



## **Play Smart, Your Brain Matters**

*The District of Columbia Athletic Concussion Protection Act  
A Concussion Awareness and Training Program*

### **What is the Athletic Concussion Protection Act?**

The concussion law applies to athletes 18 years old or younger in the District of Columbia. The Act requires preparation and training of a broad set of key athletic, school, medical and school personnel in concussion recognition and response. Athletes suspected of sustaining a concussion are to be removed from practice or play and only allowed to return to sport participation after written clearance by a licensed healthcare provider who is experienced in the evaluation and management of concussions.

### **What is the Concussion Care and Evaluation Training Program?**

Funded by the DC Department of Health, Children's National and MedStar Sports Medicine are jointly spearheading a first-of-its-kind concussion care pilot program with partners like the city's Department of Parks and Recreation, the DC State Athletic Association, and the Brain Injury Association of Washington, DC.

The program provides concussion care training and educational materials on concussions in youth sports. The program is geared towards youth and student athletes, athletic program administrators, coaches, school nurses, and parents on how to identify a concussion and how to return to learn, play, and work.

Also as part of the program, the partners will be conducting an evaluative study to look at concussion knowledge and awareness among adults involved in youth sports and activities in the District of Columbia.

### **What is a concussion?**

A mild traumatic brain injury (TBI), or concussion, occurs when a person experiences a blow to the head that causes changes in the way the brain functions. Since you cannot see a concussion, and since some athletes may not experience or report any symptoms for hours or days after an injury, it is important that coaches and parents watch their athlete for any changes in behavior.

After a concussion is diagnosed, the brain needs to heal by not being over challenged. As the Athletic Concussion Protection Act outlines, it is important to work with your healthcare provider to determine when it is the right time to return to school and the playing field.

For questions about the training program, contact:

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