

Concussions



Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Act

- ▶ Signed into law 6-16-2011 by Gov. Bev Perdue
- ▶ Requires any athlete with a suspected concussion to be removed from competition and cleared by a medical professional before return to play
- ▶ Mandates schools have an Emergency Action Plan
- ▶ Requires Coaches, school RNs, ADs, 1st Responders, Trainers, and volunteers to:

Participate in an annual concussion safety program

Sign a document re: concussion awareness (**parents must as well!!!**)



What's new?

- ▶ **NC State Board of Education**
“Return-to-Learn after Concussion”
- ▶ ID Number HRS-E-001
- ▶ Approved October 1, 2015
- ▶ Effective 2016-2017 School Year

Return to Learn

a. Each Local Education Agency (LEA) must develop a plan for addressing the needs of students preschool through twelfth grade suffering concussions. The plan must include:

- 1) guidelines for removal of a student from physical and mental activity when there is suspicion of concussion;
- 2) a notification procedure to education staff regarding removal from learn or play;
- 3) expectations regarding annual medical care update from parents, medical care plan/school accommodations in the event of concussion; and
- 4) delineation of requirements for safe return-to-learn or play following concussion.

Return to Learn (cont.)

- (b) In accordance with the LEA, each school must appoint a team of people responsible for identifying the return-to-learn or play needs of a student who has suffered a concussion. This team may include the student, student's parent, the principal, school nurse, school counselor, school psychologist, or other appropriate designated professional.
- (c) Each LEA must provide information and staff development on an annual basis to all teachers and other school personnel in order to support and assist students who have sustained a concussion in accordance with their learning and behavioral needs. This annual training should include information on concussion and other brain injuries, with a particular focus on return-to-learn issues and concerns.

Return to Learn (cont.)

- d) Each LEA will include in its annual student health history and emergency medical information update a question related to any head injury/concussion the student may have incurred during the past year.

Cause of Concussions

- ▶ Concussions are caused by injuries that shake or jar the brain. There are many ways to get a concussion. Some injuries include:
 - ▶ Fights
 - ▶ Falls
 - ▶ Playground injuries
 - ▶ Motor vehicle accidents
 - ▶ Bike accidents
 - ▶ Sports

Concussive signs & symptoms

- Headache
- Dizziness
- Tinnitus
- Gait/balance issues
- Nausea, vomiting
- Confusion
- Amnesia (5 minutes or more)
 - Most important indicator of severity, esp. if present 24 hours later (10x more predictive of outcome than loss of consciousness)
- Loss of consciousness (approx 10%)
 - < 1 min NOT predictive of injury severity
- Convulsions
 - Generally are benign
- Difficulty concentrating
- Irritability
- Blurred vision
- Photophobia
- Depression
- Sleep disturbances
- Fatigue

What does this mean for me?

- ▶ If a student is diagnosed with a concussion, a team will be formed to identify their return to learn needs
- ▶ School staff is not responsible for return to learn/play medical clearance
- ▶ Educational staff will be notified regarding a removal from learn or play
- ▶ If you are informed that a student has a concussion, please notify the school nurse
- ▶ Request for health information forms now include information on Head injury/Concussion (new)

Questions?

