

Students

CONCUSSION AND HEAD INJURY RETURN TO PLAY POLICY

I. INTRODUCTION AND IDENTIFICATION OF ACT

This Concussion and Head Injury Return to Play Policy (“Policy”) is adopted pursuant to the Illinois Protecting Our Students Act, 105 ILCS 5/10-20.53, 105 ILCS 5/34-18.45, Public Act 97-0204 (the “Act”). The Act requires Valley View Community Unit School District 365U to create a policy in compliance with the protocols, policies, and by-laws of the Illinois High School Association concerning concussions and head injuries.

II. CONCUSSIONS AND HEAD INJURIES

- A. Any athlete in a sport who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, and/or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game or practice in which he or she is playing and shall not return to play on the day of the contest until cleared by an appropriate health care professional. For purposes of this Policy, an “appropriate health care professional” is a certified athletic trainer or physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois.
- B. Where an athlete is not cleared to return to play on the same day that he or she is removed from a contest following a possible head injury (i.e., concussion), the athlete shall not return to play or practice until the athlete is evaluated by and receives written clearance from a licensed health care provider to return to play. For purposes of this policy, “licensed health care providers” consist of (1) physicians licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois; and (2) certified athletic trainers working in conjunction with physicians licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois.
- C. A “Concussion Information Sheet” issued by the Illinois High School Association (version current as of August 2011 is attached hereto as Exhibit 1), which provides information regarding this Policy, shall be distributed to each student athlete and his or her parent or guardian, and the student athlete and his or her parent or guardian shall sign and return the Concussion Information Sheet before participating in practice or interscholastic competition.

- D. This District shall use and provide educational materials supplied by the Illinois High School Association to educate coaches, student athletes, and their parents and guardians about the nature and the risk of concussions and head injuries, including continuing play after a concussion or head injury.
- E. If any provision of this Policy conflicts with any provision of the Act, the provisions of the Act shall prevail.
- F. This Policy shall not create any new liability or increase any existing liability of the District, or any of its officers, employees, or agents, which exists under any other law, including but not limited to the Local Governmental and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act, 745 ILCS 10/1-101 *et seq.*, and the School Code, 105 ILCS 5/1 *et seq.* Nor shall this Policy alter, diminish, restrict, cancel, or waive any defense or immunity of the District or any of its officers, employees, or agents, which exists under any other law, including but not limited to the Local Governmental and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act, 745 ILCS 10/1-101 *et seq.*, and the School Code, 105 ILCS 5/1 *et seq.*

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/10-20.53, 105 ILCS 5/34-18.45, Public Act 97-0204

ADOPTED: August 22, 2011

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Concussion Information Sheet

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, **all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly.** In other words, even a “ding” or a bump on the head can be serious. You can’t see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

Symptoms may include one or more of the following:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Headaches• “Pressure in head”• Nausea or vomiting• Neck pain• Balance problems or dizziness• Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision• Sensitivity to light or noise• Feeling sluggish or slowed down• Feeling foggy or groggy• Drowsiness• Change in sleep patterns | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Amnesia• “Don’t feel right”• Fatigue or low energy• Sadness• Nervousness or anxiety• Irritability• More emotional• Confusion• Concentration or memory problems (forgetting game plays)• Repeating the same question/comment |
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Signs observed by teammates, parents and coaches include:

- Appears dazed
- Vacant facial expression
- Confused about assignment
- Forgets plays
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily or displays incoordination
- Answers questions slowly
- Slurred speech
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can’t recall events prior to hit
- Can’t recall events after hit
- Seizures or convulsions
- Any change in typical behavior or personality
- Loses consciousness

Concussion Information Sheet

What can happen if my child keeps on playing with a concussion or returns too soon?

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athletes will often fail to report symptoms of injuries. Concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents and students is the key to student-athlete's safety.

If you think your child has suffered a concussion

Any athlete even suspected of suffering a concussion should be removed from the game or practice immediately. No athlete may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without medical clearance. Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours. IHSA Policy requires athletes to provide their school with written clearance from either a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches or a certified athletic trainer working in conjunction with a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches prior to returning to play or practice following a concussion or after being removed from an interscholastic contest due to a possible head injury or concussion and not cleared to return to that same contest. In accordance with state law, all IHSA member schools are required to follow this policy.

You should also inform your child's coach if you think that your child may have a concussion. Remember it's better to miss one game than miss the whole season. And when in doubt, the athlete sits out.

For current and up-to-date information on concussions you can go to:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports/>

Student-athlete Name Printed

Student-athlete Signature

Date

Parent or Legal Guardian Printed

Parent or Legal Guardian Signature

Date