

CONCUSSION GUIDELINES

Background

Peace River School Division recognizes concussions as a serious injury which requires appropriate follow-up measures to reduce risk of potential additional injury.

It is recognized that children and adolescents are among those at greatest risk for concussions and the potential risk for a concussion is greatest during activities where collisions can occur, such as during physical education classes, playground time or school based sports activities. Research has indicated that a concussion can have a significant impact on a student's cognitive, physical, emotional and social abilities.

Increasing awareness of conditions to prevent and identify symptoms related to concussions will support the proper management of concussions, reducing increased risk. Concussion awareness, prevention, identification and management are a priority of the Division and recognize that health and safety of students are essential preconditions for effective learning.

Concussion prevention and management requires the cooperation of all partners in the school community. To ensure safety of students while they enjoy the many benefits of being active, parents/guardians, students, volunteers, staff and schools must all understand and fulfill their responsibilities.

Implementation of the Concussion Administrative Procedure and Business Process Guidelines is an important step in creating healthier schools. Critical to a student's recovery is a "Return to Learn / Return to Physical Activity" plan developed through a collaborative team approach led by the school administrator.

Definitions

Concussion

- *Is a brain injury that causes changes in the way in which the brain functions and that can lead to symptoms that can be physical (e.g. headache, dizziness), cognitive (e.g. difficulty in concentrating or remembering), emotional/behavioural (e.g. depression, irritability), and/or related to sleep (e.g. drowsiness, difficulty falling asleep);*
- *May be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face, or neck or by a blow to the body that transmits a force to the head that causes the brain to move rapidly within the skull;*
- *Can occur even if there is no loss of consciousness (in fact most concussions occur without a loss of consciousness);*
- *Cannot normally be seen by means of medical imaging tests, such as X-rays, standard computed tomography (CT) scans, or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans*

Objective

To develop awareness and training to support a student's safe return to the classroom and physical activity.

Procedures

Implement strategies for preventing and minimizing the risk of sustaining concussion (and other head injuries) in schools and at off-site school events which will include:

1. Training (regular and ongoing) for concussion awareness, prevention, identification and management for school staff and volunteers.
<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/injprev/> <http://www.parachutecanada.org/injury-topics/item/canadian-guideline-on-concussion-in-sport>
 - Concussion Guidelines for "The Athlete"
 - Concussion Guidelines for "Coaches & Trainers"
 - Concussion Guidelines for "Parents & Caregivers"
 - Concussion Guidelines for "Teachers"
 - Pocket Concussion Recognition Tool Pamphlet
 - A parent's guide to dealing with concussions
2. Notification of parents – Activity Letter with medical information form (Form 311-1)
3. Steps to take following initial assessment
4. Development of an individualized and gradual "return to learning and/or return to physical activity"
5. Strategy for sharing information on concussion, concussion prevention, identification and management.

Adopted/Revised: JUN 2016, SEPT 2017

Reference: Alberta Health Services <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/injprev/>
Parachute Organization <http://www.parachutecanada.org/smartrisk>
Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines