

CITY OF MARTIN PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT TENNESSEE YOUTH SPORTS CONCUSSION POLICY

In 2013, the Tennessee General Assembly enacted Public Chapter 148. This act, effective January 1, 2014, requires that school and community organizations sponsoring youth athletic activities establish guidelines to inform and educate coaches, youth athletes and other adults involved in youth athletics about the nature, risk and symptoms of concussion and head injury. Every individual involved in youth athletics must become more proactive in identifying and treating athletes who show signs of concussion or head injury.

Education is the key to identifying and treating youth athletes who show signs of a concussion during athletic participation. It is very important that every administrator, coach, parent, official, athlete and health-care professional know the symptoms and steps to take when dealing with student-athletes that display signs of a possible concussion. Concussion can be a serious health issue and should be treated as such.

POLICY

1. Information concerning the nature, risk and symptoms of concussion and head injury should be reviewed by all administrators, coaches, youth athletes and their parent or guardian. The Tennessee Department of Health has concussion information available online at <http://health.state.tn.us/TBI/concussion.htm>.

The following information includes a copy of "Signs/Symptoms of Concussion." (Attachment 1) Every individual involved in athletics for a youth organization must review concussion information annually and sign a form that states this process has been completed.

Prior to the annual initiation of practice or competition, all coaches, youth athletes and the athlete's parent/guardian should review a concussion and head injury information sheet. A form confirming this review shall be signed and returned by the coach, youth athlete, and the athlete's parent/guardian. (Attachments 2-5: Fact Sheets and Signature Forms)

2. All persons are strongly encouraged to view the Center for Disease Control online course entitled "Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports." This online course can be found at the following link: http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/headsup/online_training.html

3. Any youth athlete who shows signs, symptoms and behavior consistent with a concussion shall immediately be removed from the activity or competition and be evaluated by a licensed healthcare professional, if available, or by the coach or other designated person.

4. No youth athlete who has been removed from play due to suspected concussion shall return to practice or competition until the youth athlete is evaluated by a health care

provider and receives written clearance from the health care provider for a full or graduated return to play.

The attached Concussion Return to Play Form (Attachment 6) has been approved by TDH and should be used. The form was adapted from the Acute Concussion Evaluation plan on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website www.cdc.gov/injury. It contains specific instructions that shall be followed before an athlete can return to sports. The form is to be completed and signed by a licensed medical doctor, osteopathic physician or a clinical neuropsychologist with concussion training before an athlete may return to participate. A copy of the form must be kept on file by the community-based youth athletic organization administrator.

All documentation relating to the completion of concussion recognition and head injury safety education course program and signed concussion and head injury information sheets shall be maintained by the athletic organization for a period of three years.

Signs/Symptoms of Concussion

Signs (Observed by Coach)

Appears dazed or stunned
Is confused about assignment or position
Forgets an instruction
Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
Move clumsily
Answers questions slowly
Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
Can't recall events after hit or fall

Symptoms (Reported by Athletes)

Headache
Fogginess
Easily confused
Slowed thought process
Difficult with Memory
Nausea
Lack of energy, tiredness
Dizziness with memory
Blurred vision
Sensitive to light and sounds
Mood changes – irritable, anxious or tearful

Suggested Concussion Management:

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal brain function. An athlete does not have to lose consciousness (be “knocked out”) to have suffered a concussion.

1. No athlete should return to play or practice on the same day of a concussion.
2. Any athlete suspected of having a concussion should be evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional that day.
3. Any athlete with a concussion should be medically evaluated and cleared by an appropriate health-care provider – licensed medical doctor, osteopathic physician or clinical neuropsychologist with concussion training – prior to resuming participation in any practice or competition.
4. A Concussion Return to Play (RTP) form must be provided by the returning player to the school/community-based youth athletic organization. This document should outline a step-wise protocol for return to practice or competition and should include provisions for delayed RTP based upon return of any signs or symptoms.

For more information, the following links are available: http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html or <http://www.cdc.gov/ConcussioninYouthSports/> and www.nfhslearn.com