

Why Not To Ban Youth Football

By

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B2

English IV

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Youth Football has been getting a ton of bad thoughts lately because of head injuries (concussions, CTE). The movie “Concussion” with the actor Will Smith has turned heads on football not being safe. Pop Warner has gone down on players because of parents scared for their children getting CTE. But there have been studies shown that youth football is probably the safest it can be: the new way coaches teach how to tackle, the way helmets are made now makes it more safe than ever before.

Replacing youth football with flag football is not as safe as people think. Children playing flag football might not be as safe as parents think, even though kids have no pads or helmets, there is still a great risk in playing the game. Children can run into each other without a helmet or pads, and that is painful and is more dangerous than colliding with pads. “Laws are trading concussions (wearing helmets) for concussions and death (not wearing a helmet)” (Dompier). Studies show that “in 1905 19 professional football players died”(Dompier) because of not wearing a football helmet. After that many new safety rules were made in 1905 to make football a little bit safer, the first improvement was “including the modern football helmet which drastically lowered the risk of death,”(Dompier) three states are considering to maybe ban football. These states are California, New York, and New Jersey. Banning contact football will not do good for the kids, starting at the age of 14 not knowing what’s going on can be scary and could get majorly hurt because of just now learning how to play and not know how to take a hit. Banning youth football will make it hard for kids to try out the sport.

Youth football is probably the safest sport. Weber says, “In reality, The Youth football field is one of the safest places a kid can be in.”Studies have been shown that “more than 90 percent of youth players did not suffer an injury that restricted participation.” (Weber). Thanks to

new ways to tackle and practice, “youth football players were found to be injured more in games than at practice”(Weber). Pop Warner’s percentage of players have been going down because of these injuries that high school and college and NFL players, which scares parents away from letting their kids do that sport.

The importance of playing team sports is crucial “Playing team sports is an important part of the process part of the process of socializing and learning how to work together to achieve a goal, not to mention a way to stay fit and healthy” (Glatter). Without team sports for children, they will not learn how to work as a team with others when they get older. Even though there is other ways that school uses to teach children how to work with each other, it is not the same as team sports. According to Robert Glatter, “Capacity for rapid risk assessment and plan execution relying on teamwork and assessment of evolving challenges may serve our children well in their later professional lives.” Youth football molds kids into good, respectful and hard working people when they grow up.

The movie *Concussion* with Will Smith who plays as a “neuropathologist Bennet Omalu, Chronicles his struggle against the NFL to prove that Chronic Traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) contributed to the decline demise of Mike Webster and several other NFL players” (Glatter). CTE is repetitive head trauma that leads to behavioral and emotional changes. “The movie provides an emotional portrayal of patients with CTE, and results in a recent editorial by Dr. Bennet Omalu calling for a ban on football, hockey and soccer in children under the age of 18 years old”(Glatter).

Robert Glatter, says, “It is impossible to legislate away all adolescent risk taking behaviors. The adolescent brain is not fully myelinated or “Hard Wired” compared to a mature

and developed adult brain.” Glatter is saying “Children are biologically more “Impulsive”, less restrained and more inclined to take risks” Football being on the risky side, children will get hurt it’s just the risk the children signed up for. An injury will happen in every sport and that will never change. There will always be an injury.

The traditional tackling that youth football has been using has been outdated and is the main culprit for head injuries. Brandon Hall said that traditional tackling “emphasized putting your head in front of the ball carrier when making the tackle essentially, I was taught to always have my head on the upfield side of the ball carrier.” Brandon Hall has also said that “in recent years, tackling techniques have started to change. The desire to reduce head impacts in football has driven the changes., but there has yet to be a consensus on the best way to teach tackling. However, a technique called “Hawk” tackling, which is based on rugby, seems to be getting some incredibly encouraging results.” The Hawk tackle is the best way to keep the head out of the tackle, rugby players who all do not wear helmets have developed this way of tackling because without helmets they do not want to go nose first into someone else's knee or chest so the “Hawk” tackle “Includes tracking the near hip, maintaining leverage, hitting the thighs of the ball carrier with the leverage shoulder, wrapping up and driving five steps,”(Hall). This type of tackling is now being used in youth football and college and has brought down the chance of head injury.

There are many benefits for children playing youth football, even though football is a full contact sport it teaches life skills. “It promotes camaraderie, teamwork, discipline and work ethic that will help shape our children into well- rounded adults”(Flipgive). Youth football builds great friendships, the amount of time they spend together going through those tough practices

and conditioning builds great bonds, brings them in closer together, they stand for each other and that is the best thing to teach them at a young age. A football team is a little family. Children that play youth football learn discipline. “Attention to the details in each task takes discipline.

Running routes, learning blocking assignments, proper tackling technique and execution all demand close attention to detail”(Flipgive). That proper discipline helps the children be more successful in the future doing the right things.