

## **NYS Concussion Awareness and Management Act**

### **Great Neck UFSD Notice for Parents and Guardians**

#### **1. What is a Concussion?**

According to the New York State Department of Health, a concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury (“TBI”) caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head that can change the way the brain normally works.

#### **2. How Do They Occur?**

Concussions may occur from a fall, blow to the body, or collision that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. Even a so-called “ding” may result in a concussion and should be evaluated by a licensed physician. Concussions may occur in any sport, but most often occur in contact sports such as football, rugby and ice hockey. According to DOH, you cannot “see” a concussion, and some athletes may not experience and/or report symptoms until hours or days after the injury. If you think your child may have a concussion, seek proper medical attention immediately.

#### **3. What Are the Signs and Symptoms?**

If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head, look for any of the following signs and symptoms of a concussion:

##### **Signs Exhibited By Athletes and Observed by Coaches:**

- Dazed or stunned;
- Confusion about game assignment, position, score and/or opponent;
- Forgets sports plays;
- Clumsy movement;
- Delayed response to questions;
- Loss of consciousness (even briefly);
- Behavior or personality changes; or
- Inability to recall events before or after a hit or fall.

##### **Symptoms Reported by Athletes:**

- Headache or “pressure” in head;
- Nausea or vomiting;
- Dizziness or balance problems;
- Double or blurred vision;
- Sensitivity to light or noise;
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy;
- Concentration or memory loss;
- Confusion; or
- Does not “feel right.”

#### **4. How Can I Help Prevent Concussions?**

While every sport is different, here are some general steps you can take to prevent concussions:

- Make sure your child wears the right protective equipment for their sport (e.g., helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). Protective equipment must fit properly, must be in good condition, and must be worn consistently and correctly.
- Know the signs and symptoms of a concussion.
- Ensure that your child follows the coach’s rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Encourage your child to practice good sportsmanship.

## 5. What Should I Do If I Think My Child Has a Concussion?

- 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 your child to return to play.
- Keep your child out of play until he or she has been symptom-free for at least 24 hours and evaluated and cleared by a licensed physician.
- Concussions are serious and can take time to heal. Children who return to play too quickly – while the brain is still healing – risk a greater chance of having a second concussion. Subsequent concussions can be very serious and could even result in permanent brain damage.
- **Promptly inform your child's coach and at least one School District official about any recent concussion in any sport, regardless of where the injury occurred.** Coaches and school districts **must** know if your child had a recent concussion in any sport. If your child received a concussion in another sport or activity (either on- or off-campus), it is possible that your child's coach may never know about it unless you tell them.

## 6. What If My Child Seems to Have Sustained a Concussion During A School Activity?

Any student who has sustained, or who is believed to have sustained, a concussion during a school-related activity will be immediately removed from that activity. If there is any doubt as to whether the student has sustained a concussion, the school must presume that the student has been so injured until proven otherwise.

## 7. What Rules Apply for the Return to School and Activities After a Concussion?

- The student **cannot** resume athletic activity until he or she has been symptom free for at least 24 hours, and has been evaluated by and received written and signed authorization from a licensed physician. In some cases, the student will also be required to receive clearance from the school district's medical director prior to resuming school activities.
- The school must follow any directives issued by the student's treating physician with regard to limitations and restrictions on school attendance and activities for that student.
- Any required authorizations will be kept on file in the student's permanent health record.

## 8. Where Can I Find More information?

The New York State Education Department publication, "*Guidelines for Concussion Management in the School Setting*" (June 2012), contains information related to concussions and guidelines for the return to school of students who have suffered such injuries. See [www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/schoolhealth/schoolhealthservices/ConcussionManageGuidelines.pdf](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/schoolhealth/schoolhealthservices/ConcussionManageGuidelines.pdf). See also, <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/schoolhealth/schoolhealthservices/>.

This School District Notice is adapted from the New York State Department of Health Model Notice, "*When in Doubt Take Them Out! Fact Sheet for Parents and Caregivers*," which is available at:

[www.health.ny.gov/prevention/injury\\_prevention/concussion.htm](http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/injury_prevention/concussion.htm)