

THE LARAMIE SOCCER CLUB

PLAYER AND PARENT HANDBOOK

April 2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Topic	Page
Foreword	2
1.0 Introduction	2
2.0 Mission Statement	3
3.0 Overview of LSC Recreational Programs	3
4.0 Overview of LSC Competitive Programs	4
5.0 Rules for Recreational league players	5
6.0 Rules for Competitive players (Blizzard)	7
7.0 Rules concerning conduct and safety	9
8.0 Fee and refund policies	10
Appendix A: Standards of Conduct for Players	
Appendix B: Standards of Conduct for Spectators	
Appendix C: Referees, Coaches and Parents: Role Models for Life	
Appendix D: CDC Concussion information for youth sports	

Foreword

The purpose of this Handbook is to outline the basic aspects of the activities of the Laramie Soccer Club for parents and players. More detailed information concerning club policies and are found in the Policies and Procedures Handbook, Coaches Handbook, and the Club Bylaws. The Laramie Soccer Club Board of Directors is the ultimate arbiter of the intent and meaning of statements contained in this document.

1.0 Introduction

The Laramie Soccer Club, hereinafter referred to as “LSC,” is a non-profit, 501(c)(3), club sports organization formed to promote and organize competitive youth soccer in Laramie, Wyoming, so that individual players have the opportunity to maximize their

potential by developing both an appreciation of the game and their own individual skills to the best of their ability.

LSC is recognized as a constituent member association of the Wyoming Youth Soccer Association, an affiliated member of US Youth Soccer, the US Soccer Federation, and FIFA. LSC teams currently compete in both state and regional leagues and tournaments, most notably those organized by Wyoming Soccer Association (WSA), Colorado Soccer Association (CSA), and the Fort Collins Soccer Club (FCSC).

The LSC Indoor Soccer Facility, along with our main office, can be found at:

725 Skyline Road, Laramie, WY 82070.

2.0 Mission Statement

The LSC strives to promote soccer in Laramie and the nearby areas. LSC develops valuable citizens by promoting teamwork, discipline and a positive attitude. LSC also educates players and their families about soccer including coaching, refereeing and sportsmanship.

To insure our success we further commit to:

- Give every player, coach and referee the opportunity to develop their skills to the best of their ability.
- Provide a healthy, safe and enjoyable soccer environment for all participants.
- Provide a level of competition equal to each participant's ability, interest and desire.
- Foster and promote sportsmanship, honesty, integrity and good will within the soccer community.
- Provide soccer-related educational opportunities to all players, coaches, parents, referees and the community at large.
- Be a positive role model and provide leadership to the sports community.

3.0 LSC Recreational Programs Overview

LSC offers recreational programs accessible to all players regardless of experience. Through participation in our recreational soccer program, youth will develop positive relationships, leadership skills, and above all good sportsmanship. These programs take place throughout the calendar year and are detailed in this section.

For age group, a team that is currently designated an “Under-XY” (U-XY) team will in general be comprised of players who have their XYth birthday during the calendar year of the end of the soccer year (July 31st).

3.1 Recreational Youth League

LSC organizes Fall and Spring recreational league seasons for youth players. All games are played in Laramie. The following age groups are eligible.

TEEN (U14-U17), U13, U9: 7v7 format with goalkeepers

U7: Group training with scrimmages

Mighty Munchkins: at least 3 and at most 5 with no soccer experience. Training and scrimmages

Game rules are found on the LSC website. Additional information for players is found in Section 5.0

3.2 LSC Polar Bear Developmental Program

The Polar Bear program is a developmental program for 4, 5, and 6 year olds. The program is conducted by the Director of Coaching and the University of Wyoming Department of Kinesiology and Health's Physical Education Teacher Education program. The program can take place outdoors or indoors and will take place in the Spring, Summer, and Fall. Participants learn and develop fundamental foot-eye and ball control skills necessary for successful game play in soccer; learn and practice basic offensive and defensive behaviors within the context of small-sided game play; develop an appreciation for the game of soccer through developmentally appropriate activities that are designed for success; work with children of varying skill levels and abilities and demonstrate personally and socially responsible behaviors within the game of soccer.

3.3 LSC 3 versus 3 Leagues (Spring, Summer, and Winter)

LSC offers 3 versus 3 Soccer leagues at various points during the year. The games will be played indoors or outdoors, depending on the season. The 3 versus 3 Leagues are for players of all ages and ability levels and all are welcome. The objective of this program is to offer game play opportunities during the times of the year when there are large gaps in organized soccer playing opportunities. This program is also open to High School, College, and Adult players in an effort to raise money for the LSC.

3.4 LSC Adult recreational programs

LSC offers a summer league for adults. There are competitive and recreational co-ed divisions. LSC also facilitates informal pick-up games on given evenings throughout the year.

4.0 LSC Competitive (Travel) Programs Overview

4.1 "Blizzard" Competitive Program

LSC organizes competitive travel teams in ages U8-U18 to compete in WSA and CSA sponsored leagues, cups, and tournaments. U8 through U10 teams regularly play in the Ft. Collins Soccer Club Fall and Spring recreational or player development (PDL) leagues. U11 through U18 teams regularly play in the Colorado State Association Advanced (Centennial) leagues. Rules regarding competitive players are detailed in section 6.

4.2 Competitive Practice/Developmental player option

LSC offers players the option to participate in practices with the competitive team of their age group, without committing to games requiring travel. Players will benefit from quality coaching and training and get a better sense if they wish to continue playing competitive soccer.

4.3 Wyoming Olympic Development Program (ODP)

The Wyoming Olympic Development Program (ODP) is the Wyoming component of a national program designed to serve two purposes, namely, to develop the top players throughout the U.S. at the state, regional, and national levels, and, secondly, to provide a long-term avenue to identify the outstanding youth players throughout the country to represent the United States in international amateur competition. Through a state selection process, teams are formed to represent Wyoming at each age level in competition against other states in Region IV. Contact WSA (WyomingSoccer.com) for more information regarding ODP participation.

4.4 Wyoming 307 Program

WSA offers the 307 program to augment club programs. Select teams play in tournaments across the region and country. More information can be found at WSA (WyomingSoccer.com).

5. Rules for Recreational League

5.1 Team formation

Teams will be formed at the beginning of each season, depending on the number of registered players and other considerations.

5.2. Uniforms and equipment

Required equipment includes LSC uniform shirt and shin guards:

- **SHIRT** - LSC reversible blue and yellow jersey printed with the LSC logo. Player will wear yellow if their team is listed as the home team, otherwise the player will wear blue. In the cold weather, coats, sweaters or other warm clothing must be worn under the LSC jersey. Therefore parents should buy a large enough size to allow this. Shirts can be obtained through NU2U.
- **SHIN GUARDS** - Shin guards may be purchased at most sporting goods and discount stores. Shin guards must be covered by socks or pants at all times during play.
- **SHOES** - Any kind of sneakers or recommended molded-sole soccer shoes may be worn. No hard-soled shoes or boots are allowed. Cleated soccer shoes are not required, but such shoes must not have a toe cleat (baseball and football shoes must have the toe cleat removed)
- **WATER**- Most fields do not have drinking fountains. Please make sure players have adequate liquids

Recommended equipment

- Appropriate clothes for the weather (blue jeans are difficult to play in)
- Elastic bands on eyewear to prevent breakage

Not Permitted:

- JEWELRY –Jewelry, watches, and earrings are considered to be safety hazards and cannot be worn. Jewelry that is difficult to remove can be worn on exception, as long as it is non-protruding and it is taped over securely and completely. The ultimate decision about such exception lies solely with the referee.
- HATS - Hats or caps with hard bills are not permitted. Only soft stocking type caps are permitted.
- CASTS - Properly padded casts are allowed at the discretion of the referee.
- TOBACCO - Cigarettes or other tobacco products are not allowed on the field; be it for practice or games. This applies to coaches and referees as well. Spectators are urged not to smoke at games.

5.3 Game Rules

Age-specific small-sided game rules can be found at the LSC website. Every child must play *at least half* of each game, and no child can play all four quarters unless every child has played three quarters. All players must be given the opportunity to play each field position. Win-loss records are not kept. Players are otherwise bound by WSA and FIFA laws of the game. All decisions of the referee are final.

5.4 Role and Duties of Coaches

The principle role of a coach is to prepare players and develop their skills at every position on the field. The coach should ensure that players receive equal playing time and play multiple positions in games, productive practices are conducted, players are educated in the rules of the game, all persons associated with the team demonstrate good sportsmanship, and that all persons associated with the team comply with the policies and procedures of the LSC Board, WSA, and USYS. The Board reserves the right to reject any application for a volunteer coaching position without explanation if it feels that appointment of the individual concerned would either compromise risk management goals or would not be in the best interests of the club.

Additional information for coaches is provided in the Coach's Handbook.

5.5 Conduct and safety

All players, parents, coaches, and spectators must abide by the policies outlined in section 7.0. In the event of cancellation due to weather, coaches will communicate to players and parents if and when make-up games will occur.

6.0 Rules for “Blizzard” Competitive Programs

6.1 Team formation

Teams will be formed in May at the annual player evaluation event. All players who wish to be part of the competitive program will be accepted, either as a competitive player or as a practice/developmental player. This designation will be made by the team Head Coach. Generally, players will be placed on a team according to birth year as designated by USYS. The composition of a team is specified by the official team roster appropriate to the particular league or tournament in question. To be eligible for inclusion on a team roster, players must be officially registered with WSA and must be of the appropriate age. The number of players included on the team roster (up to the maximum permitted number) shall be at the discretion of the Head Coach of the team. More details concerning team formation policies can be found in the Policies and Procedures Handbook.

6.2. Uniforms and equipment

Required equipment includes LSC Blizzard uniform, shin guards, and appropriate shoes:

- SHIRT – Each player is responsible for purchasing an official white and a blue LSC Blizzard Jersey. Both jerseys must bear the same player number, and that number must correspond with that shown for the player on the team roster. A player may not wear a jersey bearing a number different from that shown for him/her on the roster for any official game.
- SHORTS – Each Player is responsible for purchasing an official pair of blue LSC Blizzard shorts.
- SOCKS - Each Player is responsible for purchasing an official pair of blue and a pair of white socks.
- SHIN GUARDS - Shin guards may be purchased at most sporting goods and discount stores. Shin guards must be covered by socks or pants at all times during play.
- SHOES - Any kind of sneakers or recommended molded-sole soccer shoes may be worn. No hard-soled shoes or boots are allowed. Cleated soccer shoes are not required, but such shoes must not have a toe cleat (baseball and football shoes must have the toe cleat removed)
- WATER- Most fields do not have drinking fountains. Please make sure players have adequate liquids.

Recommended and optional equipment

- Appropriate clothes for the weather. Be aware that specific rules concerning the color of any additional clothes worn.
- Elastic bands on eyewear to prevent breakage
- Warm-up jackets and equipment bags with Blizzard logo are available for purchase but are not required

Not Permitted:

- JEWELRY –Jewelry, watches, and earrings are considered to be safety hazards and cannot be worn. Jewelry that is difficult to remove can be worn on exception, as long as it is non-protruding and it is taped over securely and completely. The ultimate decision about such exception lies solely with the referee.
- HATS - Hats or caps with hard bills are not permitted. Only soft stocking type caps are permitted.
- CASTS – Properly padded casts are allowed at the discretion of the referee.
- TOBACCO - Cigarettes or other tobacco products are not allowed on the field; be it for practice or games. This applies to coaches and referees as well. Spectators are urged not to smoke at games.

6.3 Game Rules

Age-specific small-sided game rules can be found at the LSC, WSA, and CSA websites. Players are otherwise bound by WSA, CSA, and FIFA laws of the game. All decisions of the referee are final.

6.4 Role and Duties of Coaches

The principle role of a coach is to prepare players and develop their skills. The coach should strive to develop players to the maximum of their potential, ensure that productive practices are conducted, all persons associated with the team demonstrate good sportsmanship, all persons associated with the team comply with the policies and procedures of the LSC Board, WSA, and USYS. The Board reserves the right to reject any application for a volunteer coaching position without explanation if it feels that appointment of the individual concerned would either compromise risk management goals or would not be in the best interests of the club.

Additional information for coaches is provided in the Coach's Handbook.

6.6 Team management

Teams are highly encouraged to have a manager and/or team parent to facilitate off-field administration and management of the team. Teams should designate a representative to attend board meetings. Additional policies are found in the *Policies and Procedures Handbook* on the LSC website.

6.7 Team accounts

Competitive teams will have an associated account to subsidizing tournament fees and soccer camp fees, equipment purchase additional to that supplied by LSC, etc. Please note that all purchases must be approved by the club Treasurer and all fundraising activities must be approved by the LSC board. Additional policies are found in the *Policies and Procedures Handbook*.

6.8 Conduct and safety

All players, parents, coaches, and spectators must abide by the policies outlined in section 7.0.

7.0 Conduct and safety

7.1 Standards of Conduct for Players, Coaches, and Spectators

Standards of Conduct for Players and Spectators issued by US Youth Soccer have been adopted as guidelines for LSC and are attached in Appendices A and B, respectively. Standards of conduct for coaches are found in the Coaches' Handbook. It is expected that everyone associated with LSC will conduct themselves in a manner that promotes the highest regard for the good of the game and for LSC. Consequences for actions breaking the Standards of Conduct (Parent or Player) shall include but not be limited to: Suspension or Dismissal from the team or Laramie LSC.

7.2 Participant Registration

Every soccer player, coach, and team that is sponsored, financed, coached, and/or administered by LSC shall be registered with the Wyoming Soccer Association (WSA). The LSC Registrar conducts registration of both individuals and teams. Failure to register each player, coach and team could result in LSC being:

- (a) not covered by secondary medical insurance;
- (b) considered to be in bad standing with WSA;
- (c) disciplined and/or fined;
- (d) Suspended from WSA and/or CSA sponsored and/or sanctioned activities.

7.3 Medical release and concussion information

All parents of players must complete a USYS medical release form. Information concerning concussion and head injury are found in Appendix D. Players with suspected concussion should be removed from play. A player with a diagnosed concussion may not practice or play until cleared by a medical professional.

7.4 Indemnity Waiver

By registering, both players and coaches agree that they will abide by the rules, policies, and regulations of LSC and of the state and national organizations and associations to which LSC is affiliated. Furthermore, players and their parents/guardians, and coaches agree to release, discharge and/or otherwise indemnify LSC, the state and national soccer organizations and associations to which LSC is affiliated, LSC executive officers, board members, coaches, and associated personnel against any and all claims and/or demands that may arise from their participation in LSC activities.

8.0 Fees and refund policies

8.1 Player Fees

Player fees, which may vary between age groups and division, shall be established by the LSC Board prior to the start of the soccer year. They may be subsequently modified. In general, the annual fees will be charged in two not necessarily equal installments before the start of each fall and spring season. Mid-season fee revisions in the fall may result in the spring season fee being adjusted. *Seasonal player fees are due in full at the time of player registration and should be submitted together with the completed registration materials.*

The normal expenses covered by the fees typically include a player registration fee, the use of the LSC Indoor Soccer Facility, secondary medical insurance coverage, a City of Laramie user fee, contributions to team registration fees, referee fees, equipment purchase, and administrative support. Players and their families are responsible for any and all expenses associated with players participating in and traveling to and from games, both in Laramie and away from home.

8.2 LSC Program Refund Policy

If you have registered in a LSC program and decide not to participate, the following schedule will be used to determine your refund, if any:

- If you withdraw before the start of the program (prior to issuing player cards and team rosters for league registrations, or the first day of all other program registrations), the club will refund your entire registration fee, less fees used to cover WSA registration fee that has been paid by the club, any program shirt order that has been placed due to your initial registration, any direct costs for the club, and any online transaction fees. Fees are explained below.

No refunds will be given for withdrawals after a program or league has begun with these exceptions:

- Your player was not able to be placed on a team or for an injury with a medical note. In these cases, all registration fees will be refunded less the pertinent fees for the program or league as described below.

If a uniform order has been placed, the cost of the uniform will not be refunded, regardless of the date of withdrawal.

Contact the LSC Treasurer for refund requests.

8.3 Competitive Traveling Program Refund Policy (Colorado League, Ft. Collins League, and Wyoming League)

If you withdraw prior to the issuing of player cards and team rosters, the club will refund your entire registration fee, less the \$50 WSA registration fee that has been paid by the club, plus any program shirt order that has been placed due to your initial registration, any direct costs for the club, and any online transaction fees.

No refunds will be given for withdrawals after the first game of the season, unless your player was not able to be placed on a team or injured (and meets above requirements). In that case, all registration fees will be refunded less the \$50 WSA registration fee that has been paid by the club, plus any program shirt order that has been placed due to your initial registration, any direct costs for the club, and any online transaction fees. Refunds for injury may be prorated for players who participate for any portion of the season.

If a uniform order has been placed, the cost of the uniform will not be refunded, regardless of the date of withdrawal.

Contact the Laramie LSC Treasurer for refund requests.

8.4 Recreational Program Refund Policy (Recreational league, Polar Bears, 3 versus 3 League, Practice/Developmental Player, Clinics, and Camps)

If you withdraw prior to the first day of the program, the club will refund your entire registration fee, less the cost of player insurance (typically \$20 or less), plus any direct costs, and any online transaction fees.

No refunds will be given for withdrawals after the first day of the program, unless your player was not placed on a team or is injured (and meets above requirements). In that case, all registration fees will be refunded, less the cost of player insurance.

Refunds will come in the form of a credit to the credit card used to pay or a check sent to the address on the registration.

Contact the LSC Treasurer for refund requests.

8.5 Fee Assistance:

Subject to the availability of funds, partial or full fee waivers will be available upon application for participants subject to financial limitations. LSC thereby seeks to allow players to participate who might otherwise be excluded for financial reasons. Such players and/or their parent(s) should submit scholarship application and a letter to the LSC Treasurer explaining their request for tuition support. *(These can be found on the LSC web-site)* The Treasurer shall present all fee waiver requests to the Scholarship Committee, which is comprised of current board members, appointed by the Board President. Parents should note that requesting a fee waiver does not mean that one will, or can, be granted. LSC hopes that fee waiver requests will be confined to those individuals in a true position of need, and that as many families as possible requesting waivers can be accommodated fairly and equally.

APPENDIX A

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FOR PLAYERS

The following standards are established by LSC & CSA to govern the behavior of players before, during and after soccer matches:

Do not address remarks to opposing players, coaches, spectators, or referees (except when remarks convey genuine friendship and respect, or are in response to questions by the referee).

Do not retaliate when fouled.

Avoid comments or gestures, which express disagreement with referee calls (these are cardable offenses).

Displays of temper will not be tolerated on the field or in the playing area.

Convey a consistently positive attitude toward your teammates and coaches. Your true strength of character will be displayed on the field when you are under pressure and your team is losing. What kind of person are you?

Play against your opponents, not the referee. Worry over referee calls with which you disagree can distract you from playing your best. Fewer than one in one hundred referee calls have any influence on the outcome of a game.

Players who persist in violating these standards of conduct will jeopardize their standing as players within LSC & CSA. Flagrant disregard for rules of play and standards of conduct will result in stringent disciplinary action, including possible loss of standing, loss of out-of-state travel privileges, and/or complete removal from the Association.

AGREEMENT SIGNATURE:

APPENDIX B

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS & SPECTATORS

The following standards are set forth to govern spectator conduct, before, during and after soccer matches:

DO:

I will remember that children learn best by modeling.

I will teach my child that doing one's best is as important as winning so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of a game or event.

I will recognize good players' performances by both my child's team and the opponent, and applaud superior play by both teams.

I will encourage my child to play in the spirit of the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.

I will remember that my child plays soccer for his or her enjoyment, not for mine.

I will support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from youth activities.

I will respect and show appreciation for the coaches who give their time to provide sport activities for my child.

I will support my child in all circumstances by offering praise for competing fairly and for honest effort.

DO NOT:

I will not pressure my child to participate in soccer.

I will not criticize or yell at my child for their performance or losing a competition.

I will not question nor criticize the official's judgment in public, and will avoid comments and gestures that express disagreement with referee calls. Referees make mistakes that are part of the game and your child learns by overcoming them. Remember, those who cannot conduct themselves in the above manner are not welcome at LSC soccer matches. Individuals who persist in violating these standards may be asked to leave the playing area and play may be suspended until they do so. Failure to respond may result in forfeiture against the offending spectator's side.

AGREEMENT SIGNATURE:

APPENDIX C

Referees, Coaches and Parents: Role Models for Life

What role should the referee, coach and parents play?

REFEREES, COACHES and PARENTS together have an enormous impact on the lives of thousands of youth soccer players in the United States. How can we best serve the interest of these players?

This USYS document was created in response to an overwhelming number of questions asked about how the "adults" can positively impact soccer players. While each parent must be accountable for his/her actions and teach his/her own son or daughter to do the same, referees, coaches and parents form a trio of role models from which many of our young men and women learn behaviors that they will carry into adulthood. Cooperation, respect and maturity among the adults in soccer will encourage those qualities in the players.

REFEREES: What can they do to make the game of soccer better for the players?

1. Know the Law and the rules.
2. Be professional; ie. on time, in proper uniform, prepared, fit, etc.
3. Study the game and the spirit of soccer.
4. Attend meetings, clinics, seminars.
5. Show respect to players, coaches, parents and spectators.
6. Explain rules, when needed.
7. Help less experienced referees.
8. Play the game to better understand it.
9. Seek evaluation from coaches/players.
10. Be assessed regularly.
11. Smile, enjoy the game.
12. Be firm, fair and honest.
13. Be consistent.
14. Accept only the number and level of assignments that can be done well.
15. Be neutral.
16. Know and use proper procedures.
17. Always remain calm.
18. Take each game seriously.
19. Implement good management techniques
20. Show courage and confidence; avoid arrogance.

COACHES: What can they do to make the game of soccer more enjoyable for the players, and easier for the referee to manage?

1. Take a course on the Laws.
2. Be accepting of the referee's decisions.
3. Remain calm.
4. Do not make loud, offensive remarks.
5. Concentrate on coaching, rather than on the accuracy of referee's decisions.
6. Be a role model of fair play.
7. Be positive; avoid confrontation with any official
8. During games, leave the decisions to the players.
9. Attend coaching classes to learn the most effective ways to conduct practices.
10. Give good guidelines to parents.
11. Set high standards.
12. Be on-time.
13. Be firm with parents at games.
14. Teach skills and fair tactics.
15. Discourage unfair gamesmanship.
16. Communicate with parents often in meetings and social gatherings.
17. Play the game and encourage parents to play and to referee.
18. Referee games.
19. Delegate responsibilities.
20. Remember to have fun with the kids.

PARENTS: What can parents do to make the game of soccer more enjoyable for their children and other people's kids, too?

1. Be knowledgeable of the game.
2. Encourage fair play at home.
3. Be supportive; be sure the player attends practices; pick him/her up on time.
4. Attend games.
5. Be positive or quiet at games.
6. Be respectful; expect your own children to be respectful.
7. Focus on good nutrition.
8. Volunteer to help the coach.
9. Become a referee.
10. Play the game of soccer.
11. Be calm and have good manners.
12. Support the coach's and referee's decisions.
13. Encourage communication between coach and parent.
14. Ask your own children to describe his/her role, what new skills have been learned.
15. Watch practices; focus on new strategies
16. Find soccer videos, watch them with children.
17. Concentrate on praising other people's children during games.

18. Read newspaper articles about older soccer player's successes; provide models for your own children.

Soccer ... the game for kids!

APPENDIX D – CDC concussion information

A Fact Sheet for YOUTH SPORTS PARENTS



This sheet has information to help protect your children or teens from concussion or other serious brain injury.

What Is a Concussion?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury—or TBI—caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. This fast movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, creating chemical changes in the brain and sometimes stretching and damaging the brain cells.

How Can I Help Keep My Children or Teens Safe?

Sports are a great way for children and teens to stay healthy and can help them do well in school. To help lower your children's or teens' chances of getting a concussion or other serious brain injury, you should:

- Help create a culture of safety for the team.
 - › Work with their coach to teach ways to lower the chances of getting a concussion.
 - › Emphasize the importance of reporting concussions and taking time to recover from one.
 - › Ensure that they follow their coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
 - › Tell your children or teens that you expect them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- When appropriate for the sport or activity, teach your children or teens that they must wear a helmet to lower the chances of the most serious types of brain or head injury. There is no "concussion-proof" helmet. Even with a helmet, it is important for children and teens to avoid hits to the head.

How Can I Spot a Possible Concussion?

Children and teens who show or report one or more of the signs and symptoms listed below—or simply say they just "don't feel right" after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body—may have a concussion or other serious brain injury.

Signs Observed by Parents

- Appears dazed or stunned.
- Forgets an instruction, is confused about an assignment or position, or is unsure of the 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* or *after* a hit or fall.

Symptoms Reported by Children and Teens

- Headache or "pressure" in head.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Balance problems or dizziness, or double or blurry vision.
- Bothered by light or noise.
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy.
- Confusion, or concentration or memory problems.
- Just not "feeling right," or "feeling down."

Talk with your children and teens about concussion. Tell them to report their concussion symptoms to you and their coach right away. Some children and teens think concussions aren't serious or worry that if they report a concussion they will lose their position on the team or look weak. Remind them that *it's better to miss one game than the whole season.*



Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention
National Center for Injury
Prevention and Control

GOOD TEAMMATES KNOW:

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

Concussions affect each child and teen differently. While most children and teens with a concussion feel better within a couple of weeks, some will have symptoms for months or longer. Talk with your children's or teens' health care provider if their concussion symptoms do not go away or if they get worse after they return to their regular activities.



Plan ahead.

What do you want your child or teen to know about concussion?

What Are Some More Serious Danger Signs to Look Out For?

In rare cases, a dangerous collection of blood (hematoma) may form on the brain after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body and can squeeze the brain against the skull. Call 9-1-1 or take your child or teen to the emergency department right away if, after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, he or she has one or more of these danger signs:

- One pupil larger than the other.
- Drowsiness or inability to wake up.
- A headache that gets worse and does not go away.
- Slurred speech, weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination.
- Repeated vomiting or nausea, convulsions or seizures (shaking or twitching).
- Unusual behavior, increased confusion, restlessness, or agitation.
- Loss of consciousness (passed out/knocked out). Even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously.



You can also download the CDC *HEADS UP* app to get concussion information at your fingertips. Just scan the QR code pictured at left with your smartphone.

What Should I Do If My Child or Teen Has a Possible Concussion?

As a parent, if you think your child or teen may have a concussion, you should:

1. Remove your child or teen from play.
2. Keep your child or teen out of play the day of the injury. Your child or teen should be seen by a health care provider and only return to play with permission from a health care provider who is experienced in evaluating for concussion.
3. Ask your child's or teen's health care provider for written instructions on helping your child or teen return to school. You can give the instructions to your child's or teen's school nurse and teacher(s) and return-to-play instructions to the coach and/or athletic trainer.

Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Only a health care provider should assess a child or teen for a possible concussion. You may not know how serious the concussion is at first, and some symptoms may not show up for hours or days. A child's or teen's return to school and sports should be a gradual process that is carefully managed and monitored by a health care provider.

Children and teens who continue to play while having concussion symptoms or who return to play too soon—while the brain is still healing—have a greater chance of getting another concussion. A repeat concussion that occurs while the brain is still healing from the first injury can be very serious and can affect a child or teen for a lifetime. It can even be fatal.

Revised 12/2015



Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention
National Center for Injury
Prevention and Control

To learn more, go to www.cdc.gov/HEADSUP