



CTE Hope

Research. Development. Support. Advocacy.



WHY DOES CTE HOPE SUPPORT ATHLETES ONLY PLAY FLAG FOOTBALL UNTIL THE AGE OF 14?

Children cannot sustain the forces that are inherent in tackle football, their bodies are too small and are still developing. Prepubescent children, specifically those 13 and under are at greatest risk for brain injury and long term brain damage like CTE.

Children are more vulnerable to injury, particularly to the head, neck, and spine, than adults. A child's brain takes longer to recover from a brain injury. A child's brain has less myelin than adults and key brain structures such as the hippocampus, amygdala, and frontal lobes are undergoing key developments between 10 and 13.

Kids can still learn the fundamentals of football and experience the comradery playing flag football until 14. Flag football allows every child a chance to be an impact player without taking impacts to the body and brain that expose them to CTE and other neurodegenerative brain diseases. Children of all sizes can participate and enjoy the benefits of making friends, improving physical fitness, and being part of a team. The rules are designed to keep children playing every year. Flag football is the fastest growing sport, increasing 8.7% in 2015 for children under 14. Several former professional football players support the Flag Until 14 campaigns across the US!