

Return to School Plan: Information for Parents/Guardians

This sample tool is intended to provide information for parents/guardians to assist with their understanding of the Return to School Plan and their role in supporting their child/ward in their successful progression.

The **Return to School plan** is intended to support a student's individual and gradual Return to Learn (RTL) and Return to Physical Activity (RTPA). It does not replace medical advice.

1. How do I monitor/track my child's/ward's progress through the Return to School plan?

Use the approved school board form or the [Sample Return to School Plan – Stages 1 to 3 Form](#) and the [Sample Return to School Plan – Stages 4 to 6 Form](#) to monitor/track progress. This tool provides information about:

- the activities permitted at each **RTL** and **RTPA stage**,
- when your child/ward can progress to the next stage, and
- when medical clearance is required

2. How long should my child/ward spend at each stage?

Progression through each stage is individual. Although each stage must take a minimum of 24 –hours, the length of time needed to complete each stage will vary based on the severity of the concussion and the individual student's progress.

- **Stage 1- Activities of Daily Living and Relative Rest** is the same for **RTL** and **RTPA**. These should start at the same time and should not take more than one to two days to complete.
- It is common and ok for the progression through the rest of the RTL and RTPA stages to occur at different rates.

3. What do I do if my child's/ward's symptoms return or worsen?

During stages 1– 3 (prior to medical clearance):

- it is common and ok for a student's symptoms to **return or worsen mildly and briefly**, as long as the symptoms do not last for more than an hour and the student can tolerate them.
- If the symptoms last longer than an hour and/or the student cannot tolerate the symptoms, then:
 - For **RTL**: the student should take a break, and the activities should be adapted.
 - For **RTPA**: the student should stop the activity and try again the next day at the same Stage.

During Stages 4– 6 (after medical clearance): Concussion-related symptoms should not return. If they do, the student should return to **RTPA - Stage 3** (i.e., avoid any activity that puts the student at risk of falling or experiencing another impact to the head, neck, or body) and be reassessed by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner.

4. When can my child/ward return to school?

After **Stage 1** a student should **Return to School** as soon as they can tolerate the school environment, even if they are not symptom-free. (This can be as early as **Stage 2** and should not be later than **Stage 3**.)

5. What do I do when my child/ward is ready to return to school?

When your child/ward is ready to return to school, communicate this to the school principal/designate. This can be done through a school-approved form or using the [Sample Return to School Plan – Stages 1 to 3 Form](#). The Principal/Designate will organize a meeting that is intended to support a student's successful transition back to school. This meeting often includes, members of the school staff, parents/guardians, student (as appropriate), and other members as needed.

Note: Medical clearance is not required for your child/ward to return to school.

6. Once my child/ward returns to school how will I know when they are ready to progress to the next Return to Learn and Return to Physical Activity Stage?

During each stage, the parents/guardians and school (teacher/designated staff lead) will monitor student progress. When your child/ward is ready to progress to the next stage you and/or the school (teacher/designated staff lead) will communicate this (using approved school board form or the [Sample Return to School Plan – Stages 1 to 3 Form](#) and the [Sample Return to School Plan – Stages 4 to 6 Form](#))

7. When does my child/ward require medical clearance?

Your child/ward continues to progress at **Stage 3** until they:

- are symptom-free from concussion-related symptoms at rest and at full physical exertion, and
- have completed all the **RTL Stages**

To progress to **RTPA – Stage 4** written medical clearance by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner is required (e.g., school board approved form or the [Sample Medical Concussion Clearance Form](#)).

8. What do I do if my child/ward experiences concussion symptoms after medical clearance?

If your child/ward experiences concussion symptoms after medical clearance, you should:

- **for RTL:** if your child/ward received medical clearance, you should have them re-assessed.
- **for RTPA:** your child/ward should return to **RTPA - Stage 3** for symptoms to resolve. Your child/ward will need to be re-assessed for medical clearance by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner again before moving to **RTPA - Stage 4**.

9. When does my child/ward finish their Return to Learn and Return to Physical Activity Plans?

Your child/ward will complete their **RTL** and **RTPA Plans** after successful completion of:

- **RTL – Stage 4:** if they are not participating in any physical activity at school. Note: in this case they are not required to complete any RTPA Stages.
- **RTL – Stage 4 and RTPA – Stage 5:** if they are participating in curricular and intramural physical activities.
- **RTL – Stage 4 and RTPA – Stage 6:** if they are participating in interschool athletics