Educational Material for Parents and Students (Content Meets MDCH Requirements)

Sources: Michigan Department of Community Health. CDC and the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE)

UNDERSTANDING CONCUSSION

Some Common Symptoms

Headache	**Balance Problems**	**Sensitive to Noise**	**Poor Concentration**	**Not "Feeling Right"**
Pressure in the Head	**Double Vision**	**Sluggishness**	**Memory Problems**	**Feeling Irritable**
Nausea/Vomiting	**Blurry Vision**	**Haziness**	**Confusion**	**Slow Reaction Time**
Dizziness	**Sensitive to Light**	**Fogginess**	**"Feeling Down"**	**Sleep Problems**
		Grogginess		

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by a fall, bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. A concussion can be caused by a shaking, spinning or a sudden stopping and starting of the head. Even a "ding," "getting your bell rung," or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. A concussion can happen even if you haven't been knocked out.

You can't see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussions can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If the student reports any symptoms of a concussion, or if you notice symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away. A student who may have had a concussion should not return to play on the day of the injury and until a health care professional says they are okay to return to play.

IF YOU SUSPECT A CONCUSSION:

1. **SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION RIGHT AWAY –** A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for the student to return to regular activities, including sports. Don't hide it, report it. Ignoring symptoms and trying to "tough it out" often makes it worse.

2. **KEEP YOUR STUDENT OUT OF PLAY –** Concussions take time to heal. Don't let the student return to play the day of injury and until a heath care professional says it's okay. A student who returns to play too soon, while the brain is still healing, risks a greater chance of having a second concussion. Young children and teens are more likely to get a concussion and take longer to recover than adults. Repeat or second concussions increase the time it takes to recover and can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting the student for a lifetime. They can be fatal. It is better to miss one game than the whole season.

3. **TELL THE SCHOOL ABOUT ANY PREVIOUS CONCUSSION –** Schools should know if a student had a previous concussion. A student's school may not know about a concussion received in another sport or activity unless you notify them.

SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination
- Can't recall events prior to or after a hit or fall
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes

CONCUSSION DANGER SIGNS:

In rare cases, a dangerous blood clot may form on the brain in a person with a concussion and crowd the brain against the skull. A student should receive immediate medical attention if after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body s/he exhibits any of the following danger signs:

- One pupil larger than the other
- Is drowsy or cannot be awakened
- A headache that gets worse
- Repeated vomiting or nausea
- Slurred speech
- Convulsions or seizures
- Cannot recognize people/places
- Becomes increasingly confused, restless or agitated
- Has unusual behavior
- Loses consciousness (even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously)

HOW TO RESPOND TO A REPORT OF A CONCUSSION:

If a student reports one or more symptoms of a concussion after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, s/he should be kept out of athletic play the day of the injury. The student should only return to play with permission from a health care professional experienced in evaluating for concussion. During recovery, rest is key. Exercising or activities that involve a lot of concentration (such as studying, working on the computer, or playing video games) may cause concussion symptoms to reappear or get worse. Students who return to school after a concussion may need to spend fewer hours at school, take rests breaks, be given extra help and time, spend less time reading, writing or on a computer. After a concussion, returning to sports and school is a gradual process that should be monitored by a health care professional.

Remember: Concussion affects people differently. While most students with a concussion recover quickly and fully, some will have symptoms that last for days, or even weeks. A more serious concussion can last for months or longer.

To learn more, go to www.cdc.gov/concussion.

Parents and Students Must Sign and Return the Educational Material Acknowledgement Form in your packet