

# **BRANDON JUNIOR BLACKHAWKS**



## **2017 Football and Cheer Handbook**

Welcome to the Brandon Jr. Blackhawks Football and Cheer organization. This multi-championship organization was founded in 1991 and is committed to providing the Brandon community with a competitive youth program that focuses on developing skills, self-esteem, and academic excellence in a safe, supportive and positive environment while upholding traditions of excellence in youth football and cheerleading.

### **About Us**

Brandon Jr. Blackhawks,  
A local 501c3 organization  
[www.brandonjrblackhawks.com](http://www.brandonjrblackhawks.com)

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## GENERAL OVERVIEW

### **NORTHERN YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE (NYFL)**

The Brandon Jr. Blackhawks participate in youth tackle football and cheerleading as part of the Northern Youth Football League (NYFL). Joining the Brandon Jr. Blackhawks are the Lake Orion Dragons, Waterford Corsairs, Oxford Jr. Wildcats, Clarkston Chiefs, Lapeer Jr. Lightning, Rochester Ravens, Stoney Creek Jr. Cougars & Bloomfield Hills Jr. Blackhawks.

The NYFL is the governing body organized to provide control, oversight and management of the affairs of the league. The Executive Board of the NYFL manages the day-to-day business of the NYFL and consists of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, General Manager of Football and General Manager of Cheerleading.

The NYFL Board of directors is comprised of the Presidents of each Franchise that has been granted membership into the NYFL. The NYFL Board of directors are responsible for appointing the NYFL Executive Board members and approving all changes to the NYFL Bylaws, Football Rules and Cheerleading Rules.

More information can be found at [www.nyfl.net](http://www.nyfl.net)

### **NYFL PLAYER RESTRICTIONS**

The NYFL promotes fair play for all participants and mandates the rules of play. Athlete's, age's 7-8-9, play at the Freshman level. Athlete's, age's 10-11, play at the Junior Varsity (JV) level. (Cheer athletes 6yrs of age and under participate as a Mascot) \*All ages are as of September 1<sup>st</sup>\* of the current year. A child 12 years of age and still in 6<sup>th</sup> grade for the 2017-2018 school year is also eligible to play at the JV level (up to a maximum of five per roster). Each athlete is photographed (and football athletes are weighed) at the beginning of the season for the roster books. At each game all of the football athletes are weighed-in and matched up to the roster book. Cheer athletes will be matched up to the roster book at Mega Cheer only.

### **PRACTICE – REGULAR SEASON**

Regular season practice's begin the week of July 31<sup>st</sup> and will be held at the Brandon Varsity Field located between Harvey Swanson Elementary & A&W for both Football and Cheer. BJB assumes responsibility for children only during scheduled practice and game times. Parents are encouraged to drop children off no earlier than 15 minutes before practice starts and pick them up promptly at the end of practice.

PLEASE BE ADVISED players will not be able to start practice without a registration form signed by parents, a copy of birth certificate, a sport physical and paid registration fee.

### **During Practice**

Please feel welcome to watch practices or even walk the track for exercise.

We ask anyone staying to refrain from entering onto the field and observe from the stands or outside of the fence surrounding the track. We have found when parents are trying to talk to or watch their kids from the field or track, the kids stop paying attention to the coaches.

### **GAMES**

Each team will host home games that are generally played at the high school field in their school district, and each team will have the opportunity if selected to host a division or conference playoff game, as well as the Super Bowl and Mega Cheer.

The regular season consists of 8 games which will be scheduled on either a Saturday or a Sunday beginning on August 19<sup>th</sup> through October 14<sup>th</sup>. (The finalized schedule will be published once it is provided by the NYFL).

- Round 1 play offs will be held on October 21<sup>st</sup> or 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Mega Cheer will be held on October 28<sup>th</sup>.
- Round 2 play offs will be held on October 29<sup>th</sup>.
- Super Bowl will be held on November 4<sup>th</sup>.

## WEATHER

Football and cheerleading are all-weather sports, Games AND practices will be conducted in rain and/or snow, with the exception of lightning, In the event of lightning practice's or games will be halted and delayed for approx. 25 minutes. If lightning is continuous, the practice/game will be cancelled. If there is a possibility of bad weather, parents are asked not to drop off their child and leave. Please wait with your child until the event starts or is officially cancelled. In the event a game or practice is to be cancelled notices will be posted on our Facebook page and an email will be sent out.

**\*\*\*\*Please make sure your emergency contact information is always current\*\*\*\***

## ABSENTEE AND TARDINESS POLICY

Tardiness - All players are expected to be on the field in full uniform and pads, ready to begin prior to start time. Tardiness is disruptive to other players, and coaches giving instruction.

Absences -Family emergencies, religious matters, or major illness are considered an excused absence, please contact the team parent, coach, or GM as soon as possible. Unexcused absences are unacceptable and will be subject to BJB policy(s), which can include game day suspensions. Any and all absences from practice/game/event will be documented. **All appointments, lessons, meetings, should be scheduled around practice, game days, or competitions. Please make sure your child will have travel arrangements to and from practice every day.**

## “WHATS HAPPENING” & “CHEER CHAT”

These are weekly newsletter's to help keep parents informed on what is happening weekly with the cheerleading and football programs. They will be posted on our website at <http://brandonjrblackhawks.com/> and emailed to parents each week usually on Thursdays.

## NYFL SAFETY POLICY

The Brandon Junior Blackhawks and the NYFL address concerns with the safety of our athletes through: **Rules, Education, Equipment, Training** and **Communication**. The league safety policy can be reviewed at: <https://www.eteamz.com/northernyouthfootball/files/NYFL-LEAGUECONCUSSIONINFORMATION.pdf>

## RETURN TO ACTIVITY POLICY

In accordance with MHSAA and NYFL policies any injury forcing a player to be removed from or unable to participate in a game or practice will require a written authorization from a physician, (MD/DO/Physician's Assistant/ Nurse Practitioner) approving the athlete's return to unrestricted activity prior to returning to practice and gameplay.

Example:

<b>1. Action of M.D., D.O., Physician's Assistant or Nurse Practitioner</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>The clearance must be in writing and must be un-conditional.</b> It is not sufficient that the M.D., D.O., Physician's Assistant or Nurse Practitioner has approved the student to begin a return-to-activity progression. The medical examiner must approve the student's return to unrestricted activity.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Individual schools, districts and leagues may have more stringent requirements and protocols including but not limited to mandatory periods of inactivity, screening and post-concussion testing prior to or after the written clearance for return to activity.</li><li>A school or health care facility may use a locally created form for this portion of the return-to-activity protocol, provided it complies with MHSAA regulations. (See MHSAA Protocol.)</li></ul>
I have examined the above named student-athlete following this episode and determined the following: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Permission is granted for the athlete to return to activity (may not return to practice or competition on the same day as the injury).</b>	
_____ SIGNATURE (must be MD or DO or PA or NP – circle one)	DATE: _____
Examiner's Name (Printed): _____	

## 2017 Volunteer Obligations

### **\*\*PLEASE READ CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM\*\***

The Brandon Jr. Blackhawks (also known as BJB) is entirely a volunteer organization. Parent volunteerism is vital and required for the success of our organization. If we all volunteer a little our youth will have a fun and exciting experience. It is mandatory that ALL BJB families are required to pay a "volunteer/equipment deposit fee" of \$150.00 (\$50 for each additional sibling) that is included with the registration fee. This is to ensure that each family fulfills their volunteer obligations. If a family has fulfilled their volunteer requirements of **6 shifts** per family and all equipment has been turned in undamaged, your volunteer/equipment fee will be refunded at the end of the season. If a family does not fulfill their volunteer requirements the \$150.00 fee will not be refunded.

Volunteer assignments will be coordinated and monitored by our "Volunteer Coordinator". The following are the volunteer opportunities available.

### **HOME GAME**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Time Needed</b>
**Set-up and chains (Freshman game)	Set up field and do chains during game.	Report 30 minutes prior to start of Freshman game until the end of the game.
**Chains and clean-up. (JV Game)	Do chains during JV game and pick up field.	Report 15 minutes prior to start of the game until 15 minutes after end of JV game.
**Brandon Spotter	Spot for Brandon on Brandon sideline	Report 15 minutes prior to start of the game until end of game.
**Opposing Spotter	Spot for opponent on opposing sideline	
Announcer Spotter	Spot for announcer in booth	
50/50 Drawing	Sell 50/50 tickets during 1st, 2nd & 3rd quarters of game	Report 15 minutes prior to start of game, winner is drawn during 4th quarter.
50/50 Drawing		
Concession Set-up	Set up concession stand	Report when Freshman boys report for warm-up
Concession Set-up	Set up concession stand	
Concession Worker 1 & 2	Work concession stand - Freshman Game	1. Start of game - end of halftime      2. Halftime - end of game
Concession Worker 1 & 2	Work concession stand - JV Game	1. Start of game to end of halftime      2. Halftime to 30 minutes after game ends for clean-up

### **AWAY GAME**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Time Needed</b>
**Down Marker	Do down marker during the game	Report 15 minutes prior to start of each game until the end of the game.
**Brandon Spotter	Spot for Brandon on Brandon sideline	
**Opposing Spotter	Spot for opponent on opposing sideline	

**Note: \*\* Indicates positions that are required to be filled to play games.**

### **CONCESSION STAND**

The concession stand belongs to the Brandon Schools Athletic Boosters; they make the rules for it and can shut it down during our games as we are not a school run program, if you are unsure of anything, please ask the Booster person in charge. The only ones that are allowed free food are the referee's, announcer and/or the clock operator; everyone else must pay unless given permission by the Booster's representative. No one under the age of 18 is allowed inside the concession stand and no one is allowed to eat inside the concession stand as it is a violation of the health code.

## **2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

President:	Greg Tolonen	<a href="mailto:president@brandonjrblackhawks.com">president@brandonjrblackhawks.com</a>
Vice President:	Jesse Lee	<a href="mailto:jesse.lee7281@gmail.com">jesse.lee7281@gmail.com</a>
Secretary:	Heidi Dubiel	<a href="mailto:hldubiel@gmail.com">hldubiel@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer:	Erika Pardon	<a href="mailto:mom2ctp@gmail.com">mom2ctp@gmail.com</a>
GM Football:	Heidi Pawley	<a href="mailto:rustypawley@aol.com">rustypawley@aol.com</a>
GM Cheer:	Julie Ryan	<a href="mailto:Julie.ryan49@yahoo.com">Julie.ryan49@yahoo.com</a>
Volunteer Coordinator:	Lesley Welch	<a href="mailto:sswjul1967@gmail.com">sswjul1967@gmail.com</a>
Director of Football Philosophy:	Brad Zube	<a href="mailto:bradzube@comcast.net">bradzube@comcast.net</a>
Director:	Jessica Vert	<a href="mailto:jasonvert@yahoo.com">jasonvert@yahoo.com</a>
Director:	Renee Shuett	<a href="mailto:reneeschuett@live.com">reneeschuett@live.com</a>
Director:	Rob Aquilina	<a href="mailto:aquil4@aol.com">aquil4@aol.com</a>
Director:	Taunya Hawthorne	<a href="mailto:thawthorne1987@gmail.com">thawthorne1987@gmail.com</a>
Director:	TBD	
Director:	TBD	
Director of Equipment:	Charles Hawthorne	<a href="mailto:chawthorne33@gmail.com">chawthorne33@gmail.com</a>

If at any point you have any suggestions, questions, would like to discuss an item or learn how you can be more involved please contact any of the board members listed above.

Note: Many of us can also be found during practices and would be happy to talk with you.

# FOOTBALL

## EQUIPMENT & UNIFORMS

Each player will be provided a practice and a game jersey, "2" pairs of black pants, a black belt and game day socks. BJB will also supply protective gear to include knee pads, thigh pads, hip pads, tail pad, shoulder pads and a helmet w/ chin strap. It is up to each family to provide an athletic supporter with cup, girdle, practice socks, mouth guard and cleats. **Mouth Guards cannot be white and must have a strap to attach it to the helmet.** Cleats must be rubber, non-removable type, and as close to **all black** as possible. If you can't find all black cleats, then stick with black and white or black and blue only. No metal cleats are allowed. At the end of the season all the equipment will be returned. All equipment needs to be cleaned/ disinfected before return. The socks, practice and game jerseys are the players to keep. If a player is missing any piece of the uniform BJB provides, please notify your coach right away.

## PRACTICES

**Practices are mandatory** Regular season practices begin on July 31<sup>st</sup> and will be held at Brandon Varsity Field. Regular season practice begins on July 31<sup>st</sup> and will be Monday thru Thursday, starting at 6:00pm and ending at 9:00pm, After Labor Day when school resumes the practice schedule will be reduced to 6:00pm-8:30pm, Note: as the season progresses, practices may be adjusted to end earlier. There will always be a short meeting following each practice, it is mandatory for the player to stay and attend.

**FULL UNIFORM MUST BE WORN EVERYDAY. ALL pads, girdle w/ cup, practice pants, practice jersey, mouth guard, helmet, cleats.** If any part of the uniform is missing, the player will not be allowed to participate in practice. This will be considered an unexcused absence.

## GAMES

Our home games will be played in the Brandon High School football stadium, Game days start with the Freshman game followed by the JV game, each game will last about 2 hours. Players are asked to arrive to the game 1½ hours early in full uniform. Any player missing a part of the uniform will not be allowed to participate under any circumstances. At this time the players will do warm-up drills as well as pre-game check in.

**\*Football uniform; girdle, pads, game pants, game belt, game jersey, mouth guard, helmet, team socks and cleats.**

## PLAYER PARTICIPATION POLICY

Assuming full participation in practices, NYFL rules guarantee every uniformed Freshman or JV football player a minimum number of plays per half of a game. Minimum plays will be determined based on the number of football players on a squad as follows:

Number of Player on a Squad	Minimum Play Requirement
Thirty-one (31) or less players	6 plays per half
Thirty-two (32) to forty-one (41) players	4 plays per half
Forty (42) or more players	3 plays per half

Note: These are minimums...all additional playing time is COACHES DECISION.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

All practices are mandatory. Any Football player who is going to be absent from a practice...we ask that you **call, text, or email the team parent and /or General Manager.** FACEBOOK POSTS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE.

- One excused absence: No disciplinary action.
- One tardy: Coaches discretion.
- One unexcused absence or 2 tardy: Sit out first half of next scheduled game.
- 2 excused absences: Sit out first half of next scheduled game.
- 2 unexcused absences or 3 tardy: Sit out entire game.
- 3 excused absences: Sit out entire game.

Athletes suspended or having to sit out a game are still required to attend the game or the suspension will be forwarded to the next game.

**\*\*\*Final disciplinary decisions will be made by the Head Coach and the GM of football. \*\*\***

# CHEER

## UNIFORMS

Each cheerleader will be provided a game day uniform, which includes skirt, shell, briefs, body suit, shoes, bow, warm up pants and personalized jacket. The skirt and shell are not to be permanently altered, at the end of the season they need to be returned to BJB, laundered and with any alterations undone. If a cheerleader is missing any part of their uniform provided by BJB, please go to your coach right away for a replacement piece. Note: A charge for replacement pieces may apply.

## PRACTICES

**Practices are mandatory.** To avoid distractions practices are closed to parents and/or siblings. Regular season practices begin on August 1st and will be held at Brandon Varsity Field until October 2<sup>nd</sup> (tentative) when they will move inside to the Brandon High School Auxiliary Gymnasium to prepare for Mega cheer.

Freshman and JV athletes will practice Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday's starting at 6:00pm and ending at 8:00pm. Mascot athletes will practice on Tuesday's and Thursday's starting at 6:00pm and ending at 8:00pm.

As we prepare for Mega Cheer, Freshman and JV athletes practices will increase to Monday through Thursday effective October 2nd starting at 6:00pm and ending at 8:00pm. Mascot practices will increase to Tuesday thru Thursday effective October 9th starting at 6:00pm and ending at 8:00pm. (Note: this timeline is subject to change).

**Attire for practices:** Comfortable, weather appropriate attire. No jeans, no sandals, no dresses/skirts, no tank tops. No jewelry (new ear piercings must be covered by Band-aids if they cannot be removed).

## GAMES

Our home games will be played in the Brandon High School football stadium, Game days start with the Freshman game followed by the JV game, each game will last about 2 hours. Mascots will cheer during the first half of a game with either the Freshman or the JV cheer squads which will be determined after registration. Mascots are released to parents after their half time performance at a designated spot (the coaches will tell you this spot prior to the game). We do not release the girls into the stands.

Cheer athletes are asked to arrive to the game 1 hour early in full uniform, hair should be up in a high pony, and their bow will be provided when they arrive at the field. Any athlete missing a part of the uniform will not be allowed to participate under any circumstances.

Cheerleaders and mascots ARE NOT allowed to wear make-up, nail polish, or any kind of jewelry. If medical or religious medals, rings, etc. must be worn, these items must be taped to the body and concealed. No gum or candy, etc.

- Please encourage our cheerleaders during the game and cheer them on during their half time routines.
- Please also make sure the girls have water to drink!!
- Please make sure your cheerleader eats BEFORE the game.
- Parents must sit in the stands. Only coaches are allowed on the field.
- NYFL rules requires JV and Freshman cheer athletes to attend the entire game, (One half of a game for Mascot's) We WILL cheer in rain and/or snow, with the exception of lightning cheer athletes **will not** be released early. For safety reasons umbrellas are not allowed, your cheerleader may bring a poncho and/or other weather appropriate apparel. Each time your child asks "are we done yet?" during a game will add a lap to the next practice's warm-up.

**\*Cheer uniform; briefs, skirt, shell, hair bow, shoes, ALWAYS BRING YOUR BODY SUIT AND WARM UPS.**

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

All practices are mandatory. If for any reason a cheer athlete is going to be absent from a practice we ask that you **call or text the General Manager.** FACEBOOK POSTS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE, Parents must contact the GM themselves; finding out about an absence through another cheerleader, and/or a no call/no show will be considered an unexcused absence.

**\*\*If your child was ill and stayed home from school, please do not send them to practice\*\***

- One excused absence: No disciplinary action.
- One tardy: Coaches discretion.
- One unexcused absence or 2 tardy: Sit out first quarter of next scheduled game.
- 2 excused absences: Sit out first half of next scheduled game.
- 2 unexcused absences or 3 tardy: Sit out entire game.
- 3 excused absences: Sit out entire game.

Athletes suspended or having to sit out a game are still required to attend the game in full uniform or the suspension will be forwarded to the next game. **\*\*\*Final disciplinary decisions will be made by the Head Coach and the GM of Cheer.\*\*\***



# 2017 Player– Code of Conduct and Problem-Solving Protocol

**\*\*PLEASE READ CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM\*\***

The focus of the Brandon Jr. Blackhawks (“BJB”) is to provide a safe, fun, learning environment for our athletes. We strive to create an opportunity for athletes to work together towards a common goal. We emphasize sportsmanship, teamwork and respect. Establishing proper ethics is essential for the success of our program; therefore BJB has developed this code of conduct rules pertaining to all participants. The following is the code of conduct and problem solving protocol that all players must abide by:

1. I hereby pledge to be positive about my youth sports experience, accept responsibility for my participation and will follow this player’s code of conduct.
2. I will demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times and follow the rules of BJB.
3. I will attend every practice, game and event that I possibly can, and will notify the coach or GM if I cannot attend.
4. I will do my very best to listen and learn from my coaches and GM.
5. I will refrain from talking back, using profanity or being disruptive.
6. I will encourage my parents to be involved with my youth sports team, in some capacity, because it is important to me.
7. I will act as a responsible representative of the Brandon Jr. Blackhawks and will show respect towards my coaches, teammates, officials, fans and opposing players.
8. I will demand a drug, alcohol and tobacco free sports environment and I pledge not to use them.
9. **I WILL DO MY BEST IN SCHOOL AND PUT MY SCHOOL WORK AND HOMEWORK BEFORE MY INVOLVEMENT IN THE BRANDON JR BLACKHAWKS.**
10. I will remember that sports are an opportunity to learn, grow and have fun.

## Problem-Solving Protocol

It is the expectation of BJB that all concerns are handled in a professional, respectful and caring manner on the part of the players, parents, coaches and staff. In the event you have questions or concerns regarding playing time or practice issues, we would like players to first discuss them with their head coach or GM. You should also discuss all concerns, issues, or problems with your parents who will work with BJB representatives to help you. **Any problems and/or concerns involving the health and/or safety of any athlete should be brought to the attention of your parents and a BJB BOARD MEMBER IMMEDIATELY!**

## 2017 Parent – Code of Conduct and Problem-Solving Protocol

**\*\*PLEASE READ CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM\*\***

The focus of the Brandon Jr. Blackhawks (“BJB”) is to provide a safe, fun, learning environment for our athletes. We strive to create an opportunity for athletes to work together towards a common goal. We emphasize sportsmanship, teamwork and respect. Establishing proper ethics is essential for the success of our program; therefore BJB has developed this code of conduct rules pertaining to all participants. The following is the code of conduct and problem solving protocol that all parents with athletes in the program must abide by:

1. I hereby pledge to provide support, care and encouragement for my child participating in the BJB program.
2. I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, fans and officials at every game, practice or other BJB event.
3. I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my child and the other athletes before any personal desire to win.
4. I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.
5. I will provide support for coaches, directors and officials working with my child to provide a positive, enjoyable experience for all.
6. I will demand a drug, alcohol and tobacco free sports environment and for my child and agree to refrain from using them at any BJB event.
7. I will also refrain from using profanity.
8. I will remember that the game is for the children and will do my very best to make the BJB program fun for my child and the other athletes.
9. I will remain in the spectator area during practices and games, unless asked by a coach or director for assistance.
10. I will insist my child treats other athletes, coaches, directors, fans and officials with respect.
11. I will assist in providing a fun and enjoyable experience for my child and the other athletes by volunteering for various activities.
12. I will refrain from addressing any conflict or disagreement with any BJB player, coach, director, fan or official in the presence of the athletes, and will follow procedures of communication relative to the situation.
13. I will complete my **mandatory 6 volunteer obligations** in order to get my \$150 deposit refunded at the end of the season. If I do not complete my volunteer obligations the \$150 becomes the property of the Brandon Jr. Blackhawks.

### Problem-Solving Protocol

It is the expectation of BJB that all concerns are handled in a professional, respectful and caring manner on the part of the parents, coaches and staff. In the event you have questions or concerns regarding playing time or practice issues, it is the requirement of BJB that the parents address the concerns, after a 24 hour cooling off period, with your child’s head coach and/or the GM. This cooling off period will allow for a clearer evaluation and discussion of your questions or concerns. If a parent feels their questions or concerns have not been adequately addressed they may submit the issue/grievance to the BJB president for consideration by the BJB Executive Board. **Any problems and/or concerns involving the health and/or safety of any athlete should be brought to the attention of a BJB BOARD MEMBER IMMEDIATELY!**

**\*\*TO BE SIGNED AND TURNED IN\*\***



2017 Brandon Jr. Blackhawks

**Player, Parent acknowledgment of Code of Conduct, Problem-Solving Protocol & Volunteer Obligations.**

I have read the BJB parents pack and understand all rules contained within it. My signature on this form indicates my acknowledgement and understanding of the Code of Conduct, Problem-Solving Protocol and the **6 shift volunteer requirement** in order to be eligible to receive a refund of my "volunteer/equipment deposit fee".

---

Player's Full Name (Please print)

---

PLAYER'S Signature & Date

---

PARENT/GUARDIAN Signature & Date

***Your Area of Participation?***

**Program Area** *(select one)*

- Football
- Cheerleading

**Division** *(select one)*

- Freshman    JV
- Mascot

## PARENT & ATHLETE CONCUSSION INFORMATION SHEET



### WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. Even a "ding," "getting your bell rung," or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

### WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CONCUSSION?

Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury.

If an athlete reports one or more symptoms of concussion after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, she should be kept out of play the day of the injury. The athlete should only return to play with permission from a health care professional experienced in evaluating for concussion.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

- Most concussions occur without loss of consciousness.
- Athletes who have, at any point in their lives, had a concussion have an increased risk for another concussion.
- Young children and teens are more likely to get a concussion and take longer to recover than adults.

### CONCUSSION DANGER SIGNS

In rare cases, a dangerous blood clot may form on the brain in a person with a concussion and crowd the brain against the skull. An athlete should receive immediate medical attention if after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body she exhibits any of the following danger signs:

- One pupil larger than the other
- Is drowsy or cannot be awakened
- A headache that gets worse
- Weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination
- Repeated vomiting or nausea
- Slurred speech
- Convulsions or seizures
- Cannot recognize people or places
- Becomes increasingly confused, restless, or agitated
- Has unusual behavior
- Loses consciousness (even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously)

### WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK YOUR ATHLETE HAS A CONCUSSION?

1. If you suspect that an athlete has a concussion, remove the athlete from play and seek medical attention. Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Keep the athlete out of play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating for concussion, says she is symptom-free and it's OK to return to play.
2. Rest is key to helping an athlete recover from a concussion. Exercising or activities that involve a lot of concentration, such as studying, working on the computer, and playing video games, may cause concussion symptoms to reappear or get worse. After a concussion, returning to sports and school is a gradual process that should be carefully managed and monitored by a health care professional.
3. Remember: Concussions affect people differently. While most athletes with a concussion recover quickly and fully, some will have symptoms that last for days, or even weeks. A more serious concussion can last for months or longer.

### SIGNS OBSERVED BY COACHING STAFF:

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

**"IT'S BETTER TO MISS ONE GAME THAN THE WHOLE SEASON"**



### WHY SHOULD AN ATHLETE REPORT THEIR SYMPTOMS?

If an athlete has a concussion, his/her brain needs time to heal. While an athlete's brain is still healing, she is much more likely to have another concussion. Repeat concussions can increase the time it takes to recover. In rare cases, repeat concussions in young athletes can result in brain swelling or permanent damage to their brain. They can even be fatal.

STUDENT-ATHLETE NAME PRINTED \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT-ATHLETE NAME SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT OR GUARDIAN NAME PRINTED \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT OR GUARDIAN NAME SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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