

London Regional Children's Museum

A Handbook for Employees and Volunteers

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT POLICY

July 2014

OVERVIEW

The London Regional Children's Museum has developed this policy in order to minimize and manage potential concussions. Employees and volunteers who are supervising physical activities where a child/guest sustains a possible concussion, must be able to identify and properly manage the situation.

Our objective is ensure that staff and volunteers of the Museum are aware that the health and safety of our visitors is essential in fostering and maintaining health and safe environments in which children can learn, play and grow.

We have a role to play in ensuring the safety of those participating in physical activity and for encouraging and motivating participants to assume responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others. Awareness of the signs and symptoms and knowledge of how to properly manage a concussion is critical to recovery.ⁱ

Definition

Concussion is the term for a clinical diagnosis that is made by a medical doctor or a nurse practitioner.

The definition of concussion given below is adapted from the definition provided in the concussion protocol in the Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines.ⁱⁱ

A concussion:

- is a traumatic brain injury that causes changes in the way in which the brain functions and that can lead to symptoms that can be physical (e.g., headache, dizziness), cognitive (e.g., difficulty in concentrating or

remembering), emotional/behavioural (e.g., depression, irritability), and/or related to sleep (e.g., drowsiness, difficulty in falling asleep);

- may be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face, or neck or by 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 by means of medical imaging tests, such as X-rays, standard computed tomography (CT) scans, or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans.

Roles and Responsibilities: Employees & Volunteers

Education is the key to the prevention of concussion. It is important to take a preventative approach when dealing with concussions.

Development of Awareness/Prevention

Prior to activity the instructor/leader meets with the children/participants to go over the following information on concussion: (These steps have been modified from the policies developed from the Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines).ⁱⁱⁱ

- The definition and causes of a concussion, signs and symptoms, and dangers of participating in an activity while experiencing the signs and symptoms of a concussion
- The risks associated with the activity/sport for a concussion and how to minimize those risks
- The importance of immediately informing the instructor/leader of any signs or symptoms of concussions, and removing themselves from the activity.
- The importance of respecting the rules of the game and practising fair play

Identification: Common Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion^{iv}

Following a blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that transmits a force to the head, a concussion should be suspected in the presence of any one or more of the following signs or symptoms:

Possible Signs Observed (Something that will be observed by another Person)	Possible Symptoms Reported (Something the child/participant will feel/report)
<p><i>Physical</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vomiting • slurred speech • slowed reaction time • poor coordination or balance • blank stare/glassy-eyed/dazed or vacant look • decreased playing ability • loss of consciousness or lack of responsiveness • lying motionless on the ground or slow to get up • amnesia • seizure or convulsion • grabbing or clutching of head <p><i>Cognitive</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • difficulty concentrating • easily distracted • general confusion • cannot remember things that happened before and after the injury • does not know time, date, place, class, type of activity in which he/she was participating • slowed reaction time (e.g., answering questions or following directions) <p><i>Emotional/Behavioural</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strange or inappropriate emotions (e.g., laughing, crying, getting angry easily) <p><i>Sleep Disturbance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drowsiness • insomnia 	<p><i>Physical</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • headache • pressure in head • neck pain • feeling off/not right • ringing in the ears • seeing double or blurry/loss of vision • seeing stars, flashing lights • pain at physical site of injury • nausea/stomach ache/pain • balance problems or dizziness • fatigue or feeling tired • sensitivity to light or noise <p><i>Cognitive</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • difficulty concentrating or remembering • slowed down, fatigue or low energy • dazed or in a fog <p><i>Emotional/Behavioural</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • irritable, sad, more emotional than usual • nervous, anxious, depressed <p><i>Sleep Disturbance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drowsy • sleeping more/less than usual • difficulty falling asleep
<p><i>Additional Information:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs/symptoms may appear within hours or days of the injury. • The signs/symptoms may be different for everyone. • Signs for younger children (under the age of 10) may not be as obvious as in older children 	

*** (Refer to the “Tool to Identify a Suspected Concussion” in the Appendix section of this manual. This form is to be completed, should an incident occur. Please give this form to the parent/guardian, and keep a copy for the incident report.)**

Management Procedures for a Diagnosed Concussion

INITIAL RESPONSE – Removal from Physical Activity:^v

The initial response steps as outlined below are adapted from the concussion protocol as outlined by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sports.

An individual responsible for those who are participating in organized physical activity who believes that, following a blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that transmits a force to the head, a participant in the activity may have suffered a concussion needs to take immediate action.

For a participant who is:

- UNCONSCIOUS

- Initiate emergency procedure and call 911.
- If applicable, contact the child/youth's parent/guardian to inform them of the injury and that their child is being transported to the hospital.
- Stay with the individual until Emergency Medical Services arrives.
- Monitor and document any physical, emotional and/or cognitive changes.
- **For someone who is Unconscious:**
 - Assume there is also a possible head and/or neck injury and, only if trained, immobilize the individual before ambulance transportation to hospital.
 - Do not remove athletic equipment (e.g. helmet) unless there is difficulty breathing.
 - Important: Even if consciousness is regained, he/she needs to be examined by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner.

- CONSCIOUS

- Remove the participant from the activity immediately.
- If signs are observed or symptoms are reported, a concussion should be suspected. Signs or symptoms may appear within hours or days of the injury – so be sure to monitor the child consistently during this time period.
- If a concussion is not suspected (i.e., signs are not observed and symptoms are not reported), the participant may resume physical activity; however, a parent/guardian should still be contacted and informed of the incident.

- If a concussion is suspected, contact the parent/guardian and inform them of the injury and the need to be examined by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner. Stay with the injured participant until a parent/guardian or emergency contact arrives.
- Monitor and document any physical, emotional and/or cognitive changes. Remember: signs and symptoms of concussion may appear within hours or days of the injury.
- **For a Participant who is Conscious:**
 - If in doubt, sit them out.
 - Do not administer medication (unless conditions require it – e.g., insulin)
 - Ensure a parent/guardian is aware that he/she must inform the supervisor of the participant's condition.

From this point, parents/guardians and medical professionals should develop an individualized and gradual return to activity plan for the child who sustained the concussion. They should inform museum staff of this plan if the child is returning to participate in additional activities at the CM.

Immediately following the initial response, Duty Staff are responsible for filling out an Incident Report Form, available at the front desk. Witnesses to the incident may be required to complete the Incident Report Form at the discretion of the Duty Staff. The Executive Director must be informed of the incident via text message, as well as the steps taken to manage the situation. For children in our care, if a parent, guardian or emergency contact cannot be reached, the child will remain in our care.

Training

All staff of the London Regional Children's Museum will be provided with training surrounding concussion awareness, prevention, identification and management. The subject will be mentioned in all orientation and onboarding packages, and supervisors will review this information regularly with employees and volunteers.

***Please refer to "Tool to Identify a Suspected Concussion" Appendix for additional information. Here you will find a form to complete with the details of the incident. Please give this form to the parent/guardian, and keep a copy to go along with the incident report.**

ⁱ From "Concussion Guidelines," by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport, 2013, *found online at:* http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/concussions/docs/mtcs_concussion_guide_en.pdf

ⁱⁱ From "Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines – Concussion Package" by The Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines, 2013, found online at: <http://safety.ophea.net/release-of-new-and-revised-concussion-protocols>

ⁱⁱⁱ From "Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines – Concussion Package" by The Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines, 2013, found online at: <http://safety.ophea.net/release-of-new-and-revised-concussion-protocols>

^{iv} From "Concussion Guidelines," by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport, 2013, *found online at:* http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/concussions/docs/mtcs_concussion_guide_en.pdf

^v From "Concussion Guidelines," by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport, 2013, *found online at:* http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/concussions/docs/mtcs_concussion_guide_en.pdf