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## **Concussion & Head Injury Administrative Procedures**

### **PURPOSE & PHILOSOPHY**

Early Light Academy (ELA) recognizes that concussions and head injuries are commonly reported injuries in children and adolescents. ELA seeks to provide a safe return to school activities for all students following any injury, but particularly after a concussion due to the risk of further injury if the student continues to participate in physical activities after the concussion.

The purpose of this policy is to protect the safety and health of ELA students. It has been developed to ensure concussed students are identified, treated, referred to appropriate medical care, receive appropriate follow-up medical care during the school day, and are fully recovered prior to returning to activity. This policy outlines the procedures for ELA staff and agents to follow in managing concussions and head injuries.

ELA will maintain and enforce a concussion and head injury policy in compliance with the provisions of Utah Code 26-53-101 through -301 and R277-614.

### **POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

ELA will ensure that each staff and agent is familiar with, and has a copy of, the Concussion and Head Injury Policy and these Procedures. All appropriate ELA staff and agents shall attend a yearly training in which procedures for managing school-related and sports-related head injuries and concussions are discussed.

This policy shall be posted on the ELA's website where the information will be readily accessible to the public and to parents. ELA leadership shall review this protocol annually. The Board of Directors must approve any modifications or changes.

### **DEFINITIONS**

The following definitions apply to these Procedures:

- A. "Head injury" means any injury to the head not described in Utah Code 26-53-102(6) including a mild head bump.
- B. "Traumatic head injury" means an injury to the head arising from blunt trauma, acceleration force, or a deceleration force.
- C. "Parent" means a parent or legal guardian of a student for whom ELA is responsible.
- D. "ELA staff and agent" means a coach, teacher, employee, representative, or volunteer of ELA.
- E. "Qualified healthcare provider" means a healthcare provider who:

- a. Is licensed under Title 58: Occupations and Professions; and
  - b. May evaluate and manage a concussion within the healthcare provider's scope of practice.
- F. "Free Play" means an unstructured student play, games, and field days during school hours.
- G. (a) "Sporting Event" means any of the following athletic activities that is organized, managed, or sponsored by ELA:
  - a. a game
  - b. a practice
  - c. a sports camp
  - d. a physical education class
  - e. a competition
  - f. a tryout
- (b) "Sporting Event" does not include:
  - a. free play or recess taking place during school hours

## **RECOGNITION OF CONCUSSION**

- A. A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal brain function and is clinically referred to as a mild Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). It occurs when the brain is rocked back and forth or twisted inside the skull as a result of a blow to the head or body. What may appear to be only a mild jolt or blow to the head or body can result in a concussion.  
A concussion can occur even if a student does not lose consciousness from the head injury.
- B. Common signs and symptoms of a concussion:
  - a. Signs (observed by others):
    - i. Appears dazed or stunned
    - ii. Confusion
    - iii. Forgets plays
    - iv. Unsure about game, score, opponent
    - v. Moves clumsily
    - vi. Balance problems
    - vii. Personality change
    - viii. Responds slowly to questions
    - ix. Forgets events prior to or after the hit
    - x. Loss of consciousness (any duration)
    - xi. Vomiting
    - xii. Repeating questions
    - xiii. Forgets class schedule or assignments
  - b. Symptoms (reported by student):
    - i. Headache or pressure in the head
    - ii. Balance problems or dizziness
    - iii. Fatigue or feeling tired
    - iv. Does not "feel right"
    - v. More emotional than usual
    - vi. Irritable or sad
    - vii. Nausea or vomiting

- viii. Vision changes, head pain when looking at a screen (phone, laptop)
  - ix. Double or blurry vision
  - x. Sensitive to light or noise
  - xi. Feels sluggish or “foggy”
  - xii. Problems concentrating or remembering
- C. These signs and symptoms following a witnessed or suspected blow to the head or body should be considered a probable concussion.
- a. A student with a concussion may have one or many of these signs and symptoms.
  - b. Any student who exhibits signs symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be immediately removed from the contest, game, practice, class, or activity, and
  - c. Shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate healthcare professional.
  - d. Parent notification must be made for any and all suspected or witnessed head injuries.
- D. If symptoms persist, seek care from a qualified healthcare provider specializing in evaluation and management of head injuries and concussions.

## **PROCEDURES**

- A. Before a child is permitted to participate in a sporting event of the school, ELA will:
- a. Provide a written copy of the Concussion and Head Injury Policy and these Procedures to a parent or legal guardian of a student; and
  - b. Obtain the signature of a parent or legal guardian of the student acknowledging the parent or legal guardian has read, understands, and agrees to abide by, the Concussion and Head Injury Policy and these Procedures.
- B. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES
- a. The following situations indicate a medical emergency and require activation of the Emergency Medical System (EMS):
    - i. Any student with a witnessed loss of consciousness of any duration should be spine-boarded and transported immediately to the nearest emergency department via emergency vehicle.
    - ii. Any student who has worsening symptoms of a concussion, and who is not stable (i.e. condition is worsening) should be transported immediately to the nearest emergency department via emergency vehicle.
    - iii. A student who exhibits any of the following symptoms should be transported immediately to the nearest emergency department, via emergency vehicle:
      - 1. Deterioration of neurological function (i.e. pupil changes or responses, muscle weakness, increased difficulty with response to questions)
      - 2. Decreasing level of consciousness
      - 3. Decrease or irregularity in respirations
      - 4. Any signs or symptoms of associated injuries, spine or skull fracture, or bleeding
      - 5. Mental status changes (i.e. lethargy, difficulty staying awake/alert, confusion, agitation)
      - 6. Seizure activity

- b. Any student who is symptomatic but stable may be transported by their parent.
    - i. The parent should be advised to contact the student's healthcare provider or seek care at the nearest emergency department on the day of the injury.
  - c. Any head injuries reported to ELA staff and agents should be documented in the student health record.
- C. FREE PLAY CONCUSSION AND HEAD INJURY MANAGEMENT**
- a. While many head injuries that happen at school are minor, the following steps are necessary when a student has a bump, blow, or jolt to the head:
    - i. Observe the student for signs and symptoms of concussion for a minimum of 30 minutes.
    - ii. Complete the *Concussion: Signs and Symptoms Checklist*.
    - iii. Notify the student's parent(s) that their child had a head injury and give the parent(s) the *Parent Notification of Head Injury During School Hours* document and a copy of the completed *Concussion: Signs and Symptoms Checklist*.
  - b. If the student has concussion signs or symptoms:
    - i. Advise parent(s) to dismiss their child from school
    - ii. Urge the parent(s) to have the student seen by a healthcare provider experienced in concussion management. The parent can provide the healthcare provider the *Concussion: Signs and Symptoms Checklist* to review.
    - iii. Provide the parent(s) with the *Head Injury Form* and ask for the parents and healthcare provider to complete and sign the form to provide guidance when the student can return to school and physical activity.
  - c. If the student does not have concussion signs or symptoms:
    - i. The student may return to class upon ELA receipt of the signed Head Injury Form, and
    - ii. Advise the parent(s) that if concussion signs or symptoms appear, the student should be seen right away by a healthcare provider with experience in concussion management.

## **GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE SUPERVISION OF CONTESTS AND GAMES**

### **A. RECOGNIZING CONCUSSIONS**

- a. ELA staff and agents should become familiar with the signs and symptoms of concussions that are described above.
- b. ELA staff and agents shall have appropriate training about recognizing and responding to traumatic head injuries, consistent with the employees' responsibilities for supervising students and athletes.

### **B. REMOVING FROM ACTIVITY**

- a. Any student who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be immediately removed from the activity, and
- b. Shall not return to play until the student:
  - i. is evaluated by a qualified healthcare provider who is trained in the evaluation and management of a concussion; and
  - ii. provides the school with a written statement from the qualified healthcare

provider stating that:

1. the qualified healthcare provider has, within three years before the day on which the written statement is made, successfully completed a continuing education course in evaluation and management of a concussion; and
2. the student is cleared to resume participation in the sporting event

**C. REFERRING THE ATHLETE/STUDENT FOR MEDICAL EVALUATION**

- a. ELA staff and agents are responsible for notifying the student's parent(s) of the injury.
  - i. Contact the parent(s) to inform them of the injury. Depending on the injury, transport can be provided by either an emergency vehicle or parent(s).
  - ii. A medical evaluation by an appropriate healthcare provider is required before returning to school or to play.
- D. If a student's parent(s) cannot be reached and the student can be sent home (rather than directly to a healthcare provider):
  - a. ELA's staff and agents should ensure that the student will be with a responsible individual who is capable of monitoring the student and understanding the home care instructions before allowing the student to go home.
  - b. ELA's staff and agents should continue efforts to reach a parent
- E. If there is any question about the status of a student, or if the student cannot be monitored appropriately, the student should be referred to an Emergency Department for evaluation. ELA's staff or agent should accompany the student and remain with the student until a parent arrives. ELA shall provide supervision of the other students for whom he or she is responsible while accompanying the injured student.

**RETURN TO LEARN PROCEDURES AFTER A CONCUSSION**

- A. Medical and school-based teams should counsel the student and family about the process of gradually increasing the duration and intensity of academic activities as tolerated, with the goal of increasing participation without significantly exacerbating symptoms.
- B. The student, family, healthcare provider, and school teams should monitor symptoms and academic progress to decide together the modifications that are needed to maintain an academic workload without making symptoms worse.
- C. School teams should monitor and adjust education supports until the student's academic performance has returned to pre-injury levels.

**RETURN TO PLAY PROCEDURES AFTER A CONCUSSION**

- A. Return to activity and play is a medical decision. The student must meet all of the following criteria in order to progress to activity:
  - a. Asymptomatic at rest and with physical and mental exertion
  - b. Have successfully returned to their regular academic activities, and
  - c. Have written clearance from an appropriate healthcare provider.
- B. If a parent refuses or is unable to take the student to a healthcare provider when the student shows obvious signs of a concussion or traumatic head injury, ELA will not allow the student to participate in recess, field days, physical education classes, or athletic programs. The School will make every effort to support a parent in completing the steps necessary for the student to return to play.

- C. Regardless of clearance by a healthcare provider, ELA will not allow any student who continues to demonstrate symptoms of a concussion to participate in recess, field days, physical education classes, or athletic programs.
- D. These procedures will also be followed if ELA becomes aware that a student has been diagnosed with a concussion that occurred off campus.