

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.