

Concussions in Ontario

Helping to ensure the safety of students in school settings is among the Ministry of Education's highest priorities and is critical to promoting well-being.

What is a concussion?

Causes

A concussion may be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face, or neck or by a blow to the body that transmits a force to the head that causes the brain to move rapidly within the skull.

Signs & Symptoms

A concussion is a brain injury that causes changes in the way the brain functions. It can lead to symptoms that can be physical, cognitive, emotional/behavioural and/or related to sleep.

Identification

Initial concussion-assessment strategies can help identify concussions. Most concussions occur without a loss of consciousness.

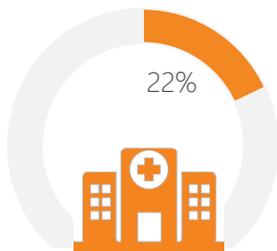
Diagnosis

Concussions can only be diagnosed by a medical doctor or a nurse practitioner. Educators, school staff or volunteers cannot make the diagnosis of concussion.

What does the concussion data in Ontario say?



Concussions represented 21% of Ontario student injuries treated by a doctor or nurse.



22% of students reported being knocked out or admitted to hospital due to a head injury in their lifetime.



Boys were 44% more likely to report diagnosis of a concussion than girls.



2x

Ontario students who reported a head injury were 2.3 times more likely to report very high emotional distress and 2.2 times more likely to report less successful academic outcomes.



1 in 10 Ontario students were told by a doctor or nurse that they had a concussion.

Sports, falls and bicycle accidents were the leading causes of head injuries.



Bike accidents



Falls



Sports

Top 3 causes of sports injury concussions:

- 1 Team sports with intentional contact
- 2 Team sports with no intentional contact
- 3 Individual sports

Sources: Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children (HBSC), 2014 and Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS), 2013, over the course of a year.

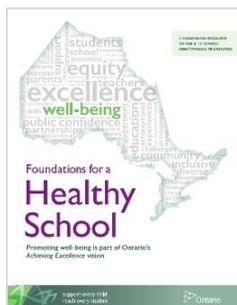
Note: The HBSC definition of a concussion (student told by a doctor or nurse they had a concussion) differs from the OSDUHS definition of head injury (student unconscious for at least 5 minutes or overnight stay in the hospital).

Policy and Program Memorandum (PPM 158): *School Board Policies on Concussions* will help protect Ontario students from life-threatening injuries.



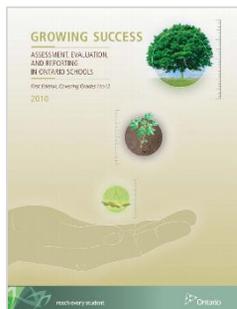
The *Ontario Government Concussion Web Portal* provides information and resources to Ontario parents, educators, coaches, children, youth and health care providers about concussions.

<http://www.ontario.ca/concussions>



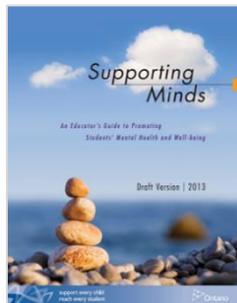
The *Foundations for a Healthy School* resource is designed to help contribute to a learning environment that promotes and supports child and student well-being – one of the four core goals in Ontario’s renewed vision for education. This goal emphasizes the need to focus not just on students’ academic success, but also on their cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development.

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/resourceF4HS.pdf>



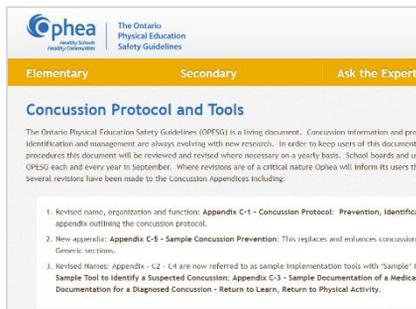
Growing Success aims to maintain high standards, improve student learning, and benefit students, parents, and teachers in elementary and secondary schools across the province.

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growSuccess.pdf>



Supporting Minds: An Educator's Guide to Promoting Students' Mental Health and Well-being is a K-12 resource guide designed to provide educators with information on the early signs of mental health and addiction problems, along with strategies that can be used in the classroom to support students.

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/SupportingMinds.pdf>



The *Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines Concussion Protocol*, managed by Ophea, represents the minimum standards for risk management practice for school boards. They provide tools for teachers, intramural supervisors and coaches on safe practices, in every activity, in order to minimize the element of risk. The Safety Guidelines include concussion protocols to help prevent and identify suspected concussions and manage a student’s safe return to learning and physical activity.

<http://safety.ophea.net/concussion-protocols>