

Some concussion education more useful than others, parents say

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Many parents whose kids participate in athletics will be asked to sign a waiver about concussion education, but that's not enough to ensure parents are confident about handling the injury, according to a new University of Michigan C.S. Mott Children's Hospital National Poll on Children's Health.

In the poll, about half of the 912 parents of middle and high school children surveyed reported participation in some type of [concussion](#) education:

- 23% have read a brochure or online [information](#)
- 17% have watched a video or attended a presentation
- 11% have signed a waiver form, with no other educational component
- 49% report no concussion education at all

Concussion education is more common among parents of children who play sports compared to non-sports parents (58% vs 31%).

"It is good news that many parents report they have received concussion education. We found, however, that the format of that concussion education really matters. The way the concussion information is delivered is linked to the parents' confidence about managing their child's [injury](#)," says Sarah J. Clark, M.P.H., associate director of the National Poll on Children's Health and associate research scientist in the University of Michigan Department of Pediatrics and U-M Medical

School.

"Many schools mandate that a waiver form to be signed, but the danger is that parents will skip over information to get to that required signature line."

The poll showed that 63 percent of parents who watched a video or a presentation rated it as very useful. Forty-one percent of parents who read a brochure or online information rated that as very useful.

However, only 11 percent of parents whose only concussion education was signing a waiver form reported that was very useful.

"If the waiver is done online or on a form returned to school, parents may be left without information at home to guide them if or when their child is injured," says Clark, who is also a member of the U-M Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control estimates that each year, nearly 175,000 children are treated in US emergency rooms for concussions related to sports or recreational activities, including bicycling, football, playground activities, basketball and soccer. Research has shown that the healing process for a concussion is different for [kids](#) than adults and that repeated concussions in a short time period are particularly dangerous.

Parents should get information about when to seek medical attention, monitoring the child's symptoms, and limiting physical activity until symptoms have subsided, says Clark. Health care providers also may recommend limiting homework and other mental activities to allow the brain to heal.

"Parents play a key role in deciding when a child returns to school and extracurricular activities, and concussion education can assist them in

making good decisions," Clark says. "So one solution could be to offer multiple education formats to ensure that [parents](#) truly hear the concussion information rather than focusing on just signing a form."

More information: [mottnpch.org/reports-surveys/h ... concussion-education](http://mottnpch.org/reports-surveys/h...concussion-education)

Provided by University of Michigan Health System

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