

# Pelham Panthers Concussion/Return to Play Policy

## Background and Rationale

A concussion is a common injury among children and adolescents participating in organized team sports.

A concussion:

- Is a brain injury that causes changes in how the brain functions, leading to symptoms/signs that can be physical (e. g., headache, dizziness), cognitive (e.g., difficulty concentrating or remembering), emotional/behavioural (e.g., depression, irritability) and/or related to sleep (e.g., drowsiness, difficulty falling asleep);
- May be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face or neck, or 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 on x-rays, computed tomography (CT) scans, or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans; and,
- Is a clinical diagnosis made by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner.

The young brain, especially the adolescent brain, is most susceptible to concussion and takes longer to recover (than adults). Without identification and proper management, a concussion can result in permanent brain damage and in rare cases, even death.

## Commitment

The Pelham Panthers Basketball Association is dedicated to keeping our athletes safe, reducing the incidence of concussions, and ensuring the proper management of players with suspected and diagnosed concussions. We are committed to sharing information/providing education on the seriousness of concussions, and on concussion prevention, identification, and management, with players, parents, coaches, and team officials. The Pelham Panthers Basketball Association promotes and adheres to a *“when in doubt, sit them out”* philosophy. Any player suspected of having a concussion shall be immediately removed from play and not be allowed to return to play that day. Following their removal from play, any player suspected of having a concussion is to be assessed by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner for diagnosis. Any player with a diagnosed concussion must follow a step-wise Return to Play protocol. Any return to play consideration must be accompanied by a medical doctor’s or nurse practitioner’s written approval.

## Policy Components

### 1. Concussion Awareness and Education

#### 1.1 Coaches/Team Officials

- a. At the beginning of each season all coaches and team officials will be provided with copies of and must review: [The Concussion Guidelines for Coaches and Trainers](#) and the [Pocket Concussion Recognition Tool](#).
- b. At a preseason coaches meeting, all coaches will watch the [Dr. Mike Evans – Concussion Management Video](#).

- c. All coaches will ensure that parents have been provided with copies of: the [Concussion Guidelines for Parents and Caregivers](#) and [the Pelham Panthers Basketball Association Code of Conduct](#). A signed copy of the Code of Conduct will be retained by the coaches each season.
- d. All coaches and team officials must ensure players practice appropriate sport techniques, and must encourage safety, respect, fair play and good sportsmanship.
- e. All coaches must complete the generic -sport module of the [Making Head Way Concussion e-Learning series](#).
- f. All coaches to complete required NCCP certification that includes concussion components.

## 1.2 Parents and Players

- a. All parents and players are required to review and sign the [Pelham Panther Basketball Association Code of Conduct](#) at the beginning of each season.
- b. All parents shall notify their child's coach about any current or previous concussions or concerns, and ensure ongoing communication with their child's coach throughout the Return to Play Process.
- c. All parents will notify their child's school principal if their child has a suspected or diagnosed concussion.
- d. All parents will review the [Concussion Guidelines for Parents and Caregivers](#) and will be encouraged to complete the [Parent Concussion Quiz- Niagara Region](#).

## 1.3 Association – General

The Pelham Panthers Basketball Association shall:

- a. Communicate this policy to all coaches, team officials, players and parents.
- b. Post this policy on their website.
- c. Post links to concussion resources (for coaches, officials, players and parents) on their website and update as necessary.
- d. Review this policy at least annually to ensure the material is current.

## 2. Removal from Play and Return to Play

Please refer to the [Ontario Basketball Concussion Prevention and Management Policy](#) for the appropriate steps regarding removal from play and return to play.

## Appendix: Additional Resources/Tools and Websites

[Ontario Government – Concussions Web Portal](#)

[Parachute Canada – Concussions](#)

[Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sports – Active and Safe](#)

[Coaching Association of Canada – Concussion Awareness](#)

[Niagara Region Public Health – Concussions and Minor Sports](#)

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Bleich PPBA President

Date: \_\_\_\_\_