

Local Services Board of Loring, Port Loring and District

Concussion Policy

PURPOSE:

The Local Services Board of Loring, Port Loring and District, hereinafter referred to as LSB, recognizes the potential danger and long-term health consequences of this often difficult to diagnose form of traumatic brain injury. This policy is intended to provide basic guidelines for participants, in any of the LSB-sponsored Sports and Recreational activities, who are diagnosed or suspected of having a concussion.

The policy is for Volunteers, Parents, Coaches and Activity Leaders; it can be shared with any other adults, volunteers or participants in LSB sports and recreation activities.

DEFINITIONS:

This policy provides guidance on the following injuries:

A. Concussion - a type of traumatic brain injury caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head (or by a blow to the body) that causes the head to move quickly back and forth. This movement can cause the brain to move around or twist in the skull, stretching and causing damage to brain cells; and

B. Second Impact Syndrome - rare but serious, second impact syndrome occurs when an individual experiences a second concussion before the symptoms of the initial concussion have resolved. It can result in rapid, potentially fatal brain swelling.

Concussions rarely involve loss of consciousness. The signs may be subjective and consist of unseen symptoms that can only be detected or sensed by the injured or ill party - for example, a headache. For additional information, refer to Annex A to this policy.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The LSB is responsible to establish procedures for dealing with head injuries and concussions, including the exclusion of participants with diagnosed concussions until cleared by a physician.

The LSB is responsible to ensure program volunteers/leaders/coaches are aware

of the signs and symptoms of concussions and take the necessary action when a concussion or brain injury is suspected.

LSB Sports and Recreation Program Volunteers/Leaders/Coaches are responsible to follow the Response to Suspected Concussion (Annex A). In addition, they are responsible to observe participants for changes, including worsening signs and to notify parents and the LSB Recreation Committee Chairperson of a suspected concussion or brain injury that occurs during LSB Sports and Recreation programs.

Before the start of any LSB Sports and Recreational program, the volunteer leader/parent/coach will receive a copy of the information contained at Annex A to this policy and will be responsible for adherence to this policy for the duration of the program.

Parents are responsible to inform the LSB Recreation Committee of any prior concussion(s) sustained by their child(ren) when registering for any LSB Sports and Recreation program. Parents are also responsible to monitor their child's progress and share information with the program volunteer(s) about any challenges or symptoms.

In the event that a concussion occurs during any LSB Sports and Recreation program, the parent or guardian is responsible provide the final physician clearance to the LSB before their child can resume activities in the said program.

When a parent registers their child(ren), they will be required to check the box agreeing to the following:

"If my child is diagnosed with a concussion during any LSB program or during ANY OTHER ACTIVITY including those outside the LSB, or if my child has a prior head injury, I will inform the LSB Recreation Committee of such diagnosis prior to the start of the program or before my child returns to play."

At the start of each session of an LSB Sports and Recreation program, parents will be advised to review the LSB Concussion Policy on the website. As many areas are not serviced by internet, paper copies will be available for parents to review.

REDUCING THE RISK:

Regardless of the steps taken to reduce injury, some participants will continue to be injured. The severity of the injury can be reduced by the following:

- Education for volunteers/leaders/parents and players to recognize the signs and symptoms of concussions
- Removal of participants from activity when a concussion or other brain injury is suspected
- Physician approval prior to 'return to play' when a concussion is suspected or has been confirmed
- Wearing the proper protective equipment for the sport and ensuring that the equipment fits properly, is well maintained and visually inspected prior to use, and is worn consistently and correctly
- Participants must follow and volunteers must enforce rules for safety, the rules of the sport or event, and fair play practices
- Volunteers shall teach proper sport techniques in proper progression and reduce impact that could lead to concussion

The Volunteers/Parents/Coaches are the key people to teach participants that it is not "a badge of honour" to continue playing with a head injury. They must not tell injured players that they are fine and must discourage others from pressuring participants to continue play.

Effective Date: 23 April 2015 (as per LSB approval)

The LSB gratefully acknowledges the resources and information obtained from the following websites:

Ontario Physical Education and Safety (OPHEA)

"Concussions and Return to Play Guidelines", Mark MacDonald and Eric Katzman - McCague Borlack LLP Sports & Recreation Liability Seminar

Sudbury Youth Soccer Association

Ohio High School Athletic Association

ANNEX A
LSB CONCUSSION POLICY
DATED 23 APRIL 2015

CONCUSSIONS:

Children and adolescents are at the greatest risk for concussions and take longer to recover than adults. The risk of concussion is highest during activities with the potential for collisions: during physical education, outdoor play or during sports. However, concussions can occur any time a person's brain impacts with their skull. For example - when the head connects with a surface or object (for example, a bench or hard-packed ground), with another person, or when the head moves rapidly back and forth.

Concussions are serious, not only because of the impact damage, but also due to the secondary injuries that can develop after the impact. These include but are not limited to: hemorrhage, brain swelling, decreased circulation, increased fatigue, mental confusion and failed memory. The brain may take days, weeks or months to be restored to normal activity.

Once an individual has had a concussion, they are at an increased risk for another concussion. Repeat concussions that occur before the brain recovers from the first incident can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of long term problems. Repeat concussions may also result in second impact syndrome. Remember, most concussions do not result in a loss of consciousness. Proper recognition and response to a concussion can prevent further injury and can assist with timely recovery.

RESPONSE TO SUSPECTED CONCUSSION:

If the participant has lost consciousness - even if only for a brief period - **DO NOT MOVE THE CHILD OR ATTEMPT TO REMOVE HELMET/SAFETY GEAR - CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY.**

If there is no loss of consciousness, the volunteer leader/parent/coach will remove the participant from the activity and monitor for signs of a concussion (refer to ANNEX B). Seek immediate emergency medical assistance if the participant exhibits any of the following signs of concussion:

- one pupil (the black part in the middle of the eye) is larger than the other
- drowsiness is experienced or the person cannot be awakened
- the participant has a headache that gets worse and does not go away

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- feelings of weakness, numbness or decreased coordination
- repeated vomiting or nausea
- slurred speech
- convulsions or seizures
- difficulty recognizing people or places
- increasing confusion, restlessness, or agitation
- loss of consciousness after the event - even if only for a brief period

WHEN A HEAD INJURY OCCURS:

- do not leave the participant alone
- do not administer medication
- be alert for symptoms that deteriorate or worsen over time
- contact the parent or guardian
- contact the Chair or any member of the LSB Recreation Committee
- provide the form "Medical Clearance following Suspected Concussion" to the parent or guardian

COMMON SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CONCUSSION *

Possible Signs Observed

(A sign is something that will be observed by another person - volunteer, parent, coach or peer)

Physical

| | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| vomiting | slurred speech |
| slowed reaction time | poor coordination or balance |
| blank stare/glassy-eyed/dazed or vacant look | amnesia |
| loss of consciousness or lack of responsiveness | seizure or convulsion |
| lying motionless or slow to get up | grabbing or clutching of head |

Cognitive

difficulty concentrating
easily distracted
cannot remember things that happened before or after the injury
does not know time, date, place, type of activity in which s/he was participating
slowed reaction time (answering questions or following directions)
general confusion

Emotional/Behavioural

strange or inappropriate emotions (laughing, crying, getting angry easily)

Sleep Disturbance

drowsiness
insomnia

* Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines - Appendix C-1 Concussion Management Procedures: Return to Learn and Return to Physical Activity

COMMON SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CONCUSSION *

Possible Symptoms Reported

(a symptom is something the child or participant will feel/report)

Physical

headache
neck pain
ringing in the ears
seeing stars, flashing lights
nausea/stomach ache/pain
fatigue or feeling tired

pressure in head
feeling off or not right
seeing double or blurry/loss of vision
pain at the physical site of injury
balance problems or dizziness
sensitivity to light or noise

Cognitive

difficulty concentrating or remembering
slowed down, fatigue or low energy
feeling dazed or in a fog

Emotional/Behavioural

irritable, sad, more emotional than usual
nervous, anxious, depressed

Sleep Disturbance

drowsy
difficulty falling asleep

sleeping more/less than usual

* Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines - Appendix C-1 Concussion Management Procedures: Return to Learn and Return to Physical Activity

MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION TO RETURN TO PLAY

(To be used when a participant has been removed from LSB Sports and Recreation programming due to a suspected concussion)

In accordance with the Local Services Board of Loring, Port Loring and District (LSB) Concussion Policy, a participant who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviours associated with concussion **will be removed from all programs and will not be allowed to re-join on the same day as the removal.** Thereafter, **written medical authorization** from a physician or another licensed medical provider is required to grant clearance for the individual to return or participate in LSB Sports and Recreation Programming.

This form will serve as the authorization that the physician or licensed medical professional has examined the individual, and has cleared him/her to return to participation. The physician or licensed medical professional must complete this form and it must be returned to the Chair of the LSB Recreation Committee prior to resumption of participation in LSB Sports and Recreation Programs.

As stated above, the individual is not permitted to rejoin/participate on the same day as the removal.

I, _____, M.D, D.O. or _____

(other licensed medical provider) have examined the following individual

_____, who was removed from the LSB Sport and Recreation

Program entitled _____ due to exhibition of signs/symptoms/behaviours consistent with a concussion.

I have examined this individual, provided an appropriate return to play regimen, if necessary, and determined that he/she is cleared to resume participation in the above LSB Sport and Recreation Program on this date _____.

Signature of Medical Professional _____

Date _____