



## LIVERMORE AREA RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT PARENT CONCUSSION INFORMATION SHEET

Each day in our nation, hundreds of thousands of young athletes participate in a wide variety of sports programs. These sports programs are a great way for children and teens to stay healthy, learn important leadership and team building skills. Medical researchers have discovered that young athletes often don't recognize their own limitations, especially when they have a concussion. Youth concussions can have long-term impacts on youth athletes that include their health, memory, learning and their survival. This has led to our responsibility to improve prevention, recognition, and response to sports related concussions. The purpose of this District-wide Concussion Procedure and Protocol that is required by the California Health and Safety Code, Section 124235, as well as help staff and our community understands the impacts of a concussion, and know how to recognize it in our players.

### DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITY

The Livermore Area Recreation and Park District staff are responsible for recognizing and responding to any participant 17 years of age or younger who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors that are consistent with a concussion, such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance issues. These participants shall be immediately removed from the activity or program and shall not return until a later date after receiving clearance from a parent/guardian and a licensed health care provider.

### OUR TRAINING

The Livermore Area Recreation and Park District offers a wide-variety of training throughout the year to our staff, including how to recognize and respond to a participant who is suspected of receiving a concussion within our sports related programs. Each year our staff receives educational training through the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)– Heads Up program and the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District that focusses on concussions in youth sports. Part of this training includes an online training tool through the CDC that certifies completion and meets the California Health and Safety Code, Section 124235.

### WHAT IS A CONCUSSION

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury—or TBI— caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. This fast movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, creating chemical changes in the brain and sometimes stretching and damaging the brain cells.



Most participants with a concussion will recover quickly and fully. But for some participants, signs and symptoms of a concussion can last for days, weeks, or longer. If a participant has a concussion, their brain needs time to heal. Talk with your children’s and teens’ licensed health care provider if their concussion symptoms do not go away or if they get worse after they return to their regular activity. Children and teens who continue to play while having a concussion symptoms or who return to play too soon, while the brain is healing, have a greater chance of getting another concussion. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first, usually within a short time period (hours, days, weeks), can slow recovery or increase the chances for the long-term problems. In rare cases, repeat concussions can result in brain swelling or permanent brain damage; it can be fatal.

### **HOW CAN I KEEP MY CHILDREN AND TEEN SAFE?**

Sports are a great way for children and teens to stay healthy and can help them do well in school. To help lower your children’s or teens chances of getting a concussion or other serious brain injury, you should:

- Help create a culture of safety for them.
  - Work with their coach to teach ways to lower the chances of getting a concussion.
  - Talk with your children or teens about concussions and ask if they have concerns about reporting a concussion. Talk to them about their concerns; emphasize the importance of reporting a concussion and taking time to recover from one.
  - Ensure that they follow their coach’s rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
  - Tell your children or teens that you expect them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Talk to you child or teen and tell them to report their concussion symptoms to you and our District staff right away. Some children and teens think concussions aren’t serious or worry that if they report a concussion they will miss out on the program or activity. Remind them that it is better to miss one day than the whole season.
- When appropriate for the sport or activity, teach your children or teens that they must wear a helmet to lower the chances of the most serious types of brain or head injury. However, there is no “concussion-proof” helmet. Even with a helmet, it is important for children and teens to avoid hits to the head.

### **HOW CAN I SPOT A POSSIBLE CONCUSSION?**

Children and teens who show or report one or more of the signs and symptoms listed below, or simply say that they just “don’t feel right” after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, may have a concussion or other serious brain injury.

Signs observed by parents:

- Appears dazed or stunned.
- Forgets an instruction, is confused about an assignment or position, or is unsure of the game, score, or opponent.
- Moves clumsily.
- Answers questions slowly.

Information adapted from the Centers for Disease Control – Heads Up Concussion  
To learn more, go to [www.cdc.gov/HEADSUP](http://www.cdc.gov/HEADSUP)



- Loses consciousness (even briefly).
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes.
- Can't recall events prior to or after a hit or fall.

Symptoms reported by children and teens:

- Headache or “pressure” in the head.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Balance problems or dizziness, or double or blurry vision.
- Bothered by light or noise.
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy.
- Confusion, or concentration or memory problems.
- Just not “feeling right,” or “feeling down.”

### **WHAT ARE SOME MORE SERIOUS DANGER SIGNS TO LOOK OUT FOR?**

In rare cases, a dangerous collection of blood (hematoma) may form on the brain after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body and can squeeze the brain against the skull. Call 9-1-1 or take your child or teen to the emergency department right away if, after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, and has one or more of these danger signs:

- One pupil larger than the other.
- Drowsiness or inability to wake up.
- A headache that gets worse and does not go away.
- Slurred speech, weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination.
- Repeat vomiting or nausea, convulsions or seizures (shaking or twitching).
- Unusual behavior, increased confusion, restlessness, or agitation.
- Loss of consciousness (passed out/knocked out). Even for a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously.

### **WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD OR TEEN HAS A POSSIBLE CONCUSSION?**

As a parent, if you think your child or teen may have a concussion, you should:

1. Remove your child or teen from play.
2. Keep your child or teen out of play the day of the injury. Your child or teen should be seen by a licensed health care provider and only return to play with written clearance from a licensed health care provider who is experienced in evaluating a concussion.
3. Ask your child's or teen's licensed health care provider for written instructions on helping your child or teen return to their program or activity with the District. You can provide these instructions to the District management staff as part of the District's Return to Play Protocol.



Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention  
National Center for Injury  
Prevention and Control

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Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Only a licensed health care provider should assess a child or teen for a suspected concussion. You may not know how serious the concussion is at first, and some symptoms may not show up for hours or days. A child's or teen's return to District programs and activities should be a gradual process that is carefully managed and monitored by a licensed health care provider.

### **LIVERMORE AREA RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT'S RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL**

If a concussion was suspected, a participant can return to the activity or program after approval from a parent/guardian and written clearance from a licensed health care provider. Participants are encouraged to follow the gradual steps recommended by their licensed health care provider to help safely return to physical activity. If any concussions symptoms are observed by District staff when a participant returns to the program or activity, District staff will be required to remove the participant from the program or activity. District staff will implement the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District's Concussion Protocol, inform the parent/guardian, document the incident, and not permit the participant from participating in the program or activity until receiving clearance from the parent/guardian and written clearance from a licensed health care provider. This process will be strictly enforced until the participant is free and clear from all concussion symptoms, and until the District receives clearance from a licensed health care provider. Please note, unless we receive clearance from a licensed health care provider, the participant will not be allowed to continue in any program or activity, including non-sports related programs offered by the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District.

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