

Blanchet Catholic School

Football Cautionary Statement

Football is a contact sport and injuries will occur. The coaches in our program are well-qualified professionals. Fundamentals related to playing football will continually be emphasized on and off the field. The information contained within this list of procedures and rules is to inform the players and their families of the proper techniques to practice for maximum safety in the contact phase of the game of football.

PRE-SEASON PARTICIPATION

Football is a contact sport, athletes must condition to prepare for the season. This includes strength training as well as aerobic training. It is also important that athletes continue to train during the season to further assist in the prevention of injuries.

COACHES WILL INSTRUCT ON PROPER TACKLING, BLOCKING, AND RUNNING THE BALL

1. By rule, the helmet is not to be used as a “ram”.
2. Initial contact is not to be made with the helmet.
3. It is NOT permissible to play the game safely or correctly without making some contact with the helmet. This usually occurs when properly blocking and tackling. Therefore, technique is important in the prevention of injuries.
4. Tackling and blocking techniques are similar.
 - a. Contact is to be made above the waist, but not initially with the helmet.
 - b. The player should always be in a position of balance, knees bent, back straight, body slightly forward, head up and in a position as close to the opponent as possible.
 - c. Main contact should be made with the shoulder. Not placing the helmet as close to the body as possible could result in shoulder injury during a block or tackle. The dangers of not using proper technique could include injury, paralysis and/or death.
5. The reason for safety rules in making contact with the upper body and helmet is that proper body alignment can put the spinal column in a vulnerable position for injury.
 - a. If the head is bent downward, the cervical (neck) vertebrae are vulnerable and contact on the TOP OF THE HELMET could result in dislocation, nerve damage, paralysis and/or death.
 - b. If the back is not straight, the vertebrae of the back are also vulnerable to serious injury if contact is made with the TOP OF THE HELMET. The development of strength in the neck muscles is one of the best methods to prevent head and neck injury.

BASIC HITTING (CONTACT), POSITION, AND FUNDAMENTAL TECHNIQUE

1. If the knees are not bent, the chance of knee injury is increased
2. A player should be in the fundamental hitting position at all times during live ball play and practice.
3. The rules have made blocking below the waist illegal, except in the area called the free blocking zone.
4. The length of the cleat has also been restricted to help prevent injury.

5. In tackling, the rules prohibit initial contact with the helmet or grabbing the facemask.
 - a. Initial helmet contact can result in injury to both parties.
 - b. Grabbing the facemask can result in serious neck injury.
6. Illegal and/or dangerous play by athletes will not be tolerated. Players are reminded constantly about fair and safe methods of play on the football field.

FITTING AND USE OF EQUIPMENT- COACHES WILL PROPER FIT EACH ATHLETE

1. Shoulder pads, helmets, hip pads, pants with thigh and knee pads should be properly fitted and worn.
2. Wear all protective pads, braces and undergarments for all practices and games.
3. Shoulder pads that are too small or too large can produce injury to soft tissue in the neck, shoulder and arm areas.
4. Helmets must fit snugly at all contact points.
 - a. The helmet must have a "NOCSAE" seal at all times.
 - b. The chinstrap must be fastened and the cheek pads must be the proper thickness.
 - c. On contact, a helmet that is too tight can produce headaches.
 - d. A helmet worn too loosely can assist in producing concussion, face injury or broken facial bones.
 - e. A blow to the head or neck can also be heightened by a loose fitting helmet.

PREPARATION FOR PRACTICE OR CONTEST

1. Wear all protective equipment, pads, mouth guard, braces and supportive undergarments to every practice or contest unless otherwise indicated by the daily practice plan.
2. Make sure all straps and laces are inspected and secured every day.
3. Wear all appropriate outer and under garments for every game and/or practice.
4. Players should drink at least 4-6 glasses of water a day (more during extreme heat). All athletes should bring their own water bottles.
5. Players with visual impairment must wear corrective, shatterproof glasses or contact lenses if the impairment affects judgment or perception
6. All jewelry should be removed before leaving the locker room for a game or practice.
7. Players with seizures, cardiac problems, diabetes or other chronic problems must be cleared by a physician before participation in any football related activities.

IN THE LOCKER ROOM

1. Be alert for slippery floors.
2. Be alert for changes in floor texture and elevated floor levels.
3. Keep floors free of litter and debris. Keep personal belongings in lockers.
4. Lock your locker every time you leave the area.
5. Keep soap and shampoo in the shower and drying area.
6. Use foot powder in designated areas.
7. Refrain from rapid movements, horseplay, and rough-housing in the locker/shower areas.
8. Identify incidents of foot or other skin infections to coach (es) immediately.
9. Be especially careful not to injure a teammate with cleated shoes and do not wear cleated shoes in the building or locker room at any time.

10. No horseplay, rough-housing, hazing or initiations.
11. Do not wear football cleats anywhere in the school building. Must remove cleats inside the school building doors.

APPROACH TO COMPETITIVE/PRACTICE SITE OR TRAVEL TO CONTEST

1. Be alert to the following:
 - a. Goalpost.
 - b. Blocking Sleds.
 - c. Blocking Pads and/or Dummies.
 - d. Kicking and/or Kick return drills.
 - e. Passing and/or Receiving drills.
 - f. Agility, sprinting, or other fast-action drills.
2. No horseplay, roughhousing, wrestling, hazing or instantiations at any time.
3. No foul language
4. Transportation will be provided to all football games. Student-athletes must ride the bus with the team to all games. Parents may transport their child home by signing them out on the coach's transportation form. Student-athletes riding with someone else's parent must have a written note prior to road trip.

CAUTIONS SPECIFIC TO BASEBALL/SOFTBALL:

1. The Head and Helmet
 - a. Tackle or block with the shoulder pads. Never use the helmet to strike an opponent.
 - b. Keep the chin and eyes up when blocking, tackling or running the football.
 - c. Lowering the head/helmet jeopardizes the neck, back and spinal cord.
2. Blocking and Defensive Contact:
 - a. The forearm striking surface should work with the shoulder and trunk extension.
 - b. DO NOT wind up to accelerate the forearm separately.
 - c. Block from the front or the side (with head in front) and above the waist.
 - d. When pursuing a ball carrier, do not pile on when an opponent is down.
 - e. Never grab the facemask of any other player.
3. General:
 - a. Get off the ground! Injuries are more common when you remain on the ground.
 - b. When falling backward – tuck – leave no extreme ties extended during a fall.
 - c. Participate fully in all strength training (especially the neck and back).
4. Hydration:
 - a. Drink water and other electrolyte fluids often before, during and after practice/games
 - b. Frequent water breaks will be scheduled during practices and games.
5. Weight Room:
 - a. Supervised strength-training activities will be employed at all times.
 - b. Observe all weight room rules and regulations at all times.
 - c. Never lift without proper supervision and a spotter.

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

Because of the physical demands of football, some injuries may occur. All injuries must be called to the

coach's attention. Most will be minor and can be managed with basic first aid. However, on occasion the situation may require more intense management.

1. Stop all activities, practice or competition. DO NOT move the victim.
2. Call a coach to manage the situation if not already at the site.
3. Sit or kneel in close proximity. Assist by:
 - a. Calling 911 Emergency Care
 - b. Bringing first aid equipment or supplies to the site.
 - c. Keeping any onlookers away.
 - d. Directing the EMTs to the scene.

Lightning

When thunder is heard or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for at least 30 minutes.vacate the playing field and take cover indoors immediately.