

Little League – Concussion Awareness & Parent Engagement – January 28, 2017

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury—or TBI—caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. This sudden movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, stretching and damaging the brain cells and creating chemical changes in the brain. (cdc.gov)

Signs are those visible to others. Symptoms are those reported / felt by the athlete.

Common Signs & Symptoms of Concussion

<u>Physical</u>	<u>Cognitive</u>	<u>Emotional</u>	<u>Sleep-related</u>
Headache	Difficulty concentrating / focusing	Sadness	Difficulty falling / staying asleep
Dizziness / balance difficulty	Feeling “out of it” or “not like myself”	Feeling more emotional than usual	Fatigue
Nausea / vomiting	Mental “fogginess”	Irritability	Drowsiness
Sensitivity to light and / or noise	Feeling slowed down / moving slower than usual / thinking slower than usual	Nervousness	Sleeping more or less than usual
Vision changes			
Ringling in the ears			

Pre-Season Considerations:

Research if there are any **concussion specialists** in your area. Search for: sports medicine physicians, neuropsychologists, neurologists.

If available:

- consider implementing a baseline testing and / or educational program for participants and parents
- establish an expedited pathway to refer athletes to their office

Review your state laws as they pertain to concussion in youth sports. If they only apply to interscholastic athletics, consider adopting the law for your organization. If specific resources for your state are not available to youth sports organizations, visit the website for NC’s Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Act (<http://gfellerwallerlaw.unc.edu/GfellerWallerLaw/qwlaw.html>) where you can find the educational sheets for athletes / parents / coaches as well as a clearance form that must be signed by a physician.

Educate parents and athletes – handouts, team meetings, pre- or post-practice “huddles”.

What to do if you suspect a player has sustained a concussion:

1. Remove the athlete from play.
2. Do not allow them to return on the same day.

“When in doubt, sit them out.”

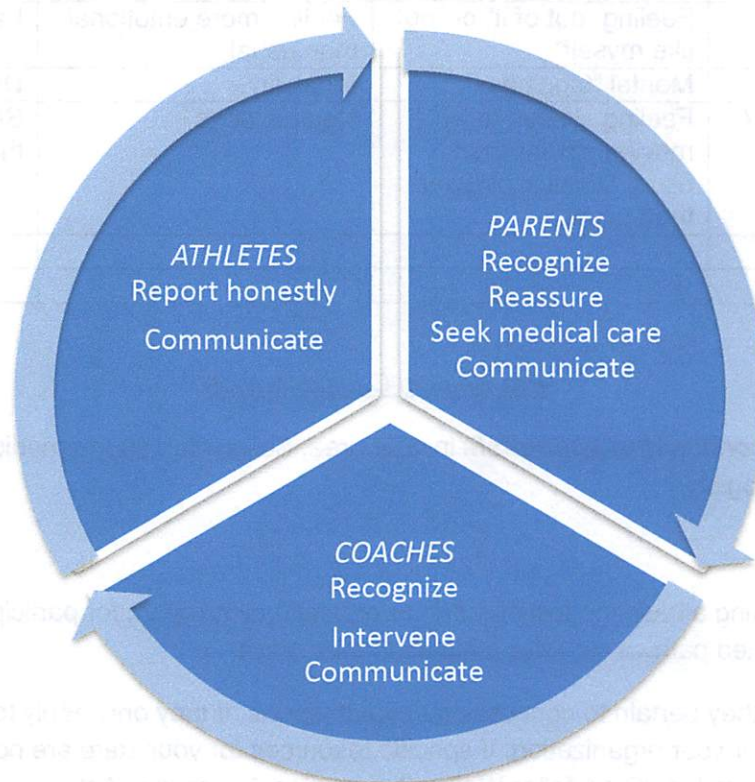
3. Alert the parent that you suspect the child has a concussion.
4. It is ultimately the parent’s responsibility to initiate a referral for medical evaluation by someone with training in concussion management or to have the child see his / her pediatrician.
5. What a parent can do immediately that will NOT hurt the athlete?
 - a. Take away / strictly limit screen time / phone usage (initiate cognitive rest).
 - b. Keep athlete out of school until evaluation / ideally within 24-48 hours following injury.
 - c. Allow the athlete to sleep. It is ok to check pulse and breathing for reassurance.

RED FLAGS for emergency referral (ie When to activate EMS or go directly to the Emergency Room):

Loss of consciousness
Significant drowsiness, unable to wake up
Progressively worsening headache
Weakness, numbness, lack of coordination
Pupils non-reactive or one pupil larger than the other
Repeated vomiting

Slurred speech
Inability to recognize people / places
Seizure
Increasing confusion, restlessness, or agitation
Unusual behavior

Whose responsibility is it anyway?



Resources Parents & Coaches for Concussion Recognition:

CDC Head's Up (app as well as audience-specific, customizable handouts at [CDC.gov/headsup](https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/))

PARCRR (\$4.99)

Sideline ImPACT (\$3.99 for the app)