and it becomes dead in his team's possession or when the ball carrier has his/her flag pulled in their own end zone. (2 points)

E. THE BALL CARRIER, BLOCKING, AND DEFENSE.

1. Offensive charging/hurdling/illegal contact

- a. The ball carrier shall strive to avoid having his/her flag pulled by the use of agility rather than power. Any attempt by the ball carrier to run over, charge, hurdle, or straight-arm a defensive player is illegal. The "running over" by the ball carrier will be judged based on a defender's established position. A hurdle is also called when the ball carrier jumps or dives forward to avoid their flag from being pulled.

2. Stopping the Ball Carrier and Loose Equipment

- a. In order to down the ball carrier, the opponent must pull either flag from the belt.
- b. Each player is responsible for not having loose clothing or equipment. All clothing must be tucked inside the pants so that the belts and flags will be visibly tight and worn at the waist level on each side.
- c. If, for any reason a flag falls off accidentally from the ball carrier, a tag with one or both hands on any part of the body will down the ball carrier.
- d. The defensive player may not strip the ball from the ball carriers hands.

3. Flag Guarding

- a. In the event of a ball carrier is called for flag guarding after passing the first down marker, the team will be rewarded with the first down, and penalty yardage will begin at the point where the flag guarding occurred. If the player is called for flag guarding before the first down marker, the penalty yardage will begin at the point where the flag guarding occurred, and result in a loss of down.
4. Screening – Non Contact Blocking
 - a. All screens must be set behind the line of scrimmage. Example: Center moving to stay between QB and rusher. Rusher must try to get around center without initiating contact. Illegal contact will be determined by the official.
 - b. **Once a ball carrier crosses the line of scrimmage, offensive players must make an effort to avoid the play (official's discretion).**
 - d. The offensive screen block shall take place without contact. The screen blocker shall have his/her hands and arms at his/her side or behind his/her back when screen blocking. Any use of the hands, arms, elbows, legs, or body to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal. A blocker may use his/her hand or arm to break a fall or to retain his/her balance. A player must be on his/her feet before, during, and after screen blocking. *Penalty:* Personal Foul
5. Defensive Roughness
 - a. The defense cannot tackle, hold, block, trip, push, charge, or bump the ball carrier out of bounds.
 - b. If the last defensive player between the ball carrier and the goal is guilty of any of the above infractions, (6a) **the ball carrier may be awarded the score he/she would have attained if the foul did not occur** (at the discretion of the official).
 - c. A defensive player cannot tackle, hold, block, trip, push, charge, intentionally bump, push the quarterback out of bounds, or hit his arm while the quarterback is attempting to pass the ball.
6. Offsides
 - a. Prior to the snap the Defense may not jump off-sides. No Defender may break the plane and jump off-sides and jump back. Once the plane is broken, the play will continue, and a coach can elect to take the penalty or accept the result of the play.
7. Defensive Rushing
 - a. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Defensive players are allowed to rush the quarterback with their hands up. Doing so may result in a penalty if an official deems contact was made with the rusher and quarterback. Making contact with the football while the ball is in the quarterback's hand may also result in a penalty. These rules are implemented with the best interest in the quarterback's safety.
 - b. Any number of players can rush the quarterback.
 - c. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.

F. **Misconduct & Other Violations**

1. Coaches are responsible for the sportsmanlike conduct of their players, spectators, and themselves. Unsportsmanlike conduct such as yelling at the opposite team, and/or officials, derogatory comments, and foul language may be penalized by an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and/or removal from the game, as well as, any or all games left in the season. If the misconduct continues, the game can be forfeited. This will be determined on a case –by-case basis. If a coach or spectator is removed from the game, or a game is called because of their conduct, he or she will not attend at least the next game his/her child is to participate in. If the coach is removed from a game for any of these reasons, an assistant coach or parent will coach the remainder of the game. If an official is threatened or physically attacked by a coach or spectator, the game will be forfeited and that coach or spectator may not be allowed to coach or attend any of the remaining games. This includes any discussion friendly or not during and/or after the game.
2. If at any time during the game, an official has to stop play to address the conduct of a spectator, coach, assistant coach, or player, that team will be charged with a timeout. If that team has no timeouts remaining, an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty will be assessed to that team's bench.
3. Only the City approved volunteer Head Coach and 2 assistant Coaches are permitted on the sideline during the game.

G. **STANDINGS / PLAYOFFS.**

All divisions except for Junior will keep score and standings. Standings will be kept up-to-date in the Youth Sports Office and posted to the Youth Sport Website, www.santa-clarita.com/youthsports, on a weekly basis. Standings will be kept for all regular season games. At the end of the regular season play, ALL teams except Junior will be seeded into the playoffs based on their final standings. Tie-breakers are determined by head-to-head play, followed by quality of wins based on records of other teams, and finally by a coin toss. Points scored **are not** factored into this equation. Teams will have the opportunity to participate in Playoffs. Playoffs will occur in a single elimination format. The two teams who advance in the tournament will then have the opportunity to participate in a Championship Game on the final week of the season.

Heads Up: Safety in Youth Sports

Dehydration and Heat Illness

Why Kids Are at Risk:

1. Children absorb more heat from a hot environment than adults. The smaller the child the faster they heat up.
2. Children release less heat through sweating.
3. Children usually don't drink enough fluids to replenish sweat losses during prolonged exercise.
4. Young athletes may be more easily distracted when occasions allow for them to rest and rehydrate.

Signs of Dehydration and Heat Illness

If dehydration progresses unchecked, the risk of heat illness increases. Heat illness is best understood in three separate degrees: HEAT CRAMPS, HEAT EXHAUSTION and the most serious and deadly form, HEAT STROKE.

Dehydration

Dehydration during exercise is a common problem. Some young athletes can begin to suffer the consequences of dehydration if they become dehydrated by just 2 percent of their body weight. That's why it's important to recognize the warning signs:

- Noticeable Thirst
- Muscle Cramps
- Weakness
- Decreased Performance
- Nausea
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Lightheaded Feeling or Dizziness
- Difficulty Paying Attention

Treating the symptoms of dehydration is crucial in preventing more serious conditions such as heat exhaustion.

1. Rest in a cool place.
2. Consume a sports drink that contains the adequate amount of electrolytes.
3. Prevent dehydration in the future by consuming fluids before, during and after exercise.
4. Allow for ample time to rehydrate.

Heads Up: Safety in Youth Sports (cont.)

Heat Exhaustion

If dehydration goes untreated, the likelihood of heat exhaustion may increase. Common symptoms of heat exhaustion are:

- Dizziness and fatigue
- Chills
- Rapid pulse

Treatment of heat exhaustion is similar to that of dehydration and should take place immediately. This treatment includes:

1. Rest in a cool, shaded area and place ice cold towels on the body.
2. Drink a sports drink that contains the adequate amount of electrolytes.
3. Lie down with legs elevated to promote circulation.
4. Athlete should begin to feel better relatively soon; if not, assume heat stroke.

Heat Stroke

Heat stroke is a medical emergency! When it is not recognized promptly and treated properly, it can result in death. If rapid cooling does not occur, damage could be extreme, resulting in fatal consequences. Symptoms and results of heat stroke include:

- Very high core body temperature
- Altered central nervous system function (i.e., confusion or unconsciousness)
- Otherwise healthy athlete collapses during intense exercise in the heat

Remember that athletes get better relatively quickly with heat exhaustion, and they get worse with heat stroke. The important thing to remember is that heat stroke must be treated immediately by doing the following:

- Immediate cool-down by whatever means possible
 - An ice bath in a “cool pool” is preferable because of the superior cooling rates (holding head out of bath)

Heads Up: Safety in Youth Sports (cont.)

- Ice packs over as much of the body as possible
- A cool shower
- Cool, wet towels
- Water spray
- **SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION IMMEDIATELY** (always transport a suspected heat stroke victim to the hospital).
- Do not drink fluids since nausea and vomiting are extremely common.

Reference:

Kendrick Fincher Hydration Foundation

For more information visit: http://www.kendrickfincher.org/hydration_facts.htm#

Safety Rules

- Players must remove any jewelry (necklaces, rings, earrings, etc.) to prevent a hazard to opponents and themselves.
- If a child has a special need, check with the parents on how to address that need.
- Here is a list of suggested first-aid supplies you might want to have on hand
 - Band-aids
 - Gauze pads
 - Ice packs
 - Athletic tape
- Procedure for Serious Accidents
 1. Do not move the individual if indications are that they may have a back or neck injury.
 2. Get in touch with parents and proceed from there, offering assistance in every way.
 - a. If parents cannot be contacted or the situation requires immediate medical attention, call 911. Stay with the child until help arrives.

Concussion in Youth Sports

The Facts

- d. A concussion is a **brain injury**.
- e. All concussions are **serious**.
- f. Concussions can occur **without** loss of consciousness.
- g. Concussions can occur **in any sport**.
- h. Recognition and proper management of concussions when they first occur can help prevent further injury or even death.

Heads Up: Safety in Youth sports (cont.)

What is a Concussion?

A concussion is an injury that changes how the cells in the brain normally work. A concussion is caused by a blow to the head or body that causes the brain to move rapidly inside the skull. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. Concussions can also result from a fall or from players colliding with each other or with obstacles, such as a goalpost.

Recognizing a Possible Concussion

To help recognize a concussion, you should watch for the following two things among your athletes:

1. A forceful blow to the head or body that results in a rapid movement of the head.
- and-
2. Any change in the athlete’s behavior, thinking, or physical functioning. (See the signs and symptoms of concussion.)

Signs and Symptoms

Signs Observed by Coaching Staff

-
- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets sports plays
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can’t recall events prior to hit or fall
- Can’t recall events after hit or fall

Symptoms Reported by Athlete

- Headache or “pressure” in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not “feel right”

Action Plan: What to do When a Concussion is Suspected

1. **Remove the athlete from play.** Look for the signs and symptoms of a concussion if your athlete has experienced a bump or blow to the head.

Ensure that the athlete is evaluated right away by an appropriate health care professional.
Do not try to judge the severity of concussions.

Warm-Up Exercises

Jogging

Have players jog (not run) a lap or two around the flag football field prior to practices and games. This will get their heart rate up and prepare muscles for exercise.

Jumping Jacks

Having players do these will increase their heart rate and stretch leg, back, and arm muscles.

Stretching Exercises

Hamstring Stretch

Stand upright and cross your left foot in front of your right, so the outside of your left foot is close to the outside of your right foot. Slowly bend forward at the waist, moving your hands toward your toes. Stop when you feel a gentle stretch through the right hamstring. Hold for thirty seconds. Breathe deeply and try to deepen the stretch with each exhale. Repeat the exercise for your left leg by crossing your right foot in front of your left.

Calf Stretch

In a push up position extend the right leg back as straight as possible. Place the left leg over the right. Push the right heel down as far as possible. Hold for ten seconds. Release. Switch legs.

Groin Stretches

Sit on the floor. Forming a circular shape with your legs, join the soles of your feet together and hold them with your hands. Lean your elbows on the inside of your legs. Lean your upper body forward from the hips.

Shoulder Stretch

Place your right arm across your chest just below chin level. Take the opposite hand and grab the right elbow, gently pull the arm until you feel a stretch in the shoulder. Hold for ten seconds. Release. Switch arms. Repeat.

Arm Stretches

Loosen up your arms/shoulders by sticking them straight out (sideways), swirl them in small tight circles, make the circles wider and wider until you're basically swinging your arms in a circle that goes from the floor around to the ceiling. That should take about thirty seconds. Do this again but swirling your arms in the reverse direction.

Proper Grip

An appropriate grip varies from one person to another. Size of hands and length of fingers always influence placement of the hand. There is no one specific way to grip the football. To provide enough control and pressure on the surface of the ball, hold the top half with one to three fingers spread across the laces and the index finger crossing the seam close to the ball's tip. Players need to practice different grips to find which one works best for them.

Proper Throwing Technique

The focus here is on an over-the-top delivery, flicking the wrists and following through for maximum velocity. Step toward target with front foot as you release the ball.

Receiving

Arms out-stretched, with the tips of the index fingers and thumbs touching, forming a diamond. This avoids the common pitfall of catching the ball with your chest.

Backpedaling

Backpedaling is especially important for players who will be covering speedy and shifty wide receivers; you must be able to move backward and side to side without losing much speed or taking time to shift body position. Defenders should focus on keeping an athletic stance, bent slightly at the waist and never crossing feet.

Offensive Drills

Handoff Drill

In this drill, the running back comes behind the quarterback and places his arms in the receiving position. If the running back is running left to right, his left hand is on top, aligning with his rib cage and his right hand is on the bottom aligning with his waist. If the back is running right to left, his right hand is on top and his left hand is on bottom. Have the quarterback hand the ball off to the running back twice while running in each direction, giving the back attempts to receive the ball correctly on a handoff.

Knee Drill

This knee drill is designed to improve your wrist snap and release while throwing the ball. Grab a partner and stand five yards apart. Get down on one knee and pick up a football in your throwing hand. Bring the ball up behind your ear and snap off a short pass to your partner, making sure to follow through so your arm comes down across your body. Repeat 10 times before moving an additional five yards away from your partner. Continue moving five feet back until you are out of your range.

Route Running

Players will line up, single file. One at a time, players will run a predetermined route. Coaches should watch each route and teach as players run the routes. After players feel comfortable with the route, add a pass from the coach.

Chase Drill

Just as players must learn to grab flags, they also must be able to avoid having their flags pulled on offense. Have players take turns being the defensive and offensive player and set up two cones 20 yards upfield, 10 yards apart. The ball carrier gets the ball along with a 3- to 5-yard head start. When the whistle blows, the ball carrier races for the condensed end zone while trying to move quickly and laterally to avoid having their flag grabbed.

Defensive Drills

Flag Pulling Drill

In this drill, you designate a defender and line up offensive players who form a single-file line. The offensive players run across the line of scrimmage with the ball, cutting right and left alternating, and increasing speed as the drills progresses. The defender must close in on the ball-carrier quickly, bend at the waist and ready to lunge for the flag with both hands.

Angle Pulling Drill

Set up two cones on the line of scrimmage, one about 10 yards to the right and the other about 10 yards to the left. Have each player wear a flag belt and pair up with another similar-sized player, with one being the running back and the other the linebacker. Position the players between the cones, facing each other about 10 yards apart. When you blow the whistle, have the running back sprint toward whichever cone she chooses. The linebacker must then take an angle of pursuit that will allow him to reach the running back before she gets past the cone. The linebacker will need to reach out across the body of the running back to grab her flag but should not make contact.

Flag Pulling Duel

Set up four to six cones to mark off a small square or circle. Have two players at a time enter the ring, each wearing a flag belt. Players will compete to see who can pull off the other's belt first. The winner will then take on a new challenger, until everyone on the team has had a chance to play.

Conditioning Drills

Sprint Drill

In this drill, each player starts at the goal line. On the coach's whistle, each player sprints to the 10-yard line and back, the 20-yard line and back and then the 40-yard line and back.

Gassers

These sprints go the length of the football field. For youth players, it's best to adjust the distance to 50 or 60 yards and adjust the number of sprints to 7 or 8. This drill will develop leg muscles and explosive speed.

Interval Sprints

Interval training improves endurance and speed. Have players start by sprinting for 15 yards, then go into a jog for 15 yards, then sprint 15 yards, then finish with a 15-yard jog. Another option is to start with a 15-yard jog and then sprint for 15 yards, as long as you do an equal number of jogs and sprints. Perform four or five repetitions, resting for about one minute between sets.

Indian Run

To perform this drill, the players get into a line and begin to jog around the outside of the field. A coach will blow a whistle or signal for the player at the back of the line to sprint to the front. When he gets to the front, he resumes jogging. The player now at the end of the line will sprint to the front on the coach's cue. Continue the drill for five to six minutes.

Jingle-Jangle

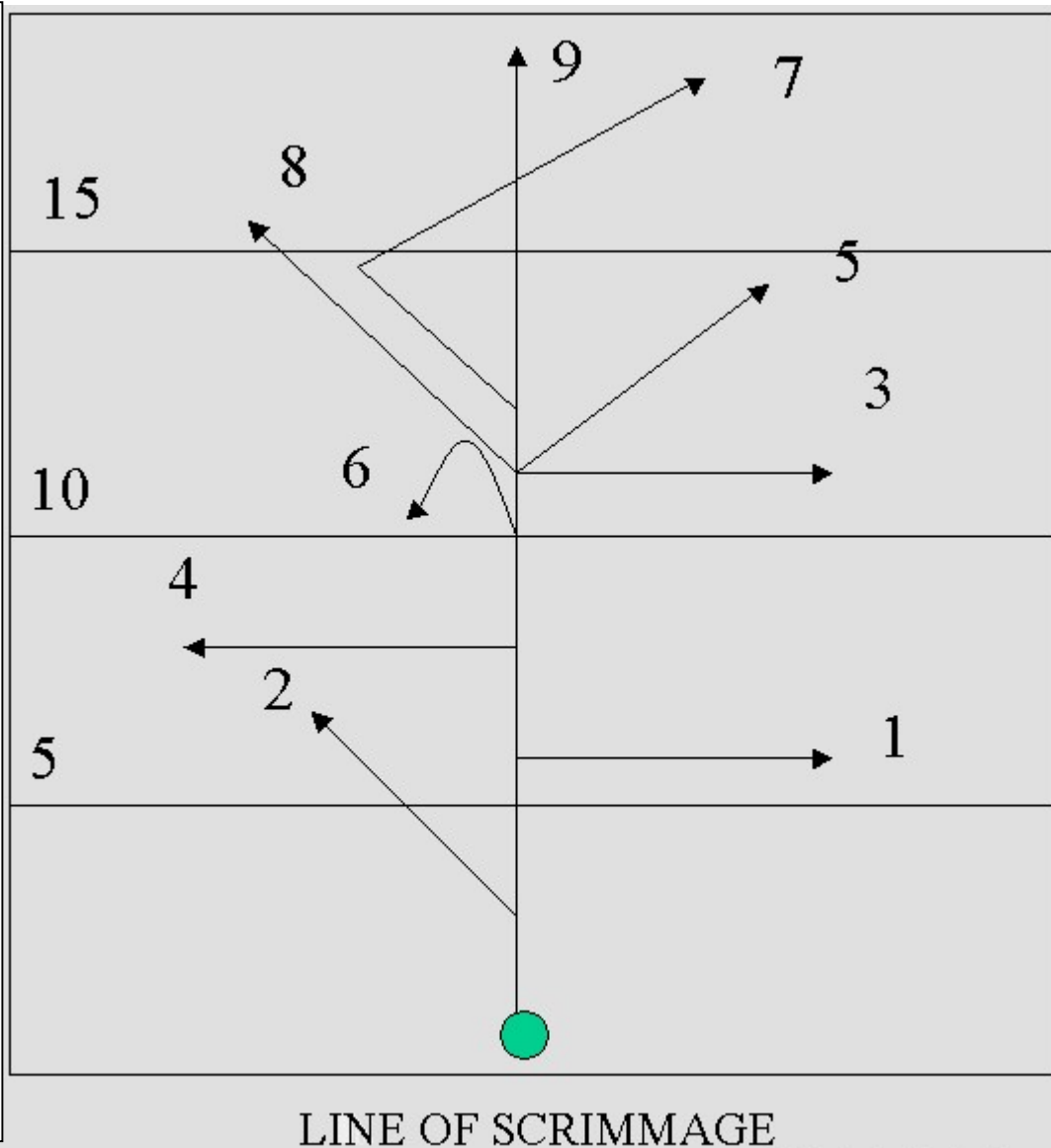
This drill improves a player's balance, footwork and quick change of direction. Place four cones on the corners of a large square. The players sprint to the first cone, back pedal to the second, side step to the third and sprint to the fourth cone.

Passing Tree Diagram

The Passing Tree is a numbered System used for the passing routes.

The passing tree system is designed so that all even (2,4,6,8) numbered routes are run towards the middle of the field; and all odd (1,3,5,7,9) numbered routes will be run towards the sideline.

These routes will be used for all positions on the field.



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Passing Tree – Routes / Number

Quick Out- 1	Slant – 2	Deep Out- 3
Drag / In – 4	Flag– 5	Curl–6
Post Corner – 7	Post– 8	Fly – 9

Passing Tree Definitions

*** For younger participants the passing routes can be reduced by half**

Quick Out (1):	This is a 5-8 yard route forward then the receiver cuts out towards the sideline looking for the ball.
Slant (2):	This is a 3-5 yard route forward then the receiver breaks towards the middle of the field on a 45 degree angle and looks for the ball.
Deep Out (3):	This is a 10-15 yard route. It should be run exactly like the quick out only deeper.
Drag/In (4):	This is a 5-8 yard route forward then the receiver breaks into the middle of the field on a 90 degree angle and looks for the ball.
Flag (5):	This is a 10-15 yard route forward then the receiver breaks at a 45 degree angle towards the sideline and looks for the ball.
Curl (6):	This is a 5-8 yard route forward then the receiver stops and turns to the ball.
Post Corner (7):	This is a 12-20 yard route forward then the receiver cuts on a 45 degree angle to the middle of the field for three steps then the receiver cuts on a 45 degree angle towards the sideline looking for the ball.
Post (8):	This is a 12-20 yard route forward then the receiver breaks on a 45 degree angle towards the middle of the field and looks for the ball.
Fly (9):	This route is ran straight up the field with the receiver looking for the ball after he gets past about 10 yards.

Coaching Resources

LA 84 Foundation

The LA 84 is a nonprofit foundation that is committed to serving youth sports. They provide information for coaches and also provide various coaching clinics

www.la84foundation.org

NFL Flag

NFL Flag is the official website for the NFL's flag football program. They offer many coaching resources including tips and plays.

www.nflflag.com

National Alliance for Youth Sports

The National Alliance for Youth Sports (NAYS) is America's leading advocate for positive and safe sports and activities for children. NAYS offers programs and services for everyone involved in youth sports experiences, including professional administrators, volunteer administrators, volunteer coaches, officials, parents and young athletes. The goal of NAYS is to make sports and activities safe and positive by providing programs and services that add value to youth sports.

www.nays.org

Penalties

Defense

Offside / Encroachment / Illegal Substitution	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and repeat the down
Defensive Pass Interference	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Holding / Blocking / Illegal Contact	+5 yards from the line of scrimmage and repeat down. Opportunity for offense to decline
Illegal Rush (Staring rush from within 7-yard marker and breaking line of scrimmage)	+5 yards from the line of scrimmage and repeat down. Opportunity for offense to decline
Roughing the Passer	+5 yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Stripping the Ball	+10 yards from spot of foul and automatic first down
Illegal Flag Pull (Before the receiver has the ball)	+5 yards from the line of scrimmage and repeat the down. Opportunity for the offense to decline
Unsportsmanlike Conduct	+15 yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Unnecessary Roughness	+15 yards from spot of foul

Offense

Illegal Forward Pass	-5 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal QB Direct Run	-5 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down
Offside / Illegal Substitution	-5 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal Motion / False Start (More than one player moving during snap)	-5 yards from the line of scrimmage and repeat the down
Illegal Contact	-5 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal Blocking / Screen	-10 yards from the line of scrimmage and repeat the down
Offensive Pass Interference (Illegal pick, pushing off/away defender)	-10 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down
Flag Guarding	-10 yards from spot of foul. (If first down is gained before penalty, the -10 yards will be assessed from the spot of the foul with a first down)
Charging / Hurdling	-10 yards from spot of foul and repeat down
Delay of Game	Clock stops, -5 yards from the line of scrimmage and repeat the down
Intentional Grounding (No receiver in the vicinity of pass)	-5 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal Hideout	-5 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down
Unsportsmanlike Conduct	-15 yards from the line of scrimmage (Called during play results in loss of down) (Called prior to snap / after conclusion of play will result in -15 yards assessed to the current down)
Unnecessary Roughness	-15 yards from spot of foul

Terms

Run: A play that does not include a forward pass prior to crossing the line of scrimmage.

Pass: Any thrown ball that spends time untouched in the air and does not touch the ground.

Forward Pass: A pass thrown by a player from behind the line of scrimmage toward the opponents' goal line.

Lateral Pass: A pass that is not thrown forward (laterally or backwards).

Incidental contact that may result from normal run of play will be called at Official's discretion.

****NOTE****

Athletes are prohibited from competing while wearing any type of jewelry. Please inform players of this rule prior to your first game day. No exceptions!

Youth Sports Contact Information

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