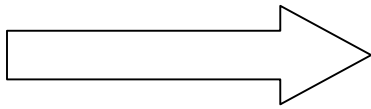


**Attention Athletes**  
**What's Wrong With This Picture?**



**In an effort to reduce the possibility of exposure to various bacteria, viruses and parasites that may be present in the bird droppings that are found on the practice fields located throughout Howell Township, we are encouraging our student-athletes to follow these simple guidelines:**

**~Protect Your Water Bottle!** *Do not place your water bottle directly on the ground.* When not in use, keep your water bottle in a gym bag, a disposable ziploc bag, or place it on some type of covering, such as a piece of plastic. If you do not have any of these items, be sure to set your bottle in the upright position in order to prevent the opening/cap from coming into contact with the ground.

Be sure to clean your reusable water bottles frequently. Follow the manufacturer's instructions regarding washing/drying your particular water bottle.

**~Protect Your Mouth Guard!** *Do not place your mouth guard directly on the ground.* When not in use, place it in a firm, perforated container if possible. This permits air circulation. If you do not have this type of container, put your mouth guard in a disposable ziploc bag. If you wear a football helmet with an attached mouthpiece, be sure to secure the mouthpiece to your face mask so that it does not come into contact with any dirt or grass.

Clean your mouth guard frequently. Rinse your mouth guard with cold water or with a mouth rinse after each use or clean it with toothpaste and a toothbrush. Occasionally clean your mouth guard in cool, soapy water and rinse it thoroughly. Protect your mouth guard from high temperatures, such as hot water, hot surfaces, or direct sunlight in order to minimize distorting its shape.

**~Wash Your Hands!** *Always wash your hands after playing outdoor sports and be sure to use proper hand-washing techniques.* Place your hands together under warm water, apply soap and rub them together for at least 20 seconds. Wash all surfaces well, including wrists, palms, backs of hands, fingers and under the fingernails. Turn the water off using a paper towel, if possible, in order to prevent re-contamination. Dry your hands completely with a clean paper towel (this helps remove germs). If towels are not available, it is ok to air dry your hands. Pat your skin, rather than rubbing it in order to avoid cracking or chapping. If soap and water is not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer to clean your hands.