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Sports CAPP is a **Concussions (be) Aware & Prepared Program** for your team which involves all the members of your team — kids, parents and staff.



PINK CONCUSSIONS



# CONCERNED ABOUT CONCUSSIONS IN SPORTS?

## 10 Questions to Ask Your Child's Youth Sports Org

As the leading concussion doctor in the US, Dr. Gerry Gioia, has created a list of ten questions that are a great way to start a conversation with your child's team about concussion policy. However, with my experience in concussion education, I have learned it is important to know **how, when and where** to approach your child's sports organization if you want to create change. Here are my suggestions and followed by Dr. Gioia's List:

1. Email or call the president/leader of your child's team and ask to set up a time to talk face to face about concussion education with him or her. **Don't ask the coach these questions before or after practice.** This is a management issue **FIRST**. If you cannot meet in person, then set up a call. I do not recommend you blast off an email with these questions to the president.
2. Before the meeting, check out SportCAPP.com [Info Link Page](#) with links to national policy is for many youth sports.
3. Start the conversation with the president with a thanks for all he/she does and say you are just trying "to help the kids" and add to the existing program which has offered your child (say something positive here).
4. Ask the questions in a friendly tone and don't forget to smile. **BE NICE**. Most youth organizations are run by volunteers who have both jobs and families. They do so much without any thanks.
4. **LISTEN** to what the president says in return and what the existing plans are to create a concussion policy. Most organizations start small with baby steps as not to rock the boat.
5. If you get a blank stare from the president or a "no" to the questions below, you have three choices:
  1. Say ok, and just hope the conversation will generate some thought or future action. You sign your child up anyway for the sport, and then attend all practices and games and watch out for your child.
  2. You find another league or sport for your child that has a concussion policy. In a nice email, let the president know why you have left the team and again offer thanks for the past years.

3. You offer to help create the policy by researching some options. This is a really exciting way to contribute to your child's sport and to the larger community

I am available by phone or email to help direct you and there are many resources available on my website. Here are the questions to ask, and don't forget to smile when you ask them.

*Source: Parents Taking Charge of the Youth Concussion Issue, Gerard A. Gioia, Ph.D. Pediatric Neuropsychologist  
Director, Safe Concussion Outcome, Recovery & Education (SCORE) Program Children's National Medical Center*

## 10 Questions to Ask Youth Sports Organizations By Dr. Gioia

In whatever sport you and your child choose, to feel more comfortable and confident with your child's participation as it relates to concussion risk, do your homework and ask questions of the league and its coaches about how they handle head safety. As a parent, you need to feel at ease that safety of the youth athletes is a priority. We encourage parents to ask these 10 questions.

1. Does the league have a general policy in how they manage concussions?
2. Does the league have access to healthcare professionals with knowledge and training in sport-related concussion?
3. Are the coaches required to take a concussion education and training course?
4. Who is responsible for the sideline concussion recognition and response to suspected concussions during practice and games?
5. Do the coaches have readily available the tools – concussion signs & symptoms cards, clipboards, fact sheets, smartphone apps, etc. – during practice and games to guide proper recognition and response of a suspected concussion?
6. Does the league provide concussion education for the parents, and what is the policy for informing parents of suspected concussions?
7. What is the policy regarding allowing a player to return to play? [Correct answer – when an appropriate medical professional provides written clearance that the athlete is fully recovered and ready to return.]
8. Does the league teach/ coach proper techniques (e.g., blocking and tackling in football, checking in hockey and lacrosse) in a way that are “head safe” by not putting the head in position to be struck? If the player does demonstrate unsafe technique during practice or a game, do the coaches re-instruct them with the proper technique/ method? Is head and neck strengthening taught?
9. If a contact sport, are there limitations to the amount of contact? How often (# days per week, # minutes per practice) do you practice with live contact? Is that any different than past years?
10. How amenable is the league/ team / coach to accepting feedback from parents about their child's safety as it relates to head safety?

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