CDC Heads UP
Concussion Training
For Special Olympics Kentucky
What is a concussion?

- A type of Traumatic Brain Injury has possible causes such as a:
  - bump to the head
  - blow to the head
  - jolt to the head
  - This includes blows to the body that causes a rapid back and forth motion resulting in the brain bouncing around.
- Results in the stretching and tearing of brain cells.
How can I recognize a possible concussion?

- Concussions result from a fall or from athletes colliding with each other, the ground, or an obstacle such as a goal post.
- Even a “Ding,” “getting your bell rung” or what seems mild can be serious.
- You as a coach know your athletes the best and can recognize when something is off.
To Help Spot a Concussion

• You should watch for and ask others to report the following two things:
  • A forceful bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that results in the rapid movement of the head
  • AND
  • Any concussion signs or symptoms, such as a change in the athlete’s behavior, thinking, or physical functioning.

• Sign and Symptoms of a concussion generally show up soon after the injury.
Number 1 RULE

• Repeatedly check for signs and symptoms of a concussion
• Tell parents or care giver that you believe they possibly have a concussion.
• Provide what to watch out for at home
• Possible worsening signs and symptoms can indicate a medical emergency.
Signs and Symptoms
Symptoms Reported by Athlete

- Headache or “pressure” in the head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or Blurry Vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Just not feeling right or feeling down.
Signs Observed by Coaching Staff

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
- Can’t recall events prior to hit or fall
- Can’t recall events after hit or fall
Concussion Danger Signs
Seek Medical Assistance

- In rare cases, a dangerous blood clot may form on the brain.
- Call 9-1-1 or take the athlete to the emergency department right away if the athlete exhibits one or more of the following danger signs:
  - One Pupil Larger than the other
  - Is drowsy or cannot be awakened
  - A headache that gets worse
  - Weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination
  - Repeated Chunks or Nausea
  - Slurred Speech

- Convulsions or seizures
- Cannot recognize people or places
- Becomes increasingly confused, restless, or agitated
- Has unusual behavior
- Loses consciousness (even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously)
What should I do if a concussion is suspected?
4 Step Process

1. **Remove the athlete from play**
   - Monitor the athlete for signs and symptoms
   - When in doubt, sit them out!

2. **Ensure that the athlete is evaluated by an appropriate health care professional.**
   - Do not try to judge the severity yourself
   - As a Coach recording the following information can be of help to the health care professional:
     - Cause of the injury and force
     - Any loss of consciousness, if so how long?
     - Any memory loss or seizures following the injury
     - Athlete Medical History
3. Inform that athlete’s parents or guardians
   - Let them know about the possible concussion
   - Heads up Fact sheet for parents - (included)

4. Keep the athlete out of ALL play.
   - An athlete should be removed from play to day of the injury.
   - Athlete should not return to play or practice until an appropriate health care professional says they are symptom-free.
   - Medical decision made ONLY by a health care professional
Why Should I Care?
Why should you be concerned?

• Most athletes with a concussion recover quickly.
• Others it can take days, weeks, or longer
• Repeated concussions can cause a slow recovery or increase the chances for long-term problems.
• Rare cases, repeat concussions can result in brain swelling or permanent brain damage.
• It can even be fatal.
Did you know?

• Young children and teens are more likely to get a concussion and take longer to recover than adults.

• Athletes who have had a concussion are at increased risk for another concussion.

• All concussions are serious.

• Recognition and proper response to concussions when they first occur can help prevent further injury or death.
Returning to Training & Competition
Returning from a Concussion

• **Baseline**
  • Athletes should not have any concussion symptoms

• **STEP 1**
  • Light aerobic exercise

• **STEP 2**
  • Moderate activity (reduced times and/or weight)

• **STEP 3**
  • Add Heavy non-contact activities

• **STEP 4**
  • Return to practice and full contact

• **STEP 5**
  • Athlete returns to competition
How Can I Help Prevent Concussions?
How to help…

• Ensure that athletes follow the rules
• Encourage good sportsmanship
• Use of proper protective gear
• Protective gear fits properly
• Use a helmet when sport or activity permits one to be used

Remember:
“WHEN IN DOUBT, SIT THEM OUT!”
CDC Handouts

- Parent and Athlete Concussion Information Sheet
- Concussion Fact Sheet for Parents
- Heads Up Concussion Action Plan

These three handouts are located on the Special Olympics Kentucky Website at:

www.soky.org/trainingcourses.htm

Additional Resources including target audience trainings for Parents, School Officials, Medical Professional etc. Can be found on the CDC’s website at: http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/
Click here to take the Concussion Training Quiz

(Quiz is required to complete training)