



SIDELINE STRONG

FREE TOOL 08 / 10

THE STAY-CONNECTED CONCUSSION PLAN

How to keep a concussed athlete on the team while the brain heals.

FOR COACHES, TRAINERS + PARENTS



FOR COACHES, ATHLETIC TRAINERS + PARENTS

REST THE BRAIN. DON'T ISOLATE THE ATHLETE.

Concussion recovery can mean less screen time, less noise and less activity. Too often it also means less team. Follow the medical plan — and keep the athlete connected inside it.

WHAT CURRENT GUIDANCE SAYS

Current concussion guidance favors a short period of relative rest, then a gradual return to light activity — not weeks in a dark room. Every step below happens **only as the athlete's medical provider allows**.

THE CONNECTION MENU

STAGE	WAYS TO STAY ON THE TEAM
EARLY REST	A short visit from one or two teammates. A phone call instead of screens. A handwritten note from the team.
LIGHT ACTIVITY	Join a quiet team meal. Sit in on a calm part of practice. Walk with a teammate.
BUILDING BACK	Take a team role at practice. Short film sessions as allowed. Travel with the team.
RETURN	Follow the return-to-play steps, plus a mental readiness check (see Tool 10).

COACH

Ask the athletic trainer what's allowed this week, then pick one item from the menu.

ATHLETIC TRAINER

Share the current stage with coach + parent, with consent.

PARENT

Help plan low-stimulation time with friends.



WATCH THE MOOD, NOT JUST THE SYMPTOMS

IT MIGHT BE THE CONCUSSION TALKING.

MOOD CAN BE A SYMPTOM

Irritability, sadness, anxiety and sleep changes can be part of the injury itself. Report them to the medical provider. Don't assume it's attitude.

SCHOOL MATTERS TOO

Falling behind in class adds stress. Ask the school counselor about temporary academic adjustments while they recover.

THE TEAM CONTACT LOG

Make sure someone reaches out every few days. Keep this on the clipboard or the fridge.

DATE	WHO REACHED OUT	HOW	HOW THEY SEEMED

CONNECT ONE

THE FOUR DOORS

You don't have to fix it. You have to walk them to a door.

DOOR 01

Student Services

School counselor, social worker or psychologist

DOOR 02

A Trusted Adult

A coach or staff member they already talk to

DOOR 03

The Athletic Trainer

The adult who sees them most during rehab

DOOR 04

988 Lifeline

Free, confidential, 24/7 — call or text 988

988

Call or text 988 · Chat at 988lifeline.org

Worried right now? Don't wait and don't leave them alone. If someone is in immediate danger, call 911.

READY FOR THE FULL PLAYBOOK?

SIDELINE STRONG SCHOOL LICENSE

Stay-connected plans for every type of injury, built into how your department runs. →
HuddleForAthletes.com

HUMAN FIRST.

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