Helping Coaches Prevent, Recognize, and Manage Concussions

Concussions can happen to any athlete – male or female – in any sport. Caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, concussions can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Each year, as many as 3.8 million sports and recreation related concussions occur in the United States.

To reduce the number of sports and recreation related concussions, CDC worked with partners to develop a tool kit for coaches called *Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports*. Coaches play a key role in preventing concussions and in managing them properly if they occur. The *Heads Up* tool kit contains practical, easy-to-use information for coaches, athletes, and parents about the possible consequences of concussion, signs and symptoms of a concussion, and safe and appropriate concussion management. *Heads Up* materials are available in both English and Spanish and in a variety of formats so that coaches, athletes, and parents can access this vital information.

During the national launch, CDC distributed more than 20,000 tool kits, tracked over 19,000 *Heads Up* web hits, and garnered extensive media exposure for this important resource.

Evaluation of the *Heads Up* coaches' tool kit demonstrated positive changes in coaches' concussion prevention and management knowledge, attitudes, behavior, and skills.

- 50% reported viewing concussions more seriously after using the tool kit.
- 68% reported using the tool kit to educate others about concussions.
- 34% reported that the tool kit increased their knowledge about how to prevent and manage concussions.
- 38% reported making changes in how they dealt with concussions, including placing more emphasis on training techniques and safety equipment that minimize the risk of concussion.

Heads Up helped coaches reverse long-held beliefs that athletes who experience a bump to the head should "walk it off" and "get back in the game." *Through Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports*, CDC has educated coaches about concussion, and equipped coaches with information that improved their ability to prevent and manage concussion in their athletes. CDC continues to create education tools for physicians, coaches, parents, and caregivers in order to prevent concussions and other traumatic brain injuries (TBIs).

To download *Heads Up* materials, go to: www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports/default.htm.

For more information about CDC at Work, please contact us at (202) 245-0600 or go to http://www.cdc.gov/washington/.

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