

Name: Jeff Vader
Type: Informative
Topic: Concussions in Junior High and High School Football
Pattern: Topical
Purpose: To inform the audience about the dangers of concussion in Junior High and High School football and to discuss how the game of football is changing in order to combat concussions
Audience: Speech class; high school students

- I. This morning we will talk about what a concussion actually is, the danger that concussions pose to young athletes that play Junior High or High School football, and how the game of football is evolving to protect the players from concussions.
- II. Before we discuss how dangerous concussions can be to football players, it is imperative that we understand what a concussion actually is and the symptoms that can be a result of a concussion.
 - A. Latin word “concussus” meaning to “shake violently” (definition)
 1. Dr. Daniel Kuland in book *The Injured Athlete* — “A concussion may produce... chemical, or neuroelectrical changes. This ‘scrambling of connections’ takes time to reorganize.” (quotation)
 2. Picture of concussion. Brain collides with skull. (visual aid)
 - B. Symptoms – headache, dizziness, ringing in ears, memory loss (fact)
 - C. Ryan Ripp – could not remember play he was concussed (example)
- III. Now that we understand what a concussion actually is, we can now discuss the dangers that concussions pose to young football players.
 - A. Continue to play—extremely vulnerable to second concussion (fact)
 1. Story of Zackery Lystedt (incident)
 - B. Potential for future brain problems (fact)
 1. 2012 NFL study – “6.1% of retired players above age 50 reported diagnoses of dementia, Alzheimer’s, and other memory-related diseases, compared with 1.2% for comparably aged men in the United States.” (quote/statistic)
 - C. G-force comparison picture (visual aid/comparison)
 - D. Dangers of concussions very serious, impact athlete’s future (opinion)
- IV. After talking about the dangers of concussions, football might sound like a pretty bad idea, but there changes to the game of football taking place that make the game safer.
 - A. Richard Adler, Lystedt lawyer – “Catastrophic brain injuries in sports are preventable. We may never be able to prevent concussions in contact sports, but we can prevent kids from returning to play with concussions.” (quote)
 - B. Go back to Zackery Lystedt story - law requires athletes to be removed if suspected concussion (example)
 - C. First law of its kind, many states have followed (fact)
 - D. States’ concussions laws map (visual aid)
 - E. Laws and more padding in helmets enough to stop concussions? (rhetorical question)
- V. As we have seen, concussions can be very dangerous, especially to young football players.

Introduction

Did you know that over four years of high school, football players have a 75% chance of sustaining at least one concussion? (startling statistic) Why is having a concussion so bad? (rhetorical question) The more important question is since the majority of you don't play football, why should you care? Well, how will you respond later in life if your child wants to play football when he is old enough? (hypothetical situation/rhetorical question) Do you think it is safe enough for your own kid to play? This morning we will talk about what a concussion actually is, the danger that concussions pose to young athletes that play Junior High or High School football, and how the game of football is evolving to protect the players from concussions. (preview/thesis)

Conclusion

As we have seen, concussions can be very dangerous, especially to young football players. So again, what would you do if your child wanted to play football? (rhetorical question/hypothetical situation) As mentioned earlier, serious enough concussions can cause severe brain trauma, and even a minor concussion makes athletes more susceptible to future concussions. However, we also discussed a few of the changes in football such as the concussion laws that will make the game safer to play. (summary) And although we have mainly talked about how common it is for a player to have a concussion, there are of course those who have not. For example, I played football for ten years and never had a concussion. (personal reference) There is no guarantee that your child would or would not sustain a concussion while playing football, so ultimately the decision will be up to you. Will the risk of concussions keep *your* child off the field? (rhetorical question)