

# Educator's Role In Concussion Management

*Good Help to Those in Need<sup>®</sup>*



*Good Help to Those in Need®*



Why are we here?

# What have we learned?



*Good Help to Those in Need®*

# How Can I Recognize a Possible Concussion?

## Signs Observed by Coaching and Training Staff

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (*even briefly*)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
- Can't recall events *prior* to hit or fall
- Can't recall events *after* hit or fall

## Symptoms Reported by Athlete

- Headache or “pressure” in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not “feel right” or is “feeling down”

# What to Look for After a Concussion

## When students return to school

- Increased problems paying attention or concentrating
- Increased problems remembering or learning new information
- Longer time needed to complete tasks or assignments
- Difficulty organizing tasks or shifting between tasks
- Inappropriate or impulsive behavior during class
- Greater irritability
- Less ability to cope with stress
- More emotional than usual
- Fatigue
- Difficulties handling a stimulating school environment (lights, noise, etc.)
- Physical symptoms (headache, nausea, dizziness)

# Who should be included as part of the team supporting the student?

- Student
- Parents/caregiver
- Physician
- PT or SP Therapist
- ATC
- Teachers
- Principal

# What roles do cognitive exertion and rest play in a student's recovery?

Resting after a concussion is critical because it helps the brain recover. Mental and cognitive exertion requires the brain's energy, and when the brain's energy is depleted due to injury, symptoms such as headaches and problems concentrating can worsen.



# Some Strategies for Addressing Concussion Symptoms at School

## COGNITIVE

1. Concentrate first on general cognitive skills, such as flexible thinking and organization, rather than academic content.
2. Focus on what the student does well and expand the curriculum to more challenging content as concussion symptoms subside.
3. Adjust the student's schedule as needed to avoid fatigue: shorten day, time most challenging classes with time when student is most alert, allow for rest breaks, reduced course load.
4. Adjust the learning environment to reduce identified distractions or protect the student from irritations such as too-bright light or loud noises.
5. Use self-paced, computer-assisted, or audio learning systems for the student having reading comprehension problems.
6. Allow extra time for test/in-class assignment completion.
7. Help the student create a list of tasks and/or daily organizer.
8. Assign a peer to take notes for the student.
9. Allow the student to record classes.
10. Increase repetition in assignments to reinforce learning.
11. Break assignments down into smaller chunks and offer recognition cues.
12. Provide alternate methods for the student to demonstrate mastery, such as multiple-

# Some Strategies for Addressing Concussion Symptoms at School

## BEHAVIORAL/SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL

1. If the student is frustrated with failure in one area, redirect him/her to other elements of the curriculum associated with success.
2. Provide reinforcement for positive behavior as well as for academic achievements.
3. Acknowledge and empathize with the student's sense of frustration, anger or emotional outburst: "I know it must be hard dealing with some things right now."
4. Provide structure and consistency; make sure all teachers are using the same strategies.
5. Remove a student from a problem situation, but avoid characterizing it as a punishment and keep it as brief as possible.
6. Establish a cooperative relationship with the student, engaging him/her in any decisions regarding schedule changes or task priority setting.
7. Involve the family in any behavior management plan.
8. Set reasonable expectations.
9. Arrange preferential seating, such as moving the student away from the window (e.g. bright light), away from talkative peers, or closer to the teacher.

# CDC

- To learn more about concussion and to order materials FREE-OF-CHARGE, go to [www.cdc.gov/Concussion](http://www.cdc.gov/Concussion) or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.