

RICHMOND KICKERS YOUTH SOCCER CLUB SOCCER CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT POLICY

Effective January 1st, 2016

The Concussion Management Policy (the “**CMP**”) of Richmond Kickers Youth Soccer Club, Inc. (“**RKYSC**”) implements a standard operating procedure for the managing and monitoring concussion injuries of RKYSC players. A concussion is a mild traumatic brain injury that occurs when a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. It is followed by a change in behavior or performance.

The CMP is effective as of the adoption date and beginning in the Spring season of 2016.

The CMP was developed with the following factors in mind:

1. A reduction of risk for RKYSC players.

Concussions are a real medical risk in youth sports. Increased education will help to ensure that when concussions occur in a RKYSC game or training setting, they will be managed in a standard process. At the same time, there is a great deal of misinformation regarding head injuries and concussions. Without proper education and policy, the risks associated with concussions increase.

2. Increased public awareness of concussions in youth soccer and youth sports.

By educating our coaches, staff, and membership more generally about concussions, RKYSC aims to both reduce the risks to our players and to increase public awareness and sensitivity to the symptoms and proper treatment of concussion policy.

The goals of the CMP are to:

1. Protect our players.
2. Educate our coaches and staff.

3. Educate our parents and identify resources parents can use to educate themselves and their children/players on concussion identification, treatment, and prevention.
4. Develop a policy and protocol that is consistent with the law in the State of Virginia.

The CMP has three parts: Education, Head Impact Protocol & Verification, and Return to Play,

Part 1 – Education

- RKYSC will hold a coaches educational seminar (in one or several sessions) each year on injury recognition and return to play protocol with a target date for the seminar at the start of the fall season.
- It will be mandatory for all competitive coaches, Directors of Coaching and technical staff to attend the seminar. Any exceptions to attendance shall be approved by the RKYSC Technical Director.
- All competitive coaches, Assistant Coaches, ADP Coaches, Recreation Coaches, Directors of Coaching, Technical Staff and travel team managers shall download the **Concussion Recognition & Response (CRR)** phone application for on site evaluation of head impacts and familiarize themselves with the Centers for Disease Controls & Prevention (**CDC**) educational materials, in particular the **CDC Concussion Symptoms Checklist**.

Concussion Recognition & Response (CRR) App



CDC HEADS UP to Youth Sports

- All competitive coaches, Assistant Coaches, ADP Coaches, Recreation Coaches, Directors of Coaching, Technical Staff and

travel team managers are required to complete the **Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports Online Course** available on the CDC website (<http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/training/index.html>) and RKYSC Travel Club and Recreation Club policy pages on www.richmondkickers.com and submit the certificate of completion to the appropriate Director over each program. (Example ADP coaches submit copy to ADP Technical Director, Recreation coaches submit copy to Recreation Director.

- A competitive coach and/or travel team manager on each RKYSC team will review the RKYSC concussion policy at a parent meeting and provide team parents with the links referenced above. (To be implemented starting in the Fall 2016)
- Competitive players and Parent/Guardian are required to sign and return **CDC Parent and Athlete Concussion Information Sheet** prior to the player being rostered and passed for the season. Team Managers will distribute and collect the signed document for every player and submit to the RKYSC Office. The **CDC Parent and Athlete Concussion Information Sheet** is available for download on the Concussion Resources page of the RKYSC website. (To be implemented starting in the Fall 2016)
- RKYSC will provide via website, email, registration systems, team distributions, workshops or parent meeting educational information to parents. RKYSC recommends all parents install the **Concussion Recognition & Response (CRR)** phone application on their personal smart phones and familiarize themselves with the **CDC Concussion Symptoms Checklist**.
- RKYSC Travel and Recreational coaches will be provided **CDC Concussion Symptoms Checklist** and other CDC Concussion documents at the preseason coach's meeting and via the coach registration program with electronic verification of receipt of the documents.

Part 2 – Head Impact Protocol & Verification

- In the event a RKYSC player sustains a suspected head impact or concerning injury he or she will be removed from the activity immediately. This includes but not exclusively limited to games, training sessions, skill sessions, other on-field activities.
- The player shall be evaluated by a coach/team manager utilizing the **CRR** phone evaluation or **CDC Concussion Symptoms checklist** to evaluate the player in the absence of a qualified licensed health care professional. A player removed from the field of play for evaluation after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body shall be kept out of play the day of the injury unless cleared by a Health Care Provider. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right away after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury.
- When the player exhibits one or more of the symptoms of concussion after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, the player shall not be allowed to return to any RKYSC activity until after he or she is reviewed and cleared by a licensed health care provider, per Virginia State law and documented to the RKYSC office.
- When emergency medical care is needed in the absence of the parent or guardian, the coach/manager shall call 911 and have the player taken to the ER, along with the notarized medical release form obtained from each family before the start of the season.
- In any situation, a parent may elect to remove his or her child from the activity if the parent is concerned about a head injury or potential head injury.
- Any RKYSC coach – and especially the designated head coach of the team – supervising a game or team activity is responsible for observing head injuries and being sensitive to activities that have the potential for head injury e.g. heading practice.
- As per above, if an injury or suspected injury occurs, the coach, team manager or a designated parent will use the **CRR** phone evaluation and/or **CDC checklist** to determine the presence of symptoms and next steps as above

- Team coaches are required to report to their Age Appropriate Program Director any player removed from the field for an evaluation after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body or other injury. The Age Appropriate Program Director shall contact the player's parent or guardian regarding the status of the player's medical evaluation if any and the results.
- Given the serious nature of concussions and the difficulty in diagnosing brain trauma, caution should be used in evaluation symptoms and the return to play.

Part 3 – Return to Play

- Once a player has been removed from play due to suspected concussion or has failed the **CRR/CDC guidelines**, medical clearance by a licensed healthcare provider must be provided in writing to the Age Appropriate Program Director or RKYSC Office prior to the player's participation on – or-off field RKYSC physical activities.
- Once clearance to play has been authorized by a licensed healthcare provider, RKYSC will institute the gradual return to play.
- Parental consent alone is not acceptable for return to play.
- Coach consent alone is not acceptable for return to play.
- Prior to return to play, the Age Appropriate Program Director, Team Coach, Parent, and Player shall meet to communicate and establish a gradual return to play plan for the player. The written Return to Play Plan shall be signed by the Player, Parent, Team Coach, and the Age Appropriate Program Director and shall be provided to the RKYSC Office for the player's file.
- Parents seeking a specialized medical evaluation or needing assistance in obtaining information, RKYSC recommends utilizing Bon Secours, Dr. Rishi Bala at 804.325.8801