

Flathead Valley Little Guy Football Concussion Policy/Guideline

A. Purpose:

Flathead Valley Little Guy Football (FVF) recognizes that concussion and head trauma can result from contact sports such as football. FVF further recognizes that most States, including Montana, have enacted legislation (i.e. the Dylan Steiger's Protection of Youth Athletes Act) which promote further safety of youth athletes related to head injuries/concussions. FVF desires to have a policy/guideline designed to increase awareness of issues related to concussion/head trauma, increase awareness of signs/symptoms of concussion/head trauma so players may be removed from play and take reasonable steps to insure appropriate evaluation before allowing players to return to play following concussion. This policy/guideline is not intended to create legal standards for concussions/head trauma prevention, protection or treatment as concussions and head trauma will occur during youth athletic despite reasonable efforts to protect against them. FVF, FVF coaches, and all parents/legal guardians recognize that concussion/head trauma can still occur despite reasonable efforts to mitigate and address concussion/head trauma because football is a voluntary contact sport.

B. Policy/Guideline:

A concussion is a brain injury and brain injuries can be serious. Concussions and brain injuries can be caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head, or blow to the body that transfers forces to the head. These injuries may range from mild to severe and may be unavoidable given the nature of full contact football. These injuries can and will occur despite reasonable efforts to mitigate these types of injuries. FVF will use the following policy/guideline regarding concussion/brain injury:

1. FVF will take reasonable steps each year to educate and familiarize its players, their parents/guardians, its coaches, its volunteers, and its officials about symptoms and signs of concussion so that they may be more prepared to recognize those symptoms and take appropriate actions consistent with this Policy/Guideline;
2. FVF will make reasonable efforts each year to make available concussion education materials to its players, player's parents/legal guardians, coaches, volunteers, and officials;
3. Parents/guardians, coaches, players, and/or officials shall report to an appropriate FVF board member and/or medical provider immediately when they reasonably believe a player has sustained a concussion or is exhibiting signs/symptoms of a concussion.
4. FVF will take reasonable steps to see that players, who have experienced an actual concussion of which FVF board members are aware, do not continue to participate in FVF football until they are authorized to do so as indicated below;

5. Parents/guardians, players, coaches, or officials shall be advised that they are prohibited from allowing a player to continue to participate in FVF football or any activity related thereto when they are aware that a player has exhibited signs or symptoms of concussion/brain injury and/or they are reasonably concerned that the player may be concussed.
6. Parents/guardians, players, coaches, or officials shall not allow a player to return to play or any FVF activity until the player has been cleared by an appropriate medical provider and the FVF Return to Play form has been fully executed.
7. Upon receiving information that causes FVF and/or any of its board members to conclude that a player may be experiencing signs/symptoms of an actual concussion, FVF board members shall notify the appropriate coaches, parents/guardians and players that the player shall not be allowed to return to play or be involved in any FVF activity until FVF receives a fully executed FVF Return to Play Form signed by both the player's required medical provider and the player's parent/legal guardian. *See Flathead Little Guy Football Concussion Return to Play form attached hereto.* This form must be received and signed by an FVF board member prior to the player returning to play. No player will be allowed to return to play following a concussion until FVF receives written approval from a licensed medical professional.
8. FVF will take reasonable steps to make educational materials available to its coaches, officials, youth athletes, and parents/guardians that address:
 - the nature and risks of brain injury associated with athletic activity;
 - the signs, symptoms, and behaviors consistent with a brain injury;
 - the need to alert a licensed health care professional for urgent recognition and treatment when a youth athlete exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion; and
 - the need to follow proper medical direction and protocols for treatment and returning to play after a youth athlete sustains a concussion.FVF will maintain forms documenting that this education material has been provided to each athlete or parent/guardian. This form will apply only to one FVF season.
9. FVF will take reasonable steps to ensure access to a training program that addresses the items set forth in Paragraph 8 above and will take reasonable steps to ensure that each coach, board member and official participating in FVF will complete the training once per season.

