

## **SYAA Concussion Management Policy** **Effective March 01, 2016**

SYAA is committed to providing a safe environment and the safety of all players on SYAA fields. This Concussion Management Policy (CMP) implements procedures for the managing concussion injuries of SYAA players. All SYAA coaches, managers, and players should adhere to the policy and meet the requirements set forth.

A concussion is a mild traumatic brain injury that occurs when a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. This sudden movement of the brain can cause stretching and tearing of brain cells, damaging the cells and creating chemical changes in the brain. It is followed by a change in behavior or performance.

Not giving the brain enough time to heal can be dangerous. A repeat concussion before the brain heals can slow recovery or increase the chances for long-term health problems. These may include changes in how the child thinks, feels, and acts, as well as their ability to learn and remember.

The SYAA Concussion Management Policy is designed to reduce player risk and increase awareness. The CMP goals are to:

1. Protect the players.
2. Educate the coaches and staff.
3. Educate the parents and identify resources parents can use to educate themselves and their children/players on concussion identification, treatment, and prevention.
4. Develop a policy and protocol that is consistent with the law in the State of Virginia and Virginia Youth Sports Concussion Policies.

The CMP has three parts: 1. Education, 2. Head Impact Protocol and Verification, 3. Return to Play

### **Part 1 – EDUCATION**

- All Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Directors of Coaching, Technical Staff and team managers shall familiarize themselves with the Centers for Disease Controls & Prevention (**CDC**) educational materials, in particular the **CDC Concussion Symptoms Checklist**.  
<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUP/youth.html>
- All Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Directors of Coaching, Technical staff are required to complete the **Heads Up Online Concussions Course** available on the <http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/index.html> and submit the certificate of completion to their League Commissioner.
- Each SYAA coach and/or travel team manager will review the CMP with each player and their parents and provide them with the links referenced above.
- Competitive players and Parent/Guardian are required to sign and return **CDC Parent and Athlete Concussion Information Sheet** prior to the beginning of each season. Team managers will maintain a record of it.
- SYAA recommends all coaches and parents install the **Concussion Recognition & Response (CRR)** phone application on their personal smart phones.

## Part 2 – HEAD IMPACT PROTOCOL and VERIFICATION

- Any coach – and specially the designated head coach of the team – supervising a game or team activity is responsible for observing head injuries and being sensitive to activities that have the potential for head injury. e.g. heading practice.
  - In any situation, a parent may elect to remove his or her child from the activity if the parent is concerned about a head injury or potential head injury.
- In the event a player sustains a suspected head impact or concerning injury he or she will be removed from the activity immediately. This includes but not exclusively limited to games, training sessions, skill sessions, other on-field activities.
- If an injury or suspected injury occurs, the coach, team manager or a designated parent will use the **CRR** phone evaluation and/ or **CDC checklist** to determine the presence of symptoms and next steps.
- When the player exhibits one or more of the symptoms of concussion the player shall not be allowed to return to any SYAA activity until after he or she is reviewed and cleared by a licensed health care provider.
- When emergency medical care is needed in the absence of the parent or guardian, the coach/manager shall call 911 and have the player taken to the ER, along with the notarized medical release.
- Team coaches are required to report to their Director of Coaching any player removed from the field for an evaluation after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body or other injury. The Director of Coaching shall contact the player's parent or guardian regarding the status of the player's medical evaluation if any and the results.
- Given the serious nature of concussions and the difficulty in diagnosing brain trauma, caution should be used in evaluation symptoms and the return to play.

## Part 3 – RETURN TO PLAY

- Once a player has been removed from play due to suspected concussion or has failed the **CRR/CDC guidelines**, medical clearance by a licensed healthcare provider must be provided in writing to the team Coach prior to the player's participation in SYAA activities. The Coach will then submit it to their League Commissioner.
- Once clearance to play has been authorized by a licensed healthcare provider.
- Parental or coach consent alone is not acceptable for return to play.
- Prior to return to play the Team Coach, Parent and Player shall meet to communicate an established gradual return to play for the player.