

## **Influencing Policy & Legislation**

- Work with local school districts to develop a concussion action plan for student athletic programs.
- Work with local school districts or the coaches association to implement policies on concussion prevention and management. An ideal policy will include:
  - The policy should require that athletes have a pre-season baseline testing exam conducted by a trained health care professional.
  - Concussion policy statements can be developed to include a commitment to safety, a brief description about concussion, and information on when athletes can safely return to play (i.e., an athlete should be kept out of play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating for concussion, says they are symptom-free and it's OK to return to play).
  - Parents and athletes should sign the concussion policy statement at the beginning of each sports season.

## **Changing Organizational Practices**

- Work with local schools to implement concussion action plans before the season starts.
- Ensure that pre-season physicals required by the school district include a baseline testing exam.
- Help area schools develop a system to monitor the health of athletes, especially those involved in multiple sports.
- Establish a mechanism for coaches, parents and athletes to report concussion injury within a particular school or school district.

## **Fostering Coalitions & Networks**

- Get support from other parents and/or league or school officials to help ensure that the concussion policy is in place before the first practice.
- Work with local youth sports organizations to maintain a safe playing environment and the use of the right protective equipment in student athletic programs.
- Enlist trained, health care professionals (including school nurses) to support concussion injury prevention and management efforts at the school and district levels.

## **Educating Providers**

- Educate student trainers, coaches and school officials about the signs and symptoms of concussion, its dangers and potential long-term consequences of concussion.
- Educate health care professionals on baseline testing of youth athletes.
- Educate health care professionals on evaluation for safe return to play.
- Educate sporting event first responders to recognize the signs and symptoms of concussion.
- Distribute the CDC Heads Up fact sheets to coaches and school officials, and youth sports associations.

## **Promoting Community Education**

- Host concussion awareness presentations through the local youth sports association.
- Coordinate a concussion awareness campaign during pre-season training camps.
- Distribute educational materials about concussions at local sporting events.

- Promote information about concussions through the CDC Injury Center social media outlets.
  - Facebook.com/cdcheadsup
  - Twitter.com/CDCInjury

### **Strengthening Individual Knowledge & Skills**

- Educate athletes and parents on the signs and symptoms of concussion. Show the CDC *Heads Up* video and pass out concussion fact sheets at the beginning of the season; if a concussion occurs, distribute again.
- Teach athletes it's not smart to play with a concussion. Before the first practice, talk to athletes and parents about the dangers of concussion and potential long-term consequences of concussion.
- Ask athletes or parents to report concussions that occurred during any sport or recreation activity. This will help in monitoring injured athletes who participate in multiple sports throughout the year.
- Provide information to guardians of athletes about concussions and consequences of concussions. This should include providing information to schools, sporting clubs, and intramural sports associations.

<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports/prevention.html>