



Educational Needs Regarding Concussion in Youth Athletes

Trevor Harvey

Pittsburg State University, 1701 S. Broadway, Pittsburg, KS 66762



Introduction

- A concussion is a “disruption of brain function and metabolism caused by a blow to the head or sudden jolt to the body that shakes the brain violently against the walls of the skull, often resulting in a transient loss of neurological function” (Worley, 2019). Currently, 47 states require distribution of concussion information to parents prior to their child participating in youth sports, but only 41 of those states require a signature verifying that the information was provided to the parent. Therefore, “once their child has sustained a concussion, a parent may lack the requisite knowledge to recognize symptoms, follow concussion management protocols, and adhere to safe return-to-play guidelines” (Feiss, Lutz, Moody, and Pangelinan, 2019).
- The purpose of this study was to increase the education provided to parents and coaches of youth athletes regarding concussions, concussion symptoms, and concussion management.

Methods

- Following approval from the Scholarly Project Committee, an application to the Institutional Review Board was submitted and approved on January 4, 2021. Data collection took place from January 18, 2021 to January 29, 2021.
- Data was collected utilizing the Qualtrics Survey Software. Two identical questionnaires were utilized prior-to and following an educational opportunity. The questionnaires contained questions regarding concussions, concussion symptoms, and concussion management.

Results

- In total, 64 individuals participated in the study. 37 of the 64 participants were parents, and 27 of the 64 participants were coaches.
- Participants correctly identified common concussion symptoms such as headache, confusion, and dizziness in both the initial and second questionnaires. Although correct symptom identification was common, misidentification of symptoms as concussion symptoms was also common in the initial questionnaire. Following the educational presentation, misidentification of symptoms significantly decreased in the second questionnaire. Similarly, participants frequently misidentified proper concussion management strategies in the initial questionnaire. Following the educational presentation, identification of proper management strategies was increased.

Conclusions

- Increasing education provided to parents and coaches of youth athletes regarding concussions, concussion symptoms, and concussion management results in an increased knowledge of concussions.
- Additional concussion education is needed for parents and coaches of youth athletes.
- Healthcare providers should utilize this study to advocate for increased concussion education for their patients.

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