

CONCUSSION - NOT JUST A BUMP ON THE HEAD!



A concussion is a brain injury resulting from a direct or indirect hit to the head or body which causes excessive, rapid movement of the brain inside the skull. Concussions can happen during sports, motor vehicle collisions, falls or other activities. It is extremely important to see a medical doctor or nurse practitioner if you suspect a concussion.

Signs and symptoms can last for days, weeks or months. Recovery generally takes approximately 1 to 4 weeks; however, it can take even longer in children and youth under 18 years old or if they have had a previous concussion. If symptoms persist beyond 4 weeks, speak with your doctor or a healthcare professional.

Children and youth with concussions may find it hard to concentrate in school. Once they feel better, let them gradually return to school and see how much they can handle without their symptoms getting worse. Discuss going back to school with your doctor and your child's teacher.

This material is provided by York Region Public Health. For more information, visit york.ca/concussions.

[This document has been prepared and approved by The Regional Municipality of York. We encourage you to share this information in your communications with families in its entirety. Any modification to wording or by reproducing it in part with other wording can alter the original meaning and may no longer be accurate.]

Public Health

1-877-464-9675
TTY 1-866-512-6228
york.ca/Injuryprevention



IT'S YOUR HEAD - USE IT!

Head injuries are the leading cause of serious injury and death to kids on wheels. Wearing a properly fitted, certified helmet can reduce the risk of serious head injury by 85 per cent. Children and youth under 18 years of age are required by law to wear a helmet when bicycling. Helmets must fit properly to protect your child in the event of a crash.

Remember the 2V1 Shake, Shake, Shake rule:

- 2: The helmet should cover the top of your child's head and sit two finger widths above his or her eyebrows. A helmet that is too big will not provide proper protection
- V: Adjust the side straps so they form a V-shape under your child's ears
- 1: Only one finger should fit between your child's chin and the fastened straps
- Shake, Shake, Shake: Have your child shake his or her head up and down and side to side to make sure the helmet is snug



This information is provided by York Region Public Health. For more information on bicycle safety please visit york.ca/injuryprevention.

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PREVENTING PLAYGROUND FALLS

A fall is the most common cause of childhood injuries requiring medical attention. For children ages five to nine, playgrounds are the most common area for fall-related injuries to occur.

At this age children try new activities, spend more time in different surroundings and become more independent. They are often not able to identify and avoid hazards. Adults can help them to manage these new challenges.



Playground falls prevention checklist:

- ☐ Do a safety-check before children play
- ☐ Choose a playground with a deep, soft surface such as sand, pea gravel, mulch, or rubber chips
- ☐ Use equipment designed for the child's age
- ☐ Actively supervise your child
- ☐ Make sure children use the equipment as intended
- ☐ Encourage children to wait their turn and never push
- ☐ Do not use playground equipment in the winter
- ☐ Teach and reinforce safety rules
- ☐ Help children learn to manage risk
- ☐ Do not assume a child understands safe practices and hazards
- ☐ Do not accept that falls and fall-related injuries are a way to teach children how to be independent
- ☐ Always model safe behaviours for children

For more information on childhood fall prevention visit: york.ca/childhoodfalls

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SCHOOL ZONE SAFETY

Traffic congestion, speeding and distracted driving can put children at risk. Be aware of your surroundings and help keep kids safe on the way to and from school with the following safety tips.

DRIVERS

- Slow down, follow posted speed limits and keep your distance
- Be prepared to stop at any time
- Park in designated areas away from the school and walk your child onto school property
- Respect the crossing guard's instructions, be aware of crosswalks, traffic lights and road signages
- Watch for vehicles, pedestrians, bikes, scooters and stopped school buses
- Make sure your child gets out from the passenger side of your vehicle
- Avoid distractions while driving (e.g., texting, using your phone)

CHILDREN

- Make sure all vehicles have stopped in all directions before crossing the road
- Make eye contact with driver before crossing
- Use crosswalks and intersections with crossing guards if available
- Walk on a sidewalk or designated area and don't run
- Don't use cell phones, text or wear ear buds while walking
- Wear bright colour clothing to ensure drivers can see you
- Ride in the same direction as traffic to make you more visible

For more information on how to keep school zone please refer to [Safer School Zone Act](#) and [SafeWalkingtoSchool](#).

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What is Active School Travel?

Active School Travel is the use of any form of human-powered travel to get to and from school. It teaches and encourages school communities to walk, bike, wheel, take the bus or park and walk a block to and from school!



What are the benefits of Active School Travel?

- Contributes to student physical wellbeing and improves mental health
- Improves academic performance
- Reduces traffic congestion and pollution
- Creates safer school zones and healthier communities
- Encourages social interaction and improves social skills
- Promotes life-long healthy habits
- Helps to meet the goal of at least [60 minutes per day](#) of moderate to vigorous physical activity

How do parents engage in Active School Travel?

- Be a role model to your child and walk, wheel, or bike with your child to and from school
- Use properly fitted equipment such as a helmet for safe travel
- Have your child ride the school bus, if eligible
- Participate in school wide activities such as international walk to school day/month
- Ensure school zone safety rules are followed when actively travelling to and from school

For more information on Active School Travel, visit York.ca/injuryprevention and [Ontario Active School Travel](#).

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WHAT IS ROWAN'S LAW?

Rowan's Law helps to protect amateur athletes. It educates coaches, parents/guardians, teachers and officials about the prevention and management of concussions. Rowan's Law came into effect in March of 2018 to honour Rowan Stringer, a high school rugby player from Ottawa, who died from a condition known as second impact syndrome (i.e., second head injury sustained before symptoms from the first head injury have resolved, causing rapid brain swelling).



In September 2019, the Ontario Ministry of Education made it mandatory for school boards to update their concussion policies and be in compliance with Rowan's Law ([PPM 158](#)). Schools must have a concussion code of conduct and a return to school and physical activity plan after a concussion. Anyone participating in sports activities are required to review the concussion code of conduct and resource annually, including parents.

We can change Ontario's culture around sports, physical activity and injury. [Rowan's Law Day](#) is the last Wednesday in September. Encourage your child to tell someone if they think they've had a concussion, get the help they need, and to take the time necessary for recovery with the support of everyone around them.

For more information on concussion prevention visit york.ca/concussion or review the Province of Ontario's [Rowan's Law: Concussion Awareness Resources](#).

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