

CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

On August 3, 2015, former Governor Rauner signed into law SB O7 (Public Act 99-245). The legislation focuses primarily on concussion management at the middle school/junior high school and high school levels. The legislation amends the School Code and is a requirement for all schools.

Highlights of the Youth Sports Safety Act:

Each school in the state of Illinois shall adopt a policy regarding student athlete concussions and head injuries that is in compliance with the protocols policies, and by laws developed by the Illinois High School Association. Please see the Play Hard, Play Smart link on the IHSA Website. (www.ihsa.org)

Information on the school board's concussion and head injury policy must be a part of any agreement, contract, code, or other written instrument that a school district requires a student-athlete and his/her parents or guardian to sign before participating in practice or interscholastic competition. The SIJHSAA has provided a Concussion Information Sheet and Sign-Off Form that schools may use to notify athletes and their parents/guardian about the dangers of concussions and head injuries. Each school may produce its own form if it wishes or modify the provided generic version for their school.

Each school district shall use education materials provided by the Illinois High School Association to educate coaches, student-athletes, and parents/guardians of student-athletes about the nature and risk of concussions and head injuries, including continuing play after a concussion or head injury.

The formation of Concussion Oversight Teams (COT) at all public, private, or charter schools. The COT's primary function will be to develop return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols for students believed to have experienced a concussion. The protocols should be based on peer-reviewed scientific evidence consistent with guidelines from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. These teams can contain a range of individuals based on the resources available to the school in their community or neighborhood but must include one person who is responsible for implementing and complying with the return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols.

No later than September 1, all interscholastic coaches and licensed officials will need to complete a training program of at least two hours on concussions. Coaches, nurses, and game officials must provide the school or district with proof of successful completion of the training. Training must be completed at least every two years. Head coaches and assistant coaches must complete the required training. Once available, SIJHSAA member schools will receive concussion education materials from the SIJHSAA office that have been provided by the IHSA.

Public, Private and Charter schools must also develop a school-specific emergency action plan for interscholastic athletic activities to address the serious injuries and acute medical conditions in which the condition of the student may deteriorate rapidly. There are certain provisions the plan must include and they must be reviewed by the COT before being approved by the school. The plan must be distributed to appropriate personnel, posted at the school, and reviewed annually. Links to sample information may be found on the IHSA Website. (www.ihsa.org)

Student and parent signatures on concussion information forms are good for the length of the school year in which they were signed. This document is good for all sports that they participate in that school year.

CONCUSSION INFORMATION SHEET

Adapted from the CDC and the 3rd International Conference on Concussion in Sport Document created 7/1/2011.

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, **all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly.** In other words, even a “ding” or a bump on the head can be serious. You can’t see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

Symptoms may include one or more of the following:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Headaches | <input type="checkbox"/> Amnesia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> “Pressure in head” | <input type="checkbox"/> “Don’t feel right” |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nausea or vomiting | <input type="checkbox"/> Fatigue or low energy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neck pain | <input type="checkbox"/> Sadness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Balance problems or dizziness | <input type="checkbox"/> Nervousness or anxiety |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision | <input type="checkbox"/> Irritability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sensitivity to light or noise | <input type="checkbox"/> More emotional |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling sluggish or slowed down | <input type="checkbox"/> Confusion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling foggy or groggy | <input type="checkbox"/> Concentration or memory problems (forgetting game plays) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drowsiness | <input type="checkbox"/> Repeating the same question/comment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Change in sleep patterns | |

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What can happen if my child keeps on playing with a concussion or returns too soon?

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athletes will often fail to report symptoms of injuries. Concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents, and students is the key to student-athlete's safety.

If you think your child has suffered a concussion

Any athlete even suspected of suffering a concussion should be removed from the game or practice immediately. No athlete may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without medical clearance. Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours.

IHSA Policy requires athletes to provide their school with written clearance from either a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches or a certified athletic trainer who is working in conjunction with a physician, licensed to practice medicine in all its branches. This written clearance must be received prior to returning to play or practice following a concussion or after being removed from an interscholastic contest due to a possible head injury or concussion and was not cleared to return to that same contest. In accordance with state law, all I.H.S.A. member schools are required to follow this policy.

You should also inform your child's coach if you think that your child may have a concussion. Remember it's better to miss one game than miss the whole season. And when in doubt, the athlete sits out.

For current and up-to-date information on concussions you can go to:
<http://www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports/>

By signing this form, we acknowledge we have been provided information regarding concussions

Printed Student Athlete Name

Student Athlete Signature and Date

Printed Parent or Legal Guardian Name

Parent or Legal Guardian Signature and Date