

# Concussion Return to School Plan Responsibilities - The Collaborative Team Approach

The school collaborative team provides an important role in a student's recovery. In consultation with the parents/guardians, the team identifies the student's needs and provides **learning strategies and approaches for cognitive and emotional/behavioural difficulties** for the prescribed stages, 3a to 4b, in the **Concussion Return to School Plan for Return to Learning (RTL)** and stages 3 to 6 in the **Concussion Return to School Plan for Return to Physical Activity (RTPA)**. Led by the school principal/designate, the team should include:

- the concussed student;
- the student's parents/guardians;
- teachers and volunteers who work with the student; and
- the medical doctor or nurse practitioner and/or appropriate licensed healthcare provider.

The management of a student concussion is a shared responsibility, requiring regular communication between the home, school (Collaborative Team), and sport organizations with which the student is involved and registered, with consultation from the student's medical doctor or nurse practitioner and/or other licensed healthcare providers (for example, nurses, physiotherapists, chiropractors, and athletic therapists).

## Designated School Staff Lead of the Collaborative Team

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One school staff lead (that is, a member of the collaborative team, either the school principal/designate, or another staff person designated by the school principal) needs to serve as the main point of contact for the student, the parents/guardians, other school staff, and volunteers who work with the student.

The designated school staff lead will monitor the student's progress through the Return to Learning (RTL) and Return to Physical Activity (RTPA) plans. Ongoing communication between parent/guardian and the

collaborative team is essential throughout the process.

The members of the collaborative team must factor in special circumstances which may affect the setting in which the stages may occur (that is, at home and/or school), for example:

- the student has a diagnosed concussion just prior to winter break, spring break or summer vacation; in this circumstance, the collaborative team must ensure that the student has:
  - completed RTL Stage 1 – 4b (full day at school without adaptation of learning strategies and/or approaches);
  - completed RTPA Stage 1 – 4 and is symptom free; and
  - obtained a signed medical concussion clearance form from a medical doctor or nurse practitioner that indicates the student is able to return to full participation in Physical Education, intramural activities, Interschool sports (non-contact) and full contact training/practice in contact interschool sports.
- the student is neither enrolled in Health and Physical Education class, nor participating on a school team, the collaborative team must ensure that the student has:
  - completed RTL Stage 1 – 4b (full day at school without adaptation of learning strategies and/or approaches);
  - obtained a signed Medical Concussion Clearance Form from a medical doctor or nurse practitioner that indicates the student is able to return to full participation in Physical Education, intramural activities, interschool sports (non-contact) and full contact training/practice in contact interschool sports.

The **medical concussion clearance** form must be provided by the student's parent/guardian to the school principal/designate and kept on file (as per school board policy).

## Return to School Strategies and/or Approaches

Consult **Sample Return to School Strategies and/or Approaches for Cognitive and Emotional/Behavioural Difficulties**.

It is important for the designated school staff lead, in consultation with other members of the collaborative team, to identify the student's symptoms and the ways they respond to various learning activities in order to develop appropriate strategies and/or approaches that meet the changing needs of the student. School staff and volunteers who work with the student need to be aware of the possible difficulties (that is, cognitive, emotional/behavioural) a student may encounter when returning to learning activities following a concussion. These difficulties may be subtle and temporary but may significantly impact a student's performance.