

Millbury-Sutton Pop Warner

Frequently Asked Questions

How safe is Pop Warner football?

Kids compete with kids of similar age and size. Pop Warner is the ONLY youth football program (local, regional and national) that sets and enforces a strict **AGE & WEIGHT MATRIX** that reduces the risk and reality of injuries. MSPW coaches attend coaching clinics each year and are knowledgeable in coaching techniques, physical conditioning, and the safety rules of organized football. Proper equipment, mouthpieces, and padding are mandated, along with helmets that are reconditioned and recertified on a regular schedule. Pop Warner football has 12% fewer injuries per capita among 5-15 year-olds than organized soccer in the same age range (U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, NEISS)! Also, organized football among 5–15 year-olds has 74% fewer injuries per capita than skateboarding in the same age group. See the following link for more facts: <http://www.popwarner.com/football/footballsafety.asp>

When does the season start and what is the practice schedule?

The season kicks off the first week in August, with football practice 4 nights per week, approximately 2 hours each night. Pop Warner mandates that the kids have at least 10 hours of practice and conditioning before they can perform any contact drills. The first game is typically Labor Day weekend, and there are 8 games total in the regular season. Most games are on Sundays.

When school starts, how many nights do they practice?

When school starts, the practices usually go down to 2 nights per week, for two hours (typically 6-8PM). The season ends at the end of October for the Mites. For the other teams, if they go into playoffs, the season is extended to November.

How is it determined at which level a kid plays?

In Pop Warner football, a child's playing level is determined by a weight-first, age-second policy. For safety reasons and to conform with practiced league-wide policy, all children will be placed in the lowest level allowed by the Pop Warner rules. MSPW will use the child's weight and playing age determined at registration to place a child on a team on a preliminary basis. The players will be weighed several times during pre-season and their playing level will be determined at the league-wide master weigh-in just before the season begins. (Note: It has been our experience that 99% of the time players remain at the team level they are originally assigned to at registration.)

What are the current age and weight requirements for Sharon Pop Warner football?

Click [here](#) (Pop Warner chart: "Tackle Football Divisions of Play") to see the current age and weight requirements for Sharon Pop Warner football.

What is "mandatory weigh-in"? Is it really "mandatory"?

The mandatory weigh-in is a date established by the Central Mass League of which Millbury/Sutton is a member. Mandatory weigh-in is a criterion that is set for football

players who participate in Pop Warner programs by the National Pop Warner Little Scholars Association which governs all Pop Warner football and cheer organizations. The requirement for this weigh-in is stressed during registration. It is readily acknowledged by all returning football players as a pre-requisite for participation after they have experienced it in their first year. The weigh-in rule was established to ensure that players are playing in the proper weight/age division for the protection of all players. The weights are certified by the league in game day books every team carries to every game. These books contain league certified documentation on each player that includes the player's picture in his/her game jersey, birth certificate and weigh-in certification. Before each game every player is weighed against the information in these books to ensure that only certified players are being dressed to participate in any given game. Again, we are trying to do everything possible for the safety of the players by ensuring that every player is participating at the proper weight/age level. **Under these rules no player is allowed to play unless they are weighed and certified by the league.** There is one mandatory weigh-in for all teams. This weigh-in does not take place in the middle of summer but as late in August as possible while still allowing all weights to be certified by the start of the season. Sharon teams cannot certify their own players, so this function cannot happen during equipment distribution. Certification is a league function.

If a child misses the mandatory weigh-in, can he or she still play?

Unfortunately, if your child cannot attend the mandatory weigh-in, he/she will not be able to play the first two games of the season. There are always unavoidable conflicts and religious conflicts and thus a second alternative weigh-in is always scheduled two weeks into the season. This alternative weekend is not designed to penalize players but has been implemented to allow players a second chance to weigh in while only missing two games in an eight plus game season (often MSPW teams qualify for playoffs which accounts for those additional games beyond eight).

What kind of football equipment and clothing should I buy?

The league provides a helmet, shoulder pads, practice pants, game jersey and pants, mouth-guard, pant pads (5 in all), girdle, rib protectors, and a belt. Families are responsible for purchasing an athletic supporter and cleats

What is the refund policy if a child registers then drops out?

The Millbury/Sutton Pop Warner and Cheerleaders Refund Policy are as follows: (a) All refund requests must be made in writing to be official, and mailed to: Millbury/Sutton Pop Warner, PO Box 605, Millbury, MA 01527. E-mails will be acceptable. The date of the official postmark, or the date on the email, is the refund request date. For refund requests not made in writing, the request is unofficial and the date of the request is determined by the Treasurer of Sutton Pop Warner. (b) There will be no refunds granted for refund requests received after August 1st for a participant who has previously been in the program. (c) There will be no refunds granted for refund requests received after August 15th for a first year participant. (d) Any granted refunds will be charged a \$25 administration fee per participant. A participant not granted a refund may appeal to the Executive Board for a waiver of policy by writing a letter with an explanation and mailing it to the address above.

What does the "minimum mandatory play" rule mean?

In accordance with Pop Warner rules, MSPW will abide by the established minimum mandatory play rules. The number of minimum plays for each player is determined by the number of players eligible for that day's game. See the following chart:

# of Eligible Players	# of Minimum Plays
16-25	10
26-30	8
31-35	6

These are minimum play numbers. In most cases, players will play more than the minimum number of plays. One exception to the rule is for missed practices. The mandatory minimum play rule is affected by the player's participation at practice during the week before the game. It is up to the coach to decide whether the child will make his/her minimum plays based on how much he/she missed. These policies are as much for safety reasons as it is for learning responsibility to teammates. We do acknowledge that homework comes first, however we expect participants to find time to study and play.

Why can't my child be with her friends or on her sister's or brother's team?

Pop Warner is a national organization and as such we must follow their rules regarding placement of children on teams. There are age guidelines for each level. The Pop Warner season begins on August 1st and so July 31st is when the age cut-offs take effect. Sometimes, a girl whose birthday is July 31st will not make the age cut-off for a particular team, even though her friends do. No exceptions are ever granted by Pop Warner regarding these age cut-offs. Rostering a girl or boy at the incorrect level will cause all our teams to be ineligible to participate in Pop Warner. We try to accommodate family relationships whenever possible.

Why is each player and cheerleader required to pay \$50 toward the Calendar Raffle.

The \$50 assessed at registration for the calendar raffle and player participation in our tag days is the only mandatory fundraisers expected. Fundraising is an important part of Pop Warner football. Game day expenses are barely covered by registration costs and many years the league pays money toward awards for championship teams as well as awards for our Mites teams. We need the children and their families to help. Practice fields, equipment, uniforms, lights, safety equipment, playing fields for game days, storage facilities, awards, cheerleading competition fees, transportation to/from cheer competition, insurance, EMTs, Police Details and personalized sweatshirts. These are just some of the many items required to sustain the program. We are a growing organization and need to continually re-invest to ensure the safety of our children and the continued success of the program.

The fundraisers scheduled throughout the season are planned in a fun way so that families can attend events and not be required to sell things like candles or chocolate bars.