

**St. Vincent de Paul Parish**

**SVdP**

# **Sports Handbook**

*The Omaha Archdiocesan Schools admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origins to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the schools. They do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of their educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan program, and athletic and other school-administered programs.*

**14330 Eagle Run Drive  
Omaha, NE 68164  
[www.svdP-school.org](http://www.svdP-school.org)**

Welcome to St. Vincent de Paul (SVdP) Sports. This handbook is provided by the St. Vincent de Paul Sports Commission to familiarize parents, athletes, and coaches with fundamental goals, regulations, and policies. In signing the acceptance of the handbook, the parents and athletes agree to be governed by the following policies and procedures. The Sports Board reserves the right to amend this handbook at any time.

## II ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SPORTS MISSION STATEMENT

- To provide an opportunity for the children of St. Vincent de Paul Parish to participate in organized leagues, in various sports, from recreational to competitive levels.
- To provide a Christian atmosphere that emphasizes sportsmanship, teamwork, commitment, and skill development.
- To provide a safe environment in which to play.

## III TEAM PRAYER

It is suggested that St. Vincent de Paul teams say a short prayer before games. The following prayer is displayed in the gym.

*Awesome God, to you we pray  
to do our best as we play.  
May both teams have fun,  
and play fair in this game.  
Protect us from harm,  
we ask in your name.  
St. Vincent de Paul, pray for us.*

## IV THE SVDP SPORTS BOARD

The Sports Board is comprised of volunteers and consists of Commissioners for all the sports programs, representatives from the school, and ad hoc members. The board meets regularly and is open to any member of the parish. The current members are as follows:

Acting Athletic Director: Dan Dineen.....	<a href="mailto:ddineen@centurylink.net">ddineen@centurylink.net</a>
Jonah Beacom (Cross Country / Track).....	<a href="mailto:jonah.beacom@gmail.com">jonah.beacom@gmail.com</a>
Steve Farnier (Finance / Treasurer).....	<a href="mailto:stevefarnier@gmail.com">stevefarnier@gmail.com</a>
Diane Warneke (School Representative).....	<a href="mailto:warneked@svdpomaha.org">warneked@svdpomaha.org</a>
Courtney McGuire (Soccer).....	<a href="mailto:svdpsoccerclub@gmail.com">svdpsoccerclub@gmail.com</a>
Tara Sands (Soccer).....	<a href="mailto:svdpsoccerclub@gmail.com">svdpsoccerclub@gmail.com</a>
John Menicucci (Volleyball).....	<a href="mailto:jmenicuc@yahoo.com">jmenicuc@yahoo.com</a>
Nate Broders (Basketball).....	<a href="mailto:nate@firststratetrading.com">nate@firststratetrading.com</a>
Brad Burks (Basketball).....	<a href="mailto:bradleyburks@gmail.com">bradleyburks@gmail.com</a>

## V SEASONS AND SUMMARY OF SPORTS OFFERED

**Participants:** boys and girls registered in the five-day school or Religious Education program.

**Fall:** Cross Country, Soccer, Volleyball

**Winter:** Basketball

**Spring:** Soccer, Track

Registration for all St. Vincent de Paul parish sports is now online. Parents will be asked to complete a family demographics form for all of their children and a registration per sport in which their child wishes to participate. Fees for the six sports at SVdP will vary for each sport. The fees may be paid through eFunds or with a check. No player will be turned away due to an inability to pay. If necessary, arrangements can be made by contacting the commissioner of the sport, the athletic director, or Father Andrew Roza.

**Refund Policy:** There will be no refunds of fees after teams have been selected. Any refund because of injuries or extenuating circumstances is at the discretion of the program commissioners.

### Fall Sports

**Cross Country: Commissioner: Jonah Beacom ([jonah.beacom@gmail.com](mailto:jonah.beacom@gmail.com))**

- Cross Country is offered for boys and girls in grades 6-8 attending the five-day school or Religious Education program.
- Registration is in August and practices will be held two to three days a week, beginning the end of August or early September. The meets are held in September and October at different locations in Omaha. The final meet of the year is the Nebraska Junior High Cross Country Meet.
- The teams are open to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders, but there is a race for the grade 6 participants and for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders who did not qualify for the main meet.

**Soccer (CYSL): Commissioners: Courtney McGuire and Tara Sands ([svdpsoccerclub@gmail.com](mailto:svdpsoccerclub@gmail.com))**

- Soccer is offered for children enrolled in Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade at St. Vincent or who are parishioners enrolled in grades K-8 elsewhere.
- Cost is \$75 for Kindergarten through 4<sup>th</sup> grade and \$100 for 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades.
- **Kindergarten will only be able to play CYSL (not micro).**
- Soccer teams play in the Catholic Youth Soccer League (CYSL).
- The fall CYSL season will start in late August and will run through the end of October. The Spring season starts mid-March and will run through the end of May. Teams play 6-7 games per season against teams from other Catholic schools in the Omaha/Council Bluffs metro.
- Game locations will vary depending on opponent and field availability. A full list of locations can be found on the CYSL website at [www.cysl.net](http://www.cysl.net).
- Schedules are generally released the week that school starts. Teams practice once per week; this is determined by the coach after the teams are formed.

- **NOTE: Okoboji Soccer Tournament Team Selection Guidelines**

- Participants will be selected through a lottery / drawing if the number of players exceeds the available team slots. Additional criteria will be used to qualify players eligible for the lottery:
  - Players who play in the fall and spring have priority over those playing only in the spring.
  - Players must play in at least 50% of the team CYSL games to be eligible.
  - Payment must be received by the deadline date.
- Okoboji fees will be managed using a separate registration process and payment will be made for those who are selected to participate.

**Micro Soccer: Commissioners Courtney McGuire and Tara Sands ([svdpsoccerclub@gmail.com](mailto:svdpsoccerclub@gmail.com))**

- Micro Soccer is offered to preschool aged children who are members of the parish or attend preschool / kindergarten at St Vincent.
- Micro Soccer is designed to be an entry level introduction to soccer. It consists of a 6-game season with practice / games held on Sundays. Each week, players will participate in a parent / coach-led practice followed by a game with another St. Vincent team. The practice and game are 30 minutes each.
- The fall Micro Soccer season starts the weekend after Labor Day. Spring starts the first weekend of April.
- Cost is \$35.

**Soccer Uniforms:** Uniforms for both Micro Soccer and CYSL are purchased by the parents, through Soccer International.

**Volleyball: Commissioners John Menicucci ([jmenicuc@yahoo.com](mailto:jmenicuc@yahoo.com)), Sarah Volpone ([smvolpone@icloud.com](mailto:smvolpone@icloud.com)), and Ellen Osborne ([ellendosborne@gmail.com](mailto:ellendosborne@gmail.com))**

- Volleyball is offered to girls registered in the five-day school or Religious Education program for grades 3-8.
- Teams play in the Parochial Athletic League.
- Registration is in the spring. Practices begin in August with 8-10 league games played in September and October plus a post-season tournament. Some teams will play in additional tournaments during the season.
- St. Vincent follows the PAL guidelines when selecting teams and placing them in the appropriate division. PAL rules and guidelines are subject to change. All PAL grades 3 and 4 teams are considered recreational; therefore, players will be divided as equally as possible in regards to talent. Grades 5-8 teams will be selected after tryouts (if required). The intent of the team placement is to get all players and teams in the appropriate division (AAA, AA, A, B) for the level of talent on the team.

## Winter Sports

**Basketball: Commissioners: Nate Broders ([nate@firststratetrading.com](mailto:nate@firststratetrading.com)) and Brad Burks ([bradleyburks@gmail.com](mailto:bradleyburks@gmail.com))**

- Basketball is offered to boys and girls in grades 3-8 attending the five-day school or Religious Education program.
- Teams play in the Parochial Athletic League (<https://sites.google.com/site/palbasketballomaha/home>).
- Registration will begin in September. Tryouts will be held in late October or early November with practices beginning in November. League games begin in early December with 8-10 games scheduled and a post-season tournament. Some teams will play in additional tournaments during the season. St. Vincent follows the PAL guidelines when selecting teams and placing them in the appropriate division. PAL rules and guidelines are subject to change.
- All PAL grade 3 and 4 teams are considered recreational; therefore, all teams will be divided as equally as possible in regards to talent.
- Grades 5-8 teams will be selected through tryouts (if required). The intent of the team placement is to get all players and teams in the appropriate division for their level of talent.

## Spring Sports

**Track: Commissioner: Jonah Beacom ([jonah.beacom@gmail.com](mailto:jonah.beacom@gmail.com))**

- Track is offered to boys and girls registered in the five-day school or Religious Education program for grades 6- 8.
- Registration will be in February with practices beginning in March. The season runs in April and May.
- Track location for use for practice may vary from season to season.
- The Parochial Athletic League schedules track meets.
- Participation opportunities in track and field events are varied for both individual and team events. Meet participation is based on objective measures of performance, i.e. times and distances, practice attendance and team needs. A super meet will be held at the end of the season.

**Soccer** (see above) for soccer information.

## **VI. FACILITIES and Safety**

The SVdP gym is used for practices for St. Vincent de Paul teams. All gym scheduling for basketball and volleyball is arranged via the commissioner for that sport. The schedule of availability of practice times for Basketball is on the web at <http://www.svdp-school.org/Basketball-Schedules> during the season. The schedule of availability for Volleyball is on the web at <https://calendar.google.com/calendar/embed?src=volleyball%40svdp-school.org&ctz=America%2FChicago> during the season. Outside gyms may also be used when available (i.e. Picotte Elementary, Skutt, Prep).

St. Vincent de Paul Parish supports youth athletic activities. We especially encourage athletic programs open to all parish youth. Because this is one facet of our parish's programs, we will balance opportunities for all youth to be involved in athletics with the needs of other parish programs, following the guidelines of the Pastoral Center Usage policy. As good stewards of the facility, the parish may need to limit activities in the gym at times.

The safety of our youth is always our top priority. When practices are held at SVdP, the building will be locked. Team coaches will be issued fobs (devices to open the electronic doors) to be used during their respective seasons. All coaches and athletes should enter the building through the school entryway and gather in the upper commons area. Once the entire team has arrived, or more than one coach has arrived, athletes may proceed to the gym under the supervision of the coach. Coaches should allow only their team members into the building. The doors should never be propped open. If a door is found to be propped, the team responsible will not be allowed to use the facilities in the future. Youth should not be allowed to roam the building without supervision.

**Gym Availability** – (subject to Parish calendar and approved by Parish office)

- **In Season Usage:**

- Weekday Evenings 5:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
- Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. games or practices
- Sunday Noon to 7:00 p.m. games or practices

- **Out-of-season Usage:**

- All out-of-season gym scheduling should be scheduled through the Parish Office.

- **Summer Gym Usage:**

- The gym will be available beginning approximately June 1. The gym will be closed for refinishing for up to two weeks beginning in late June.
- Gym available hours will be M-F 9:00 AM – 7:00 PM, Saturday 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM, and Sunday 12:00 PM – 5:00 PM, unless in use for other noted parish activities. Hours are subject to change.
- All use must be approved through the registration request process for each sport.
- The school and gym will be open only during scheduled hours. Coaches, parents and players will not need a key FOB. Available gym times can be seen on the following calendar. <https://calendar.google.com/calendar/u/0/embed?src=volleyball@svdp-school.org&ctz=America/Chicago>
- No walk-in times are allowed. All sessions must be registered. Parents should monitor the calendar for any scheduled grade-level sessions.
- Coaches or parents (if including more than the parent's child) must be safe environment certified to participate.
- Participation is open to St. Vincent students or parishioners only, no outside participants.

- **Summer Volleyball Use:**

- The gym will be available for volleyball teams, individuals or small groups. Because volleyball tryouts have been completed and teams selected, teams or individuals may

utilize the gym.

- For volleyball, requests should be made by coaches to the volleyball commissioner as with any practice request. John Menicucci ([jmenicuc@yahoo.com](mailto:jmenicuc@yahoo.com)), Ellen Osborne ([ellendosborne@gmail.com](mailto:ellendosborne@gmail.com)), or Sarah Volpone ([smvolpone@icloud.com](mailto:smvolpone@icloud.com)).
- **Summer Basketball Use:** The gym will be available for basketball for the following uses:
  - Coaches or parents can lead skills development sessions or games for grades of players. These sessions should be available to any parish child in the grade.
  - Team practices or skill sessions are not allowed for basketball as teams have not been selected yet for the upcoming season.
  - Shooting sessions for small groups (5 or fewer players). St. Vincent recently purchased a shooting machine to enhance shooting sessions. Use of the shooting machine will be available to coaches or parents who have completed the training review on proper use of the machine.
  - For basketball, requests will be submitted using the following request form: <https://forms.gle/cGThhWfwsX6xm9737>. Requests will go to the basketball commissioners and will need to be approved before final.
  - For basketball questions, please contact Brad Burks ([bradleyburks@gmail.com](mailto:bradleyburks@gmail.com)) or Nate Broders ([nate@firststratetrading.com](mailto:nate@firststratetrading.com))
- **Summer Soccer Use:** The soccer field can be used as described below:
  - Skill sessions or clinics offered to all eligible players in a grade(s) facilitated by St Vincent coaches / parents
  - No club clinics allowed
  - Sessions must be scheduled through the soccer commissioners. Requests can be made to: [svdpsoccerclub@gmail.com](mailto:svdpsoccerclub@gmail.com)

#### **Other Guidelines:**

- No practices are to be held in Hanneman Hall.
- Practices for students younger than sixth grade should end by 8:30 p.m.
- Use of outside facilities is a privilege for SVdP teams. Athletes and coaches will show proper care and respect for these facilities, and for the people in charge of them.

#### **Sports Soccer Field Availability: Guidelines for Use:**

The field will be used by the school and by the athletic teams of the parish. When an issue comes up that is not directly addressed by the rules presented here, we ask that those involved discuss these issues with the Sports Board and / or school representatives, who will determine what is in the best long-term interest of the field and its users.

- All uses of the fields must be scheduled through and approved by the Sports Board or their designated representative.
- The Soccer field may be used by Parish affiliated soccer teams for appropriately scheduled games and practices.
- The Soccer field may not be used for baseball, softball, or football practices.



- Shot-put or discus are not allowed on the field.
- Painting lines or driving stakes on the field is not permitted.
- No food, sunflower seeds, gum, smoking or tobacco products are allowed on the field.
- Because the fields have many users, organizers of events are asked to always leave the site in as good or better condition than they found it. This includes the picking up and disposing of any trash in the appropriate containers.
- Because we are in a residential neighborhood, no parking is allowed on 143<sup>rd</sup> Circle. Vehicles may not block the driveway due to the need for emergency access. All parking is to be in the main facility lot south of the building.
- The building will not be accessible to participants or fans of the games or practices. The soccer club may, at their own discretion and cost, install portable rest rooms on the site.

## **VII ELIGIBILITY**

The St. Vincent de Paul Sports Program is open to all families registered in St. Vincent de Paul Parish. Participation is open to students enrolled in the religious education program or 5-day school. Participants will be asked to uphold standards of integrity that reflect our Christian principles. These standards involve maintaining integrity on and off the playing field, and encouraging academic excellence above athletics. Players, coaches, and parents will be asked to sign a Code of Conduct contract.

To be eligible for participation in a sports activity, players must:

- Attend school for the entire day of the sports activity, other than pre-excused doctor visits, funerals, or similar exceptions. The school should be notified of exceptions as early as possible before the day of absence.
- Adhere to all guidelines, as outlined in the Code of Conduct.
- Meet academic standards as described below.
- At least twice a season, the assistant principal will review the grades of sixth, seventh and eighth grade players in the 5-day school. If a player's average in any subject is below 70%, the player and parent will be advised as such. The player will be allowed to participate in all activities on a probationary status for a period of approximately two weeks. During this probationary time, students are encouraged to make an extra effort to bring the failing grades above 70%. If the average is still below 70% at the end of the probationary period, the player will be ineligible. The assistant principal will contact the parents and the commissioner for the appropriate sport.
- Students in the 5-day school who receive a conduct report will be ineligible (see Parent/Student Handbook). The assistant principal will send a letter to the parents indicating ineligibility.
- Students in the Religious Education program must adhere to the behavior and attendance guidelines set forth by that program. Not following those guidelines could result in ineligibility. The director of religious formation will contact parents and the commissioner of the appropriate sport to communicate the ineligibility.
- The ineligibility period will last for one (1) game. The assistant principal will contact the commissioner of the sport in which the ineligible student is participating, who will then contact the particular coaches.



Parents of 5-day school students may check their child's grades at any time using PowerSchool. Doing so on a regular basis may help athletes avoid ineligibility due to low grades.

When registering their child for a sport, parents are asked to electronically sign a statement indicating they have read the SVdP Sports Board Handbook and will support the policies therein. The signed statement also gives school personnel permission to release information, relative to a child's eligibility, to the Sports Commission, so that the eligibility policy can be administered.

## **VIII CODES OF CONDUCT**

### **1. Player Code of Conduct**

I understand that playing for St. Vincent de Paul is a privilege and an honor. My actions reflect upon my teammates, my parish, and myself. Therefore, I promise to conduct myself in accordance with the following:

- I will do my best to maintain appropriate academic and behavioral expectations, as outlined by the SVdP Eligibility Policy.
- I understand that my playing time could be affected by my not attending practices.
- All athletes are expected to be at all practices. I will notify my coach in advance if I am unable to attend a practice or game.
- I will treat each player, coach, official, parent, and administrator with respect and dignity.
- I will respect the property and gym of SVdP, each opposing team, and any facility used by my SVdP team for practices or games. I will do nothing to harm or destroy that property.
- I will refrain from derogatory comments about my teammates, opposing players, or officials, and will act to encourage my teammates through positive comments and actions.
- I will do my best to learn the fundamental skills and rules of the sports in which I participate.
- I understand that my primary commitment is to my SVdP team. I will not allow participation on another team to interfere with, nor take priority over, my SVdP team practices and games.

### **2. Parent Code of Conduct**

I understand that it is my responsibility as a parent to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child during his/her participation in youth sports at St. Vincent de Paul. Therefore, I will adhere to the following code of conduct:

- I will encourage true sportsmanship, by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game, practice, or other youth sports event.
- I will demonstrate my understanding that the game is for the children, not the adults, and I will place the physical and emotional well-being of the children over any desire to win.
- I will support the SVdP Sports Commission policy for athletic eligibility.
- I will provide support for the coaches and officials working with my child to provide a positive youth sports experience. If I should have any concerns or suggestions, I will express them to my child's coach in private, and in accordance with the communication policy, as stated in the SVdP Sports Handbook.

- I am committed to helping my child enjoy the youth sports experience by being a respectful fan.
- I will expect that my child will be playing in a safe and healthy environment.
- I am aware and support the policy that my child may not attend practices or games if he or she do not attend a full day of school on the day of any weekday practices and games.
- I will expect a drug, alcohol, and tobacco-free sports environment for my child, and agree to assist in establishing such by refraining from their use at any sports event.
- I will ensure my child's commitment to the team by ensuring his/her attendance and timeliness at practices and games.

### **3. Coach Code of Conduct**

I understand that my responsibilities as a youth coach are of great importance, and that my actions have the potential to significantly influence the young athletes whom I coach. Therefore, I will conduct myself in accordance with the following guidelines:

- I will lead by example, demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all players and officials.
- I will conduct my practices so that all players have the opportunity to improve their skill level through active participation.
- I will not, nor will I allow my players to, harass or yell at any official or opposing team member.
- I will be sensitive and supportive of my players, and understand that verbally degrading them, or denying them necessities, will not be tolerated.
- I will allow any parent access to any practice.
- I understand that any demonstration of uncontrolled anger, resulting in physical contact against a player, parent, coach, or referee, will be grounds for my immediate dismissal from any coaching role.
- I will support the SVdP Sports Commission policy for athletic eligibility, as it relates to behavioral and academic expectations.
- I will successfully complete a "Safe Environment Training" session offered by the Archdiocese of Omaha. I will submit paperwork for a background check prior to coaching.
- I will successfully complete a "Concussion Awareness Training" and submit my certificate prior to coaching.

### **Supervision**

Each coach is responsible for the supervision of athletes before, during, and after all practices and contests. The coach should be the last person to leave the premises. Athletes will not be allowed to use the facilities, unless under the direct supervision of an adult who has completed the concussion awareness training and is safe environment certified. I will follow the procedures on page 4 of this handbook regarding use of key fobs at SVdP practices

**FOR BASKETBALL AND VOLLEYBALL COACHES ONLY:**

- The third and fourth grade teams are considered learning and developmental teams. Therefore, all teams will play in recreational divisions. Some fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grade teams will also be considered recreational. With this in mind, I will do my best to give all players as equal playing time as possible in each game. I will follow this rule to the best of my ability, unless the player has missed practices, or has not conducted himself or herself in a manner in accordance with the Player. The only exception to this will occur during the PAL and other tournaments, at which time I will use my best discretion in using players who will allow the team to advance in the tournament. This, however, will not be done at the expense of any player having to sit out an entire game for basketball or match for volleyball.
- As for the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grade teams that participate in a competitive league, I realize that these are competitive teams, and equal playing time may not be possible. However, I will attempt to provide adequate participation for all team members.
- I will successfully complete a "Concussion Awareness Training" and submit my certificate to the athletic director prior to coaching.

## IX UNIFORMS – Track / Cross Country and Basketball

- All SVdP equipment and uniforms are the property of the SVdP Sports Commission, and are to be returned by the players after the end of every season. Responsibility for returning the property of SVdP is shared by all coaches, players, and parents.
- It is the players' responsibility to keep uniforms CLEAN and in GOOD condition. Any damage to uniforms should be reported to the coach as soon as possible. Then, the uniform can be repaired before any additional damage occurs.
- **Uniforms are to be worn ONLY for games involving St. Vincent de Paul teams. Coaches and parents are asked to enforce this policy.**
- If a uniform is not returned at the end of the season, players/parents will be asked to reimburse the SVdP Sports Commission for the cost of the uniform. Basketball uniforms are \$75 for all grades. Track and cross-country uniforms are \$25.00

## X COMMUNICATION

Communications that parent and players should expect from the coach:

- Philosophy of the coach.
- Expectations of the team.
- Location and times of all practices and games.
- Procedure to follow should a player become injured during a practice or game.

Communications coaches expect from parents and players:

- Notification of any schedule conflict, as far in advance as possible.
- Specific concerns regarding coach's philosophy and experience.

Participating in youth sports can be one of the most rewarding experiences in a child's life. It is

important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you wish. At these times, discussion with the coach may be desirable, to clear up the issue, and to avoid any misunderstanding. It is advised that any concerns be brought up in private, away from a game or practice situation.

If a meeting with the parent and coach does not provide a satisfactory resolution to an issue, the commissioner of the sport should be contacted. The commissioners are listed in the handbook.

If there are general questions or concerns about the SVdP sports program, any Sports Commission member listed in this handbook should be contacted.

## **XI SUNDAY MORNINGS**

No practices or games are to be scheduled before noon on Sundays.

## **XII SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS**

If school is cancelled for weather-related reasons, all home games and all practices are cancelled, unless the pastor decides otherwise.

## **XIII SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

All St. Vincent de Paul coaches, as volunteers who have regular contact with children, are required by the Archdiocese of Omaha to receive training and maintain current Safe Environment certification. A formal background check will be required prior to coaching. If you are interested in coaching and would like more information about the training, contact [andersonk@svdpomaha.org](mailto:andersonk@svdpomaha.org) **The commissioners of each sport are responsible for verifying Safe Environment Certification Status with pastoral minister Kelly Anderson (andersonk@svdpomaha.org)**

## **XIV. PLAYER SAFETY**

At St. Vincent de Paul, player safety is our number one priority. We want to continue to create an environment of healthy activity and good sportsmanship. We have partnered with Children's Sports Medicine to share information on youth sports concussions, injury management and prevention. Please review at [childrensomaha.org/sportsmedicine](http://childrensomaha.org/sportsmedicine) for more information.

## **XV. CONCUSSION AWARENESS**

Player safety is always a high priority. Coaches are to keep current on concussion protocols. The state of Nebraska offers concussion training for coaches and information for parents and athletes. See the following websites for more information on concussion awareness:

[www.cdc.gov/Concussion](http://www.cdc.gov/Concussion) or [www.NebSportsConcussion.org](http://www.NebSportsConcussion.org)

**What is a concussion?** A concussion is a brain injury caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head. A concussion can also occur from a fall or a blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. A concussion, which may or may not result in loss of consciousness, disrupts normal brain functions. Even a “ding,” “getting one’s bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow can be serious.

**What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?** Many signs may be observed and many symptoms may be felt or experienced when a concussion has occurred. Signs and symptoms can show up right away after the injury or they may not be observed or experienced until later, sometimes days or weeks after the injury. A concussion can affect not only physical responsiveness and abilities, but also thinking and remembering, emotions or mood and sleep.

**What risks are posed by a concussion?** Concussions affect people differently. With a proper response and medical attention, most student athletes will recover quickly and fully; but for some, symptoms could last for days or even weeks. A more serious concussion can last for months. In rare cases, a blood clot could form on the brain and crowd the skull. While a concussed brain is still healing, exertion (e.g., exercising) may cause concussion symptoms to reappear or become worse. The same is true of activities that involve a lot of concentration, such as studying, using a computer or playing video games. Once a concussion has been sustained, the risk of sustaining another concussion increases, especially during the gradual healing process. Subsequent concussions can have longer recovery times. In rare cases, repeat concussions can cause serious and long-lasting problems, including brain swelling or permanent brain damage. They can even be fatal.

**What should a student athlete do in response to sustaining a concussion?** If a student athlete feels or experiences dizziness or drowsiness, or has a headache that lasts or worsens over time, or vomits repeatedly, or has blurry vision or slurred speech, or feels more and more sick, or feels or experiences any one or more of the other symptoms of a concussion, he/she should inform his/her parent(s) or guardian, coach, athletic trainer or school nurse right away. A bump, blow or jolt to the head should never be ignored. Likewise, parents (guardians) should seek medical attention for the student athlete upon observing signs of a concussion or upon receiving notice that the student athlete has been reasonably suspected of having sustained a concussion.

**Return-to-Activities Restriction:** Pursuant to Nebraska statutes 71-9104(2)(a), a student athlete must be removed from a practice or game whenever he or she is reasonably suspected of having sustained a concussion or brain injury based upon observation by a coach or a licensed health-care professional. The student athlete so removed cannot be permitted to participate in any school-supervised team athletic activities involving physical exertion, including, but not limited to, practices or games, (unless and) until the student athlete: (1) has been evaluated by a licensed health care professional; (2) has received from the licensed health care professional written and signed clearance to resume participation in athletic activities; (3) has submitted the written and signed medical clearance to the school; and (4) has submitted with the medical clearance, written permission to resume participation from the student athlete’s parent(s) or guardian.