**POST-CONCUSSION RETURN TO SCHOOL LETTER**

Dear School Staff:

[Student]\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ sustained a concussion on \_\_\_[Date]\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Recovery typically takes between several days to several weeks. The student should return to school as soon as they can tolerate it but many students will benefit from some accommodations to their school program as they recover. As symptoms resolve and the student’s learning/cognitive functioning returns to normal, s/he can gradually progress to their normal school day with reduced supports.

**Current Symptoms:** The student is currently reporting the following symptoms as indicated by the (√) below. These can be viewed as targets for supportive classroom accommodations to assist a successful return. See suggested supports for these symptoms on page 2.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PHYSICAL** | | **COGNITIVE** | **EMOTIONAL** |
| □ Headaches | □ Fatigue | □ Feeling mentally foggy | □ Irritability |
| □ Sensitivity to light | □ Sensitivity to noise | □ Memory problems | □ Anxiety/ nervousness |
| □ Blurry/double vision | □ Nausea/ vomiting | □ Slowed thinking/ performance | □ Sadness |
| □ Balance Problems | □ Dizziness | □ Difficulty concentrating | □ Feeling more emotional |

**Return to School:** The student can return to school when:

(1) S/he can concentrate on school work for 30 minutes before symptoms worsen significantly.

(2) Symptom exacerbation reduces/resolves with cognitive rest breaks, allowing return to activity.

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| *Based on the current symptoms, he/she is \_\_\_ permitted to return to school.*  *\_\_\_ is excused for \_\_\_\_\_ days* |

**Safety Restrictions**: To reduce risk for re-injury, there should be

\* No physical (risk) activity during recess \*No Physical Education (Gym) class

\* No sports participation \*Other:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Physical Activity:** Mild-moderate symptom-limited exercise (walking) daily is permitted.

Health Care Provider Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Provision of School Supports:** Listed are some suggested accommodations for consideration by school personnel, tailored to the student’s specific symptoms:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Post-concussion symptom** | **Effect on school learning** | **Accommodation** |
| *Physical Symptoms* |  |  |
| Headache | Difficulty concentrating | Frequent breaks, quiet area, hydration |
| Fatigue | Decreased attention, concentration, low energy | Frequent breaks, shortened day, attendance in fewer classes |
| Light/noise sensitivity | Worsening symptoms (headache) | Sunglasses, ear plugs/headphones, avoid noisy areas (cafeterias, assemblies, sport events, music class), limit computer work |
| Dizziness/ balance | Unsteadiness when walking, room feels like it is spinning | Elevator/lift pass (if available)  Class transition before bell |
| *Cognitive Symptoms* |  |  |
| Difficulty concentrating | Limited focus on schoolwork | Shorter assignments, decreased workload, frequent breaks, having someone read out loud, more time to complete assignments/tests, quiet area to complete work |
| Working/ short-term memory | Forgetting instructions, oral lecture, reading material, thoughts during tasks | Repetition; Written instructions  Provide student with teacher generated class notes |
| Difficulty remembering | Difficulty retaining new information, remembering instructions, accessing learned information | Written instructions, smaller amounts to learn, repetition |
| Slow speed of performance / process | Unable to keep pace with work load, slower reading/ writing/calculation  Difficulty processing verbal information effectively | Extended time to complete coursework, assignments, tests  Reduce/slow down verbal information and check for comprehension |
| *Emotional Symptoms* |  |  |
| Anxiety | Decreased attention or concentration, overexertion to avoid falling behind | Reassurance and support from teachers about accommodations, reduced workload |
| Irritability | Poor tolerance for stress (social, academic load) | Reduce stimulation and stressors (e.g., overwhelmed with missing work) |

*Note: Further information on the Symptom-Targeted Academic Management Plan (STAMP) can be found in Gioia, GA. Return to school: When and how should return to school be organized?Operationalizing Active Collaborative Concussion Management. In I. Gagnon & A. Ptito eds. Sports Concussions: Recovery and Management. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press; in press.*