

Concussion and Head Injury in Youth Sports

Concussions are one of the most commonly reported injuries in children and adolescents who participate in sports and recreational activities, estimated by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to reach nearly four million sports and recreation-related each year.

Concussion occurs from a blow to or a slamming motion of the head or body which cause the brain to move rapidly inside the skull. Concussions are sometimes called mild traumatic brain injuries (MTBI) and can range from mild to severe while disrupting normal brain function. They can occur in any organized or unorganized sport or recreational activity and can result from a fall or from players colliding with one another or slamming into obstacles or onto the ground. Concussions may occur with or without loss of consciousness, but most usually occur without loss of consciousness. The risk of catastrophic injuries or death is significant when a concussion or head injury is not properly evaluated and managed.

To ensure that affected youth athletes are not returned to play prematurely, resulting in actual or potential physical injury or death, the superintendent establishes the following:

1. YSD athletics conforms to Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) standards and guidelines, informing and educating coaches, youth athletes, and their parent(s)/guardian(s), as well as physical education and recreational staff, of the nature and risk of concussion and head injury, which includes continuing play after a concussion or head injury. The district is appropriately insured for accident and injury.
2. A concussion and head injury information sheet shall be signed and returned to the district by the youth athlete and the athlete's parent(s)/guardian(s) prior to the youth athlete's engaging in practice or competition.
3. A youth athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or game shall be removed from competition at that time.
4. A youth athlete who has been removed from play may not return to play until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussion, receiving written clearance to return to play from that health care provider. Licensure includes medical doctor (MD), doctor of osteopathy (DO), advance registered nurse practitioner (ARNP), physician assistant (PA), and licensed certified athletic trainer (ATC).
5. Schools shall require all non-profit youth sports groups utilizing school facilities to provide a statement of compliance with the policies for the management of concussion and head injury. This statement of compliance shall be returned to the school district prior to the group's first practice/competition; see operational procedure 4330.

The district shall not be liable for injury or death of a person due to action or inaction of persons employed or contracted with the district if the program takes place on school property during the delivery of services of the youth program and the district carries appropriate accident and liability policy. The district remains responsible for a contractor or employee of the district

acting in his or her capacity as a contractor or employee and also remains responsible for the safety of equipment, facilities, and structures used by its programs.

Legal References:

RCW 38A.600

RCW 4.24.660

1999 c 316 s 3

Related Documents - Zachery Lystedt Law – HB1824 –Management of Concussion and Head Injury in Youth Sports

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA)

Date Adopted:

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