

## **SOFTBALL RISK ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

### **CAUTIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENT/ATHLETES AND PARENT/GUARDIAN(S)**

The following procedures have been developed for the Oak Creek High School Softball program. Because of the strength, endurance, conditioning and physical demands required, student-athletes and their parent/guardian(s) are asked to read, understand and adhere to the following cautions and responsibilities to enhance the safety and enjoyment of the sport of Softball by participants. The Oak Creek-Franklin School District Co-Curricular Code; the Oak Creek High School Code of Conduct; Softball Team Rules and Procedures; along with adhering to W.I.A.A. (Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association) and N.F.H.S. (National Federation of High School) Rules are expectations and responsibilities of the student-athlete and parent/guardian. The student-athletes and parent/guardian(s) are responsible to become familiar with and adhere to the above-mentioned codes, rules and procedures in accordance with this risk acknowledgement statement.

The following recommendations have been developed specifically for the Oak Creek High School Softball team. Athletes and parents are asked to read and understand certain cautions and responsibilities designed to improve the safety and enjoyment of the sport.

#### **Pre-season Preparation**

- Because of the intense demands and conditioning required athletes must condition to prepare themselves for the season. This includes both strength training as well as aerobic training. It is also important that athletes continue to strength train during their season to help prevent injuries. Athletes should focus on developing muscular strength, endurance, cardiovascular fitness and flexibility. Weight training and strength conditioning programs have been developed for athletes pertaining to their specific sport. The weight room is open year-round to offer opportunities for training and conditioning. Athletes must adhere to the safety procedures when working out in the weight room.
- Athletes need to incorporate the basic food groups and have a diet high in complex carbohydrates. A vitamin supplement (approved by your physician), fluids, regular rest, proper nutrition and dress contribute to the maintenance of health.
- The school has purchased protective helmets that are certified by the National Operating Commission for Safety of Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE). This certification indicates that research has been conducted to verify the protectiveness and shock absorption capabilities of the helmet. Each player will receive a demonstration on the proper wearing of a batting helmet. Proper wearing of these helmets is the responsibility of the player after the orientation has been completed.

#### **Preparation for Practice or Contest**

- Prior to the first day of practice, athletes must turn in to the Activities Office a completed:
  - ✓ Physical Form
  - ✓ Oak Creek High School Athletic Code
  - ✓ WIAA Code
  - ✓ Concussion Form
  - ✓ Drug Testing Consent Form
  - ✓ Risk Acknowledgement Form
  - ✓ Blue Emergency Card – Emergency Info – Google Form
- Athletes with seizure, neuromuscular, renal, cardiac, insulin/diabetic, or chronic skeletal problems, respiratory diseases, disorders or diseases, must present a physician's approval prior to participation in any practice session.
- It is the responsibility of the student athlete and parent to report to the coach and athletic trainer any medical condition and/or medication the student may require during the course of the activity inclusive but not limited to practice, travel, games/performances.
- Athletes who are ill, dizzy, or lightheaded should not practice and should contact their coach and athletic trainer.
- Any injury problem or concern should be discussed with the coach and athletic trainer.
- Athletes needing preventive taping or bracing should arrive early to receive treatment. Athletes need to wear all pads, braces and supportive undergarments to all practices and competitions.
- Athletes with visual impairments must wear shatterproof glasses or lenses where judgment or safety is a problem. Glasses must be mounted in break resistant frames and secured with an elastic strap.
- Horseplay, roughhousing, hazing or initiations is prohibited.
- Athletes must remove all jewelry and metal hair fasteners.
- Weight training and strength training may be a requirement for physical preparation. Athletes should observe all weight room policies for progressions, spotting and general safety.
- Athletes should ingest the equivalent of 4-6 glasses of water each day.
- Athletes should think safety first.
- Athletes should always be aware of the proximity of others when executing large motor movements.
- Athletes should always use proper technique.
- Weight control or weight reduction programs should not be undertaken without the approval of the coach, athletic trainer and personal physician.

#### **Cautions Specific to Softball**

- All protective equipment required by rule must be worn at practices and competition during those situations that require it.

- Helmets are to be worn by batters, base runners, catchers and base coaches.
- "On deck" hitters are to take practice swings in a designated circle but with complete attention directed to the pitcher and batter. If no circle is designated, stand behind the backstop. Keep hands off the backstop.
- Swing only one (1) bat when taking practice swings.
- Batting practice, infield drills, outfield drills, and pitching practice are to be done in designated areas and at designated times. DO NOT begin these practices without direction of the coach.
- Sliding technique is to be performed as a progression and approved by the coach before it is tried. Lower extremity injuries may still occur when players are experienced in sliding techniques.
- Offensive and defensive players involved in sliding or other close plays must recognize the possibility of being hit by a thrown ball, being accidentally bumped, or of injury due to friction burn, being stepped on, or skeletal injury. Be alert to the location of the ball and opponents.
  - Assume a protected position. Do not leave limbs extended when on the ground.
- Burns, sprains, strains and contusions must be reported to coaches.
- Dugout and team bench - Players in the dugout or team bench area must be alert to foul balls, over throws, or defensive players moving towards the area at high speed.
- Indoors - always look before taking practice swings during drills. If you are chasing balls into a hitter's area, get his/her attention before going near him/her.
- Pitchers in batting cages will always wear protective helmets.
- On a pitched ball, which appears to be headed towards a hitter, all hitters will be instructed to turn their front shoulder towards the catcher and tuck their chin to avoid being hit in the facial area.
- Never catch without protective equipment.
- Never slide head first into a catcher at home plate.

### In the Locker Room

- Be alert to slippery floors and use caution.
- Be alert to changes in floor texture and to elevated thresholds between shower and locker rooms.
- Keep floors free of litter.
- Secure all personal belongings in assigned locker.
- Open locker doors can have sharp edges. Close and lock locker door when away from your assigned locker.
- Use soap and shampoo only in the sink/shower areas.
- Horseplay, roughhousing, hazing or initiations is prohibited.
- Identify incidents of foot or other skin infections to the coach and athletic trainer immediately.

### Entry to the Practice/Contest Site

- Be alert to ramps, stairs, artificial turf surfaces, carpets, concrete surfaces, stairways, practice/playing surfaces and other changes in footing textures.
- Be alert to weather conditions – especially stormy weather. Check with the coach before practicing or playing if there are any safety questions. Use good judgment regarding unsafe weather if the coach is located at a different area than you are practicing/playing.
- Steps, ramps, dugout locations
- Locations of bulk equipment or specific drills
- Ball throwing machines
- Hitting practice and "on deck circle"
- Pitching practice
- Be alert to debris and glass in practice/playing areas.
- Be cautious in parking lots when unloading equipment or changing shoes.
- If you notice or have a safety concern, bring it to the coach's attention prior to initiating practice/playing.

### Travel to Contest/Practice Site

- Student-athletes are required to travel in school vehicles.
- Student-athletes who do not travel in school vehicles may only travel with parent/guardian and/or another designated family member if written permission is given by the parent/guardian 2-days in advance of the event date. The parent/guardian and student-athlete assumes all risk of personal liability for damage, loss or injury related to non-school vehicle transportation.
- At no time will a coach approve a request for a student-athlete to transport with another member of the team in non-school vehicles. Parent permission does not supersede this rule.
- Be alert to weather conditions-especially stormy weather if traveling in non-school vehicles.

### Emergencies

Because of the nature of Tennis, some injuries will occur. All injuries must be called to a coach and trainer's attention. Most will be minor and can be managed with basic first aid. However, some may need more intense management and may also require squad members to:

1. Stop all practices, scrimmages, or drills. DO NOT move the victim!

2. Call the coach to manage the situation if not already at the site.
3. Sit or kneel in close proximity.
4. Assist by:
  - a. Helping with the injured person
  - b. Directing athletic trainer to injured player
  - c. Calling for additional assistance
  - d. Bringing first aid equipment or supplies to the site
  - e. Keeping onlookers away
  - f. Directing the rescue squad to the accident site
5. Fire or Fire Alarm
  - a. Evacuate or remain outside the building
  - b. Move and remain 150 feet away from the building
  - c. Be prepared to implement the emergency procedures outlined in #4

**I understand that the risks of engaging in the sport of softball include, but are not limited to death, serious neck and spinal injuries which may result in complete or partial paralysis, brain damage, serious injury to virtually all bones, joints, ligaments, muscles, tendons, and other aspects of the muscular-skeletal system and serious injury or impairment to other aspects of the body, health and well-being and may impair future abilities.**

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We certify that we have read, understand, and agree to adhere to the cautions, considerations, and responsibilities required for participation on the Oak Creek High School Softball Team.

Athlete Signature:

Date:

Parent/Guardian Signature:

Date: