

Township of Schreiber
Policy Statement R-2016-1

CONCUSSION POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Township of Schreiber is committed to the health and well-being of all employees and participants in sport and recreation programming. This policy will provide awareness and training on how to properly assess and manage a concussion incident as well as how to help minimize these incidents from occurring.

All Township of Schreiber employees who are directly involved in sport and recreation programming will be made aware of common symptoms and signs of a concussion to properly manage a potential concussion incident. Our policy will be displayed internally and publically in the areas mentioned within this concussion policy.

PURPOSE:

The Township of Schreiber has developed a concussion policy to provide concussion awareness to all individuals and organizations involved in Township of Schreiber recreation programming and the use of Township of Schreiber recreational facilities throughout the municipality. The Township of Schreiber will inform individual participants and community organizations that a concussion policy has been implemented and that resources will be available for their information.

The Township of Schreiber, all participants, coaches, parks and recreation staff, instructors, safety personnel, fitness trainers, parents, etc. have a role to play to ensure the safety of those participating in physical activity. This includes encouraging and motivating participants to assume responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others. The Township of Schreiber will ensure that concussion resource information is available to all residents and visitors at town facilities.

ACTION STEPS:

ACTION STEP # 1 - EDUCATE STAFF, INSTRUCTORS, SUPERVISORS, COACHES, PARENTS AND ATHLETES

Definition of a Concussion:

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury, or TBI, that is often described as a "mild" brain injury because concussions are not usually life-threatening. Their effects, however, can be serious, especially if the brain is not given adequate time to heal before returning to sports or activities. Preventing concussion, recognizing symptoms, seeking medical evaluation and following concussion guidelines are all vital for full recovery and the prevention of more serious effects.

Concussions are caused by a fall or blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth, causing impact on the brain. Athletes/ participants experiencing any of the signs and symptoms below after a blow to the head or body should be kept out of play the day of the injury and until a health care professional skilled in evaluating concussion says they are symptom-free and able to return to play.

(ThinkFirst – National Injury Prevention Foundation, Concussion Recognition, Management and Prevention, www.thinkfirstfoundation.com).

Observed Signs Include:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score or appointment
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Exhibits mood, behavior or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit or fall

Symptoms Reported by Athlete/ Participant Include:

- Headache or pressure in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Just does not "feel right"

Rest is essential after a concussion to allow the brain adequate time to heal. If a repeat concussion occurs before the brain has recovered, there is an increased risk for a more serious brain injury with long-term effects. Young children and teens are more likely to get a concussion and can take longer to recover than adults (Get a Heads Up on Concussion in Sports Policies, National Centre for Injury Prevention and Control, www.cdc.gov/Concussion).

Recognizing and responding properly to concussions when they first occur can help prevent further injury or even death (Get a Heads Up on Concussion in Sports Policies, National Centre for Injury Prevention and Control, www.cdc.gov/Concussion). It is essential that staff, instructors, supervisors, coaches, parents and athletes are all educated on the importance of following strict concussion guidelines.

ACTION STEP # 2 - REMOVE THE ATHLETE/PARTICIPANT FROM PLAY

All participants should consult a physician when a concussion is suspected. Coaches, municipal staff, trainers and safety personnel, players or participants and parents should not attempt to treat a concussion without a physician's involvement.

In the event of a loss of consciousness:

- If there is a loss of consciousness – Call 911 for ambulance response. Assume possible neck injury – do not move the participant. Continue to monitor ABCs - airway, breathing and circulation.

- Do not leave participant alone.
- Do not move the participant or remove any athletic equipment. Wait for EMS to arrive.
- Follow Standard First Aid practices in response to an unconscious person.
- Contact parent/ guardian of the participant. If not onsite call parent/guardian
- Physician's approval is required for participant to return to physical activity.

If the injured participant is conscious...

- Remove the participant from the current game/practice/programming.
- Do not leave the participant alone; monitor symptoms and signs following Standard First Aid Practices.
- Do not administer medication.
- Inform the Coach/Recreation Staff, parent/guardian about the injury.
- The participant must not return to play in that game/practice/activity.
- The participant must be evaluated by a medical physician as soon as possible.
- Physician's approval is required for participant to return to physical activity.

ACTION STEP # 3 – OBTAIN PERMISSION TO RETURN TO PLAY

(ThinkFirst – National Injury Prevention Foundation, Concussion Recognition, Management and Prevention, www.thinkfirstfoundation.com).

The return to play process is gradual, and begins after a physician has given the participant clearance to return to activity. If any symptoms/signs return during this process, the participant must be re-evaluated by a physician. If any symptoms or signs persist there is no return to play. Remember, symptoms may return later that day or the next, not necessarily when active!

A player who returns to active play before full recovery from the first concussion is at high risk of sustaining another concussion, with symptoms that may be increased and prolonged.

Step 1

No activity, only complete rest. Proceed to step 2 only when all symptoms and are gone. This includes avoiding both mental and physical stress.

Step 2

Light aerobic exercise, such as walking or stationary cycling. Monitor for symptoms and signs. No resistance training or weight lifting.

Step 3

Sport/activity specific activities and training (e.g. skating/running).

Step 4

Drills without body contact. May add light resistance training and progress to heavier weights. The time needed to progress from non-contact to contact exercise will vary with severity of the concussion and the participant. Go to step 5 only after medical clearance has been granted (reassessment and medical note clearing participant for contact play).

Step 5

Begin drills with body contact.

Step 6

Game play.

Participants should proceed through return to play steps only when they do not experience symptoms or signs and a physician has given clearance. Each step should be a minimum of one day. If symptoms or signs return the participant should return to the step 1, and be re-evaluated by a physician.

The earliest a concussed participant should return to play is one week. Symptoms and signs of a concussion often last for 7-10 days but may last much longer. Having had previous concussions may increase the chance that a person may take longer to heal.

RESPONSIBILITY

The following responsibility protocol will be implemented in order to ensure the concussion policy is maintained and updated as required.

- The CAO and entire management team will support the Concussion Policy and its implementation;
- The CED Manager or Recreation Programmer will update this policy should information and knowledge on Concussion Awareness and Management change;
- Recreation Programmer will circulate this policy, changes and updates to all township staff;
- The Recreation programmer will inform sport organizations that utilize municipal facilities;
- Employees shall recognize and be accountable for their responsibilities in the exercise of their duties;
- In the event that an employee(s) becomes aware of a suspected concussion, an incident report will be completed by the employee(s) and submitted to their supervisor.

COMMUNICATION

The Township of Schreiber will communicate this policy in the following ways:

- Distribution to all sport and recreation community groups who facilitate programming in Township of Schreiber facilities;
- Display in all Township facilities;
- Display on Township website.