Southern Independent Schools

Concussion Management Policy

Purpose

SIS is committed to providing a safe environment for all students participating in an SIS Event. SIS recognises that Sport Related Concussion (SRC) is a growing health concern in Australia with athletes of all levels of sports and all ages affected.

Safe Participation, together with responding to Concussion Incidents are a paramount concern of SIS. SIS recognises the risk to students where concussion incidents occur and ams to employ proactive risk mitigations practices by ensuring Member School have sufficient plans in place to address suspected or confirmed concussion incidents, noting the significant risk to students if they continue to engage in sports before fully recovered from concussion.

Scope

This policy applies to all Member School staff, volunteers, contractors, families, and students.

This Policy is made available via our public website.

Concussion

Concussion is a complex process caused by trauma that transmits force to the brain either directly or indirectly and results in temporary disturbance or impairment of brain function. It can happen from an impact that is not directly to the head, and concussion does not always cause loss of consciousness.

Concussion most commonly causes temporary impairment, and the symptoms may develop over the hours or days following the injury. This means that it may be difficult to determine, by either staff, parents, or medical practitioners, immediately after the injury whether a person is concussed. Cognitive functions in children and adolescents typically take up to 4 weeks to recover.

Concussion occurs most often in sports which involve body contact, collision, or high speed.

The Concussion Recognition Tool, provided at Appendix One, outlines the recommended process to assist in identifying concussion, however, formal assessment by a Medical Professional is required.

Member School Concussion Management Policy

All SIS Member Schools are required to develop and maintain a Concussion Management Policy that, as a minimum:

- Has a strict return to sport process, including:
    - Requirement of Medical Clearance to return to sport.
- Specifically excludes parental clearance as sufficient to return to sport.
- Requires, and sets out the procedure for maintaining, a Concussion Register.
- References a reputable Concussion Recognition Tool.

Event Requirements

For Each SIS Event the SIS Member School must ensure:

- Students who have not been cleared to return to sport are not participating in any SIS Contact Sport.
- Staff supervising are appropriately trained and have access to or understanding of the Concussion Recognition Tool.
- Where a student has a history of Concussion staff are appropriately briefed as to the student's history and risk factors.

Emergency Response

In the event of a suspected or confirmed concussion incident, First Aid Procedures should be followed, including the following requirements, as a minimum, which are noted in the Concussion Recognition Tool:

> ***"Any athlete with a suspected concussion should be – IMMEDIATELY REMOVED FROM PRACTICE OR PLAY and should NOT RETURN TO ANY ACTIVITY WITH RISK OF HEAD CONTACT, FALL OR COLLISION, including SPORT ACTIVITY until ASSESSED MEDICALLY, even if the symptoms resolve."***

Consultation

SIS consults with all member schools in the development of Policies and Procedures and welcomes feedback from students, parents or carers or the wider SIS community.

Review

This policy is to be reviewed, approved and endorsed annually, as a minimum, by the SIS Committee.

Last Review: February 2024.

Approval: February Committee Meeting.

Next Review: February 2025.

Appendix One – Concussion Recognition Tool

CRT6™

Concussion Recognition Tool

To Help Identify Concussion in Children, Adolescents and Adults

What is the Concussion Recognition Tool?

A concussion is a brain injury. The Concussion Recognition Tool 6 (CRT6) is to be used by non-medically trained individuals for the identification and immediate management of suspected concussion. It is not designed to diagnose concussion.

Recognise and Remove

Red Flags: CALL AN AMBULANCE

If **ANY** of the following signs are observed or complaints are reported after an impact to the head or body the athlete should be immediately removed from play/game/activity and transported for urgent medical care by a healthcare professional (HCP):

- **Neck pain or tenderness**
- **Seizure, 'fits', or convulsion**
- **Loss of vision or double vision**
- **Loss of consciousness**
- **Increased confusion or deteriorating conscious state (becoming less responsive, drowsy)**
- **Weakness or numbness/tingling in more than one arm or leg**
- **Repeated Vomiting**
- **Severe or increasing headache**
- **Increasingly restless, agitated or combative**
- **Visible deformity of the skull**

Remember

- In all cases, the basic principles of first aid should be followed: assess danger at the scene, check airway, breathing, circulation; look for reduced awareness of surroundings or slowness or difficulty answering questions.
- Do not attempt to move the athlete (other than required for airway support) unless trained to do so.
- Do not remove helmet (if present) or other equipment.
- Assume a possible spinal cord injury in all cases of head injury.
- Athletes with known physical or developmental disabilities should have a lower threshold for removal from play.

If there are no Red Flags, identification of possible concussion should proceed as follows:

Concussion should be suspected after an impact to the head or body when the athlete seems different than usual. Such changes include the presence of **any one or more** of the following: visible clues of concussion, signs and symptoms (such as headache or unsteadiness), impaired brain function (e.g. confusion), or unusual behaviour.

Developed by: The Concussion in Sport Group (CISG)

Supported by:

International Olympic Committee · FEI · FIA · FIFA · IIHF · World Rugby

CRT6 Concussion Recognition Tool

To Help Identify Concussion in Children, Adolescents and Adults

1: Visible Clues of Suspected Concussion

Visible clues that suggest concussion include:

- Loss of consciousness or responsiveness
- Lying motionless on the playing surface
- Falling unprotected to the playing surface
- Disorientation or confusion, staring or limited responsiveness, or an inability to respond appropriately to questions
- Dazed, blank, or vacant look
- Seizure, fits, or convulsions
- Slow to get up after a direct or indirect hit to the head
- Unsteady on feet / balance problems or falling over / poor coordination / wobbly
- Facial injury

2: Symptoms of Suspected Concussion

Physical Symptoms
Headache
"Pressure in head"
Balance problems
Nausea or vomiting
Drowsiness
Dizziness
Blurred vision
More sensitive to light
More sensitive to noise
Fatigue or low energy
"Don't feel right"
Neck Pain

Changes in Emotions
More emotional
More Irritable
Sadness
Nervous or anxious

Changes in Thinking
Difficulty concentrating
Difficulty remembering
Feeling slowed down
Feeling like "in a fog"

Remember, symptoms may develop over minutes or hours following a head injury.

3: Awareness

(Modify each question appropriately for each sport and age of athlete)

Failure to answer any of these questions correctly may suggest a concussion:

"Where are we today?"

"What event were you doing?"

"Who scored last in this game?"

"What team did you play last week/game?"

"Did your team win the last game?"

Any athlete with a suspected concussion should be - IMMEDIATELY REMOVED FROM PRACTICE OR PLAY and should NOT RETURN TO ANY ACTIVITY WITH RISK OF HEAD CONTACT, FALL OR COLLISION, including SPORT ACTIVITY until ASSESSED MEDICALLY, even if the symptoms resolve.

Athletes with suspected concussion should **NOT**:

- Be left alone initially (at least for the first 3 hours). Worsening of symptoms should lead to immediate medical attention.
- Be sent home by themselves. They need to be with a responsible adult.
- Drink alcohol, use recreational drugs or drugs not prescribed by their HCP
- Drive a motor vehicle until cleared to do so by a healthcare professional

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