



## DISTRICT PRACTICE 10750

### CONCUSSION AWARENESS AND MANAGEMENT

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#### **DISTRICT PRACTICE:**

This practice is implemented at all schools in connection with School District [policy 5100, student safety](#). The purpose of the practice is to provide staff with clear information and direction when a student suffers a significant impact to the body or head while at school or while participating in a school-sanctioned activity. It is also intended to provide clear information to staff about how to manage a student's return to school after a concussion is diagnosed, consistent with the plan outlined by the student's medical health professional.

#### **1. RECOGNIZE**

A concussion occurs when there is a significant impact to the head or body that causes the brain to move inside the skull. Common causes of concussion include falls, sport, and recreational-related activities, and motor vehicle crashes. Refer to the concussion recognition tool ([Concussion Awareness Training Tool CATT](#)).

The signs and symptoms of concussion in individuals include, but are not limited to:

- headache; dizziness; nausea; blurred vision; light/sound sensitivity; imbalance; ringing in the ears; seeing "stars"; irritability; fogginess; fatigue; difficulty concentrating; poor memory; neck pain; sadness; confusion.

#### **2. RESPOND**

Following a potential concussion-causing event, the individual should be removed from activity immediately and assessed for Red Flags. If any of the Red Flags are present, call an ambulance or seek immediate medical care. **Either way, contact the Parent/Guardian or emergency contact person as soon as practicable.**

**Red Flags:** neck pain or tenderness; double vision; weakness or tingling/ burning in arms or legs; severe or increasing headache; seizure or convulsion; loss of consciousness; deteriorating conscious state; vomiting; increasingly restless, agitated, or combative.

**If no Red Flags are present:** do not leave the individual alone; continue to monitor for Red Flags and signs and symptoms of concussion; do not let the individual return to their activity; do not give the individual any immediate medication; do not let the individual leave by themselves; do not let the individual drive or ride a bike.

**Note: The Concussion Guide for Parents and Caregivers** will provide parents with additional information.

#### REFERENCES

[CONCUSSION RECOGNITION TOOL](#)  
[CONCUSSION GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS](#)

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#### 3. MANAGE

Once diagnosed, a concussion can have a significant impact on physical, cognitive, and emotional functioning. The recovery process involves balancing activities such that they do not trigger or worsen symptoms. The recovery process is best done in collaboration with key individuals, such as medical professionals, family members, friends, employers, teachers and school staff, and coaches.

The first and most important step in recovery from a concussion is to rest for 48 hours. The individual will need both physical and cognitive rest in order to allow the brain to heal.

- Physical rest includes participation in activities that do not result in an increased heart rate or breaking a sweat. Restrict: exercise, sports, running, biking, rough play, etc.
- Cognitive activity should be limited, minimizing activities that require concentration and learning. Restrict: reading, electronics (computers, smartphones, video games, TV), work/schoolwork, playing musical instruments, listening to loud music, etc.
- Once symptoms start to improve, or after 48 hours of rest, the individual should begin a step-wise process to return to regular activity, including school, work, sports, etc.
- Symptoms should decrease over the course of time. If you are worried that the individual is not improving, follow-up with a licensed medical professional, such as a physician or nurse practitioner.
- **On average, an adult takes 7 to 10 days to recover from concussion, while children and youth typically take 2 to 4 weeks.** While most concussions resolve within 3 months, persistent symptoms have the potential to cause long-term difficulties. Individuals dealing with symptoms lasting longer than 2 weeks in adults and longer than 4 weeks in children and youth may require additional medical assessment and multidisciplinary management.
- The recovery period may be influenced by: prior concussions; history of headaches or migraines; learning disabilities; mental health issues; ADHD; use of drugs or alcohol; returning to activities too soon; lack of family or social supports.
- Proper management of a concussion can reduce the risk of complications. It is important that the individual has successfully returned to school or work before fully returning to sport and physical recreation activities. Returning to activity too early may result in more severe symptoms and potentially long-term problems.

[Concussion Awareness Training Tool CATT online](#) has additional information and training materials.

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