

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU SUSPECT YOUR CHILD HAS A CONCUSSION?

Your child should not be left alone and should be seen by a doctor as soon as possible that day.

**If your child loses consciousness**, call an ambulance to take your child to the hospital immediately. Do not move your child or remove any sports equipment until the paramedics arrive.

**Problems caused by a head injury can get worse later that day or night.** Your child should not be left alone, and should be checked regularly throughout the night. If you have any concerns about your child's breathing or sleeping, wake your child up.

You should see a doctor immediately if your child's symptoms get worse, such as:

- Trouble waking up
- Increased confusion
- Seizures
- Trouble walking
- Headache that gets worse
- Vomiting more than once

## HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE FOR MY CHILD TO GET BETTER?

No two concussions are exactly the same. Most concussion symptoms disappear within a few days or weeks. Some symptoms can last much longer, however, because child and teen brains are still developing, making them more vulnerable. It may take longer to heal from a concussion if your child or teen has had a concussion before.

## HOW IS A CONCUSSION TREATED?

The most important treatment right after a concussion is resting the body and the brain. The child should not exercise, go to school, or do any activities that over-work the brain, such as reading, watching TV, listening to music, or using electronics (e.g., texting, playing video games, and using computers).

Too much stimulation of the brain too soon can make concussion symptoms worse and last longer - especially in children and teens whose brains are still developing. When children and teens start to feel better, it is important to increase learning and then play activities gradually so the brain has time to heal without being overloaded.



Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board has developed guidelines for supporting **Return to Activity** following concussion. These guidelines include a 5-phase process for **Return to Learn** followed by a 5-phase process for **Return to Play**. Concussion is a brain injury. With parental consent, school administration will work collaboratively with school psychology staff to monitor your child's progress through the 10 phases.

For more information, contact your child's school.

*"Peace, peace, to the far and the near, says the Lord; and I will heal them." (Isaiah:57.19)*



Additional resources for students and parents can be accessed at Parachute Canada. ([www.parachutecanada.org](http://www.parachutecanada.org)).

# We want to give you a heads up



## Concussions are serious



## WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

Concussions are brain injuries caused by rapid movement of the brain inside the skull. Concussions can result from a blow to the head or body (e.g., receiving a check in hockey, falling from a jungle gym, and being in a car crash even if the head has not hit anything).

Concussion changes brain function, which results in a variety of physical, cognitive, and behavioural/emotional signs or symptoms.

A concussion is difficult to diagnose. Brain scans do not always determine if a concussion exists, but ignoring the symptoms of a potential concussion can have serious and long-lasting effects.

It should be noted that injuries that result from a concussion may lead to 'second impact syndrome', which is a rare condition that causes rapid and severe brain swelling and often catastrophic results, if an individual suffers a second concussion before he/she is free from symptoms sustained from the first concussion.

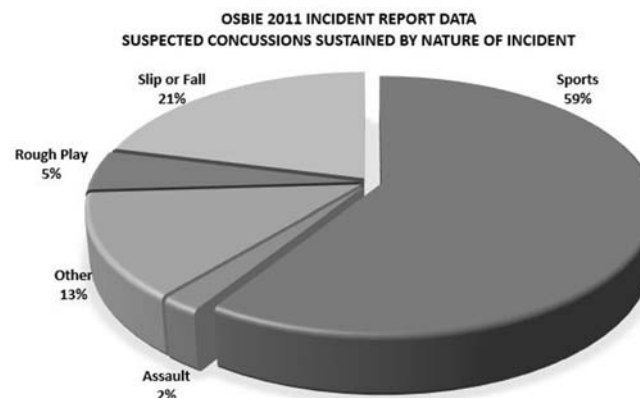
Since concussions can only be diagnosed by a medical doctor or a nurse practitioner, educators, school staff, or volunteers cannot make the diagnosis of concussion.

*"...but it was your word, O Lord, that heals all people." (Wisdom:16.3)*

## WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CONCUSSION?

### PHYSICAL

- Loss of consciousness/lack of responsiveness
- Blank stare/glassy-eyed/dazed or vacant look
- Seizures/convulsions
- Slow to get up
- Headache/pressure in head/child clutching head
- Neck pain
- Dizziness
- Balance problems/poor coordination
- Nausea or vomiting
- Loss of vision or blurred or double vision
- Seeing stars or lights
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Ringing in the ears
- Slurred speech



## WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CONCUSSION?

### COGNITIVE

- Confusion (not aware of play or events)
- Unable to answer memory questions immediately after injury
- Feeling "slowed down"
- Feeling "in a fog" or "dazed"
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty learning and remembering

### BEHAVIOURAL/EMOTIONAL

- Tired/lethargic/drowsy
- Irritable/easily frustrated or upset
- Sad/more emotional
- Anxious/nervous
- Sleeping more than usual
- Difficulty falling asleep
- Doesn't "feel right"

**YOUR CHILD CAN HAVE A CONCUSSION WITHOUT BEING KNOCKED OUT (LOSE CONSCIOUSNESS)**

**IF ANY OBSERVED SIGNS OR SYMPTOMS WORSEN  
SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION**