

CITY OF WELLAND

POLICY

Policy Title: Municipal Concussion Policy	
Date of Approval: May 8, 2018	Policy Number: SER-015-0008
Lead Role: Manager, Recreation & Cultural Division	Support Role: Arts & Culture Co-ordinator
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POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Welland recognizes the seriousness of concussions and is committed to keeping participants safe by reducing the incidence of concussions, and ensuring the proper management of participants with suspected and diagnosed concussions following appropriate return to play guidelines.

PURPOSE

This policy is intended to:

- Align with the Ontario Concussion Strategy. As part of the Strategy, an approach was developed by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport (MTCS) to ensure that sport organizations and community sport and recreation providers have concussion protocols which are consistent to those required by Ontario School Boards. The City of Welland - specifically, Recreation & Culture Division staff, will work closely with program participants, instructors, local minor sport organizations, and additional recreation providers to ensure proper awareness.
- Educate users/participants on concussion awareness and prevention

DEFINITIONS:

A concussion is a common injury among children and adolescents participating in sports and recreational activities. A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that can have serious effects on a young, developing brain. While most children and teens with concussion recover quickly and fully, some will have concussion symptoms that last for days, weeks, months, or even years.

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A concussion:

- is a brain injury that causes changes in how the brain functions, leading to symptoms/signs that can be physical (e.g., headache, dizziness), cognitive (e.g., difficulty concentrating or remembering), emotional/behavioural (e.g., depression, irritability) and/or related to sleep (e.g., drowsiness, difficulty falling asleep);
- may be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that transmits a force to the head that causes the brain to move rapidly within the skull;
- can occur even if there has been no loss of consciousness (in fact, most concussions occur without a loss of consciousness);
- cannot normally be seen on X-rays, computed tomography (CT) scans, or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans; and
- is a clinical diagnosis made by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner.

Participants, who have had a concussion at any time of their lives, have a greater chance of getting another concussion. Recognizing and responding properly to concussion when they first occur can help prevent further injury. The young brain - especially the adolescent brain - is most susceptible to concussion and takes longer to recover (than adults). Without identification and proper management, a concussion can result in permanent brain damage, and in rare occasions, even death. Signs and symptoms can be immediate or may be delayed by hour or days. Concussion symptoms are made worse by exertion – both physical and mental. It may be more difficult for children under 10 years of age to communicate how they are feeling.

Concussion Signs and Symptoms:

Presence of any one or more of the following signs & symptoms may suggest a concussion:

Loss of consciousness	Headache
Seizure or convulsion	Dizziness
Balance problems	Confusion
Nausea or vomiting	Feeling slowed down
Drowsiness	Pressure in the head
More emotional	Blurred vision
Irritability	Sensitivity to light
Sadness	Amnesia
Fatigue or low energy	Feeling like “in a fog”
Nervous or anxious	Neck Pain
“Don’t feel right”	Sensitivity to noise
Difficulty remembering	Difficulty concentrating

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

All City of Welland employees/contractors that are directly involved with recreation programming and/or the supervision of participants will:

- Follow appropriate procedures related to “Removal from Play” in cases where a concussion is suspected.
- Document all suspected concussions sustained while participating in a City of Welland program using an Incident Report.
- Ensure that participants follow the “6 Step Return to Play” protocol in cases where a concussion has been diagnosed by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner. Any return to play considerations must be accompanied by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner’s written approval.

Note: If an individual is unconscious/has experienced any loss of consciousness, initiate emergency action plan and call 911.

Participants and/or parents/guardians will:

- Notify an employee/contractor of City of Welland about any current or previous concussions or concerns, and ensure ongoing communication throughout the “Return to Play” process.

GOALS:

The City of Welland will:

- Ensure that all participants and/or parents/guardians are aware of this policy.
- Provide information to program participants and/or parents/guardians that addresses concussion prevention, identification and management.
- Provide training on the prevention, identification and management of suspected and diagnosed concussions to all employees/contractors that are directly involved with recreation programming and/or the supervision of participants.
- Provide information to program participants and/or parents/guardians that addresses concussion prevention, identification and management.
- Encourage that all participants wear a helmet during skating programs. Helmets are mandatory for all hockey related programs including, but not limited to, sledge hockey, senior skate, shinny hockey.
- Sport Facility Lessees will be supplied a copy of the City of Welland Municipal Concussion Policy and be required to sign off that they have received and reviewed the policy.

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POLICY DETAILS

Implementation

The City of Welland Municipal Concussion Policy will be made available to all participants and user groups

Procedures

Removal from Play (suspected concussion)

- A. If an individual is conscious and suspected of having a concussion, he/she is to be immediately removed from play/activity.
- B. Employees/contractors are to understand that they have the authority to remove from play any individual suspected of having a concussion – “when in doubt, sit them out.”
- C. Following their removal from play, any individual suspected of having a concussion is to be assessed by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner.

6 Step Return to Play (diagnosed concussion)

Step 1: No activity, only complete mental and physical rest. Proceed to step 2 only when all symptoms are gone.

Step 2: Light aerobic exercise, such as walking or stationary cycling. Monitor for symptoms and signs. No resistance training or weight lifting.

Step 3: Sport specific activities and training (e.g. skating).

Step 4: Drills without body contact. May add light resistance training and progress to heavier weights. Go to step 5 after written medical clearance.

Step 5: Begin drills with body contact.

Step 6: Game play. (The earliest a concussed athlete should return to play is one week).

Failure to comply with this Policy may result in loss of permit reservations, and/or program participation.

Accessibility

This policy will comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005 and Accessibility Standards resulting from the Act. The City will ensure that participation in sport opportunities is accessible to people of all ages and abilities.