

# Concussion Prevention Strategies – Teachers, Coaches, and Supervisors

**Prior to the beginning of the school year/semester; interschool sport season; and/or intramural activity, teachers, coaches and intramural supervisors should:**

- be knowledgeable of school board’s concussion policy and procedures for prevention, identification, and Return to School Plan (Return to Learning and Return to Physical Activity);
- be knowledgeable about safe practices in the activity/sport (for example, the rules and regulations and the specific activity/sport pages in the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education);
- be familiar with the risks of a concussion or other potential injuries associated with the activity/sport and how to minimize those risks;
- be up to date and enforce school board/athletic association/referee rule changes associated with minimizing the risks of concussion;
- be up to date with current body contact skills and techniques (for example, safe tackling in tackle football), when coaching/supervising contact activities/sports;
- be knowledgeable (when applicable) with the requirements for wearing helmets. (To date there is no evidence that helmets protect against concussions.) For more information on helmets consult Helmet Information;
- determine that protective equipment is approved by a recognized equipment standards association (for example, Canadian Safety Standards, National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment), is well maintained, and is visually inspected prior to activity; and
- determine (where applicable) that protective equipment is inspected within approved timelines, by a certified re-conditioner as required by manufacturer (for example, football helmet).

**During the physical activity unit; interschool sport season; and intramural activity teachers, coaches, and supervisors should:**

- teach skills and techniques in the proper progression;
- provide activity/sport-specific concussion information when possible;
- teach and enforce the rules and regulations of the activity/sport during practices and games/competition (particularly those that limit or eliminate body contact, or equipment on body contact);
- reinforce the principles of head-injury prevention (for example, keeping the head up and avoiding collision);
- teach students/athletes involved in body contact activities/sports about:
  - activity/sport-specific rules and regulations of body contact (for example, no hits to the head); and
  - body contact skills and techniques and require the successful demonstration of these skills in practice prior to competition.
- discourage others from pressuring injured students/athletes to play/participate;
- demonstrate the ethical values of fair play and respect for opponents;
- encourage students/athletes to follow the rules of play, and to practice fair play;
- use game/match officials in higher-risk interschool sports that are knowledgeable, certified and/or experienced in officiating the sport; and
- inform students about the importance using protective equipment (for example, helmets, padding, guards) that is properly fitted (as per manufacturer's guidelines) and properly worn.

**Prior to the interschool sports season, coaches must also (as required by Policy/Program Memorandum No. 158: School Board Policies on Concussion):**

- be knowledgeable of the [Ontario Government's Concussion Awareness Resources E-Booklet](#) and/or school board approved concussion resources;
- follow school procedures to confirm their annual review of the resources;

- provide [concussion awareness resources](#) to parents/guardians of students under 18 years of age;
- provide concussion awareness resources to team trainers (where applicable) and officials;
- provide age appropriate concussion awareness resources for students;
- follow school procedures to confirm the review of these resources with all of the above individuals;
- be knowledgeable of the Interschool Concussion Code of Conduct for Coaches and follow school board procedures to confirm its review every school year;
- provide students with the Interschool Concussion Code of Conduct for Students and follow school board procedures to confirm its review prior to participation in sport;
- follow school board procedures in providing parent/guardians of students under 18 years of age with the Interschool Concussion Code of Conduct for Parent/Guardians and confirmation of its review; and
- follow school board procedures in providing team trainers (if applicable) the Concussion Code of Conduct for Interschool Sports for Coaches/Team Trainers and confirmation of its review.

**Prior to the interschool sports season parent/guardians of students under 18 years of age must (as required by Policy/Program Memorandum No. 158: School Board Policies on Concussion):**

- be knowledgeable of the contents of the appropriate [concussion awareness resource](#) provided by the school and to follow instructions to confirm review; and
- read the contents of the Parent/Guardian Concussion Code of Conduct provided by the school and to follow instructions to confirm review.