Improving TBI Detection and Services

Center for Persons With Disabilities

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/cpd_blog

Recommended Citation

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Center for Persons with Disabilities at DigitalCommons@USU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Blog Posts by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@USU. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@usu.edu.
IMPROVING TBI DETECTION AND SERVICES

September 15, 2011 by cpehrson

Fall brings with it the start of a new school year. It also brings the start of a new sports season for youth and young children.

Any sport puts players at risk for injuries, but concussions and traumatic brain injuries are the most serious and potentially long lasting types. One of the CPD’s partner agencies, the Brain Injury Association of Utah, lists the five leading sports or recreational activities which account for concussions as bicycling football, basketball, playground activities, and soccer.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, each year U.S. emergency departments treat an estimated 135,000 sports- and recreation-related TBIs, including concussions, among children ages 5 to 18.

This year, youth players in Utah will have better protection from TBIs than ever before. Utah legislators recognized the great risk of sport-related injuries and signed House Bill 204-Protection of Athletes with Head Injuries- into law (March 2011).

This law places the safety of players first and foremost above all other concerns.

HB 204 requires all youth sports organizations to put into place policies and procedures for players suspected of experiencing a brain injury/concussion. It requires high school athletes and anyone under 18 who suffers a concussion to get medical clearance in order to continue playing.

The concern over TBIs and their potential life altering impact does not stop with high school students.

A concussion research project that is starting at USU this year will help keep university athletes safe and healthy. The project will assess all players before the playing season to determine a baseline. If a concussion/head injury occurs during play, the athlete will be evaluated to best determine when he or she is ready to return to game play using a balance machine that tests balance, spatial orientation, and vision.

For the past decade, the CPD has worked to build public awareness about the dangers of concussions/TBIs. Through federally funded projects, they have partnered with state agencies to coordinate statewide efforts to foster the awareness of TBIs, and improve the community services and supports for victims.

Currently, the CPD’s Utah Implementation Partnership Grant is focusing on improving the statewide TBI services for two distinct populations in Utah, young children, ages birth to 4 years old, and service members and veterans who have suffered traumatic brain injuries.

Becoming aware of the signs and symptoms of TBIs is essential in getting needed medical services. By placing the safety of people first and foremost above all other concerns, TBI victims will be identified sooner and receive prompt treatment.