



## NOTICE TO PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

### **Play It Safe A Guide to Safety and Health for Young Athletes**

It's called playing, but sports activities are more than play. Participation in athletics improves physical fitness, coordination and self-discipline, and gives students valuable opportunities to learn teamwork.

#### **Reasons for Concern:**

Each year, more than 3.5 million sport-related injuries in children are treated in health care facilities in the U.S.-some are minor, some serious, and still others resulting in lifelong medical problems.

Young athletes are not merely small adults. Their bones, muscles, tendons and ligaments are still growing, which makes them more susceptible to injury. Young athletes of the same age can differ greatly in size and physical maturity. Their brains are continuing to develop as well.

#### **Guidelines for Preventing Sports Injuries and Related Illnesses or Infections:**

- Prevent injuries with a complete physical examination at the beginning of the season.
- Prevent injuries with proper attire and equipment.
- Prevent injuries by training which includes muscle strength, endurance, cardiovascular fitness and flexibility.
- Maintain hydration or fluid levels; drink plenty of water, during, and after practice or competition.
- The latest research indicates teens need an average of 9 hours of sleep/night; remember to include time for studying and "down time".
- Practice healthy eating habits and good nutrition.
- The use of anabolic steroids has shown to cause serious and potentially life-threatening complications and should never be used to improve athletic performance.

#### **Prevention and control of infections:**

- Wash hands with soap and water frequently or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer routinely.
- Encourage immediate showering following sports activities.
- Avoid sharing towels, razors, bar soap, other personal items or athletic gear.
- Wash athletic gear and towels after each use.
- Take good care of cuts, scrapes, and sores. Clean them with soap and water. Keep them dry and covered with a bandage, taped on all sides, until they are healed.
- Call your doctor if you have signs of a rash or skin infection such as;
  - A sore that looks like a spider bite
  - A red, painful bump under the skin
  - A cut or sore that is swollen, hot and oozing pus or blood
  - Blisters filled with fluid
  - A skin lesion that does not respond to initial treatment
- If you have a skin infection or rash, notify coach, trainer or school nurse.
- If a wound cannot be covered or has drainage, then the student should be excluded from activities that may lead to transmission of infection to others.
- Stay home and rest if you have a fever, or need to re-habilitate an injury.

**Please pay careful attention to these guidelines, we want you to play successfully with good health and safety practices.**