

Concussion and Traumatic Head Injury

Human Resources Policy- #126

Policy:

Davidson County recognizes that concussions and head injuries can result from contact in sports, playground activities or other contact related events and can have serious consequences if not properly evaluated and treated. Therefore, the County has adopted this Concussion and Traumatic Head Injury Policy in order to educate and establish a plan of action for coaches, teachers, employees, or volunteers (Representatives) of the County when a player or participant (defined as an individual under the age of 18 years) suffers or is suspected of suffering a concussion during a sporting or other contact event.

All County employees, agents as well as parents/guardians of players involved in sporting events or other contact activities will be familiar with the symptoms and signs of concussion and be prepared to take appropriate action as outlined below in responding to such incidents. "When in doubt, sit them out!" Youth players are particularly vulnerable to the effects of concussion. Once considered little more than a minor "ding" on the head, it is now understood that a concussion has the potential to result in death, or short-term and long-term changes in the brain function.

A concussion is a brain injury that results in a temporary disruption of normal brain function. A concussion occurs when the brain is violently rocked back and forth or twisted inside the skull as a result of a blow to the head or body. Symptoms include (but are not limited to) transient confusion, disorientation, impaired consciousness, dysfunction of memory, loss of consciousness, seizures, irritability, lethargy, vomiting, headache, dizziness, or fatigue. Continued participation in any sporting or contact activity following a concussion can lead to worsening concussion symptoms, as well as increased risk for further injury to the brain or even death.

The well-being of the players is a paramount concern during a sporting event or contact activity. Employees, representatives and parents/guardians are being asked to make all efforts to ensure that concussed players do not continue to participate. Thus, employees, representatives and parents/guardians should all be looking for signs of concussion in all players and any suspected concussed player should immediately be removed from play.

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Participating Departments will ensure that all employees and representatives involved will be familiar with and will receive a copy of this policy. Parents/guardians will be provided a copy of this Policy as well as the Concussion Fact Sheet. These documents must be reviewed and the acknowledgement signed by the parent/guardian before the player will be allowed to participate in a sporting event.

Role of County coaches, instructors, employees, or volunteers (Representatives)

Representatives will NOT be expected nor will they be trained to “diagnose” a concussion. Diagnosis is the job of a qualified health care provider.

Representatives are being asked to use their best judgment in observing the signs, symptoms and behaviors associated with concussions. If a Representative is observing questionable signs, symptoms, or behavior, they must remove the player from the sporting event for further evaluation and notify the player’s parent/guardian.

Representatives are not permitted to allow a player to resume activity until the representative receives a written statement from a qualified health care provider indicating that the player is cleared to resume participation in the sporting event or contact activity. The written statement must be provided to the Department Director or their designee before the player may resume participation in the contact activity or sporting event.

Role of Parent/Guardians

Like representatives, parents/guardians will NOT be expected to “diagnose” a concussion. However, parents/guardians are being asked to become familiar with the signs, symptoms, and behaviors associated with concussions.

Parents/guardians will be required to review the Information Sheet and sign the Parental Acknowledgement Form indicating that the parent/guardian has read, understands, and agrees to abide by this Policy. Parents/guardians will be expected to comply with this Policy and support the determination made by the Representatives to remove a player from a sporting event.

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It is the parent/guardian’s obligation to have the player evaluated by a qualified health care provider and to obtain and present to the Department Director the health care provider’s written statement that clears the player to resume participation in the contact activity or sporting event.

Mandated Course of Action

1. Remove player or participant from the contact activity or sporting event.
2. Notify parent/guardian.
3. Any Player or participant suspected of having a concussion should be evaluated by a qualified health care provider as soon as practicable.
4. Before a player or participant will be allowed to resume participation in a contact activity or sporting event, the parent/guardian of the player or participant must obtain and return to the County’s Department Director a completed health care provider’s statement authorizing player to resume play in the sporting event.

Scope:

This policy is applicable only to Davidson County teams, leagues, contact events and sporting events. The County is not responsible for implementing any concussion or head injury policy for independent teams, leagues, organizations, or associations that utilize County owned or operated fields or facilities.

Document Change Record

Revision	Description
6-27-2023	New Policy