



Risk management



Train your camp counselors about concussions

Your staff's preparedness to manage a potential concussion is a critical element of a healthy camp environment. Whether a child falls from a horse or a climbing wall or suffers a collision playing a field game, it is possible for him or her to suffer a concussion even when wearing protective gear. In addition to having properly trained medical staff present, creating and maintaining awareness of concussion management practices for on-site staff supports a safer camp environment.

What are concussions?

Read the basics about concussions below:

- Concussions are one of the most commonly reported injuries in children and adolescents who participate in sports and recreational activities. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that just under 4 million sports-related and recreation-related concussions occur in the U.S. each year.
- A concussion is caused by a blow or motion to the head or body that causes the brain to move rapidly inside the skull. The risks of catastrophic injuries or death are significant when a concussion or head injury is not properly evaluated and managed.
- Concussions are a type of brain injury that can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally functions.
- Concussions can occur in any organized or unorganized sport or recreational activity and result from a fall or from players colliding with each other, the ground, or with obstacles.
- Concussions can occur with or without loss of consciousness. The vast majority occurs without loss of consciousness.
- Continuing to play with a concussion or symptoms of head injury leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury and even death.
- The Zackery Lystedt Law requires you to have a plan for managing concussions or head injuries should one occur.
- These requirements apply to all sports and may also have application to recreational activities.

Learn more about concussion education

Educate yourself on concussion injuries and concussion management. More information, documents, and toolkits can be obtained from the [CDC here](#). While this material may reference coaches, athletes, and parents, it is easily transferable to camp staff, campers, and parents.

Consider these tips:

- Review the following documents:
 - Fact sheet for coaches
 - Fact sheet for athletes
 - Fact sheet for parents
 - Coach's clipboard facts

- Order the free Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports toolkit and review materials included. Incorporate this into your staff training.
- Provide campers or youth athletes and their parents or guardians with the following information:
 - Fact sheet for athletes
 - Fact sheet for parents
- Require a concussion and head injury information sheet be signed and returned by the youth athlete and the athlete's parents, custodial parent, or guardian prior to the youth athlete's participation and return to practice or competition.

Additional information on concussion management can be found on **ImPACT's website**.