



Town of Cornelius PARC Department

Program Participant Concussion Policy

PURPOSE AND INTENT

The Cornelius Parks, Arts, Recreation and Culture (PARC) Department offers a wide variety of programs, services and activities for the citizens of this community and seeks to provide a safe experience for program participants who may take part in activities organized by the PARC Department, program partners, or affiliated service providers.

This document establishes a policy to educate staff, volunteers, parents, coaches, officials and participants about the signs, symptoms and risks associated with suffering a blow or bump to the head, or hit to the body, that may or may not lead to a concussion or concussion-like symptoms.

Further, this policy establishes an action plan, which identifies the process by which anyone suspected of suffering a head-injury, blow to the body, or concussion-like symptoms will be treated.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Cornelius PARC Department will educate staff, volunteers, parents, coaches, officials and participants about the signs, symptoms and risks associated with concussions while also providing three (3) actions steps and an infographic that will be beneficial when providing education about concussion-like symptoms while guiding the steps that should be taken when a concussion is suspected.

DEFINITION

As defined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Centers For Disease Control (CDC), a concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head or by a hit to the body that causes the brain to move rapidly back and forth. This sudden movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, creating chemical changes in the brain and sometimes stretching and damaging brain cells.

RECOGNITION

There are many signs and symptoms that should be considered when evaluating a participant for a possible concussion. In accordance with this policy, any program participant who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion must be removed from the program, event, activity, game or practice immediately and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional.

Signs and Symptoms Observed by Staff, Volunteers, Parents, Coaches or Officials: (Red Flags)

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction

- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Exhibits mood, behavior or personality changes
- Trouble remembering events prior to hit or fall
- Slowed reaction time
- Seizures

Symptoms Reported by Participant:

- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish
- Concentration problems
- Memory loss
- Confusion
- Does not “feel right”
- Trouble sleeping

ROLE OF STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, PARENTS, COACHES OR OFFICIALS

Staff, volunteers, parents, coaches or officials will not be expected to diagnose a concussion. However, they will be asked to use their best judgement when observing the signs, symptoms and behaviors associated with concussions. If a participant exhibits signs or symptoms of a concussion during a recreation program, event, activity, game or practice, the participant must be removed from play and the following action plan implemented:

COURSE OF ACTION

In accordance with best practices identified by the CDC, the Cornelius PARC Department’s Action Plan will consist of the following steps:

STEP 1: Educate Staff, Volunteers, Parents, Coaches or Officials

Inform and educate staff, volunteers, parents, coaches and officials about the signs, symptoms and behaviors associated with concussions.

Educate staff, volunteers, parents, coaches and officials about the types of incidents that might lead to the onset of a concussion or concussion-like symptoms (a bump, blow or jolt to the head, or by a hit to the body, that causes the brain to move rapidly back and forth).

The PARC Department will initiate concussion program education and training as follows:

- On an annual basis, the Cornelius PARC Department will review the Program Participant Concussion Policy in accordance with best practices as published by the CDC
- The review process will take place by July 1
- Programs operated by the PARC Department, and associated staff training programs, will be developed in accordance with the Program Participant Concussion Policy
- Provide access to concussion information sheets for all staff, volunteers, parents coaches and officials
- Post the policy on the Department website

- Compliance with this policy will be added as a requirement to all program agreements, partner agreements, or other contract service agreements administered by the Department, as appropriate
- For partner organizations or contract service providers that are sanctioned by, or affiliated with, governing bodies or other organizations (examples: Little League Baseball, Pop Warner Football, U.S. Soccer) the Town will provide the organization with the following options:
 - Use the Town of Cornelius PARC Department Program Participant Concussion Policy
 - Use the policy of the organization’s governing body if it meets or exceeds Town policy
 - Note: Whether using the Town of Cornelius Program Participant Concussion Policy or the policy of their governing body, partner organizations and contract service providers will be responsible for implementing and overseeing their organization’s concussion management program in its entirety

STEP 2: Remove Participant from Play

If a staff member, volunteer, parent, coach or official observes a program participant who demonstrates any of the signs, symptoms or behaviors associated with a concussion, or concussion-like symptoms, steps must be taken to remove the participant from their activity right away:

- Tell a staff member, coach, parent or official if you suspect that a participant has a concussion or displays concussion-like symptoms
- Remove participant from activity, event, practice, game or competition right away
- If a head injury appears to be severe, call 911
- Report the concussion symptoms observed to Cornelius PARC Department staff
- Notify parent or guardian
- It is then the responsibility of the parent / guardian to seek further medical evaluation for the participant
- Complete an incident report
- Any participant removed from an activity due to a blow to the head, or due to displaying the signs, symptoms or behaviors associated with a concussion, WILL NOT be permitted to resume participation until the following step has been completed:

STEP 3: Obtain Permission to Return to Play

Any participant removed from activity in accordance with the Program Participant Concussion Policy must be evaluated by a physician and medically cleared before returning to participation.

- When a participant is removed from an activity, the participant, or parent / guardian if under 18 years of age, should seek medical attention
- Prior to a return to program participation the participant must be medically cleared by a physician
- Participant must provide a signed document by a physician stating they are cleared to return to full program participation and this document must include the date when a return to active participation is allowed
- Emergency Room and Urgent Care Physicians typically do not make clearance decisions at the time of the first visit

- When all necessary steps have been completed, the Recreation Superintendent, or his / her designee, will review the signed documents and grant permission to return to participation for programs managed by the Cornelius PARC Department
- For partner programs, or programs organized by contract service providers, the organization shall designate a concussion program manager in accordance with their organizational guidelines