

Ohio Youth Sports Concussion and Head Injury Return to Play Guidelines Committee

November 7th, 2014

Chairman Hodges and distinguished members of the committee my name is Scott Elchert and I am currently the athletic director and the men's varsity head basketball coach at Jackson Center High School. I want to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak to you today on youth sports concussions in Ohio and my experience I have had as an athletic administrator and coach when dealing with this serious injury.

As an athletic director and basketball coach I am in a very privileged position to be able to mentor and work with young athletes to help them achieve their goals and dreams. One of the greatest experiences a child or teenager can have when in school is to participate in interscholastic activities. As we all know there is value in our youth athletes participating in a team-like atmosphere, competing with others like themselves to achieve a victory whether on the football field, basketball court or baseball diamond. Unfortunately, during competition there can be unintended injuries that occur. One of the more serious injuries I have had experience with since my coaching and administrating career began is concussions. It is an injury that seems to have progressively gotten worse over the years and I am here today to offer my professional input on what type of training requirements I believe our providers need to ensure our athletes are healthy when they re-take the playing field.

Jackson Center, Ohio is located in Shelby County and has a population of around 1,500 people. While we may be a small town it is my personal opinion our high school athletic teams allows Jackson Center to positively stand out. A man part of our high school athletics is Jackson Center's team doctor, Dr. Kreg Huffer, DC. He is a chiropractic physician who has been working with our school district for 30 years. While it is evidently clear by my credentials I am no healthcare provider I can testify to Dr. Huffer's specific credentials that he, as a chiropractic physician, provides a great service and practices concussion management safely. Over the years he has worked with Jackson Center's concussed athletes and has always taken the proper precautions before returning those athletes back to the field. His continuing education in sports-related injuries, which included training in neurology, allows him to assess and clear concussed athletes back to play. However, it is also in my opinion that not all chiropractic physicians should be able to practice concussion management, just as all medical doctors, should not be able to practice concussion management without the proper training. It is my understanding that chiropractic physicians, medical doctors and doctors of osteopath all receive neurological and diagnosis training while in school, but I do believe because Ohio's youth concussion injuries are getting worse in Ohio that these three healthcare providers and any other provider who wants to practice concussion management in Ohio should receive additional training and education upon their graduation from their respective school. I believe it is in the best interest for our student athletes this committee make the proper recommendations to the Department of Health to require additional continuing education and training that allows our student athletes to get back to the playing field safely.

Thank you again Mr. Chairman and other committee members for your time and consideration. At this time I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Scott Elchert

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