



## **Policy Relating to Concussion, Head Injury, and Concussed Players**

The Nebraska Legislature passed legislation (Ne. Statute 71-9105) in 2011 regarding youth athletes, concussions and return to play. The City of Wahoo Parks and Recreation Department, in compliance with the Nebraska Concussion Awareness Act (LB 260), has implemented the policy below which requires adherence by all coaches, volunteers, parents, legal guardians, participants, employees, and agents of the Wahoo Parks and Recreation Department.

### **General Concussion Description**

The City of Wahoo Parks and Recreation Department is adopting this policy as part of its obligation to provide a safe playing environment for its players.

Awareness of concussions and effects of concussion on players, especially youth players has increased over the past decade. Medically, a concussion is a form of traumatic brain injury. Because it is a brain injury, a concussion is not a visible injury, such as a broken arm. It requires time to heal properly, involving both physical and mental rest. Consequences may include loss of coordination or memory, vision problems, learning issues and changes in emotions and behavior.

A concussion may result from a direct blow to the head or from an indirect blow to the body that causes various forces to affect the brain within the skull. Signs and symptoms may appear immediately or may be noticed hours or days (or longer) later. There are a wide variety of symptoms which are possible. Loss of consciousness is not required to be diagnosed with a concussion. Adolescents require more time to recover from concussions than adults.

Approved trainings, videos, concussion fact sheets, and resources can be found by going to on-line to: <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Concussion.aspx>

### **Nature and Risk**

A concussion or a traumatic head injury; and continuing to participate in a sporting event after sustaining a concussion or a traumatic head injury can leave the athlete vulnerable to greater injury or death. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even severe brain swelling with devastating and even fatal consequences.

### **Pre-Season Requirements**

All Wahoo Parks and Recreation youth sports coaches are required to read and follow the "CDC Heads Up" Fact Sheet for Youth Sports Coaches located here: [https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/media/pdfs/youthsports/coaches\\_engl.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/media/pdfs/youthsports/coaches_engl.pdf)

### **In-Season Requirements**

If the Wahoo Parks and Recreation Department, its employees, supervisors, coaches, volunteers, parents or legal guardians suspects an athlete (a child who is under the age of 18) of sustaining a concussion or traumatic head injury while participating in a sporting event or the athlete exhibits the signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion, the athlete

shall be removed immediately. The parent or guardian of the athlete shall be notified by the coach or representative of the Wahoo Parks and Recreation Department of the date and approximate time of the injury. Upon removal of the athlete suspected of sustaining a concussion or traumatic head injury, a written medical clearance from a licensed health care professional is required before the athlete can return to participate in any sporting event.

- 1) "Licensed Health Care Professional" means a physician or licensed practitioner under the direct supervision of a physician, a certified athletic trainer, a neuropsychologist, or some other qualified individual who (a) is registered, licensed, certified, or otherwise statutorily recognized by the State of Nebraska to provide health care services and (b) is trained in the evaluation and management of traumatic brain injuries among a pediatric population.
- 2) "Sporting event" means any of the following athletic activities that is organized, operated, managed, or sponsored by the Wahoo Parks and Recreation Department, such as: a game, a practice, a clinic, a scrimmage, a sports camp, an educational class, a competition, or a tryout.
- 3) "Traumatic head injury" means an injury to the head arising from blunt trauma, an acceleration force, or a deceleration force, with one of the following observed or self-reported conditions attributable to the injury: (a) transient confusion, disorientation, or impaired consciousness, (b) dysfunction of memory, (c) loss of consciousness, or (d) signs of other neurological or neuropsychological dysfunction, including: (i) seizures, (ii) irritability, (iii) lethargy, (iv) vomiting, (v) headache, (vi) dizziness, or (vii) fatigue.

### **Concussion Action Plan**

What should a parent and/or legal guardian do when a concussion is suspected?

- 1) Report the suspicion to the coach:
  - a. Look for the symptoms and signs of a concussion (see description above)
  - b. When in doubt, remove the athlete from play
- 2) Ensure that the athlete is evaluated right away:
  - a. Do not try to judge the severity yourself, get assistance from a licensed health care professional as soon as possible
- 3) Allow athlete to return to play only with permission from a licensed health care professional:
  - a. Repeated concussion prior to recovery can increase the likelihood of further problems
- 4) Both coach and parent should record the following:
  - a. The cause of the head injury and with what force
  - b. Any loss of consciousness and for how long
  - c. Any memory loss immediately after the injury
  - d. Any seizures immediately after the injury
  - e. Any other pertinent information you may think will help the health care professional

Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Wahoo Parks and Recreation Department at (402) 443-4174.