

DATE: September 21, 2023

MEMORANDUM TO: Chairs of District School Boards
Directors of Education

FROM: The Honourable Neil Lumsden
Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport

The Honourable Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education

SUBJECT: Concussion Safety and Rowan’s Law Day

The start of the school year welcomes the return of school clubs and sports. Whether students are participating in team sports, physical education classes, dance, performing arts or any other physical activity – safety is always top of mind.

Our government is promoting concussion safety and helping to prevent injury through the enactment of *Rowan’s Law*, named after Rowan Stringer, a 17-year-old athlete who tragically died in the spring of 2013 from a condition known as second impact syndrome (swelling of the brain caused by a subsequent injury that occurred before a previous injury healed). Rowan is believed to have experienced three concussions over six days while playing rugby. She had a concussion but didn’t know her brain needed time to heal. Neither did her parents, teachers or coaches. *Rowan’s Law* and [Rowan’s Law Day](#) were established to honour Rowan’s memory and bring awareness to concussions and concussion safety.

This year, Rowan’s Law Day falls on September 27. As schools and school boards prepare for their annual concussion awareness events, we invite you to share these concussion safety resources within your school communities:

Email signature footer

Use the following email signature as a part of your everyday communications. Share it with your contacts, especially if they are students, families and educators who are passionate about sports:



Hit. Stop. Sit.
Know the signs of a concussion. [Ontario.ca/concussions](https://www.ontario.ca/concussions)

Posters

Invite school staff to print posters and hang them in the hallways, gymnasiums, cafeterias, clubs and classrooms:

[Hit.Stop.Sit. poster](#)

Please remember to use the **#RowansLawDay** hashtag on your social media.

Resources for Schools

Our government has policies and resources in place to keep students safe from concussion injury.

Ophea has an online [Rowan's Law Day Toolkit](#) for schools to support recognition of the day and spread concussion awareness. The toolkit contains activities for schools, posters, social media posts and links to additional resources.

In addition, attached is a collection of resources intended to support concussion awareness, prevention, detection, and management in the education sector.

Of note is:

- The updated e-learning module on concussion safety for school staff developed by Ophea.
- The sample concussion codes of conduct for students/athletes, parents/guardians, and coaches/teachers.
- The concussion awareness e-booklets available in multiple languages, including some Indigenous languages.

[Policy/Program Memorandum \(PPM\) 158: School Board Policies on Concussion](#), which was updated to be consistent with *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018* and was released on September 25, 2019, took effect January 31, 2020, for school boards, school authorities, and provincial and demonstration schools.

Our government will release the fifth Rowan's Law Progress Report on Rowan's Law Day, which will outline the progress that we have made on concussion safety and what we are doing to build on the success of Rowan's Law to make sport safer.

Your participation will ensure that concussion safety remains top of mind in every sport setting – for every athlete and their family, coach and educator.

Best regards,

The Honourable Neil Lumsden
Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport

The Honourable Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education

Attachment – Resources to Support Concussion Safety in Schools

Cc : President, Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques de l'Ontario (ACÉPO)
Executive Director, Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques de l'Ontario (ACÉPO)
President, Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques (AFOCSC)
Executive Director, Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques (AFOCSC)
President, Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA)
Executive Director, Ontario Catholic School Trustees Association (OCSTA)
President, Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)
Executive Director, Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)
Executive Director, Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE)
President, Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO)
Executive Director and Secretary-Treasurer, Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO)
President, Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA)
General Secretary, Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA) President, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)
General Secretary, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)
President, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF)
General Secretary, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF)
Chair, Ontario Council of Education Workers (OCEW)
Chair, Education Workers' Alliance of Ontario (EWAO)
President of OSBCU, Canadian Union of Public Employees – Ontario (CUPE-ON)
Co-ordinator, Canadian Union of Public Employees – Ontario (CUPE-ON)
Executive Director, Association des directions et directions adjointes des écoles franco-ontariennes (ADFO)
Executive Director, Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario (CPCO)
Executive Director, Ontario Principals' Council (OPC)