



2024 – 2025

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Blue Mountain Union School

# Athletic Handbook

BLUE MOUNTAIN UNION SCHOOL

# **Athletic Department**

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© Blue Mountain Union School  
2420 Route 302  
Wells River, VT 05046  
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Dear Student-athletes,

By becoming a member of the Blue Mountain Athletic program, you are helping to continue a great tradition!

Our program strives to represent the very best in personal effort, competition, coaching, equipment, facilities, schedules and organization. Participation on a sport is a wonderful expansion of your education. We hope that it will foster your growth, not only in athletic ability, but in personal development, as well. Lifelong lessons learned through athletic involvement will benefit you well beyond your years here at BMU. Interscholastic competition demands a serious commitment. It will require long hours of dedication and perseverance but will enable you, as an individual, to learn to work within a group to achieve a collective goal.

This handbook has been put together specifically for the student-athlete and family, who will be competing on or supporting one or more of our athletic teams. I hope the contents will help you better understand our program, policies, and expectations of student-athletes.

We appreciate all of your efforts and wish you personal success as you join the many outstanding student-athletes who have enjoyed and enriched Blue Mountain. Best of luck in your academic and athletic pursuits. If you have any questions or concerns throughout the year, please feel free to stop by or call me at (802) 757-2711 x1300.

Sincerely,



Todd Powers  
Athletic Director  
Blue Mountain Union School

*“It’s not where you’re from;  
It’s where you’re going!  
It’s not what you drive;  
It’s what drives you!  
It’s not what’s on you;  
It’s what’s in you!  
It’s not what you think;  
It’s what you know!”*  
-Gatorade

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# Blue Mountain Athletics Mission

## Extra Curricular Philosophy

*Champions aren't made in the gyms. Champions are made from something they have deep inside them -- a desire, a dream, a vision.*

*-Muhammad Ali, American Boxer*

The Blue Mountain Union mission and graduate outcomes are congruent with providing a challenging, comprehensive education, which will foster a lifetime of curiosity, learning, productivity, and good citizenship. While academics are our primary concern, we recognize that athletics provide additional opportunities and challenges for personal growth and development. Through competition and organized activities, students learn the value of discipline and respect for rules. Being involved in athletics provides students with a model for good citizenship.

Athletics are an integral part of the educational program. Their purpose is to provide unique educational experiences that will contribute to the development of better citizens. Athletics compliment the work that takes place in the classroom. Emphasis is on teaching life skills through athletics, in addition to teaching the skills of the sport. Development of the whole student is at the core of the BMU program.

Athletics provide students opportunities to improve fitness and social skills, and to develop as individuals. They serve as a laboratory where students can cope with problems and situations similar to those encountered in today's society. With good leadership, students learn self-discipline, self-motivation, and develop good sportsmanship.

At the middle school and junior varsity levels, development of skills, knowledge and understanding of the game, and conditioning is stressed, while encouraging a positive, winning attitude. At the varsity level, winning is stressed, not on an "at any cost" basis, but rather as the result of a strong work ethic, positive attitude, and a strong basic knowledge of the game.

## Statement of Objectives

- To present athletic participation as a part of the total educational process and provide an opportunity for physical, mental, and social growth.
- To strive always for playing excellence that will produce winning teams within the bounds of good sportsmanship, while enhancing the mental health of student-athletes.

- To protect, promote, and preserve the health and physical well being of participating students. To help students understand and practice the principles of sound health, safety, and physical fitness.
- To provide a program that enhances the curriculum of the school, helping students learn new skills beyond those acquired in regular classes and to improve upon those already acquired.
- To provide opportunities for students with advanced talents and skills to have extended experiences.
- To give each student the opportunity to be a member of an organized team and to compete at a level that is consistent with his/her abilities.
- To provide students with the opportunity to experience working as a member of a team in order to achieve a goal, and in the process, to learn that cooperation and competition are not mutually exclusive concepts.
- To give parents and community members an opportunity to see our students work in a team environment.
- To provide a positive image of school athletics at Blue Mountain Union School.
- To provide students with the opportunity to exemplify good sportsmanship as a means for learning good citizenship.
- To provide students with the opportunity to experience self-discipline, sacrifice, and dedication as a means of achieving goals.
- To provide students with the opportunity to experience both winning and losing. Students should come to understand that losing provides opportunities to learn and to make adjustments.
- To demonstrate to students that real, lasting satisfaction comes from doing the job to the best of one's ability.
- To develop self-confidence and foster a feeling in students that, as individuals, they are capable of achieving more than they may have thought possible.
- To provide students with the opportunity for experience in problem solving, decision making, and time management.

# Eligibility

## Participation / Eligibility

The BMU Athletic Department encourages all students to participate in extracurricular activities providing they meet the eligibility guidelines. It is important that students, parents, and interested individuals are aware of necessary expectations.

### VPA Eligibility Rules

Eligibility rules and activities policies apply to all students, both boys and girls, in grades 7-12 in affiliated schools. Eligibility rules and activities policies apply to all activities, athletic and non-athletic, sanctioned or sponsored by the Vermont Principals' Association. Waiver requests regarding undue hardships must be submitted through the Principal.

The following are VPA eligibility rules:

- Contestants or participants must be enrolled in their school and must meet the school's prescribed academic and eligibility rules. Students may only compete on school teams sponsored by their own school during the season, and may only compete for the one school in which he or she is officially enrolled. Students may participate in meets as individuals but may not participate as a member of another team.
- In a sports season players who have participated in competition as a member of a school group shall not compete as members of a non-school organized group in the same sport. Violation of this rule will be handled as follow:
- Transfer students are eligible at once provided they were bona fide students in good standing in the school from which they transferred according to the above definition in and there is a bona fide change in residence. If the transfer is the result of any coercion, recruiting or inducement to move in order to participate in interscholastic activities, students will be ineligible for a period of 365 calendar days from the date of the infraction.
- If there is no bona fide change in residency, students are eligible to participate immediately up to the first play date of that sports season. If a student's transfers, and does not change residence, after the first play date of that sports season, the student must wait 20 calendar days after the transfer to be eligible, and must participate in at least 60% of the season competitions (at the new school) to be eligible for post season competition.



- A school shall be deemed in violation of the rule against recruitment for directly or indirectly supporting or sanctioning recruitment if a representative or agent of the school, or any individual or group associated with the athletic programs of that school, approaches a student-athlete in another school, apart from a publicized meeting for all prospective students in that school, and directly or indirectly attempts to persuade or induce a student-athlete to enroll in his/her school. A school may also violate this rule by failing to take adequate steps to control recruitment by third parties.
- A student who competes in any VPA sanctioned activity must be under nineteen (19) years of age, except that a student whose nineteenth (19th) birthday occurs on or after August 1 is eligible for all activities in the ensuing school year. Students who have attained the age of nineteen (19) prior to August 1 shall be ineligible for all VPA sanctioned activities.
- Students are ineligible if they have graduated from any course of study in a secondary school comparable to the Vermont system.
- Students have four (4) consecutive years or eight (8) consecutive semesters of eligibility for participation in school activities. Attendance of thirty (30) school days of any semester shall be regarded as a semester. Attendance is defined as being included in the official roll and attendance records of the school and not physical presence in the class. A student that is enrolled for his/her eighth and final semester of eligibility, during the fall-winter term, may complete the winter sports season as long as he/she is an eligible student and has not graduated.
- No student may participate in the same sport for more than four seasons.
- Students are ineligible if they have lost their amateur standing, i.e., they have accepted remuneration, gifts or donations directly or indirectly for participation in an athletic contest, or they have participated under an assumed name, or they have competed on a team some player of which was paid for his participation, or they have entered into a playing contract with a professional club or agent. Reference to "gifts or donations" is not intended to preclude the acceptance of playing apparel and equipment that is presented by the sponsoring organization.

For a complete list of VPA rules and regulations, go to [www.vpaonline.org](http://www.vpaonline.org).

## **BMU Participation Standards**

It is a requirement of Blue Mountain Union School and the Vermont Principals' Association to have a physical examination every two (2) years for students who engage in interscholastic athletics. These exams are at the expense of each individual. The main office has the forms that need to be completed by a doctor. It is also necessary that all candidates furnish proof of accident/health insurance or purchase the school medical insurance prior to participation.

The following forms must be returned in order for a student to participate in athletics:

- Warning, Acknowledgement, & Authorization – to be read and signed by both parent/guardian and athlete.
- Contact Information and Health Questionnaire – to be completed by parent/guardian and athlete. (Form will be kept in the Athletic Office)
- Physical Exam for Competitive Sports – to be completed at exam with doctor
- Athletic Emergency Card – to be completed by parent/guardian and updated anytime there is a change.

In addition the following general provisions adopted by the Blue Mountain School Board apply:

- Candidates must be full-time students as defined by Policy 2051, or home schooled students.
- Using the appropriate forms, parents must give written permission prior to a student's participation on a BMU team.
- By becoming a member of any team, participants agree to comply with rules and codes of conduct established by the BMU Athletic Department and by the Vermont Principal's Association. Specific rules and penalties which are established shall be distributed to each participant in writing prior to the start of each season. Students will provide written verification that they have received this information prior to participation.
- In an activity season, players who have participated in practice or competition as a member of a school group shall not practice or compete as members of a non-school organized group in the same activity. Students may participate in an event as individual, but not as members of another team. Violation of this rule will be handled as follows:
  - For the first infraction, a warning to the student that the choice of participation on one or the other team must be made.
  - For the second infraction, the student will be dropped from the school team.

## **Academic Eligibility**

Academics come first! A student who needs to get extra help from a teacher is expected to do so. Please notify the coaches or Athletic Director one day ahead if possible. Students who need immediate academic help and cannot give one days notice, must see the Athletic Director before the end of the academic day. This is an acceptable absence or tardy and the student will not face any consequences for the absence.

1. Students in grades 9 - 12 must maintain a 2.0 GPA and not be failing any classes to be eligible for the season. Grades will be checked prior to the season's first practice. Students will be notified of their eligibility by the Athletic Director.
2. Any student who chooses to participate in an activity or on an athletic team under the auspices of this policy must maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA throughout the season. GPA will be checked at progress report time and at the end of each quarter.
3. Eligibility will be determined at progress report time and at the end of a quarter.
4. Students whose GPA falls below 2.0, or fail a class, will be eligible if they attend 2 weekly 8<sup>th</sup> period study halls for the remainder of the season. If students are still ineligible at the next grade check they will be required fulfill on additional study hall for each grade check they are ineligible. Each time the consequence building. Study Hall credit guidelines are delineated in the Athletic Handbook. \*
5. Incoming ninth grade students must have a 2.0 GPA or higher on the third trimester report card.
6. Students playing on the middle school teams must maintain a 75% average and not be failing any classes to be eligible for the season. Grades will be checked prior to the season's first practice, at progress report time, and at the end of each marking period. Students will be notified of their eligibility by the Athletic Director.
7. Courses given an incomplete will be evaluated by the Principal on an individual basis.
8. Eligibility of transfer students shall be based on the standards of their previous school until they have been issued a BMU report card.

\*(In the case of students playing on middle school teams, a 75% average and no failing grades replaces the 2.0 GPA requirement.)

## Eligibility Study Hall

If deemed academically ineligible students must follow the subsequent guidelines in order to receive credit and meet the standard.

- Students must attend two (2) study halls per full week and one (1) study hall per short week. A full week is defined as four (4) or more class days, while a short week is defined as three (3) or fewer class days. Three (3) sessions per full week will be offered.
- Standards for study hall are delineated below. If students are meeting the standards, they get credit for that day. If they do not, they will be sent out and not given credit for that day.
  - Study hall begins at 2:35 p.m. and ends at 3:25 p.m.
  - Students will be working on class assignments for the duration of the study hall.
  - Students will not use cell phones while participating in study hall.
  - Students will respect all student and staff personnel participating within the study hall.
  - Students will enter the study hall prepared to stay for the duration. They will have an individual plan for success created by the student and study hall supervisor present at all times. This includes written descriptions of assignments to be completed during the study hall.
  - If a student is required to be in the extracurricular study hall, that student may not be in the main hallway until after 3:30 p.m.
- The consequence for not participating in the study hall for the required number of days will be ineligibility for the next game played.
- Students will be allowed to leave the study hall in order to receive help from a teacher. They must return to the study hall prior to 3:25 p.m. with a note signed by that teacher.
- If students need use of a computer, they will need to bring a laptop to study hall with them.
- A student who is late will not be given credit for that day. A student who leaves early (unexcused) will not be given credit for that day.
- Any discipline issues (disrespect, distracting others, using cell phone) will result in dismissal from study hall and as a result, no credit for that day.
- Students will not be excused from study hall on home game days or for practice.

# Rules & Regulations

## Federal Law

### Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal Law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

If you do not want your student-athlete's roster information (including photos) on rosters, publicity mailings, websites or other sports information, please contact the athletic director prior to the start of the sports season.

## Title IX

Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 states that:

*"... no person in the U.S. shall, on the basis of sex be excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal aid."*

## Equal Opportunity

The Blue Mountain Union School interscholastic athletic experience is equally available to all students. This equal opportunity exists regardless of race, religion, gender, ethnicity or nationality. Three separate sports are offered for girls, three for boys and one is considered co-educational. To ensure that a balanced program, available for all students, is maintained at all times, the Principal and Athletic Director shall consider the following:

- The nature and extent of the sports offered and their accommodation of the interests and abilities of all students both in terms of sports and levels of competition offered.
- The provision of equipment and supplies.
- The scheduling of games and practice times.
- The provision for travel.
- The nature and extent of the coaching provided.
- The assignment and compensation of coaches.
- The provision of locker rooms, practice and competitive facilities.
- The nature and extent of publicity.

Equal aggregate expenditures shall not be required in ensuring that a balanced program for men and women is maintained at all times. However, financial resources shall be allocated as necessary to provide facilities, equipment, supervision, supplies, and opportunities for participation and competition that equally accommodate the athletic interests and abilities of both men and women.

## **State Regulations**

As a member of the Vermont Principals' Association (VPA), Blue Mountain Union requires its athletes to conform to rules and regulations adopted by the VPA.

A comprehensive list of these regulations can be found on the VPA website: <http://www.vpaonline.org/bylaws/index.asp>

## **League Regulations**

As a member of the Central Vermont League (CVL), Blue Mountain Union requires its athletes to conform to rules and regulations adopted by the CVL.

## **Board Policy**

In addition, students are expected to comply with all policies and procedures adopted by Blue Mountain Union School. Questions regarding rules, regulations, policies, and procedures should be directed to the Athletic Director.

**Refer to Policy**  
#2053, #4330, & #4360

## **Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco**

We perform best when following sound health practices. These practices include a prohibition on alcohol, tobacco products, and illegal or misused drugs. It is the policy of Blue Mountain Union School District that no student shall knowingly possess, use, sell, give or otherwise transmit, or be under the influence of any illegal drug (any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, or any controlled substance as defined by state or federal regulation or statute), regulated substance, tobacco products, tobacco paraphernalia, tobacco substitutes or alcohol on any school property, or at any school sponsored activity away from or within the school.

Students who violate the school's policies on alcohol, drugs and tobacco while they are members of a school athletic team will be removed from the team for the remainder of the season. If drugs or alcohol are involved, drug/alcohol counseling may be required in order to participate in the next season. Any student who commits a second offense in the same year may not represent the school in any activities for the remainder of the school year. This rule applies to behavior both on and off school property. The player may also be subject to further action under the school's disciplinary policy.

**Refer to Policy**  
#4900

## **Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying**

Blue Mountain Union School District will ensure that all students find their participation in athletics enjoyable. In order for this to happen, all adults and student leaders will make every effort to ensure that participants understand what harassment, hazing, & bullying are and will not take part in any action which will make the experience less than enjoyable for others.

“Harassment” means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct based on or motivated by a student’s or a student’s family member’s actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity that has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student’s educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

“Hazing” means any act committed by a person, whether individually or in concert with others, against a student in connection with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with the district; and which is intended to have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of, humiliating, intimidating or demeaning the student or endangering the mental or physical health of the student. “Hazing” also includes soliciting, directing, aiding, or otherwise participating actively or passively in the above act. Hazing may occur on or off school grounds.

“Bullying” means any overt act or combination of acts directed against a student by another student or group of students and which:

- occurs during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity;
- is intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the student; and
- is repeated over time.

Since bystander support of harassment, hazing or bullying can support these behaviors, the district prohibits both active and passive support for acts of harassment, hazing, or bullying. The staff should encourage students to support students who walk away from these acts when they see them, constructively attempt to stop them, or report them to the designated authority.

The Blue Mountain Union School District recognizes that students should have a safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environment and that none of the above has a place or will be tolerated in the school. We expect students to conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, school staff, volunteers, and contractors.

**Refer to Policy**  
#2435

## **Student Medication**

A middle school or high school pupil may possess and self-administer medications only with written permission of a parent or guardian and with the permission of the Principal or school nurse. Self-administration means that the pupil is able to consume or apply prescription and non-prescription medication in the manner directed by the physician without additional assistance or direction. Self-possession means that the pupil may carry medication on his-her person to allow for immediate and self-determined administration. A medicine that a pupil possesses must be labeled and prepared by a pharmacy or pharmaceutical company and include the dosage and frequency of administration. Only one day's dose may be carried by the student at one time. A pupil's use cannot be denied if the conditions of written permission and physician direction are met. The principal may discontinue a pupil's right to self-administer and self-possession if there is misuse by the pupil. The denial shall follow a consultation with parent/guardian.

For example, a pupil who requires the use of an inhaler for relief or prevention of asthma symptoms will be allowed to carry and use the inhaler if there is written approval from the pupil's physician and parent/guardian on record at the school. A pupil who is in possession of an inhaler under the above conditions shall have each of his/her teachers notified of this by the school nurse. Any student whose inhaler for self medication is found out of the student's possession will have these privileges suspended and must report to School Nurse's Office for his/her inhaler.



## **Transportation to Athletic Events**

Students must travel to and from away games, meets, and activities on the team bus. However; students may leave with a parent/guardian at the conclusion of their contest. It is the parent's responsibility to personally tell his/her son/daughter's coach that the student will be going home with the parent and sign them out with the coach on the provided trip form. **Please make sure that you only approach the coach after the athletes and coach have completed all post game meetings!** No students will be permitted to ride with any other adult, student, or to drive to or from away games. All bus regulations will be followed. Before and after the event, students must remain in the building or under the bus port. No student is to be on the bus at any time unless supervised by a staff member and/or a member of the contracting bus service. Any exceptions must have written approval of the Principal and Athletic Director one day prior to the event.

## **Departmental Rules**

### **Coach's Statement**

Each sport is unique unto itself. It is appropriate for the individual coach to determine and set team guidelines. These approved guidelines will be made known to the athlete and parent(s) in writing. Student-athletes, accompanied by a parent/guardian, in grades 9-12 may be required to attend a pre-season meeting with the prospective coach. We hope this will open communication between all parties and help to start off the season on the same page.

### **Community Service**

Community service projects allow students to apply the lessons learned in the classroom and on the field/court to real-life situations and experiences. Community service promotes personal development in the areas of responsibility, effective mentoring, and the development of self-confidence. The community plays a large role in the development and success of the athletic department. It is the belief of the Blue Mountain Athletic Department that we have a responsibility to give back to a supportive community.

All varsity athletes must participate in an athletic department community service project for each sports season in which they play a sport. This will not be the coaches' responsibility and will be organized by the team captains. If an athlete is unable to attend the team event he/she will be required to turn in documentation of five outside hours of community service. *(These cannot be hours already used for NHS or other school requirements.)* All projects will be cleared through the athletic director prior to completion for scope and community dimension.

The intent of the requirement is to encourage students to be active and engaged members of their communities and to address important community issues.

## Cyber Image Policy

Blue Mountain Union School encourages safe and responsible student behavior with regard to internet use. We highly recommend our students avoid inappropriate use of public web sites such as Facebook, Twiter, Instagram or YouTube. Any identifiable image, photo, video, or posted on-line conversation which implicates a student-athlete to have been in violation of our rules that is discovered on these or any other web based sites will be investigated immediately by school officials. Parents will be notified, and the student will be questioned. If the violation is substantiated, the consequences outlined in the handbook may result.

**Refer to Policy**  
#4102

## Dress Code

All students will follow the BMU dress code. The expectation is all athletic teams will dress in clothing that is appropriate for their sport and the school environment during all practices & events. In addition, on game days (both home and away) athletes will not wear jeans, hats, or tee-shirts. Appropriate attire for boys will include a shirt and tie. Girls will be expected to wear a dress, skirt, or dress slacks within the guidelines of the BMU dress code. Blouse or shirt shall conform to the guidelines as well. Appropriate footwear is required for both boys and girls. Students will be expected to follow this expanded dress code for the duration of the school day and to the contest. In the event that adequate locker rooms are not available at the visiting school(s), the Coach may at his/her discretion, waive the dress code, and require all athletes to wear their uniforms to the away contest. This is more likely in the fall and spring sports where locker room facilities are not always available. Those athletes would still be expected to “dress up” following the above guidelines for the academic day. Students who choose not to follow this dress code will not play in that days contest.

## Doctor’s Care

Student-athletes who sustain an injury (requiring more than basic first aid) during practice or competition will leave the game or practice immediately to receive medical attention. If a student has been under a doctor’s care, s/he must obtain written permission from the doctor before being allowed to return to participation - practice or competition.

## **Expenses**

### **Mandatory**

With tightening budgets and rising costs of equipment, it is expected that a team member may have some associated costs depending on the sport he/she participates in. Just as pencils, paper, and binders may be a requirement of a teacher, the coach will identify what will be needed at the start of the season. This cost is not to exceed twenty dollars (\$20.00). Some examples include practice jerseys for basketball, undergarments for cheerleading, and hats/visors for baseball/softball. In most cases, the athletic department will buy these items in bulk to save on cost and can be reimbursed at a later date. All items are necessary to participate and if cost is prohibitive, then parents or students are asked to contact the athletic director and the cost will be covered.

### **Supplementary**

Some teams may want to purchase additional team wear during any given season. While this show of team spirit is to be applauded, items such as shirts, sweatshirts, pants, and other school spirit items are deemed optional and not a necessity. If a team agrees to purchase a staple item, the cost is not to exceed forty dollars (\$40.00). The School Board, in an effort to reduce the number of fund raising projects, does not allow fundraising for these materials as it is not an essential item and does not stay within the program. If cost is an issue for a parent or student, the athletic director may be able to help in securing funds.

## **Nuisance Devices**

The use of cell phones, cameras, media players or other nuisance devices are not permitted during athletic events. This includes games, practices, or other identified team events. These devices are not permitted inside the confines of locker rooms or other changing areas and should be securely stored away at all times.

## **Personal Property**

Blue Mountain Union School is not responsible for student-athlete's personal or school issued property that is lost, stolen or damaged in association with participation in athletics. When not in use, students are expected to keep their property locked in their lockers at all times. Students should make a strong attempt to leave extremely valuable items or large sums of money at home. However, if absolutely necessary, these items can be secured with their individual coaches.

## **Playing Time**

Decisions regarding playing time are made by the coach in the best interests of the team. The team will always come first.

At the varsity level, playing time is determined by the individual's skills, attitude, effort, and the team situation. Winning is emphasized more strongly, and playing time is not guaranteed.

At the middle school and sub-varsity levels, every effort will be made to ensure each athlete participates in every event. It is expected that members of the middle school and junior varsity level teams will see action in each game as long as they fulfill all of their team responsibilities and expectations as determined by the coaching staff.

On the middle school level, every effort will be made to ensure each athlete participates on one team. Example: Basketball -- Team A or Team B. An athlete may be moved up or down, but will play in no more than 4 quarters per day and a total of no more than 18 games, including tournaments. Soccer - no more than 2 halves per day and a total of no more than 12 games, exclusive of authorized tournaments. Baseball/Softball - no more than 7 innings per day and a total of no more than 12 games, including authorized tournaments. Cross-Country - no more than 10 meets, including authorized individual or championship meets.

## **Postponement of Games / Practices**

The responsibility for postponing games generally rests with the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director will consult with the coach before postponement of a home athletic event, if possible. The Athletic Director will reschedule postponed games according to availability of open dates, after consultation with the opposing school. The Athletic Director must notify all parties affected, including the opposing school, the game officials, police or security, the building custodian, the media, etc.

The responsibility for canceling practice generally rests with the coach only after he/she has contacted and obtained permission from the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director will then inform the respective team of the cancelled practice. If the coach is unable to contact the Athletic Director, they shall contact the administrative office to ensure proper notice is given to the athletes.

- If a team is scheduled to play away from home, we will in general accept judgment of the host school regarding a game postponement.
- The Athletic Director may decline to play or travel, if in his/her opinion, playing or traveling conditions are unsafe.
- In the absence of the Athletic Director, the Principal and varsity coach will act in his/her place.
- In the case of lightning or thunder, practice or competition will be suspended immediately. Subsequently, VPA guidelines will be followed.

## **Practice Requirements**

An athlete must have at least ten practices, no more than two practices per day, or one in the morning and one in the afternoon or evening, before he/she may participate in a game. Practice only starts when the player is eligible. A practice is defined as a structured, formal situation under the supervision of a coach and or assistant coach where formal instruction, training or conditioning for a sport is being conducted. It is expected that practice must be physical in nature unless an injury prevents that. An athlete is expected to be at practice every day to participate and learn.

When a student joins a team, s/he has a responsibility to teammates and to the school to be involved for the duration of the season. An athlete is expected to attend each practice and game. Missing practices or games because of detentions or suspension is considered an unexcused absence. Unexcused absences may result in the student being suspended or dropped from the team. Excused absences include doctor or dental appointments, illness, after school academic assistance, or other legitimate excuse as determined by the Principal, Athletic Director or Coach. Students are expected to see their coaches before missing a practice/game. Excuses must be made in writing. Communication through a friend is not acceptable. If a parent feels it is unsafe for their child to attend practice due to weather or conditions the practice will be excused buy the coach as long as they are notified the student will not be attending.

Students must be in school for the full day if they are going to participate in a game. If there are extenuating circumstances, a parent may contact the principal for a waiver to the full day rule. (*Refer to Policy 4100*) They should also be in school the full day to attend practice unless the parent has contacted the school to explain the absence.

## **Purchases**

All purchases of equipment, uniforms, supplies, etc. for use by Blue Mountain athletic teams must receive Athletic Director approval, regardless of who is paying for it (school, parents, athletes, coaches, etc.) This includes all warm-ups purchased by athletes.

Any design, logo, choice of colors, wording or placement thereof, must be in good taste and receive approval from the Athletic Director prior to the order being placed. If deemed inappropriate, athletes will be prohibited from wearing said item. We must always be aware that wherever our athletic teams go, they represent Blue Mountain Union School.

## **Recruitment of Students**

Students are to be encouraged to take part in the athletic program. Under no circumstances are students to be pressured or recruited by a coach to participate in their program by actively dissuading them from participating in another activity. This practice of recruitment serves only to deny students the freedom of choice they deserve and to create unnecessary friction and low morale among the staff.

## **Required Attendance at Events**

Attendance at the annual sports meeting, or its equivalent, is required of each student and parent/guardian before the student may participate in practice. In addition to this, a coach's meeting must be attended by both the prospective student-athlete and his/her parent/guardian if required by the head coach. There are occasions when the school will bring in special guest speakers, and in-season athletes will be obligated to be present. This may also apply to other community events in which the Athletic Director may see benefit for the athlete to attend. Exceptions will need to be arranged well in advance.

## **Schedule Conflicts**

Signing up for a sport means that students, as well as their parents, have made a commitment to that sport and are expected to make every effort possible to fulfill the obligations.

BMU students are often involved in multiple activities and organizations and are encouraged to explore a variety of interests at this time in their lives. Students are encouraged to be responsible citizens, which includes developing a balance between all facets of one's life. These beliefs are a driving force for BMU and can be found within the BMU Mission Statement.

Coaches need to be mindful of the many activities taking place.

Adults in charge of practices on the day of a culminating or special activity will permit the students involved to leave prior to the event, in order to be ready. The student will be dismissed one and one-half hours before the next scheduled event. The Athletic Director and/or Principal will notify coaches in advance when this situation arises. The students involved are responsible for notifying their coaches in advance of the upcoming event. A student will not be penalized for involvement in more than one activity on any given day.

## **School Property**

If a student-athlete is involved in malicious damage to the school or other public property, he or she will be required to make restitution to the owner and may be suspended or dismissed from the team. Students should have pride in our school. It is ours, and any environment is only as good as the people in it. Student-athletes should also play their part in keeping the locker room areas clean and without damage.

## **Try-outs**

Blue Mountain Union generally supports a no-cut policy. It is the goal of BMU Athletics to offer team sports to as many students as possible. However, in the event that a large number of students try out for a particular sport, the school may have to set limits on the number of participants. In the event that cuts will be made, the students

and their parents will be notified before or during the first practice. Students and parents will be told how many students will make the teams and when the official roster(s) will be developed. This will occur within one week of the first practice.

## **Uniforms and Equipment**

Students are responsible for all uniforms and equipment issued to them. They are responsible for keeping them clean, in good repair, and returning them at the end of the respective season. Uniforms are to be worn only in competition and when directed by the Coach or captains and not to be loaned out for any other events or activities. The uniforms will be returned to the Coach within one week of the conclusion of the sport. Students will be liable for lost and damaged items, and will be charged for replacement as determined by the respective Coach and the Athletic Director.

Team members will show respect and pride for themselves, their team, and the school community while representing BMU in competition. All shirts will be tucked in. All pants or shorts will be pulled up to the waist. All sleeves will be left where they were intended to be. All players will wear the same team colored socks; the same team colored headbands; and wear the same team hats or headgear during play. See Dress Code for appropriate dress on game days.

All protective headgear (helmets) will be put on and worn correctly.

It is required that each athlete in a contact sport use a mouth guard during practice and competition. The Athletic Director will distribute one free mouth guard to each player. After that it is the player's responsibility to obtain a replacement if lost. It has been proven that the use of a mouth guard reduces head injuries and protects the teeth.

## **Weekend and Vacation Commitments**

It is necessary, because of league scheduling limitations and lack of qualified game officials, to schedule athletic contests on Saturdays. High School athletes must understand that a commitment to the team will include Saturday games and occasional practices.

There is also an obligation to practice times during vacation if one hopes to compete at the Varsity level. The fall season generally begins around the second week of August. The Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Mid-winter vacations typically impact the winter sports season. The spring season involves the April break and may go beyond the regular school academic year.

If any conflicts do surface, parents and students should meet with the coach, well in advance, to discuss the situation and the impact it will have on the student and the team.

# Expectations of Conduct

## Standards of Behavior

We believe that the opportunity to participate in an athletic program is a privilege that carries with it many responsibilities. Any student who is willing to adhere to the rules and standards of an athletic team is given this privilege. We believe that academics come first and that the values and attitudes learned in athletics contribute to the complete education of the student.

Athletes attending school activities will conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at all times. School rules and procedures will be followed.

Students are expected to show good behavior on bus trips, home/away athletic competitions, restaurants, and host schools. Failure to do so may result in suspension from the sport and/or school.

**All School rules are in effect on school property, during a school related activity, while on a school bus, or during any other school sponsored activity.**

**Refer to Policy**  
#4300, #4310, & #4311

## Discipline Issues

All participants are expected to positively represent themselves, their team, their school, and their communities. Any behavior deemed detrimental to the team, school, and/or community will result in a minimum one-game suspension, to a maximum of termination from the team as determined by the Principal and Athletic Director.

Any school-related suspension will result in suspension from participation. Students may not participate in, or attend any extra-curricular programs during the term of a school-related suspension (to include weekends).

For example:

- If suspended from school on a Friday, the student may not participate in any activity held Friday, Saturday, or Sunday.
- If assigned OSS than the student may not participate in any activity until they return to school.

Possession, consumption and/or distribution of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or look-alike substances on/off school grounds will result in an immediate declaration of ineligibility. Arrival at school for a regular school day or to participate in school functions after having consumed, and/or being impaired by alcohol or other illegal substances on/off school grounds; counseling may be required. Students who violate the school's policy on alcohol/drugs while they are members of a school athletic team will be removed from the team for the remainder of the season and attend drug/alcohol counseling. Any student, who commits a second offense in the same



year, may not represent the school in any extra-curricular activities for the remainder of the school year.

Additionally, while a member of any team, participants must comply with rules and codes of conduct established by each Coach. Specific rules and penalties that are established shall be distributed to each participant in writing prior to the start of each activity.

## **Responsibilities**

### **The Athletes' Responsibility**

Respect, commitment, dedication and hard work - these are the qualities that describe an athlete. Furthermore, by treating the opponent with courtesy and respect, one demonstrates self-respect, respect for your family, the community, and the school. An athlete should bring to every competition a "do your best to win attitude". Competition is designed to be played by the highest standards of fair play and within the rules of the game.

Some things athletes can do to see that the game is played well and that indicate a willingness to practice good sportsmanship are:

- No arguing with officials.
- Make only positive comments to an opposing player or coach.
- Treat an opponent as you would like to be treated, especially if you are the home team. Remember, being friendly doesn't mean you can't be competitors.
- Cheer for your own team.
- Positively acknowledge a good performance by an opposing player.
- Refrain from gloating after a victory. Be happy with the win, but it is not necessary to do so at the expense of the opponent.

### **Parent & Guardian Responsibilities**

- Be positive with your child. Let him or her know that he or she is accomplishing something simply by being part of the team.

- Encourage your child to work hard, reach his or her potential and contribute to the team's efforts. Do not offer excuses for your child if he or she is not playing as much as he or she would like.
- Be openly supportive of the coaches rather than being openly critical of them. By openly criticizing the coaches, your child will be trapped between the coach's authority and the parent's criticism. This situation merely erodes your child's effectiveness and lessens his or her ability to contribute to the team effort.
- Encourage and support your child's efforts to follow the BMU Interscholastic Policies, school and team rules. Your positive role modeling is critical to your child's success and well-being.
- Emphasize the importance of academics and understand school and VPA academic guidelines. With few exceptions, most student-athletes do not receive collegiate athletic scholarships. Your child's future as an active, contributing citizen is determined by his or her academic abilities, not his or her athletic abilities.
- Sport is a game, and games are supposed to be fun. Do not criticize or envy the failures or successes of your child's teammates or the children on the other team. Most are trying their hardest on any given day, and they deserve respect for their efforts.
- Focus your energy toward being a supporter of the team. Every team is composed of three groups: athletes, coaches, and parents. Be a positive part of the team.
- Emphasize being a good sport with your child. Win or lose, your child must show respect for his or her opponents and demonstrate the maturity necessary to show class. Self-respect begins with self-control.
- Remember that officials are professionals who occasionally make mistakes. When a coach, player, or official participates in a contest he/she is always trying to do his/her best. Please respect the contributions and feelings of all officials.
- Emphasize that "team" must take precedence over the individual. Recognition is directly affected by the success of the team and the individual's contribution to the team's success.
- The lessons learned through athletic competition are lessons for life. Keep sports in perspective. It is not life and death.

## **Sportsmanship**

Blue Mountain Union School promotes good sportsmanship amongst student-athletes and fans. We encourage students, parents and friends to attend games and support our teams, but we ask you to do so in a positive manner. High School students should set a good example in the matter of sportsmanship and should quickly condemn unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of other students or adults. To this end, they should strive at all times to exemplify the qualities of good citizenship and realize that they are role models.

Inappropriate language or gestures that are vulgar, demeaning, hurtful, derisive or not in the school or athletic program's best interests will not be tolerated. On the field, a real athlete does not use profanity or illegal tactics, and learns fast that both winning and losing are part of the game, and that you should be gracious in defeat and modest in victory. When you assume the risk of competition, be prepared to handle either outcome with honor.

## **Crowd Behavior**

We encourage students, parents, and friends to attend games and support our teams, but we ask you to do so in a positive manner. Individuals who choose to berate opponents or officials, use vulgar language, or make derogatory comments will be asked to leave. We understand that games can get emotional; a poor call, a coaching mistake, or a loss can be difficult. However, we ask you to keep high school sports in perspective, and to understand that the students, coaches, and the officials do make mistakes. Yelling at them from the stands can only make matters worse. Thank you for proudly representing our school and community with the dignity that you expect from our coaches and team.

## **Guidelines for Spectators**

A good spectator at an athletic contest sets a good example by:

- Showing an interest in the contest by enthusiastically cheering and applauding the good plays or performance of both teams.
- Showing proper respect for opening ceremonies by standing at attention and by remaining silent when the National Anthem is being played.
- Refrain from booing, stomping feet, or making disrespectful remarks toward the players and officials.
- Obeying official and faculty supervisors who are there to keep order.
- Staying off the playing floor, field, or contest area at all times. This includes dugouts and sidelines designated for the team.

- Refraining from disturbing others by throwing any materials about the building, playing floor, field, or bleachers.
- Showing proper respect for officials, coaches, cheerleaders, and contestants as guests in the community.
- Knowing that during a free throw in basketball there should be silence among the crowd.
- Knowing that bells, whistles, or noise makers of any kind are not proper for indoor athletic events.
- Showing interest in the contest by paying attention, remaining in their seat and no running about the building or area while the contest is in progress.
- Paying attention to the half time program and not disturbing those who are watching.
- Respecting public property by not causing any damage to equipment or facilities.
- Knowing that school officials have the right to keep him/her from attending athletic events if his/her conduct is not appropriate.

# Additional Information

## Awards

- All junior varsity athletes will receive a certificate of participation. If a participant is a member of the team for the entire duration of the respective season, a JV pin will also be awarded.
- A participant who is a member of a varsity team for at least sixty percent (60%) of the respective season will be awarded a certificate, a varsity letter, or an appropriate metal insert award. Players will receive subsequent awards in the same sport at the same level.
- A captain's pin shall be awarded to all participants recognized as captains of a varsity sport.
- A manager's pin shall be awarded to all participants recognized as managers of a varsity sport.
- A star and CVL certificate shall be awarded to all participants recognized as members of CVL All-league teams.
- A Scholar Athlete award and pin will be presented to students carrying a 3.5 GPA at the conclusion of the year.
- A Tri-Sport Award will be presented to all student-athletes that participate in all three seasons at the conclusion of the year.
- A Senior Varsity Award will be present to all athletes that participate in two years of a single activity with at least one year of participation being in the senior year or participate in two different activities with at least one year of participation being in the senior year.
- The Blue Mountain Bucks Sportsmanship Award or “Outstanding Sportspersons of the Year” will be awarded to one male and one female at the conclusion of the year. This award honors student-athletes/spectators who, through their actions in the competitive arena of athletics, have demonstrated one or more of the ideals of sportsmanship, including fairness, civility, honesty, unselfishness, respect and responsibility. Recommendations are made by the coaches and the Athletic Director.

**Any athlete who is suspended for an extended period of time or removed from an athletic team will forfeit all awards and/or recognition.**

## Communication of Athletic Concerns

We strongly encourage the student, not the parents, to talk to the Coach about any issues or concerns that may arise during the season. This is not only the most direct and productive means of communication, but also a valuable method of teaching responsibility and self-advocacy.

We realized that situations may arise where parents find it necessary to raise a concern, and we ask that parents follow the following communication guidelines:

### Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:

- The treatment of your child, mentally and physically
- Ways the parent can help the child to improve
- Concerns about your child's behavior

### Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches:

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student-athletes

### Protocol for Registering Concerns:

**Contact the coach first!** Please do this by telephone or e-mail, attempting to meet with a coach right before or after a game or practice is generally not productive. If you cannot reach him/her, call or e-mail the Athletic office and a meeting will be set up for you.

If the meeting with the Coach does not provide satisfactory resolution, call to set up an appointment with the Athletic Director, Todd Powers.

Phone: (802) 757-2711 ext. 1300

E-mail: [todd.powers@bmschool.org](mailto:todd.powers@bmschool.org)

## **Due Process**

After the ruling of ineligibility, suspension, or expulsion from athletics has been made, an athlete and/or his/her parent(s)/guardian may formally appeal that decision in writing to the Principal, provided an appeal is received within seven (7) calendar days from the first day such ineligibility shall take effect. The Principal or appropriate administrator will acknowledge in writing the receipt of the complaint within two (2) school days. The Principal or appropriate administrator will complete the investigation of the complaint within ten (10) school days and respond in writing. Said student, will not be eligible to participate until a final decision is made.

If the issue is not resolved by involvement of the Principal, the complainant may refer the issue to the Superintendent for his/her review and decision. The Superintendent will respond to the complaint within ten (10) school days after the receipt of a written complaint. If the issue is not resolved by involvement of the Superintendent, the next step in the complaint procedure will be to the School Board Student Affairs Committee. Unless otherwise requested by the complainant, the Committee will hear the complaint at its next regularly scheduled meeting and will respond to the complainant within ten (10) school days after the complaint has been heard by the committee.

If the above steps do not resolve the concern of the complainant, he/she may request a session of the Board for the purpose of reviewing the Student Affairs' decision. All parties involved, including the School Administration, shall be asked to attend such a meeting for the purpose of presenting the facts, making further explanations, and clarifying the issue. The Board shall conduct such meetings in a fair and just manner. Upon review, the Board shall then render a decision within ten (10) school days.

## **NCAA and Collegiate Eligibility**

Student-athletes may wish to participate in intercollegiate athletic activities upon completion of high school. In order to be academically eligible the NCAA requires certain minimums on high school core courses, grades and SAT/ACT standardized test scores. It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to monitor his/her status concerning meeting NCAA requirements. It is also the responsibility of those student-athletes who wish to compete in Division I or II collegiate athletics to complete NCAA Clearinghouse forms. Any questions in this area should be directed to the Guidance Department.

## Team Captains

Being selected as a captain, either by the coach(es) or by one's peers, is a privilege and an honor. As such there are expectations for captains beyond that of regular team members in time and behavior. Captains are leaders and need to set examples in appropriate behavior both in and out of school. Captains should be at the forefront of following school policies. By garnering repeated detentions and disciplinary actions or other behavioral infractions a captain may lose his/her captaincy. Please, be the first to lead by example and the last to violate school and team standards.

Team captains are chosen based on the following criteria:

**Leadership** – this includes influencing team members to work hard and be committed to the team goals; leading by example; and being a leader off the field.

**Skill** – A captain must have the physical and mental skill to play the game and turn opponent's mistakes into opportunities. Captains must become students of the game and learn both in and out of season.

**Work Ethic** – Captains are the first to practice and last to leave. During practice, captains push themselves harder to improve their own ability.

**Morale** – Captains do not give up and are determined to earn the respect of their opponents.



## Sources

VPA Policies & Bylaws <http://www.vpaonline.org/bylaws/index.asp>

VPA Sportsmanship: A Winning Attitude

BMU Policy #2053	Participation (eligibility) Standards
	Athletic and Other Extra Curricular Activities
BMU Policy #2435	Administering Medications to Pupils at School
BMU Policy #4100	Attendance
BMU Policy #4102	Dress Code
BMU Policy #4300	Behavior Management
BMU Policy #4310	Detention
BMU Policy #4311	After School Academic Assistance
BMU Policy #4330	Alcohol & Drug Abuse
BMU Policy #4360	Tobacco Prohibition
BMU Policy #4900	4900-Harrasment, Hazing and Bullying of Students
BMU Policy #6551	Transportation to Athletic Events

ALL ATHLETES, YOUNG OR OLD, SHOULD REMEMBER...

There are little eyes upon you  
And they're watching night and day  
There are little ears that quickly  
Take in every word you say;  
There are little hands all eager  
To do anything you do;  
There's a little kid who's dreaming  
Of that day they'll be like you.  
You're the wisest of the wise,  
In their little mind about you,  
No suspicions ever rise;  
They believe in you devoutly,  
Holds true all you say and do,  
They will say and do, in your way  
When they're grown-up like you.  
There's a wide eyed little kid  
Who believes you're always right,  
And their ears are always open,  
As they watch day and night;  
You are setting an example  
every day in all you do,  
For the little kid who's waiting  
To grow up to be like you.

...Anonymous

# HEADS **X** UP

## CONCUSSION IN HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

A FACT SHEET FOR **ATHLETES**

### What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury that:

- Is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body.
- Can change the way your brain normally works.
- Can occur during practices or games in any sport or recreational activity.
- Can happen even if you haven't been knocked out.
- Can be serious even if you've just been "dinged" or "had your bell rung."

All concussions are serious. A concussion can affect your ability to do schoolwork and other activities (such as playing video games, working on a computer, studying, driving, or exercising). Most people with a concussion get better, but it is important to give your brain time to heal.

### What are the symptoms of a concussion?

You can't see a concussion, but you might notice **one or more** of the symptoms listed below or that you "don't feel right" soon after, a few days after, or even weeks after the injury.

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Bothered by light or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Difficulty paying attention
- Memory problems
- Confusion

### What should I do if I think I have a concussion?

- **Tell your coaches and your parents.** Never ignore a bump or blow to the head even if you feel fine. Also, tell your coach right away if you think you have a concussion or if one of your teammates might have a concussion.
- **Get a medical check-up.** A doctor or other health care professional can tell if you have a concussion and when it is OK to return to play.
- **Give yourself time to get better.** If you have a concussion, your brain needs time to heal. While your brain is still healing, you are much more likely to have another concussion. Repeat concussions can increase the time it takes for you to recover and may cause more damage to your brain. It is important to rest and not return to play until you get the OK from your health care professional that you are symptom-free.

### How can I prevent a concussion?

Every sport is different, but there are steps you can take to protect yourself.

- Use the proper sports equipment, including personal protective equipment. In order for equipment to protect you, it must be:
  - The right equipment for the game, position, or activity
  - Worn correctly and the correct size and fit
  - Used every time you play or practice
- Follow your coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Practice good sportsmanship at all times.

**If you think you have a concussion:**  
Don't hide it. Report it. Take time to recover.

**It's better to miss one game than the whole season.**

For more information and to order additional materials *free-of-charge*, visit: [www.cdc.gov/Concussion](http://www.cdc.gov/Concussion).

# HEADS <sup>x</sup> UP

## CONCUSSION IN HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

A FACT SHEET FOR **PARENTS**

### What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body. 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?

You can't see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days after the injury. If your teen reports *one* or *more* symptoms of concussion listed below, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, keep your teen out of play and seek medical attention right away.

Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians	Symptoms Reported by Athlete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appears dazed or stunned</li><li>• Is confused about assignment or position</li><li>• Forgets an instruction</li><li>• Is unsure of game, score, or opponent</li><li>• Moves clumsily</li><li>• Answers questions slowly</li><li>• Loses consciousness (<i>even briefly</i>)</li><li>• Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes</li><li>• Can't recall events <i>prior</i> to hit or fall</li><li>• Can't recall events <i>after</i> hit or fall</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Headache or “pressure” in head</li><li>• Nausea or vomiting</li><li>• Balance problems or dizziness</li><li>• Double or blurry vision</li><li>• Sensitivity to light or noise</li><li>• Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy</li><li>• Concentration or memory problems</li><li>• Confusion</li><li>• Just not “feeling right” or is “feeling down”</li></ul>

### How can you help your teen prevent a concussion?

Every sport is different, but there are steps your teens can take to protect themselves from concussion and other injuries.

- Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity. It should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly.

- Ensure that they follow their coaches' rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.

### What should you do if you think your teen has a concussion?

1. **Keep your teen out of play.** If your teen has a concussion, her/his brain needs time to heal. Don't let your teen return to play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating for concussion, says your teen is symptom-free and it's OK to return to play. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first—usually within a short period of time (hours, days, or weeks)—can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of having long-term problems. In rare cases, repeat concussions can result in edema (brain swelling), permanent brain damage, and even death.
2. **Seek medical attention right away.** A health care professional experienced in evaluating for concussion will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your teen to return to sports.
3. **Teach your teen that it's not smart to play with a concussion.** Rest is key after a concussion. Sometimes athletes wrongly believe that it shows strength and courage to play injured. Discourage others from pressuring injured athletes to play. Don't let your teen convince you that s/he's “just fine.”
4. **Tell all of your teen's coaches and the student's school nurse about ANY concussion.** Coaches, school nurses, and other school staff should know if your teen has ever had a concussion. Your teen may need to limit activities while s/he is recovering from a concussion. Things such as studying, driving, working on a computer, playing video games, or exercising may cause concussion symptoms to reappear or get worse. Talk to your health care professional, as well as your teen's coaches, school nurse, and teachers. If needed, they can help adjust your teen's school activities during her/his recovery.

#### If you think your teen has a concussion:

Don't assess it yourself. Take him/her out of play. Seek the advice of a health care professional.

**It's better to miss one game than the whole season.**

For more information and to order additional materials *free-of-charge*, visit: [www.cdc.gov/Concussion](http://www.cdc.gov/Concussion).