



Changing perceptions around the importance of concussion education

Concussion education is an important step in implementing safe concussion protocols within a sport organization. Sport administrators, coaches, parents and players should ideally do concussion education annually and there are specific concussion resources available for each stakeholder.

Each sport may have a have different risk of concussion driving their motivation to be educated about concussions. A challenge sports with a low risk of concussion face is that the sport administrators, coaches, parents and players may not feel concussion education is a priority. An important consideration is that even if the risk is low in your sport, participants within your organization can show up at a game or practice with a concussion they sustained from another sport. Concussion awareness and protocols can help make sure the appropriate steps are taken when that happens and reduce the risk of secondary consequences due to mismanaged concussions.

If you are having challenges with members of your organization not completing concussion education here are some strategies you can try.

1. **Credible source with persuasive messaging**

Consider who in your organization has an influential voice. If the message around the importance of completing concussion education comes from them, individuals may be more likely to complete concussion education. Players, coaches and parent leaders who have experience going through concussion protocol and benefited from education can help provide persuasive messaging. Their message could include the pros and cons of completing education along with their personal story.

2. **Safety pledges**

Another strategy you could try is to have coaches, parents and players within your organisation complete a safety pledge at the beginning of each season that includes awareness and appropriate action should a suspected concussion occur. You can customize this pledge to include more than just concussion messaging and make it part of your risk management strategy.

3. **Make completing concussion education easy**

Recommending free online concussion education (e.g., completing the concussion awareness training tool cattonline.com) reduces two of the most common barriers reported by individuals when asked about the challenges of completing concussion education (time and cost). Interestingly, our implementation study of Canadian National Sport Organisation stakeholders suggested that some stakeholders were not aware that concussion education could be free. Make sure that the link to concussion education and your protocol is prominent on your site, sent out in communications and discussed at a pre-season parent and/or participant meeting.

4. Mandatory education

One of the easiest ways to increase the number of individuals completing concussion education is to make it mandatory and track completion. If this is a step you want to take, consider using the [Concussion Awareness Training Tool](#). There is an option to have your participants submit their certificates.