Understanding Concussion and Its Impact on Learning

A concussion can impact a child's ability to learn and stay focused. Regardless of the intensity of the head impact, a concussion is a type of brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. It is caused by a bump, blow or jolt (with or without physical contact) to the head. **Concussions can occur without loss of consciousness.**

Signs and symptoms of a concussion can show up right after an injury or may not appear or be noticed until hours or days after the injury.

Physical symptoms that are common following a concussion may include:

- Headaches
- Double Vision
- · Light & Noise Sensitivity
- Dizziness
- Lack of Coordination
- Physical Fatigue

Learning difficulties that are common following a concussion may include:

- Mental Fatigue
- Attention Slippage
- Memory Lapses
- Slower ability to take in/respond to new information
- (Possibly) language problems

Any of these symptoms may negatively impact a student's learning, behavior, emotional regulation, or social functioning when they return to school.

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Additional Resources

www.cdc.gov/headsup

Return-to-Learn After Concussion

NC State Board of Education Policy (HRS-E-001)

Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Act



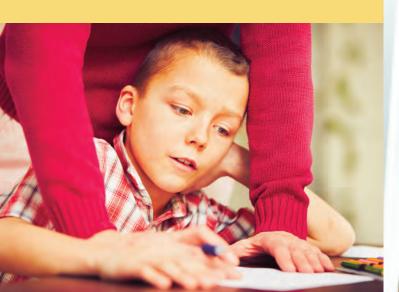


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Head Injury: Concussion

There are many signs and symptoms of a head injury or concussion. If your child or teen has one or more of the symptoms below following an injury to their head or neck, seek medical attention right away.

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about events
- Answers questions slowly
- · Repeats questions
- Can't recall events prior to/after the hit, bump or fall
- · Nausea/vomiting
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavioral or personality changes
- Forgets their class schedule or assignments; other memory lapses
- Unsteady on their feet



Returning to School After a Concussion:

How can I help my child return to school safely following a concussion?

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction has a policy requiring each public school system to develop a plan to provide needed support for students who have been diagnosed with a concussion.

Children and teens who return to school after a concussion may need to:

- · Take rest breaks as needed
- · Spend fewer hours at school
- Be given more time to take tests or complete assignments
- Reduce time reading or writing or in other academic tasks
- Reduce time on computers or other electronic devices





Steps Parents Should Take:

- Seek/ensure treatment by a medical professional
- Find out who the "Concussion Contact" is at your child's school
- Talk with your child's teacher, school nurse, coach, school psychologist, and/or counselor about your child's concussion and symptoms they are experiencing
- Provide the paperwork from your doctor, documenting the concussion and any suggested accommodations for school
- Provide ALL follow up documentation from the doctor to the appropriate school personnel
- Communicate with school staff members any concerns you have regarding your child's recovery/functioning

Learning, behavior, and emotions can be affected in many different ways and for differing lengths of time following a concussion. Your child's school will assist you in developing a plan of action specific to your child in order to facilitate their safe return to the classroom/school environment.