



## PROTECTING YOUR ATHLETE'S SMILE

The mouth is a frequently injured area of the body during contact sports. Research has shown that most mouth injuries occur when athletes are not wearing a mouthguard. Wearing a mouthguard can help prevent broken teeth, cuts on the lips and tongue, and jaw injuries.

# What Makes a Good Mouthguard?

- Mouthguards protect the teeth from trauma or loss and reduce the risk for jaw fractures.
- Mouthguards also minimize lacerated and bruised lips and cheeks by keeping these soft tissue areas away from the teeth, especially true for children with braces.
- Wearing a mouthguard is highly recommended for those participating in boxing, basketball, baseball, field hockey, football, ice hockey, lacrosse, martial arts, soccer, wrestling, water polo and rugby.

## Which Mouthguard Is Right For Your Child?

- **Stock/Ready-made:** Available in various sizes and shapes, but cannot be adjusted to fit your mouth. Often, they are loose and bulky and may interfere with speaking or breathing.
- **Mouth-formed/Boil & Bite:** These plastic mouthguard shells are boiled in water for a few seconds, cooled under tap water and molded directly in the mouth.
- **Custom-made:** Dentists make these at the office or order them from a laboratory from a cast of your child's teeth. Young athletes are more likely to wear a mouthguard that fits comfortably, stays in place and allows for better breathing.

**LifeSmile** from Delta Dental can help you prevent disease and keep you and your child on the path toward a healthier, happier life. Healthy Smile, Happy Life: Take advantage of numerous free resources for improving your oral health at **DeltaDentalNC.com**.