

## **OWHA MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS OWHA CONCUSSION CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **CONCUSSIONS in SPORT**

A concussion is a common form of head or brain injury that causes changes in how the brain functions, leading to symptoms that can be physical, cognitive or emotional/behavioural. A concussion can occur from a direct or indirect blow to the head or body that causes the brain to move rapidly back and forth within the skull.

Though concussions are common sport injuries, particularly among children and youth, there are sometimes subtle symptoms that may go unnoticed. Without identification and proper management, a concussion has the potential to result in permanent or severe brain damage.

Ontario takes the health and well-being of athletes seriously. Ontarians want to know that amateur athletes are protected by a safe sport system where everyone understands concussions, actively minimizes the risk of concussions, and knows what to do immediately if someone is concussed.

The government is improving concussion safety to create a world class amateur sport system where athletes can participate safely.

The OWHA supports the government in improving concussion safety to create a world class amateur sport system where athletes can participate safely.

### **CONCUSSION CODE OF CONDUCT**

OWHA participants, parents and guardians of athletes who are under 18 years of age, coaches, trainers, officials, bench staff and all named-insured individuals are required to make an annual written commitment and acknowledgement at the time of registration with the OWHA that:

- 1) They have read the age appropriate OWHA Concussion Awareness Resource within the past 3 (three) months and that they:
  - a. Make a commitment to fair play and respect for all;
  - b. Make a commitment to concussion recognition and reporting, including self-reporting of possible concussion and reporting to a designated person when an individual suspects that another individual may have sustained a concussion;
  - c. Make a commitment to following and supporting the Hockey Canada return-to-sport process;
  - d. Make a commitment to sharing any pertinent information regarding incidents of a removal from sport with the athlete's school and any other sport organization with which the athlete has registered;
  - e. Coaches and trainers are required to make a commitment to providing opportunities before and after each training, practice and competition to enable athletes to discuss potential issues related to concussions;
  - f. Make a commitment to zero-tolerance for prohibited play that is considered high-risk for causing concussions;
  - g. Acknowledgement of mandatory expulsion from competition for violating zero-tolerance for prohibited play that is considered high-risk for causing concussions;
  - h. Acknowledgement of escalating consequences for those who repeatedly violate the concussion code of conduct.
  - i. The OWHA/Hockey Canada Injury Report form and the Concussion Follow Up and Communication Form must be completed in a timely manner and submitted to the OWHA within the required time frame.

### **PRE-SEASON MEETING**

It is the strong recommendation of the OWHA that all OWHA teams hold a pre-season meeting with players, parents and staff in attendance. An important item on the agenda is concussion education to re-enforce the OWHA Concussion Awareness Guide and to discuss responsibilities and communication channels within the team.