



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Department of School Nursing

Noelle Freeman, BSN, RN, NCSN - Director

45 Oak St, Shrewsbury, MA 01545

Tel.: 508-841-1226 Fax: 508-841-1227

nfreeman@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us



Date: 10/22/19

To: School Committee

Re: 2018-2019 Concussion Report

Introduction

According to the CDC's "Heads Up Concussion" website, "A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury—or TBI—caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. This fast movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, creating chemical changes in the brain and sometimes stretching and damaging the brain cells."

Signs and symptoms typically appear immediately following the injury. However the severity may not be clearly understood for hours or days later. Monitoring of concussion symptoms should take place immediately following the injury and for several days after.

Depending on the severity of the injury, a concussion may have short- or long-term impact on a student's learning. Some students return to full academics and other activities within 7 - 10 days, while other students can continue to have symptoms that affect their ability to attend classes and complete assignments for months after the initial injury. These students require careful monitoring and academic accommodations in order to ensure an eventual full recovery.

Statistics

A total of 100 concussions were reported to Shrewsbury Public Schools (SPS) school nurses and/or the SHS athletic trainer throughout the 2018-19 school year. This total includes concussions that occurred during athletics and other school activities, as well as those that occurred during outside of school activities.

SHS Athletes	OMS Athletes	District Wide - Concussions occurring during the school day (not including injuries sustained during athletics)	District Wide - concussions occurring during outside of school activities
24	0	18	58

Below is a breakdown of concussions sustained in athletic activities by sport per data collected by Walter Hildebrand, ATC:

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-2019
Baseball	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Basketball, Boys	1	2	3	0	2	0	1	1
Basketball, Girls	2	2	5	1	0	3	1	3
Cheer	5	1	3	2	1	2	5	0
Crew, Boys	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0
Crew, Girls	0	1	3	0	1	0	0	0
Track /Cross Country, Boys	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	1
Track/Cross Country, Girls	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dance	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Field Hockey	0	3	2	4	3	0	0	0
Football	19	13	16	26	12	1	6	8
Gymnastics	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Hockey, Boys	1	4	0	2	2	1	2	1
Hockey, Girls	1	1	1	1	0	0	3	0
Lacrosse, Boys	4	1	1	2	0	0	2	0
Lacrosse, Girls	3	3	0	0	1	1	0	2
Ski	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Soccer, Boys	1	2	2	5	0	3	5	0
Soccer, Girls	4	3	3	4	2	0	1	3
Softball	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0
Swim, Girls	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Track, Girls	4	1	3	0	0	0	1	0
Volleyball	2	1	3	0	2	0	1	5
TOTAL	52	42	47	50	28	11	30	24

Care of Students with Concussions

As noted in previous reports, school nurses are involved in the care of all students who sustain a concussion. At times, school nurses are the first to recognize symptoms of a concussion, contact families and recommend follow up with a medical provider.

The school nurse then works with the student, family, and outside providers to determine the most appropriate plan for return to school and learning. When the student is ready to return to school, the nurse communicates with appropriate school staff regarding necessary accommodations, and checks in frequently with the student to monitor progress and encourage a balance between school responsibilities and the rest necessary for complete healing. The school nurse also maintains communication with the outside provider to determine when the student is fully cleared to return to all activities. Students must be able to tolerate a full school day of academics before a return to play protocol for return to athletics and PE can be initiated.

When the student is also an SHS athlete, the athletic trainer (ATC) is also involved in the student's care. The ATC assesses students at the time of injury whenever possible, and provides follow up care and recommendations to the student and family. The ATC notifies the SHS school nurses of any suspected or diagnosed concussion, and the nurses work with the student, family and staff as outlined above. When medical clearance is given for return to athletics, the ATC monitors the gradual Return to Play protocol for all student athletes.

Prevention and Education

Education of students, parents, teachers and coaches is our best strategy for concussion prevention. Each of these stakeholders is provided with opportunities to learn about the causes, signs and symptoms of concussion, as well as what to expect for treatment and follow up if a concussion does occur.

Information regarding concussion protocol, return to play, and IMPACT testing is included in Sports Nights presentations hosted by the Director of Athletics at the beginning of each sports season at SHS. As part of the sports registration process, both students and parents are also expected to read the SPS Concussion Manual (available on the Athletics and Nursing Department web pages) and sign off that they have read and understand the information that is provided therein. Concussion information is available as a resource for families on the Department of Nursing and Department of Athletics web pages.

Coaches receive annual concussion training through the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). Each coach completes an online training, and the certificates of completion are kept on file by the athletic trainer. The ATC is available to provide recommendations on how to reduce the risk of concussion and as a general resource for coaching staff throughout school year should they have questions or concerns.