

# Swan Valley Youth Football Athletic Handbook

Approved March 11, 2024



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## NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

Swan Valley Youth Football does not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, gender identity or expression, race, color, religion, creed, age, physical handicap, ancestry, national origin, height, weight, military status, marital or family status, or any other legally protected category. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies:

Mr. John Wunderle  
SVYF - Director  
1461 Grissom Ct.  
Saginaw, MI 48609  
(989) 274-1398

Mr. George Garcia  
SVYF - Treasurer  
1461 Grissom Ct.  
Saginaw, MI 48609  
(989) 274-2616

Dear Parents/Guardians and Student Athletes,

Becoming a member of an athletic team provides an individual with many positive experiences and opportunities. It gives a person the opportunity to gain knowledge, to learn the importance of teamwork and sportsmanship, to develop a sense of loyalty, to promote school spirit and develop a sense of self-accomplishment.

As in all aspects of life, rules and regulations are necessary to provide a fair and orderly opportunity for all participants. This Code of Conduct attempts to provide you with the basic rules and regulations set by the Michigan High School Athletic Association and the Swan Valley Youth Football Club (SVYF).

Please read this handbook with your son or daughter. It contains information regarding the general operation and regulations of SVYF. After reading the information, the Student Athletic Agreement Form that is included must be signed by both the Athlete and Parent/Guardian and returned to the Team Mom (who will give to the SVYF Director). I recommend that you keep this information in a safe place for possible future reference.

***Please note the following must be completed and turned in to the Team Mom before the athlete is allowed to practice.***

- 1. Student Athletic Agreement Form***
- 2. Physical form filled out by a doctor indicating the athletes ability to fully participate in tackle football.***

If, at any time, a member of our Board of Directors can be of assistance, please feel free to contact us.

Thank you,

*John P Wunderle*

John Wunderle  
SVYF - Director

## SVYF POLICIES

**Sportsmanship:** Swan Valley Youth Football (SVYF) and Central Michigan Youth Football League (CMYFL) follow the MHSAA guidelines. Under Regulation V in the MHSAA Handbook, when an athlete is ejected from a contest for flagrant or unsportsmanlike conduct, that athlete shall be withheld by the coach for the remainder of that day of competition and for at least the next day of competition for that team. Athletes ejected from competition are also required to complete an online sportsmanship course from the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) before returning to competition.

### OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Since SVYF uses the facilities of the Swan Valley School District, athletes who have been suspended from school shall receive the following athletic discipline from SVYF.

1. The athlete shall not be allowed to practice for the term of suspension.
2. The athlete shall not be allowed to participate in any athletic contest during the term of suspension. Any further disciplinary action toward the athlete shall rest in the hands of the coach involved.

It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to communicate to the SVYF Director when an out-of-school suspension has occurred.

### SCHOLARSHIP/CITIZENSHIP

SVYF promotes scholarship and citizenship along with teaching the fundamentals of football. We wish for the student athletes to establish good habits that include ensuring school work is done and passing grades are maintained. If a student athlete needs help, we do have resources and are willing to help them. Please approach a coach or Board member for assistance.

### CITIZENSHIP

1. Athletes are expected to maintain a wholesome attitude, which consists of interest and cooperation with teachers and coaches at all times.
2. All athlete are expected to conduct themselves respectfully at all times.
3. An athlete must show good sportsmanship and proper respect toward his teammates, coaches, opponent teams and their coaches and the officials.
4. An athlete is considered a leader and standard-bearer among their peers. The athlete must, therefore, have no involvement/association with drugs, alcohol, and /or tobacco products. **Any athlete found to be in violation of this standard of citizenship shall lose eligibility for the next (2) consecutive contests.**

## **BULLYING**

It is the policy of the SVYF Program to provide a safe environment for all participants. Bullying of anyone is strictly prohibited. We accept the definition of bullying as defined by the American Psychological Association at [Bullying \(apa.org\)](http://Bullying.apa.org). It reads as follows:

Bullying is a form of aggressive behavior in which someone intentionally and repeatedly causes another person injury or discomfort. Bullying can take the form of physical contact, words, or more subtle actions.

The bullied individual typically has trouble defending him or herself and does nothing to “cause” the bullying. Cyberbullying is verbally threatening or harassing behavior conducted through such electronic technology as cell phones, email, social media, or text messaging.

Adapted from APA Dictionary of Psychology

## **HAZING**

The act of “hazing” is a crime in the State of Michigan and will not be tolerated by SVYF. SVYF will fully comply with Michigan law<sup>1</sup> regarding any “hazing” incidents.

## **ATTENDANCE**

1. An athlete must be in regular attendance at all practice sessions called by the coach. SVYF does promote well rounded athletes and will work with the athlete if they have scheduling conflicts with other sports.
2. Athletes must obtain advance permission from the coach to be absent from practice.
3. Athletes who are absent from school during the day may not attend practice sessions. Funerals and other such unexpected emergencies may be the exception as determined by the Coach or SVYF Director.

## **GENERAL**

1. All athletes are expected to uphold the traditions of good sportsmanship and fair play at all times.
2. The use of profanity or vulgar gestures will never be acceptable.
3. Each athlete will be responsible for the proper care and maintenance of all equipment checked out. If damage or loss occurs, each athlete will be held financially responsible for reimbursement to SVYF for the initial cost of the equipment.
4. As an athlete you need to always remember that you are representing Swan Valley Youth Football.
5. Other routine team rules regarding missing practice, arriving late for practice, not carrying out assignments, etc., may be established and enforced by respective coaches.

### **CONFLICTS WITH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

If a conflict occurs between a practice/contest or School Activity on the same day but different times, the School Activity shall take precedence and all coaches involved will make accommodations to allow the athletes to participate in both if possible.

1. Michigan Penal Code 750.411t

### ***TRANSPORTATION***

Swan Valley Youth Football does not provide transportation to away contests. The athletes are required to provide their own transportation to and from the event sites.

1. Parents/guardians will be expected to drive their OWN child to and from games.
2. The coach will travel to all contests and be responsible for the team's safe and proper behavior.
3. The coach should know the location and directions to the facilities.

## ***PARENT/COACH COMMUNICATION***

We believe the SVYF program helps develop the character traits that promote a successful life after high school. Both parenting and coaching are extremely challenging vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of each other, providing greater benefit to children. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's team. If a situation arises which requires a conference between the coach and the parent, this is encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position.

***Please do not attempt to confront a coach before, during, or immediately after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution and never go well, as many things that are said remain long after the issues are resolved.***

***A lack of cooperation may result in Administration Action.***

### **Communication you should expect from your child's coach:**

1. Philosophy of the coach,
2. Expectations the coach has for your child and other players on the team,
3. Locations and times of all practices, contests, scrimmages, meetings, banquets, and possible awards,
4. Procedure should your child be injured during participation

### **Communication coaches expect from parents**

As SVYF athletes become involved in the athletic program, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there may also be times when things do not go the way an athlete wishes. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged.

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach.
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
3. Specific concerns regarding a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

### **Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches**

1. The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
2. Ways to help your child improve.
3. Concerns about your child's behavior.

### **Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches**

Many parent concerns regarding their child's coaches arise from the issue of "Playing Time." No playing time is guaranteed. All Athletes will earn their spot on the field through the SVYF coaching staffs assessment of where they best fit. Generally it is not appropriate to discuss with the coach as their judgment should be respected by both players and parents. Coaches make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for the team and all athletes involved.

1. Playing time
2. Strategy
3. Play calling
4. Other student-athletes

### **Procedure for speaking with your child's coach**

When parent-coach conferences are necessary or you have a concern to discuss with the coach, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

1. The student-athlete should speak with the coach to bring the concern to the coach.
2. If the player-coach meeting does not resolve the issue, call the SVYF Director to set up an appointment with the coach. *The student-athlete is required to attend the parent-coach meeting.*

### **What can a parent do if the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution?**

Call and set up an appointment with the SVYF Director to discuss the situation.

At this meeting the appropriate next step will be determined.

## ***USE OF MOOD-ALTERING CHEMICALS RULES***

During the season of practice or play, the athlete shall not use, possess, consume, buy, sell or give away:

- intoxicating beverages.
- marijuana, or any "controlled substance" pursuant to federal and/or State statute.
- Steroids, human growth hormones, or other performance enhancing drugs.
- Substances purported to be illegal, abusive, or performance enhancing, i.e., "lookalike" drugs.
- DRUG PARAPHERNALIA.
- All forms of VAPE/VAPOR pens, electronic cigarettes, and the products used in them.
- Tobacco or tobacco products of any form.

It is not a violation for an athlete to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for a athlete's own use by his or her doctor.

### ***PENALTIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE USE OF MOOD ALTERING CHEMICALS***

#### **1. FIRST VIOLATION**

- a. **Penalty:** After confirmation of the first violation, the athlete shall lose eligibility for the next two (2) consecutive contests. No exception is permitted for an athlete who becomes a participant in a treatment program.
- b. **Recommendation:**
  1. It is recommended that, when appropriate, the club refer an athlete to a community agency or a professional individual for assessment of potential chemical abuse or misuse.

#### **2. SECOND VIOLATION**

- a. **Penalty:** After confirmation of the second violation, the athlete shall lose eligibility for the next six (6) consecutive contests. No exception is permitted for an athlete who becomes a participant in a treatment program.
- b. **Recommendation:**
  1. It is recommended that before being re-admitted to activities following suspension for the second violation, the athlete shall show evidence in writing that they have sought or have received counseling from a community agency or professional individual such as a school counselor, drug counselor, medical doctor, psychiatrist or psychologist.
  2. It is recommended that, when appropriate, the club refer an athlete to a community agency or a professional individual outside the school for assessment of potential chemical abuse or misuse.

Violations will be recognized by the following: SVYF Coaching Staff, SVYF Board of Directors and Law Enforcement Agencies.



**ATTENTION PARENTS: The Athletic Agreement and Concussion Pledge Information Form must be signed or the athlete may not be allowed to participate in contests.**

## **HEADS UP CONCUSSION**

## **A Fact Sheet for ATHLETES**

### **WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?**

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

A concussion is a brain injury that:

Is caused by a bump or blow to the head

Can change the way your brain normally works

Can occur during practices or games in any sport

Can happen even if you haven't been knocked out

Can be serious even if you've just been "dinged"

### **WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?**

Headache or "pressure" in head

Nausea or vomiting

Balance problems or dizziness

Double or blurry vision

Bothered by light

Bothered by noise

Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy

Difficulty paying attention

Memory problems ° Confusion ° Does not "feel right"

### **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 if one of your teammates might have a concussion.

***Get a medical checkup.*** A doctor or health care professional can tell you if you have a concussion and when you are OK to return to play.

Give yourself time to get better. If you have had a concussion, your brain needs time to heal. While your brain is still healing, you are much more likely to have a second concussion. Second or later concussions can cause damage to your brain. It is important to rest until you get approval from a doctor or health care professional to return to play.

### **HOW CAN I PREVENT A CONCUSSION?**

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

Follow your coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.

Practice good sportsmanship at all times.

Use the proper sports equipment, including personal protective equipment (such as helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). In order for equipment to protect you, it must be:

The right equipment for the game, position, or activity

Worn correctly and fit well > Used every time you play

For more information and to order additional materials free-of-charge, visit:

[www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports](http://www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports) and/or [www.cdc.gov/injury](http://www.cdc.gov/injury)

# A Fact Sheet for PARENTS

## **WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?**

A concussion is a brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump or blow to the head. Even a "ding," "getting your bell rung," or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

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 or weeks after the injury. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away.

## **WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?**

Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs and symptoms of a concussion:

Appears dazed or stunned	Is confused about assignment or position
Forgets an instruction	Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
Moves clumsily	Answers questions slowly
Loses consciousness (even briefly)	Shows behavior or personality changes
Can't recall events prior to hit or fall	Can't recall events after hit or fall
Symptoms Reported by Athlete	Headache or "pressure" in head
Nausea or vomiting	Balance problems or dizziness
Double or blurry vision	Sensitivity to light
Sensitivity to noise	Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
Concentration or memory problems	Confusion
Does not "feel right"	

## **HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD PREVENT A CONCUSSION?**

Every sport is different, but there are steps your children can take to protect themselves from concussion.

Ensure that they follow their coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.

Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.

Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity (such as helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). Protective equipment should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly.

Learn the signs and symptoms of a concussion

## **WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD HAS A CONCUSSION?**

1. Seek medical attention right away. A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to sports.
2. Keep your child out of play. Concussions take time to heal. Don't let your child return to play until a health care professional says it's OK. Children who return to play too soon—while the brain is still healing—risk a greater chance of having a second concussion. Second or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.
3. Tell your child's coach about any recent concussion. Coaches should know if your child had a recent concussion in ANY sport. Your child's coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach.

Dear Parents,

## CONCUSSION PLEDGE INFORMATION FORM

### STUDENT/ATHLETE

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand that concussions are serious injuries. I understand that if not handled properly, concussions may lead to permanent brain injury or death.

I have read the fact sheet for athletes in the handbook.

***I pledge that if I RECOGNIZE symptoms of concussion in myself, or a teammate, that I must REPORT it immediately to a coach, athletic trainer, or parent.***

***I pledge to not play my sport again until I'm cleared by a doctor and complete a graduated process (BRAIN protocol). This will help ensure that I RECOVER completely before returning to play.***

*Athlete's Signature* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date* \_\_\_\_\_

### PARENT/GUARDIAN

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand that concussions can be serious injuries. I understand that if not handled properly, concussions may lead to permanent brain injury or death.

I have read the Fact Sheet for parents in the handbook.

***I pledge that if I RECOGNIZE symptoms of concussion in my child, that I will REPORT it to the Coach or athletic trainer immediately.***

***I pledge to not allow my child to play again until they are cleared by a doctor and complete a graduated process (BRAIN protocol). This will help ensure that my child RECOVER completely before returning to play.***

*Signature* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date* \_\_\_\_\_

**[www.cdc.gov/concussion](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion)** Concussion Resources / online concussion education

\*\*\*\*\* Your child is a signed up to be a participant in the Swan Valley Youth Football Club.

Participation in all athletic activities is voluntary, and therefore we would like to have your approval for your child to participate. If a athlete does not have a valid physical completed on or after April 15, 2024, they will be required to have an updated physical exam. This must be signed by the athlete and parent/guardian. The athlete will not be permitted to practice or play until a satisfactory report has been filed with their coach or the Team Mom. Be aware that a sports physical form is merely a screening procedure and is not meant to replace routine health physicals by your child's primary physician. If your child has an underlying medical problem, complaints of syncope with exercise, or a family history of cardiac disease and /or sudden death, understand that they should have a more extensive work-up before participating in athletics.

Even though SVYF provides the best available equipment and trained supervision, the nature of athletic activities make some injuries possible. A note from parents which allows return to activity from injury ***is not*** adequate protection for the coach and SVYF. ***An athlete must have a physician's written permission to return to practice or competition if he/she has sustained any injury or illness which requires a visit to a physician.*** SVYF is ***not*** liable for bills incurred for physical examinations, ambulance, emergency or other care that result from athletic injury. Such bills are the responsibility of the parents.

**NOTICE \* NOTICE \* NOTICE \* NOTICE \* NOTICE \***

**\* MEDICAL INSURANCE IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARENTS \***

Sincerely,

*John P Wunderle*

John Wunderle  
SVYF - Director

**SWAN VALLEY YOUTH FOOTBALL  
ATHLETIC AGREEMENT**

We, the undersigned, have read and understand the policies of Swan Valley Youth Football contained in the Athletic Handbook (found at website [www.svyf.org](http://www.svyf.org)).

Student Athlete \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

This agreement must be signed and returned to the respective coach prior to the first contest. Athletes lacking a signed Swan Valley Youth Football Athletic Agreement will not be allowed to participate in contests. This agreement will be kept on file by the team for the duration of the season.