

Bob Jones Academy

Policy for Concussions and Student Athletes

Purpose: To establish the basic structure for the identification, management and return to play of student athletes with suspected concussions.

Bob Jones Academy recognizes that concussions may be serious and potentially life-threatening and that such injury may result in serious consequences later in life if managed improperly. BJA is committed to practices that reduce the potential for short-term and/or long-term effects from such injuries.

Recognition and management

If a coach, assistant coach or game official suspects that a student athlete under his/her supervision has sustained a concussion or brain injury in a practice or in an athletic competition, the student athlete must be removed from practice or competition at that time.

A student athlete who has been removed from play may return to play if as a result of evaluating the student on site, a school-approved physician, physician assistant or athletic trainer (pursuant to scope of practice guidelines) or nurse practitioner (pursuant to written protocol) determines in his/her best professional judgment that the student athlete does not have any signs or symptoms of a concussion or brain injury.

If no school-approved healthcare provider is available on site, the student athlete will not be returned to play until evaluation by an approved healthcare provider can be conducted.

A student athlete who has been removed from play and evaluated and who is suspected of having sustained a concussion or brain injury may not return to play until he/she has received written medical clearance by a physician.

Teacher notification

A concussion can interfere with school, work, sleep, and social interactions. Many athletes who have had a concussion will have difficulty in school with short- and long-term memory, concentration, and organization. Teaching staff should be made aware of a concussed student in order to provide an appropriate learning plan until symptoms clear. In the high school the athletic director will be responsible for notifying the administrators and guidance office personnel of the presence of a concussed athlete, and they will notify that student's teachers. In the middle school the athletic director will be responsible for notifying the administrative

assistant and the assistant principal of a concussed athlete, and they will notify the student's teachers. A student in either level will be asked to submit a concussion care plan from his/her physician which specifies dates and details regarding return to school, return to practice and return to play activities.

Concussion management plan

BJA will utilize guidelines and procedures developed by the National Federation of High School Athletes (NFHS), South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, South Carolina Department of Education, and the Centers for Disease Control along with other pertinent information to develop and implement a comprehensive and practical concussion management plan for identifying and managing sports-related concussions. BJA will utilize this plan to inform and educate coaches and student athletes and their parents/legal guardians of the nature and risk of concussions, including the dangers associated with continuing to practice and/or play after a concussion.

Information to parents/legal guardians

BJA will annually distribute the Concussion Fact Sheet for Parents/Legal Guardians and Student Athletes to all coaches, volunteers, and student athletes and their parents/legal guardians. The concussion information sheet will provide information on the nature and risk of concussion and brain injury and on the risks associated with continuing to practice and/or play after a concussion or brain injury.

The parent/legal guardian's receipt of the information sheet will be documented in writing before the student athlete is permitted to participate in an athletic competition or practice.

Training of coaches and assistant coaches

All coaches and assistant coaches will be trained in CPR/AED, first aid, and concussion management. A yearly review of signs and symptoms and management of concussion will be conducted and documented. The review will utilize information and training videos on the NFHS website and on the CDC Heads Up concussion website. Other pertinent information may also be used.

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Protocol for Concussions and Student Athletes

Definition

As defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head, face or neck that can change the way the brain normally works. Concussions can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head to move rapidly back and forth. Most concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Proper management is essential to the immediate safety and long-term future of the injured individual. A concussion can be difficult to diagnose, and failing to recognize the signs and symptoms in a timely fashion can have dire consequences.

Signs of a concussion

The following signs of a concussion in a student athlete may be observed by a coach, athletic trainer, game official, school nurse or physical therapist:

- Appears dazed, stunned or disoriented; demonstrates decreased alertness
- Forgets plays or demonstrates short-term memory difficulty
- Slurs words
- Exhibits difficulties with balance or coordination
- Answers questions slowly or inaccurately
- Exhibits seizures or vomiting
- Exhibits changes in level of consciousness

Symptoms of concussion

The following symptoms of a concussion may be reported by the student athlete to a coach, athletic trainer, game official, school nurse or physical therapist:

- Headache
- Nausea
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double vision or changes in vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Feeling sluggish or foggy
- Difficulty with concentration and short-term memory
- Sleep disturbance
- Irritability or changes in personality and behavior

Concussion Management

Evaluation

If a coach, athletic trainer or game official suspects that a student athlete under his/her control/supervision has sustained a concussion or brain injury in a practice or in an athletic competition, the student athlete will be removed from practice or competition at that time.

- A student athlete displaying signs or symptoms of concussion will be evaluated by a school-approved healthcare provider as outlined in state law (physician, athletic trainer, nurse practitioner or physician assistant).
- If no approved healthcare provider is available, the student athlete will not be returned to participation until evaluation by an approved healthcare provider can be conducted.
- A healthcare provider must use a standardized concussion assessment instrument.

Return to play (RTP)

A student athlete who has been removed from play may return to play if as a result of evaluating the student athlete on site, the school approved physician, physician assistant or athletic trainer (pursuant to scope of practice guidelines) or nurse practitioner (pursuant to written protocol) determines in his/her best professional judgment that the student athlete does not have any signs or symptoms of a concussion or brain injury.

Any student athlete determined to be concussed may not return to play on the same day of injury.

A student athlete with a suspected concussion is only to be released to the direct care of his/her parent/legal guardian unless emergency transportation is necessary.

The parent/legal guardian of a student athlete determined to be concussed will be contacted and counseled regarding management of the injury.

A student athlete who has been cleared to return to practice or play must obtain from his/her physician an appropriate graduated RTP protocol as well as any specific instructions concerning classroom work.