

Vienna Youth Soccer, Inc.

Concussion Policy

This document describes the policies and procedures to be followed by coaches, players and parents of Vienna Youth Soccer, Inc. (VYS). This policy is effective December 5, 2014.

A concussion is a type of brain injury caused by a traumatic bump, blow, or jolt to the head that can change the way the brain normally works. Concussions can also occur from a fall or a blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. Typical symptoms include headache, confusion, disorientation, feeling dazed, loss of balance, double vision, nausea and sensitivity to light or noise. All concussions are serious and most concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Recognition and proper response to concussions when they first occur can help prevent further injury or more serious complications. A second blow to the head of a concussed player may result in more serious effects as a brain that has suffered trauma is more susceptible to injury. In some cases, repeat concussions have caused permanent brain damage. Any player suspected to have suffered a concussion should be evaluated by a qualified medical professional. More information is available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/>.

Concussion Prevention – VYS is committed to injury prevention and the safety of players is our highest priority. It is far better to prevent or avoid a concussion than to try to correct the damage once it is done. The human brain is very sensitive to damage and takes time to heal from injury. Coaches should make every effort to prevent head injuries through teaching proper technique, sportsmanship and organizing/supervising practices to avoid situations that can lead to injury. If an injury occurs, coaches must immediately provide proper care and attention to the injured player and remove the player from practice/play where appropriate. This is especially important for injuries to the head. When in doubt, take the player out of the game/practice.

Concussion Education/Awareness – VYS endeavor to host a concussion awareness class every season to help coaches, team managers, parents and players become more aware of the causes, symptoms and care of concussions. All VYS volunteer coaches and professional trainers must read and acknowledge the concussion awareness statements provided by VYS before coaching/training players. In addition, all volunteer coaches and professional trainers must read and sign the concussion policy provided by VYS before the first practice/game of each season. All coaches must take and pass the CDC concussion awareness course at: http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html. Upon completion, coaches must keep a copy of the course certificate for audit. Each season, all parents and players will be provided with a copy of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) fact sheet on concussion awareness with their receipt for registration. The CDC fact sheet for parents is available at: http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/parents_Eng.pdf. The CDC fact sheet for players is available at: http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/athletes_Eng.pdf. Parents and players shall acknowledge reading these fact sheets during registration, sign the attached Concussion Policy, Educational Information and Awareness Form (attached) and provide the signed form to their player's coach or team manager before participating in activities each season. The coach or team manager shall retain these forms for the duration of the season.

Concussion Disclosure – All parents are required to disclose at registration if their child has suffered a concussion within the last 12 months and, if so, whether the child has been cleared to play soccer

with no restrictions by a qualified medical professional. Parents will also be required to provide a copy of the medical professional's written release to their player's coach or team manager. If any player suffers a concussion, the player's parents shall notify VYS and provide a written release to the player's coach or team manager from a qualified medical professional before the player will be allowed to participate in VYS activities. The coaches and team managers shall ensure the confidentiality of all medical information.

Baseline Testing – Baseline testing is used to record a player's cognitive responses prior to injury to assist in later evaluation by a qualified medical professional. Responses to a baseline test are age dependent so testing should be repeated every couple of years. Some helpful information on baseline testing may be found at:

<http://childrensnational.org/~media/cnhs-site/files/departments/score/neuropsychologicaltesting.a shx?la=en>. VYS encourages all players U-9 and older to complete a baseline test (such as the ImPACT test) upon initial registration and bi-annually thereafter. The cost of this testing is typically about \$35. VYS will endeavor to facilitate baseline testing each season. As a point of reference for parents, Fairfax County Public High Schools require baseline testing for all student athletes prior to participation in organized sporting activities.

Initial Occurrence – If a coach or assistant coach observes a traumatic blow to the head, especially one that the player did not expect or see coming, then that player shall be removed immediately from the game or practice if the player exhibits any of the symptoms of a possible concussion, such as headache, confusion, disorientation, feeling dazed, loss of balance, double vision, nausea, sensitivity to light/noise or loss of consciousness. A coach may elect to remove a player from a game or practice even though there are no symptoms if the coach deems that the blow was severe enough to possibly cause a brain injury. Coaches are not qualified to make a judgment on the severity of a head injury. In many cases, there may be no concussion but this decision can only be made by a qualified medical professional with experience in evaluating and treating brain injuries. The coach will inform the parent or guardian that the player received a blow to the head and provide the Head Injury Report Form and the CDC fact sheet for parents (http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/parents_Eng.pdf) to the player's parent(s). The coach will also retain a copy of the Head Injury Report form.

Return to Play – A player who has been removed from practice or a game due to a blow to the head will not be allowed to return to physical activity with VYS until his/her parent has had the player evaluated by a qualified medical physician and submits a written statement from the medical professional that the player is fully able to participate in soccer. The coach or team manager and VYS Administrator will retain a copy of the medical professional's release to play.

Violations of Policy – A coach found to be in violation of this policy will be suspended from coaching for 2 games (and associated practices) for an initial violation. A subsequent violation will result in suspension for the remainder of the season. Any additional violations will result in a coach being permanently suspended from coaching with VYS. Any parent that does not notify VYS of a concussion to their child shall receive a written notification of violation of this policy upon VYS learning of the violation. A further violation of policy shall result in suspension from VYS activities for the remainder of the season with no refund of fees.

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Concussion Policy, Educational Information and Awareness Acknowledgement Form

Parents/Players - please provide a signed copy of this form to your coach at the first practice/game

Youth Athlete Name (Please Print):

I, the parent or legal guardian of the above named youth athlete, have received and read the Parent Information Fact Sheet and the VYS Concussion Policy. I understand the nature and risk of concussion and head injury to players including the risks of continuing to play after a concussion or head injury.

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian:

Date:

Parent or Legal Guardian Printed Name:

I am a youth athlete participating in the sport of soccer with Vienna Youth Soccer. I have received and read the Student Athlete Information Fact Sheet. I understand the nature and risk of concussion and head injury to youth athletes including the risks of continuing to play after a concussion or head injury.

Signature* of Youth Athlete:

Date:

Youth Athlete Printed Name:

**Only required for youth athletes age 8 and older*

