



POLICY NO. 4	POLICY TITLE: Rowan's Law/Concussion Policy
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Policy 4- Rowan's Law/Concussion Policy

Purpose

This Policy provides the necessary information to understand what a concussion is and the appropriate steps to take when a concussion is suspected or diagnosed. This Policy is designed to ensure that players suspected of having a concussion are promptly removed from participation, undergo a proper medical evaluation, and follow a structured process for safely returning to activity.

Scope and Application

This Policy applies to all coaches, volunteers, players, participants, and parents/guardians of athletes involved in any HCSA event or activity.

All participants, parents/guardians (if under 18), coaches, and volunteers must review Rowan's Law Concussion Awareness Resource annually and complete an acknowledgment form before participating in any HCSA activity

Definition

A concussion is a mild traumatic brain injury. It may affect the way a person thinks, feels and acts. It is caused by any blow to the head, face or neck. It impacts individuals differently.

Head Injury Recognition

A concussion should be suspected in the following situations:

- When a player/participant experiences a significant impact to the head, face, neck, or body

- If a player/participant reports any concussion-related symptoms to a peer, parent/guardian, coach, or if anyone observes the participant/player displaying visual signs of a concussion.

In some cases, a player/participant may exhibit signs or symptoms indicating a more serious head or spine injury, such as convulsions, worsening headaches, vomiting, or neck pain. If these symptoms are observed, a more severe injury should be suspected, and **Emergency Medical Assessment** should be sought immediately.

Observable Signs of a Possible Concussion:

- Lying motionless on the playing surface.
- Slow to get up after a direct or indirect blow to the head.
- Disorientation or confusion; unable to respond appropriately to questions.
- Blank or vacant stare.
- Difficulty with balance, gait problems, stumbling, slow or labored movements.
- Facial injury following a head impact.

Symptoms That May Indicate a Concussion:

- Headache or "pressure in the head".
- Balance problems or dizziness.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Drowsiness, fatigue, or low energy.
- Blurred vision.
- Sensitivity to light or noise.
- Heightened emotions, irritability.
- A sense of not feeling "right".
- Feelings of sadness, nervousness, or anxiety.
- Difficulty with memory or concentration.
- A sensation of being "slowed down" or "in a fog".

- Memory problems.

For **player/participants who are non-verbal**, concussion signs and symptoms should be identified using the criteria above.

For **player/participants who are verbal**, in addition to the above signs and symptoms, failure to correctly answer the following memory questions may suggest a concussion:

1. What venue are we at today?
2. Which sport are you participating in?
3. Is it before or after lunch?

Removal From Sport Protocol

- A participant/player must be immediately removed from all training, practice, or games if they have sustained or are suspected of having sustained a concussion, regardless of whether the concussion occurred during a sport-related activity.
- The participant/player, or their parent/guardian if the participant is under 18 years of age, will be informed that the participant must undergo a medical assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner before being allowed to return to training, practice, or games.

Reporting

- An Incident Report must be filled out immediately by a volunteer/coach and submitted to HCSA leadership following any suspected head injury
- Parents/guardians must be notified immediately if a concussion is suspected

Return to Sport Protocol

A player/participant who has been diagnosed with a concussion or is suspected of having sustained a concussion should not return to training, practice, or games until permitted to do so.

A player/participant who has not been diagnosed with a concussion may only return to training, practice, or games if the participant, or their parent/guardian if the participant is under 18, provides confirmation to the designated person(s) regarding the outcome of the player's/participant's medical assessment. Specifically, the confirmation must state that the participant:

1. Has undergone a medical assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner and has not been diagnosed with a concussion.
2. Has been medically cleared by a physician or nurse practitioner to resume training, practice, or games.

Adapted from Special Olympics Canada- Head Injury Recognition

Approved by Board, Nov 12,2025