

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF
FORSYTH COUNTY, GEORGIA ESTABLISHING A FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS
AND RECREATION YOUTH SPORTS CONCUSSION POLICY**

WHEREAS, the well-being of youth athletes who participate in athletic competition at Forsyth County Parks and Recreation facilities is of paramount concern to the Board of Commissioners of Forsyth County, Georgia, and the Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Department; and

WHEREAS, concussions and head injuries pose a significant risk to youth athletes who participate in sports and athletic competition; and

WHEREAS, the effects of concussion can be mitigated by prompt recognition and appropriate response; and

WHEREAS, many youth athletes, parents and guardians, coaches, and others involved in youth athletics may lack awareness about prevention, identification, and treatment of concussions, as well as when it is most appropriate for the youth athlete to return to play; and

WHEREAS, adoption of a viable policy focused on concussion education, prevention, and a uniform return-to-play policy is in the best interest of the youth athletes who participate in athletic competition at Forsyth County Parks and Recreation facilities, and of their families and friends who care about their health and well-being; and

WHEREAS, the objective of this Youth Sports Concussion Policy is to establish a policy that will provide all youth sport coaches permitted to use Forsyth County Parks and Recreation facilities with guidelines concerning how to recognize signs of a concussion, procedures for dealing with athletes and parents when a concussion is suspected, as well as recommendations for cessation of activity and a participant's return to action.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Commissions that the following Youth Sports Concussion Policy will be in effect as of November 7, 2013 for all youth athletes who participate in athletic competition at Forsyth County Parks and Recreation facilities:

YOUTH SPORTS CONCUSSION POLICY

I. DEFINITIONS

- A **concussion** is a brain injury that is characterized by an onset of impairment of cognitive and/or physical functioning, and is caused by a blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that causes a sudden jarring of the head. A concussion typically results in the rapid onset of short-lived impairment of neurologic function that resolves spontaneously. A concussion may result in neuropathological changes, but the acute clinical symptoms largely reflect a functional disturbance rather than structural injury. A concussion can occur with or without a loss of consciousness, and proper management is essential to the

immediate safety and long-term future of the injured individual.

- A **health care provider** means a licensed physician or another licensed individual under the supervision of a licensed physician, such as a nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or certified athletic trainer who has received training in concussion evaluation and management.
- **Return to play** means to participate in a non-medically supervised practice or athletic competition.
- **Youth athlete** means a participant in a youth athletic activity who is four years or older and under 19 years of age
- **Cleared to participate** means that the youth athlete has been released to return to play by an appropriate licensed healthcare provider as defined above.

II. SIGNS/SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION

The common **signs/symptoms of a concussion** include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Appears dazed or stunned;
- Headache or pressure in head;
- Nausea or vomiting;
- Double or blurry vision;
- Sensitivity to light;
- Sensitivity to noise;
- Forgets an instruction;
- Loss of consciousness;
- Loss of memory;
- Confusion about an assignment / position;
- Is unsure of games, score or opponent;
- Balance problems or dizziness;
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy;
- Concentration or memory problems;
- Answers questions slowly;
- Moves clumsily;
- Mood, behavior, personality changes; and
- Inability to recall events before/after injury.

III. COURSE OF ACTION

The following course of action shall apply to all sports competitions and sports related activities occurring at Forsyth County Parks and Recreation facilities:

1. If a youth athlete experiences or exhibits any of the above **signs/symptoms of a concussion** following an injury, contact event, or blow to the head, face, neck or body, he or she shall be immediately removed from the athletic event, game, practice or contest. It is recommended that the athlete not return to play until he or she is cleared to participate by a health care provider. **(WHEN IN DOUBT, KEEP THEM OUT!)**
2. The youth athlete's parent or guardian shall be notified that:

- (a) He she experienced an injury, contact event, or blow to the head, face, neck or body, and/or that he or she exhibited one or more **signs/symptoms of a concussion**;
 - (b) That he or she was removed from the athletic event, game, practice or contest; and
 - (c) That it is recommended that he or she see an appropriate licensed health care provider before return to play. (See Paragraph 4.)
3. It is recommended that a youth athlete suspected of having a concussion be evaluated by a health care provider the day of the injury, contact event, or blow to the head, face, neck or body.
 4. If a youth athlete is deemed by a health care provider to have sustained a concussion, he/she shall not return to play until receiving clearance from a health care provider for a full or graduated return to play.

IV. TRAINING FOR COACHES

All coaches (head and assistant) should be knowledgeable regarding the **signs/symptoms of a concussion**, appropriate strategies to reduce the risk of concussions, how and when to seek proper medical treatment for a youth athlete suspected of having a concussion, and when the athlete may safely return to play.

Accordingly, all coaches (head and assistant) responsible for a youth athletic sports team that is utilizing Forsyth County Parks and Recreation facilities are strongly encouraged to complete The Center for Disease Control's *Heads Up-Concussion in Youth Sports* video training course, which is available at http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html, in advance of their participation in youth athletic coaching, practice events, or game events Forsyth County Parks and Recreation facilities.

Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports is a free, online course available to coaches, parents, and others helping to keep athletes safe from concussion. It features interviews with leading experts, dynamic graphics and interactive exercises, and compelling storytelling to help one recognize a concussion and know how to respond if an athlete is believed to have suffered a concussion. (Parents and guardians of youth athletes are also urged to visit The Center for Disease Control's website and view the video training.)

As a further resource, it is also strongly recommended that coaches participate in the free, online course on concussion management entitled *Concussion in Sports* prepared by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFSH), which can be found at www.nfhslearn.com.

V. ROLE OF COACHING STAFF / GAME OFFICIALS / COMPLIANCE

1. Coaches:

Coaches (head and assistant) and their staff are NOT expected to “diagnose” a concussion, as that is the job of an appropriate licensed health care professional. Coaches/Coaching Staffs shall use their best judgment in observing the **signs/symptoms of a concussion**, and in taking the action mandated by this Policy in the event that a youth athlete experiences or exhibits any of the **signs/symptoms of a concussion** following an injury, contact event, or blow to the head, face, neck or body.

2. Game Officials:

Games Officials are NOT expected to “diagnose” a concussion, as that is the job of an appropriate licensed health care professional. Games Officials shall use their best judgment in observing the **signs/symptoms of a concussion** in the event that a youth athlete experiences or exhibits any of the **signs/symptoms of a concussion** following an injury, contact event, or blow to the head, face, neck or body. If a Game Official observes questionable signs, symptoms, or behavior that is consistent with a concussion, the Game Official should notify the head coach (or an assistant coach if the head coach is not available) and remove the participant from the games for further evaluation.

A Game Official is not responsible for the sideline evaluation or management of the youth athlete after he or she is removed from play. The responsibility of further evaluation and management of the suspected symptomatic youth athlete falls upon the coach (head and/or assistant), and, if applicable, an appropriate licensed health care provider.

3. Compliance:

Any coach (head or assistant) that disregards the safety and well-being of a youth athlete as it relates to this Youth Sports Concussion Policy will be immediately suspended from coaching youth athletics and events at all Forsyth County Parks and Recreation facilities.

Additionally, any coach (head or assistant) that misuses this policy to prohibit an otherwise healthy, fit, uninjured player from participating in a youth athletic sporting event, practice or competition will be immediately suspended from coaching youth athletics and events at all Forsyth County Parks and Recreation facilities.

4. Issuance of Informational Material:

All Youth Athletic Associations shall be required to issue informational material to the parents and/or guardians of all youth athletes who will be participating in youth athletics, practices and/or sporting events at a Forsyth County Parks and Recreation facility at the time of registration or at the first team meeting.

5. Placement of Youth Sports Concussion Policy on County Website:


This Youth Sports Concussion Policy shall be posted on the County website and require all Youth Athletic Associations utilizing Forsyth County Parks and Recreation facilities to link to this Policy.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, we have hereunto affixed the SEAL of the County of Forsyth, State of Georgia, and signatures of the members of the governing body thereof, and this Youth Sports Concussion Policy shall become effective, this 7th day of November, 2013.

FORSYTH COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Ralph J. Amos, Chairman



Jim Boff, Vice Chairman



Brian R. Tam, Secretary

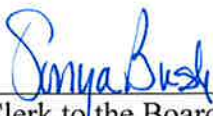


Cindy J. Mills, Member



Todd Levent, Member

Attest:



Clerk to the Board