

HEALTH POLICY
RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Concussion

Guiding Principle and Purpose

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that can have a serious effect on a young, developing brain. While most children and teens with a concussion recover quickly and fully, some will have concussion symptoms that last for days, weeks, or even months. Not giving the brain enough time to heal after a concussion can be dangerous. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain heals from the first, usually within a short amount of time (hours, days, weeks), can slow recovery or increase the chances for long-term health problems. These may include changes in how the child or teen thinks, feels, and acts, as well as their ability to learn and remember. While rare, a repeat concussion can result in brain swelling or permanent brain damage. It can even be fatal.

Policy

This policy applies to any suspected or confirmed head injury during all school activities including sporting events on or off the school grounds. The Athletic Director, gym teachers, and all coaches and assistant coaches complete an annual concussion training before the sport season begins. Concussion training is done online through the CDC HEADS UP program.

Educate Coaches, Parents, and Athletes: Inform and educate coaches, athletes, and their parents and guardians about concussion through training and/or a concussion information sheet. All parents and student athletes are instructed about concussions and are required to sign a form produced through the HEADS UP program that they have read and understand the meaning of a concussion, the removal from play if a concussion is suspected, and medical follow up and clearance is mandatory before they will be allowed to return to play.

Remove Athlete from Play: An athlete who is believed to have a concussion is to be removed from play immediately.

Obtain Permission to Return to Play: An athlete can only return to play or practice after at least 24 hours **and** with permission from a health care professional. These action steps are based on recommendations presented in the International Concussion Consensus Statement. First created in 2002 and most recently updated in 2008, the Consensus Statement was developed by experts in the field and includes the latest science available on concussion in sports.

Ensure Safer Play by:

- Limiting contact during sports practices (when appropriate for the sport).
- Putting in place rule changes and/or banning or limiting the use of certain drills or techniques to help reduce the chances of injury.
- Checking sports equipment often. This includes making sure the equipment fits the athletes well, is in good condition, stored properly, and is repaired and replaced based on instructions from the equipment

companies.

Manage Return to School by:

Providing information on returning to school when a student has potentially experienced a concussion or was out of school due to a confirmed concussion is necessary for safe re-entry into the classroom. *This includes:*

Coaches will inform the school nurse of any potential concussions. The school nurse will inform the student athlete's educational team to look for any changes in behavior or increased problems with school work. The nurse will meet with the student athlete to remind them to come to the health office if they are experiencing any signs or symptoms of a concussion and to determine any special support or help students may need during the school day to help with their recovery.

References:

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Additional Resources:

For more information and resources on concussion and CDC's Heads Up program, visit www.cdc.gov/Concussion or contact CDC at cdcinfo@cdc.gov or 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4643) TTY 1-888-232-6348.