



## YOUTH SPORTS CONCUSSION POLICY

### I. DEFINITIONS

- A **concussion** is a brain injury that is characterized by an onset of impairment of cognitive and/or physical functioning, and is caused by a blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that causes a sudden jarring of the head. A concussion typically results in the rapid onset of short-lived impairment of neurologic function that resolves spontaneously. A concussion may result in neuropathological changes, but the acute clinical symptoms largely reflect a functional disturbance rather than structural injury. A concussion can occur with or without a loss of consciousness, and proper management is essential to the immediate safety and long-term future of the injured individual.
- An **appropriate licensed health care provider** means a licensed physician or another licensed individual under the supervision of a licensed physician, such as a nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or certified athletic trainer who has received training in concussion evaluation and management.
- **Return to play** means to participate in a non-medically supervised practice or athletic competition.
- **Youth athlete** means a participant in a youth athletic activity who is seven years or older and under 19 years of age
- **Cleared to participate** means that the youth athlete has been symptom free for 48 hours, or more, and has been released to return to play by an appropriate licensed healthcare provider as defined above. Such release to return to play MUST be in writing.

## **II. SIGNS / SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION**

The common **signs / symptoms of a concussion** include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Appears dazed or stunned;
- Headache or pressure in head;
- Nausea or vomiting;
- Double or blurry vision;
- Sensitivity to light;
- Sensitivity to noise;
- Forgets an instruction;
- Loss of consciousness;
- Loss of memory;
- Confusion about an assignment / position;
- Is unsure of games, score or opponent;
- Balance problems or dizziness;
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy;
- Concentration or memory problems;
- Answers questions slowly;
- Moves clumsily;
- Mood, behavior, personality changes; and
- Inability to recall events before/after injury.

## **III. MANDATED COURSE OF ACTION**

The following mandated course of action shall apply to all sports competitions and sports related activities occurring at the City of Milton Parks and Recreation facilities:

1. If a youth athlete experiences or exhibits any of the above **signs / symptoms of a concussion** following an injury, contact event, or blow to the head, face, neck or a blow to the body that causes a sudden jarring of the head, he or she shall be immediately removed from the athletic event, game, practice or contest and shall not return to play until he or she is cleared to participate by an appropriate licensed health care professional. **(WHEN IN DOUBT, KEEP THEM OUT!)**
2. The youth athlete's parent or guardian shall be notified that:
  - (a) He or she experienced an injury, contact event, or blow to the head, face, neck or a blow to the body that causes a sudden jarring of the head, and/or that he or she exhibited one or more **signs / symptoms of a concussion**;
  - (b) That he or she was immediately removed from the athletic event, game, practice or contest; and
  - (c) That he or she may not return to play until he or she is cleared to participate by an appropriate licensed health care professional. (See Paragraph 4.)
3. Any youth athlete suspected of having a concussion should be evaluated by an appropriate licensed health care professional **within 24 hours of the injury**, contact event, or blow to the head, face, neck or a blow to the body that causes a sudden jarring of the head.

4. No youth athlete shall be permitted to return to play until he or she has not exhibited the **signs / symptoms of a concussion** for 48 hours, or more, and is medically cleared to participate by an appropriate licensed health care professional. The coach must receive written permission from an appropriate licensed health care professional before the youth athlete may return to play.

#### **IV. MANDATED TRAINING FOR ALL COACHES**

All coaches (head and assistant) must be knowledgeable regarding the **signs / symptoms of a concussion**, appropriate strategies to reduce the risk of concussions, how to seek proper medical treatment for a youth athlete suspected of having a concussion, and when the athlete may safely return to play.

Accordingly, all coaches (head and assistant) responsible for a youth athletic sports team that is utilizing the City of Milton Parks and Recreation facilities are required to complete The Center for Disease Control's *Heads Up-Concussion in Youth Sports* video training course, which is available at [http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online\\_training.html](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html), in advance of their participation in youth athletic coaching, practice events, or game events at City of Milton Parks and Recreation facilities.

*Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports* is a free, online course available to coaches, parents, and others helping to keep athletes safe from concussion. It features interviews with leading experts, dynamic graphics and interactive exercises, and compelling storytelling to help one recognize a concussion and know how to respond if an athlete is believed to have suffered a concussion. (Parents and guardians of youth athletes are also urged to visit The Center for Disease Control's website and view the video training.)

Upon completion of this online training session, all coaches shall print out the completion certificate evidencing same, and provide the certificate to the City of Milton Parks and Recreation Department Director or his/her designee.

As a further resource, it is also strongly recommended that coaches participate in the free, online course on concussion management entitled *Concussion in Sports* prepared by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFSH), which can be found at [www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com).

## V. ROLE OF COACHING STAFF / GAME OFFICIALS / COMPLIANCE

### 1. Coaches:

Coaches (head and assistant) and their staff will NOT be expected to “diagnose” a concussion, as that is the job of an appropriate licensed health care professional. Coaches/Coaching Staffs shall use their best judgment in observing the **signs / symptoms of a concussion**, and in taking the action mandated by this Policy in the event that a youth athlete experiences or exhibits any of the **signs / symptoms of a concussion** following an injury, contact event, or blow to the head, face, neck or body.

### 2. Game Officials:

Games Officials will NOT be expected to “diagnose” a concussion, as that is the job of an appropriate licensed health care professional. Games Officials shall use their best judgment in observing the **signs / symptoms of a concussion** in the event that a youth athlete experiences or exhibits any of the **signs / symptoms of a concussion** following an injury, contact event, or blow to the head, face, neck or body. If a Game Official observes questionable signs, symptoms, or behavior that is consistent with a concussion, the Game Official shall notify the head coach (or an assistant coach if the head coach is not available) and remove the participant from the games for further evaluation.

A Game Official is not responsible for the sideline evaluation or management of the youth athlete after he or she is removed from play. The responsibility of further evaluation and management of the suspected symptomatic youth athlete falls upon the coach (head and/or assistant), and/or an appropriate licensed health care professional.

### 3. Compliance:

Any coach (head or assistant) that disregards the safety and well-being of a youth athlete as it relates to this Youth Sports Concussion Policy will be immediately suspended from coaching youth athletics and events at all City of Milton Parks and Recreation facilities.

Additionally, any coach (head or assistant) that misuses this policy to prohibit an otherwise healthy, fit, uninjured player from participating in a youth athletic sporting event, practice or competition will be immediately suspended from coaching youth athletics and events at all City of Milton Parks and Recreation facilities.

This concussion policy shall be in effect for all youth sports activities run, sponsored or sanctioned by the City, to include events and programming at both City owned or operated facilities and at non-City facilities.

4. **Acknowledgement:**

All coaches (head and assistant) shall be required to sign an Acknowledgement confirming receipt and their understanding of this Youth Sports Concussion Policy.

5. **Issuance of Informational Material:**

All Youth Athletic Associations shall be required to issue informational material to the parents and/or guardians of all youth athletes who will be participating in youth athletics, practices and/or sporting events at a City of Milton Parks and Recreation facility at the time of registration or at the first team meeting.

6. **Parent/Guardian Execution of Acknowledgement of Youth Sports Concussion Policy:**

All parents or guardians of youth athletes participating in Youth Athletic Association sponsored events, practices and/or sporting competitions shall be required to execute an acknowledgement of their review and understanding of this Youth Sports Concussion Policy.

7. **Placement of Youth Sports Concussion Policy on city Website:**

This Youth Sports Concussion Policy be posted on the city website and requires all Youth Athletic Associations utilizing the City of Milton Parks and Recreation facilities to link to this Policy.