**LOUISIANA YOUTH CONCUSSION ACT (Focus on bold print)**

**LRS 40§1089.1. Legislative intent**

**A. Concussions are one of the most commonly reported injuries in children and adolescents who participate in sports and recreational activities. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that as many as three million nine hundred thousand sports-related and recreation-related concussions occur in the United States each year. A concussion is caused by a blow or motion to the head or body that causes the brain to move rapidly inside the skull. The risk for long-term, chronic cognitive, physical, and emotional symptoms associated with the development of post-concussion syndrome and chronic traumatic encephalopathy, as well as the risk for catastrophic injuries or even death, is significant when a concussion or head injury is not properly recognized, evaluated, and managed.**

**B. Continuing to play with a concussion or symptoms of head injury leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury and even death. The Legislature of Louisiana recognizes that, despite having generally recognized return-to-play standards for concussions and head injury, some affected youth athletes are prematurely returned to play resulting in actual or potential physical injury or death to youth athletes in the state of Louisiana.**

**C. The Legislature of Louisiana further recognizes that it is in the best interest of the state to create a uniform education, training, and return-to-play protocol to be followed throughout the state**.

 Acts 2011, No. 314, §1, eff. June 28, 2011

**LRS 40§1089.2. Definitions**

            As used in this Subpart:

            (1) "Healthcare provider" means a physician as defined in R.S. 37:1262, a licensed nurse practitioner, a licensed physician assistant, or a licensed psychologist, which person has received training in neuropsychology or concussion evaluation and management.

(2) "Public recreation facility" means a recreation facility owned or leased by the state of Louisiana or a political subdivision thereof.

            **(3) "Youth athletic activity" means an organized athletic activity where the majority of the participants are seven years of age or older and under nineteen years of age, and are engaging in an organized athletic game or competition against another team, club, or entity or in practice or preparation for an organized game or competition against another team, club, or entity. "Youth athletic activity" shall not include college or university activities or an activity which is entered into for instructional purposes only, an athletic activity that is incidental to a nonathletic program, or a lesson.**

            Acts 2011, No. 314, §1, eff. June 28, 2011;

**LRS40§1089.3. Louisiana youth athlete concussion education requirement**

A. The governing authority of each public and nonpublic elementary school, middle school, junior high school, and high school shall:

            (1) Prior to beginning of each athletic season, provide pertinent information to all coaches, officials, volunteers, youth athletes, and their parents or legal guardian which informs of the nature and risk of concussion and head injury, including the risks associated with continuing to play after a concussion or head injury.

            (2) Require each coach, whether such coach is employed or a volunteer, and every official of a youth athletic activity that involves interscholastic play to complete an annual concussion recognition education course which is in accordance with the provisions of Subsection C of this Section.

            (3) Require as a condition of participation in any athletic activities that the youth athlete and the youth athlete's parents or legal guardian sign a concussion and head injury information sheet which provides adequate notice of the statutory requirements which must be satisfied in order for an athlete who has or is suspected to have suffered a concussion or head injury to return to play.

            B. Each private club or public recreation facility and each athletic league which sponsors youth athletic activities shall:

            (1) Prior to beginning of each athletic season, provide pertinent information to all coaches, officials, volunteers, youth athletes, and their parents or legal guardian which informs of the nature and risk of concussion and head injury, including the risks associated with continuing to play after a concussion or head injury.

            (2) Require each volunteer coach for a youth athletic activity and each coach with whom the club, facility, or league directly contracts with, formally engages, or employs who coaches a youth athletic activity and each official to complete an annual concussion recognition course which is in accordance with the provisions of Subsection C of this Section.

            (3) Require as a condition of participation in any athletic activities that the youth athlete and the youth athlete's parents or legal guardian sign a concussion and head injury information sheet which includes but is not limited to adequate notice of the statutory requirements which must be satisfied in order for an athlete who has or is suspected to have sustained a concussion or head injury to return to play.

            C.(1) The concussion recognition education course required by this Section shall include the following information:

            (a) How to recognize the signs of and symptoms of a concussion.

            (b) The necessity of obtaining proper medical attention for a person suspected of having sustained a concussion.

            (c) The nature and risk of concussions, including the danger of continuing to play after sustaining a concussion and the proper method and statutory requirements which must be satisfied in order for a youth athlete to return to play in the athletic activity.

            (2)(a) An organization or association of which a school or school district is a member may designate specific education courses as sufficient to meet the requirements of Subsection A of this Section.

**(b) Training materials made available by the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) entitled, "Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports" and any amendments or updates thereto, training materials made available by the National Federation of High Schools for the Louisiana High School Athletic Association and any amendments or updates thereto, or other training materials substantively and substantially similar to the CDC materials, along with dissemination of a copy of the statutory requirements which must be satisfied in order for a youth athlete who has or is suspected to have sustained a concussion to return to play in the athletic activity, shall be deemed to satisfy the education requirements provided for in this Section Acts 2011, No. 314, §1, eff. June 28, 2011;**

**LRS40§1089.4. Removal from and return to play**

            A. A coach who is required to complete concussion recognition education pursuant to this Subpart shall immediately remove any youth athlete from a game, competition, or practice if any of the following occurs:

            (1) The youth athlete reports any defined sign or symptom of a concussion and is reasonably suspected of having sustained a concussion.

            (2) The coach, athletic trainer, or official determines that the youth athlete exhibits any defined sign or symptom of a concussion and he reasonably suspects that the youth athlete has sustained a concussion.

            (3) The coach or official is notified that the youth athlete has reported or exhibited any defined sign or symptom of a concussion and is reasonably suspected of sustaining a concussion by any of the following persons:

            (a) A licensed, registered, or certified medical healthcare provider operating within his scope of practice. The medical healthcare provider performing an evaluation, for the purposes of this Subsection, upon a youth athlete suspected of sustaining a concussion or brain injury may be a volunteer.

            (b) Any other licensed, registered, or certified individual whose scope of practice includes the recognition of concussion symptoms. The individual performing an evaluation, for the purposes of this Subsection, upon a youth athlete suspected of sustaining a concussion or brain injury may be a volunteer.

            B**. If a youth athlete is removed from play pursuant to this Section and the signs and symptoms cannot be readily explained by a condition other than concussion, the coach shall notify the athlete's parent or legal guardian and shall not permit the youth athlete to return to play or participate in any supervised team activities involving physical exertion, including games, competitions, or practices, until the youth athlete is evaluated by a healthcare provider and receives written clearance from the healthcare provider for a full or graduated return to play.**

            C. After a youth athlete who has sustained a concussion or head injury has been evaluated and received clearance for a graduated return to play from a healthcare provider, an organization or association of which a school or school district is a member, a private or public school, a private club, a public recreation facility, or an athletic league may allow a licensed athletic trainer with specific knowledge of the athlete's condition to manage the athlete's graduated return to play.

            D. This Section does not create any liability for, or create a cause of action against, a school, its officers, or its employees, an organization or association of which a school or school district is a member, a private or public school, a private club, a public recreation facility, or an athletic league when such person or entity has complied with the provisions of this Subpart.

            Acts 2011, No. 314, §1, eff. June 28, 2011; §1089.5. Concussion information

Concussion Signs observed and Symptoms Reported

**CDC-Centers for Disease Control Prevention**

[**https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/basics/concussion\_symptoms.html**](https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/basics/concussion_symptoms.html)

Children and teens who show or report one or more of the signs and symptoms listed below, or simply say they just “don’t feel right” after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, may have a concussion or more serious brain injury.

Concussion Signs Observed

* Can’t recall events *prior to* or *after* a hit or fall.
* Appears dazed or stunned.
* Forgets an instruction, is confused about an assignment or position, or is unsure of the game, score, or opponent.
* Moves clumsily.
* Answers questions slowly.
* Loses consciousness *(even briefly)*.
* Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes.

Concussion Symptoms Reported

* Headache or “pressure” in head.
* Nausea or vomiting.
* Balance problems or dizziness, or double or blurry vision.
* Bothered by light or noise.
* Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy.
* Confusion, or concentration or memory problems.
* Just not “feeling right,” or “feeling down”.

Signs and symptoms generally show up soon after the injury. However, you may not know how serious the injury is at first and some symptoms may not show up for hours or days. For example, in the first few minutes your child or teen might be a little confused or a bit dazed, but an hour later your child might not be able to remember how he or she got hurt.

You should continue to check for signs of concussion right after the injury and a few days after the injury. If your child or teen’s concussion signs or symptoms get worse, you should take him or her to the emergency department right away.