



Alamance Parks Concussion Management Program

Purpose

Alamance Parks understands the importance of protecting youth in the community and in our programs and therefore wishes to provide a safe and secure environment. Alamance Parks adopted this policy in order to provide safe practices that will protect youth from the potential for serious complications from concussions. Outlined below are some guidelines for parents, coaches, and staff in dealing with possible concussions. These are general guidelines and must not be used in place of a proper medical examination.

Definition

Concussion – a type of traumatic brain injury, caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that causes the stretching and tearing of brain cells, damaging the cells and creating chemical changes in the brain. Symptoms of a concussion are (but not limited to):

- Dazed or stunned appearance
- Forgetfulness
- Clumsy movements
- Nausea
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Emotions of “not feeling right”

Management of a Concussion

1. Assume a concussion has occurred if any of the above symptoms occur, even in the mildest form.
2. Remove the athlete from play.
3. Ensure that the athlete is evaluated by an appropriate health care professional. Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Call 911 if parents or guardians are not present. Closely monitor the athlete for any signs or symptoms of a concussion.
4. Inform the athlete’s parents or guardians immediately. Inform them about the possible concussion and instruct them to get proper medical care for the athlete.
5. Keep the athlete out of play. Any athlete removed from play because of a concussion must have medical clearance by a licensed health care provider before he or she can resume practice or competition. No exertional activity for athlete until symptoms have disappeared.



Prevention

Insist that safety comes first. To help minimize the risks for concussion or other serious brain injuries:

- Ensure that athletes follow the rules for safety and rules of the sport.
- Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Make sure the athlete wears the right protective equipment for their activity. Protective equipment should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly.
- Wearing a helmet is a must to reduce the risk of severe brain injury and skull fracture. However, a helmet does not make an athlete immune to concussion. There is no “concussion-proof” helmet.

Returning athletes to play

If an athlete has a concussion, his or her brain needs time to heal. He/she should only return to sports practices under the supervision of an appropriate health care professional. The CDC’s Heads Up Program suggests the following guidelines:

Baseline: Athletes should not have any concussion symptoms. Athletes should only progress to the next level of exertion if they do not have any symptoms at the current step.

Step 1: Begin with light aerobic exercise only to increase an athlete’s heart rate. This means about 5 to 10 minutes on an exercise bike, walking, or light jogging. No weight lifting at this point.

Step 2: Continue with activities to increase an athlete’s heart rate with body or head movement. This includes moderate jogging, brief running, moderate-intensity, stationary biking, moderate-intensity weightlifting (reduced time and/or reduced weight from your typical routine.)

Step 3: Add heavy non-contact physical activity, such as sprinting/running, high-intensity stationary biking, regular weightlifting routine, non-contact sport-specific drills (in 3 planes of movement).

Step 4: Athlete may return to practice and full contact (if appropriate for the sport) in controlled practice.

Step 5: Athlete may return to competition.



Training and Education

All coaches, support volunteers and staff working with youth under the age of 18 at any Alamance Parks sponsored events will receive an orientation that includes:

- The definition of a concussion
- The signs and symptoms of a concussion
- How to manage concussions until medical care is administered
- How to prevent concussions
- How to return an athlete to play

Attendees will be required to sign a form acknowledging that they attended and participated in the orientation session. Records of attendance must be taken for all orientation and training sessions.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I hereby acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand Alamance Parks' Concussion Management Program and agree to comply with this policy in all respects.

Print Name	Sign Name	Date
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