

Part 12 – Bylaw -Concussion Management for Youth Sports

Section 1: Ohio State Law – Return to Play

A: Background

1. In order to protect young athletes, the State of Ohio has passed a law regarding concussions in youth sports, commonly called the "Return to Play" law. This law, similar to laws enacted in most other states, imposes training, safety, and awareness requirements on youth sports organizations and all leagues, tournaments, coaches, referees, officials, and athletes and their families.
2. A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They may be caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications which could include brain damage and/or death if not managed properly.
3. Because of health concerns posed by the risk of concussions and the "Return to Play" law enacted by the State of Ohio, GCSL is instituting the following policy that is applicable to all players, their parents, coaches, trainers and referees who participate in the GCSL program. It also applies to all OSYSA sanctioned or sponsored activities and in sanctioned and organized activity of any of the other OSYSA member leagues or associations.
4. **NOTE:** Any GCSL Club / Teams who participates in any non OSYSA event are covered under this Law of the State of Ohio and must comply with terms of this Law. Any team from outside of the State of Ohio playing in an GCSL and/or OSYSA event must comply with the terms of this Law.

B: Club Responsibility

1. All GCSL Clubs and Teams are to provide each parent / guardian of players registered a copy of the Ohio Department of Health form entitled Ohio Department of Health Concussion Information Sheet for Youth Sports Organizations. This form is to be provided at the time of registration each seasonal year or every time that a new registration form is created (e.g. transfer). This form shall be provided to a parent / guardian even if the parent / guardian has received the form if their child played for a different team or in a different sport.
2. To support member Clubs and teams, this required form will be printed in conjunction with each Player's Registration form. It is the Clubs and teams

responsibility to insure that this form is given to the parents / guardian. Also, the Player Registration form includes a signature block that the parent / guardian must sign acknowledging receipt of the form.

3. It is required that parent / guardians must sign all the section on the registration form that includes the acknowledgement of receipt of the forms that we are required to provide under the Laws of the State of Ohio. Registration cannot be completed until this section is signed. Failure to sign this section will be counted in the GCSL procedure for assessing fines for incomplete registration.
4. If the parent / guardians utilize the Esign process for GCSL, a copy of this form is provided to them to print out and their Esign includes the acknowledgment of the receipt of the Form. parents / guardian must complete the Esign in order for their child to be registered.
5. All coaches who are registered with GCSL are to receive a copy of the Ohio Department of Health form, entitled Ohio's Return to Play Law: What Coaches and Referees Need to Know - Youth Sports. This form will be provided when the Coaches Registration form is printed. The form will be provided to all coaches even if the coach received the form because registered with a different team participated in a different sport. In addition, the GCSL Coaches' Registration form will include a signature block where the coach must sign acknowledging receipt of the form. If coaches elect Esign, the same form and acknowledgment are contained with the Esign material.
6. Coaches cannot be registered without signing all of the signature(s) blocks on the registration form and failure to sign / Esign will be counted in the GCSL procedure for assessing fines for incomplete registration.
7. The parents / guardians to any guest players for any GCSL member Club team must also be given this form.
8. GCSL policy permits an individual to stand in for a coach - using that coaches pass - if the coach cannot be in attendance. However, before anyone can substitute the substitute coach must also have received the form prior to his/her being a substitution coach for a game and they must have also completed the training as outlined below. The Substitute coach must show the copy of their Concussion Training Certificate to the Referee prior to the start of the game alone with the coaches' pass for the individual that he/she is substituting. Also a coach who is currently registered as a GCSL coach may act as a substitute. If he/she is currently registered GCSL coach, he/she must show the referee his/her current coaching pass and the coaching pass for the

coach for whom he/she is substituting. No other individual can stand in as a substitute coach.

C Referees

1. GCSL and GCSL member Clubs and teams must help to ensure that all referees, regardless of their age, who will be officiating any games of the teams who are members of GCSL Clubs are provided a copy of the Ohio Department of Health form, entitled Ohio's Return to Play Law: What Coaches and Referees Need to Know - Youth Sports.
2. This form is to be provided to the referees before they officiate in any games and/or scrimmages. This form shall be provided to all referees even if the referee received the form because they had officiated with a different league or tournament or in different sport.

D Required Training - Coach and Club Responsibility

1. Coaches who are registered by GCSL and all referees who officiate in games and/or scrimmages in their league or association have taken one of the two Ohio Department of Health approved online concussion awareness training courses that are available at:

- <http://www.nfhslearn.com/electiveDetail.aspx?courseID=38000>

This website is provided by the National Federation of High Schools.

- http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html

This website is provided by United States' Center for Disease Control.

PLEASE NOTE: Both courses offer a "certificate of completion" upon successful passage. The NFHS course allows organizations to search for and [track coaches who have completed the course](#) while the CDC course does not.

2. This course must be completed by everyone in the GCSL member Club who is a Director of Coaching, Coach, Assistant Coach or Trainer or anyone who assists in training. They must complete the course even if they do not hold register as a coach for any team(s). The course is good for a three year period. Once the three year period is up coaches must complete the course again as outlined above.
3. GCSL Member Clubs are required to collect and keep proof of completion certificate for the training course shown above for each and every coach assistant coach, trainers and other Club personnel who are required by Law to

complete the course. This proof of completion must be kept by the Club for period of 5 years.

- 4, Each Club must provide copies of all forms each season/year to GCSL via disk, flash drive or posting as established by GCSL.
- 5, GCSL Member Club should use the GCSL Web Site system to track when coaches need to repeat their concussion training. The GCSL member Club is as then required to notify coaches when their certificate is expiring and have them complete the course and submit the new certificate their Club. GCSL member Clubs should recommend to their coaches that they make multiple copies of their certificate and keep so that they are available if needed.
6. All GCSL Clubs must enter into the GCSL Web Site Concussion Tracking system the receipt of the Concussion Training Certificate for each DOC, Assistant DOC, Coach, Trainer or Assistant Trainer the receipt of the Concussion Training Certificate for each of the above. All coaches must have successfully completed the Concussion Training and been recorded on the Web Site prior to the time that the playing schedule is to be completed for the upcoming season. If a coach has not been submitted his/her Concussion Training Certificate and his/her Club has not recorded this on the GCSL Web Site the coach will be dropped from the team. If removing a coach from the team reduces the team to less than 2 coaches, the team will be dropped from GCSL and will not be scheduled.
7. GCSL Member Clubs are not to submit their Coaches registration forms to GCSL following the procedure as outlined (disk, flash drive, posting) until they have a copy of the Certificate from one of the two training courses completed by the coach. In addition, the web site will not allow Coaches passes to be printed unless their Concussion Training as been recorded.
7. GCSL Member Clubs must provide a cop(ies) of the coaches Certification of completion of their authorized training when needed in support of the Ohio State Law or this policy following the procedure that has been established.

D. Tournaments

1. Any GCSL member Club that is approved by GCSL to operate OSYSA sanctioned tournaments must provide the parent / guardian of all players who will be participating in the tournament is provided a copy of the Ohio Department of Health form entitled Ohio Department of Health Concussion Information Sheet for Youth Sports Organizations. This includes parents / guardians from teams outside of the boundaries of the State of Ohio. This form is to be provided to a parent / guardian of all players even if the parent received the form because

their child participated in a different tournament or in a different sport. The tournament will be in compliance with this section if a copy of the Ohio Department of Health Concussion Information Sheet for Youth Sports Organization is included in the tournament's program and a copy of that program is provided to a parent / guardian of all participants in the tournament. The tournament is also in compliance with this section for all teams that play in a sanctioned OSYSA league if the league has reported to OSYSA that 100% of their teams have complied with the requirements of the State of Ohio Return to Play Law.

2. All coaches (including out of state coaches in the tournament in the State of Ohio) who will be participating in the tournament are to be given a copy of the Ohio Department of Health form entitled, Ohio's Return to Play Law: What Coaches and Referees Need to Know - Youth Sports prior to the coach's participation in the tournament. This form shall be provided to all coaches even if the coach received the form because they had participated in a different tournament or in different sport (exception teams who have been certified by OSYSA as to have been qualified under the Laws of the State of Ohio).
- 3, All coaches who are going to participate in the tournament and all referees who officiate in games in the tournament have taken one of the two Ohio Department of Health approved online concussion awareness training courses as outlined above.
4. GCSL Member Clubs who operate tournaments must keep the records of compliance (copy of coaches Certificate) with the Ohio State Law (including written medical permission to return) for a period of 5 years (except as outlined above when certified by OSYSA).
5. The requirement outlined above applies to all tournament teams and tournament guest players
6. All referees, regardless of their age, who will be officiating in the tournament are to be provided a copy of the Ohio Department of Health form, entitled Ohio's Return to Play Law: What Coaches and Referees Need to Know - Youth Sports prior to officiating in any games in the tournament. This form is to be provided to all referees even if the referee received the form because they had officiated in a different tournament or in different sport. Referees who received this form for GCSL league games do not need to be presented this form. Any referee registered by Ohio SRA with the US Soccer is in compliance with the requirements of the Law of the State of Ohio - Return to Play.
7. GCSL Member Clubs who operate tournaments must keep the records of compliance (copy of coaches Certificate) with the Ohio State Law (including

written medical permission to return) for a period of 5 years (except OSYSA teams who have been certified by OSYSA).

E. Concussion Management

1. If during any games (League, tournament, fun, scrimmage or practices) of all teams of Member GCSL Clubs a coach or referee or believes that a player exhibits the signs, symptoms or behaviors of a person who may have sustained a concussion then that coach, referee must:
 - remove the player from the game or practice and
 - coach(es), referee(s) shall prohibit the player from participating in a game or practice for the balance of that calendar day and until the player has received written permission to return to participate in a game or practice from a physician or other authorized medical personnel.
2. In the event that the coach and referee cannot agree on the condition of the player, then it is then the sole responsibility of the referee to have the player removed from the game until cleared by a physician or other authorized medical personnel as outlined above. Once removed from the game the player cannot return to play the balance of the day or return to play until he/she has written approval as outlined above.
3. Once the referee had made that decision the player must be removed.
4. Parents cannot accept the responsibility and inform the coach and/or referee that their son and/or daughter is OK to play.

F. Record Retention - Return to Play

1. GCSL Clubs are required to collect and keep for (time to be specified) the written approvals by a physician or authorized medical personnel provide under the terms of the Ohio State Law for a Player to Return to Play. This includes all league games, practices, scrimmages or tournament games. These records must be maintained for a period of (time to be determined)

G. Miscellaneous

1. No person shall be permitted to act as a substitute coach or as a club assistant referee during any league games, practices, scrimmages, tournament games for any GCSL or OSYSA events unless that person has been provided a copy of the Ohio Department of Health form entitled Ohio's Return to Play Law: What Coaches and Referees Need to Know - Youth Sports and has taken one of the

two Ohio Department of Health approved online concussion awareness training courses outlined above. The substitute coach must show a copy of the coaches pass for whom he/she is substituting and his/her current Concussion Training Certificate to the referee at the game prior to coaching. If the substitute is a currently carded coach by GCSL, he/she must show the referee the coaches pass for the individual for whom he/she is substituting and his/her own GCSL issued and current coaches pass. Without one of these two procedures that individual cannot be a substitute coach.

2. No coach, referee, coach or club assistant referee is required to demonstrate or prove to any other coach, referee, club assistant referee, player or parent of a player, that they are in compliance with the requirements of Ohio's "Return to Play" law and/or this section. However, as outlined, they must provide a copy of their certification of completion of the training course to their GCSL Member Club and the Club must certify as outlined above that everyone in the Club is within compliance.
3. Coaches, referees, or club assistant referees need only be required to demonstrate or prove to GCSL or OSYSA that they are in compliance with the requirements of Ohio's "Return to Play" law.
5. Coaches shall have no official standing to make a determination a player on the opposing team is showing signs, symptoms or behaviors of an individual who may have sustained a concussion under the requirements of Ohio's "Return to Play" law.

Section 2: Ohio South Youth Soccer Association - Bylaw 20

A: SECTION 20.0 (PLAYER SAFETY)

20.1 PURPOSE

This section establishes specific bylaws to provide minimum standards for player safety in regards to the practice of heading of soccer balls during games, practices, tryouts and other activities organized by OSYSA. This section applies to but is not limited to ODP, State Cup, President's Cup, MRL, other OSYSA competitive programs as well all activities of all OSYSA member leagues and associations, clubs, and teams. In addition, this Section 20.0 shall apply during all OSYSA sanctioned tournaments and to tournament guest players and to players rostered on tournament teams.

The bylaws contained within this Section 20, are designed to comply with the specific recommendations established by USSF. The reference to the player age groups contained with

this Section 20.0 are consistent with the age groups as listed in OSYSA Bylaw Section 3, Addendum #2.

20.2 All players who are registered on or participate with any Under 11's or younger team are prohibited from deliberately striking a soccer ball with any portion of their head, (a.k.a. heading), during any game, practice, tryout, or other soccer related activity.

20.3 If a player 10 years old (U11 age) or younger participates on an U-12 or older team, it shall be the responsibility of the player's coaches and the player's parents and / or guardians to ensure that the player does not head a soccer ball during any soccer related activity.

20.6 As recommended and established by USSF and adopted by US Youth Soccer, all players who are U-12 or U-13 or U-14 are prohibited from deliberately striking a soccer ball with any portion of their head, (a.k.a. heading), during any practice session for more than an accumulated maximum total of 30 minutes during any 7 day period and for an accumulated maximum of 15 to 20 head to ball contacts during any 7 day period. For players who are on an U-12 or older team, there are no limits or restrictions on the number of head to ball contacts that may take place during games and scrimmages.

20.7 All coaches of players who are rostered on an U-12 or older team are to instruct, teach, and emphasize the importance of proper techniques for heading of soccer balls.

20.8 If an OSYSA sanctioned tournament has 64 or more U-11 and older teams, (excluding U-10's and younger teams), registered in the tournament, then the tournament must have one or more Health Care Professionals, (a.k.a. HCP), at each playing site where there are 4 or more soccer fields that are in use for the tournament. A HCP shall be defined as a person who is either a physician, (M.D. or D.O.), an athletic trainer whose work is supervised by a physician, a physician assistant or a nurse practitioner.

20.9 When a player who is rostered on a team playing in an U-11 or younger age group or division deliberately strikes the ball with his / her head during any league or tournament game, Referees and Assistant Referees of that game must consider the act to be Dangerous Play and handle the matter accordingly as an infraction of the Laws of the Game.

B: Deliberately Striking a Soccer Ball With Any Portion Of Their Head

1. Players playing in U8, U9, U10 and U11 age groups are prohibited from All deliberately striking a soccer ball with any portion of their head.
2. Players in the the U12 and older age groups may elect to deliberately head the ball in games.
3. Players in the U12 and U13 age groups are restricted by the OSYSA Player Safety on deliberately striking a soccer ball with any portion of their head during practice. See OSYSA Bylaw 20.
4. Players in the U8, U9, U10 and U11 age groups may elect to play up. If any player in the U8, U9, U10 or U11 age group that elects to play up in an age group that allows deliberate heading of the soccer ball, may - AT THEIR OWN RISK - head the ball during games. Any player who plays up from these age groups must also follow the restrictions on heading in practice.

5. The player registration form, which the parents must sign in order for their child to participate outlines that they accept the risk created by their child who is playing up and can deliberately strike the ball with any portion of his/her head.
6. During practices, it is the responsibility to insure that no play in the U13 and younger age exceeds the limits on heading established in OSYSA Player Safety Bylaw 20.
7. All coaches of players who are rostered on an U-12 or older team are to instruct, teach, and emphasize the importance of proper techniques for heading of soccer balls.