

# Sample Brain Injury Risk Management Program for Youth Football and Cheer for \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name of team/association/conference)

## Educational Awareness through Online Training and Information Handouts and Administration / Document Retention

### Coaches

#### Basic Concussion Training Course (Free)

All paid and volunteer coaches should complete the National Alliance for Youth Sports Concussion Training Video every two years with certificate of completion documentation retained at team/association/conference level for a period of at least 15 years:

<http://www.nays.org/additional-training/preview/concussion-training.cfm>

#### Seahawks Tackle Training (Free)

All paid and volunteer coaches should view the [Hawks Tackling resource page](#) to find the online course and log into [MyAYF.com](#) to take the related test with certificate of completion documentation retained at the team/association/ conference level for a period of at least 15 years.

### Staff / Participant / Parent Concussion Awareness Information Sheet

The following CDC Parent / Athlete Concussion Information Sheet should be distributed annually to all staff, participants, and parents (if minor participants) with the signed and dated sheet retained at the team/association/conference level for a period of at least 15 years:

[http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/pdfs/youthsports/parent\\_athlete\\_info\\_sheet-a.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/pdfs/youthsports/parent_athlete_info_sheet-a.pdf)

### Baseline Neurocognitive Testing

It is strongly recommended that each athlete take a baseline neurocognitive test prior to the start of conditioning / training camp. In the event of a concussion, this baseline test will assist the health care professionals in making return to play decisions.

### Identify Suspected Cases of Concussions

The highest medical authority at a practice or game is the person who is in the best position to diagnose a suspected concussion and to make the call. The presence of (or immediate access to) a medical doctor (MD), doctor of osteopathy (DO), or athletic trainer trained in concussion recognition is ideal. However, in cases where medical professionals are not present or immediately available, a person should be present who is at least EMT certified or is currently certified in Red Cross Community First Aid or the equivalent.

**Signs observed by parents, guardians, or sports staff:** appears dazed or stunned; is confused about the assignment or position; forgets instructions; 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; and can't recall events after hit or fall.

**Symptoms reported by player:** headache or pressure in the 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; or does not "feel right".

**What to do:** If athletes report or exhibit one or more of the signs listed above or say they “just don’t feel right” after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, they may have a concussion.

**Danger signs:** one pupil larger than the other; drowsiness or inability to wake up; headache that gets worse and does not go away; weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination; repeated vomiting or nausea; slurred speech; convulsions or seizures; inability to recognize people or places; increasing confusion, restlessness, or agitation; unusual behavior, loss of consciousness (even brief). If one or more of these danger signs occur after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body: call 9-1-1 or transport the athlete immediately to the emergency room.

**Smartphone App:** All coaches should have an app immediately available to help identify and respond to possible concussions such as the one made available by The American Academy Of Neurology.

**On Field Medical Status Evaluation:**

Orientation Questions: (ask the athlete)

What period/quarter/half are we in?	Who scored last?
What stadium/field is this?	Do you remember the hit?
What city is this?	What team did we play last?
Who is the opposing team?	Repeat the following words: Girls, Dog, Green.

Concentration: (ask the athlete)

- Repeat the days of the week backwards (starting with today)
- Repeat the months of the year backward (starting with December)
- Repeat these numbers backward 63, (36), 419 (914), 6294 (4926)

Exertional Maneuvers:

Complete 5 jumping jacks / Complete 5 sit ups.

Word List Memory: (ask the athlete)

Repeat the three words from earlier: Girls, Dog, Green

**If a Concussion Is Suspected, the Following Actions Should Be Taken**

- ▶ **Remove the athlete from play** - if any of the signs and symptoms are observed, remove the athlete from play. When in doubt, sit them out!
- ▶ **Make sure the athlete is evaluated by an MD or DO who is experienced in evaluating concussions.** Let the professionals judge the severity.
- ▶ **Inform the athlete’s parents / guardians and provide them with the CDC fact sheet** on "Concussions for parents" to help them monitor the athlete for signs and symptoms:  
[http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/pdfs/custom/headsupconcussion\\_fact\\_sheet\\_for\\_parents.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/pdfs/custom/headsupconcussion_fact_sheet_for_parents.pdf)
- ▶ **Keep the athlete out of play the day of the injury AND until an MD or DO experienced in evaluating concussion says it’s OK for the athlete to return.**

The AYF/AYC Resume Participation Medical Clearance Form or similar form should be completed, signed by an MD or DO, and returned before a player suspected of having a concussion will be allowed to return to play.

## Reduce Full Contact during Practices

Definition: "Full contact" includes both "thud" and "live action". "Thud" is a drill that is run at assigned speed through the moment of contact, with no pre assigned winner, where contact remains above the waist and players remain on feet and a quick whistle ends the drill. "Live action" is a drill that is run at game like conditions and is the only time where a player may be taken to the ground.

Prohibition on full-speed head-on tackling or blocking drills in which players are lined up more than three yards apart.

Full contact during practices should be limited to 60 to 90 minutes a week and no more than 30 minutes a day.

During pre-season two-a-day practices, only one session should include full contact.

It is understood that pre-season workouts will likely have more full contact to teach the fundamentals of tackling. However, as the season progresses, less and less time should be devoted to full contact.

## Proper Fitting and Care of Helmets

All equipment managers and coaches should be trained on the proper fitting and care of helmets. Resources on this topic can be found at [www.sadlersports.com/riskmanagement](http://www.sadlersports.com/riskmanagement) under the football section.

## Compliance with State Concussion Laws and NFHS Recommendations

To the extent that our state's concussion laws exceed the requirements outlined above, we should comply with our state's law. A summary of state concussion laws can be found at <http://www.lawatlas.org/preview?dataset=sc-reboot>

To the extent that our state's version of National Federation of High School Associations (NFHS) rules, regulations, or recommendations on brain injury exceed the requirements outlined above, we should comply with such standards.

Our sports organization has adopted this program by board action and should implement this brain injury risk management program prior to the start of every season.

Name of authorized sports organization official: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### DISCLAIMER

THIS SAMPLE BRAIN INJURY RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR TACKLE FOOTBALL AND CHEER IS MEANT TO PROVIDE GENERAL AWARENESS AND EDUCATION AND IS NOT AN ALL ENCOMPASSING PROGRAM. EACH PROGRAM SHOULD CONSULT OTHER SOURCES AND EXPERTS IN ORDER TO CUSTOMIZE THEIR OWN PROGRAMS. NO LEGAL ADVICE IS BEING PROVIDED. THE PURPOSE OF THIS PROGRAM IS TO REDUCE THE RISK OF LIABILITY. THIS PROGRAM IS NOT A SAFETY PROGRAM AND DOES NOT GUARANTEE THE SAFETY OF SPECTATORS, PARTICIPANTS, OR THIRD PARTIES. SADLER AND COMPANY, INC. DISCLAIMS ANY AND ALL LIABILITY RESULTING FROM THE DISSEMINATION OF THIS PROGRAM. IN EXCHANGE FOR RECEIPT OF THIS INFORMATION, SPORTS ORGANIZATION AND THEIR ADMINISTRATORS AND STAFF AGREE TO HOLD HARMLESS AND INDEMNIFY SADLER AND COMPANY, INC AND RESPECTIVE DIRECTORS, OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES FOR ANY CLAIMS, OF BODILY INJURY, PROPERTY DAMAGE, OR OTHER DAMAGES (INCLUDING REASONABLE ATTORNEY'S FEES) TO THEMSELVES OR THIRD PARTIES.