

Guidelines & Procedures – HB 284 – Return to Play Act Concussion and Head Injury

Concussion Information and Education

With the passage of **HB 284 - Return to Play Act** by the Georgia Legislature in 2013, new requirements to educate coaches, youth athletes and their parents on the dangers of concussions in competitive youth athletic activities will become effective for all competitive sports in January 2014. The Georgia Department of Public Health is referring everyone to the "**Heads Up - Concussion in Youth Sports**" program offered by the Center of Disease Control (CDC). Gwinnett County Parks & Recreation (GCPR) will use the before mentioned education program for all competitive sports provided by GCPR, and will recommend the same education program to all youth sports partners (Gwinnett County Athletic Associations (GCAA) and Gwinnett County Summer Swim Leagues (GCSSL)) that utilize GCPR facilities.

A link to the program on the CDC website can be found here: [CDC - Concussion Program](#)

Definition

A concussion is a type of brain injury that is caused by a blow to the head or body that jars or shakes the brain inside the skull. It is important to note that an athlete does not have to lose consciousness to have suffered a concussion.

Symptoms Reported by Athlete

- Headache
- Nausea
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or fuzzy vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish
- Feeling foggy or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion

Signs Observed by Others

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment
- Forgets plays
- Is unsure of game, score or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Cannot recall events prior to hit
- Cannot recall events after hit

Purpose

The following guidelines and procedures are being implemented by GCPR with the intent to reduce the potentially serious health risks associated with competitive sports related concussions and head injuries.

Guidelines

GCPR will educate coaches, referees, site supervisors, parents and participants of the signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with sports induced concussions.

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Procedure

I. Distribution

- A. Parents, Coaches, assistant coaches and site supervisors associated with competitive sport activities should become familiar with and have access to a copy of GCPR's Concussion and Head Injury Guidelines.
- B. Parents, Coaches and assistant coaches are strongly encouraged to view the "Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports" online course from the Center for Disease Control (CDC). This online course can be found at the link listed below.
http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html
- C. Staff and Site Supervisors will take the "Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports" online course.
- D. GCPR will provide concussion educational information to all coaches and officials. (See Attached)
- E. GCPR will provide concussion educational information to all youth athletes and their parent/legal guardian. The parent/legal guardian must sign an acknowledgement of receipt. (See Attached)
- F. GCPR will provide concussion educational information to all GCAA and GCSSL who utilize GCPR facilities in the 2014 GCAA and GCSSL Policies & Procedures Manual. It is recommended to all GCAA and GCSSL that they provide educational information per **HB 48** to all coaches, participants and their parents.

2. Suspected Concussion Procedures for GCPR provided programs

- A. Any participant exhibiting the signs, symptoms or behaviors associated with a concussion or head injury: (1) must be immediately removed from the activity. **Remember: When In Doubt Sit Them Out!!**
- B. The injured participant's parent or guardian should be immediately notified of the suspected concussion or head injury so they can be taken and evaluated by an appropriate healthcare professional.
- C. An Accident or Injury Report Form must be submitted to GCPR within 24 hours or on the next business day following the incident.