

CONCUSSION
AWARENESS WEEK
TOOLKIT

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F-P/T Concussion Awareness Week Background

Acknowledgement

The Federal-Provincial/Territorial Working Group on Concussions in Sport would like to acknowledge and warmly thank all the contributors to this document, including Parachute Canada, the Sport Resource Information Centre (SIRC), and communication services of the Public Health Agency of Canada and Canadian Heritage.

Foundation

This toolkit was created to support the following actions taken by the federal/provincial-territorial (F-P/T) governments over the years:

- Recommendation to the Sport Physical Activity and Recreation Ministers (Red Deer, 2019) that every jurisdiction implements an annual Concussion Awareness Day in collaboration with the sport sector to support the dissemination of harmonized resources and key messages by 2021.
- Build on the 2019 endorsed recommendation to align and collaborate to promote an annual concussion awareness week by bringing together, if appropriate, the day in each jurisdiction during the last week of September starting in 2021.
- The Subcommittee on Sports-Related Concussions in Canada Report, *Tackling the Problem Head-on: Sports-Related Concussions in Canada* recommends that the Government of Canada work with the provinces and territories to establish Concussion Awareness Week to coincide with Rowan's Law Day in Ontario in September.
- Concussions are a serious issue that affects all Canadians and all sectors. It remains a top ministerial priority on F-P/T agenda.

Implementation

The implementation of the days and week for concussion awareness is based on the following principles:

- The designated week should include Ontario's Rowan's Law Day, which is the last Wednesday in September each year. (Note: Although preferable to have the week from Sunday to Saturday, the week could begin on any given day – for example, Wednesday to Wednesday with Rowan's Law Day being the first day). Rowan Law Day is the only previously established provincial or territorial observance day for concussion in Canada.
- Jurisdictions have the option to observe the full week or select one day of observance within the week
- Jurisdictions will be provided with campaign resources but will activate the campaign according to their own mandates, priorities, and resources

- A formalized debriefing process to track pan-Canadian activities and to evaluate reach, engagement and outcomes should be taking place to improve the next editions of future days/weeks.

Target audience

Under the mandate of the F-P/T Work Group and its deliverables to the SPAR Ministers, the primary target is sport, recreation, and physical activity stakeholders (including school-based sport).

Partners

While feasibility will vary across jurisdictions, collaboration with partners in health and education is encouraged.

Partner	Roles and responsibilities
F-P/T Work Group members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and maintain campaign toolkit and resources in English and French. • Identify and engage partners. • Establish tracking and debriefing processes, in consultation with jurisdictions. • Report activities and results to FPTSC and SPARC. • Participate in Concussion Awareness Week. activities and resource dissemination as appropriate.
Parachute Sport Information Resource Centre (SIRC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make campaign resources available online (parachute.ca and sirc.ca). • Support dissemination through web, social media, and networks. • Track and report campaign resource reach (web and social media analytics).
Jurisdictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine date(s) Concussion Awareness Days and/or Week will be observed locally. • Identify and engage local partners. • Plan and implement activities. • Track and report on activities.

Concussion Awareness Week Toolkit:

The F-P/T Work Group will provide essential tools and resources to enable jurisdictions to activate the concussion awareness week, for example:

- Theme (dependent on capacity available to plan and execute an annual theme)
- Key messages
- Backgrounder (about the issue, harmonization, and concussion awareness week)
- Shareable graphics
- Social media guide
- Media release template
- Proclamation Templates
- Activity ideas
- Links to credible, evidence-based resources (e.g., Parachute and SIRC resources)
- Activity Evaluation Tool (Template)
- Activity Tracking Tool (Template)

These resources will be uploaded to a devoted Concussion Awareness Week webpage on Parachute's website and be linked on SIRC's website. All partners can post and share the resources using the links provided.

Tracking

Members of the FPT Work Group should report back on their jurisdictions and sectors' activities at the end of the campaign. Members should be provided with a simple reporting template to facilitate this process. The Work Group should consider how to collect such information from jurisdictions that are not members of the Work Group.

Work Groups members will be invited to share their social media statistics, webpage visits and any other relevant statistics with Canadian Heritage who will compile the results.

Depending on capacity, a survey of community stakeholders could be done to evaluate use and usefulness of the toolkit.

Debriefing

The Work Group should discuss successes and challenges after the campaign, and record these for quality improvement for the following year. Activities implemented in jurisdictions should be noted to include as activity ideas for subsequent years.

F-P/T Concussion Awareness Week Toolkit

Summary

The following tools and resources are intended to support jurisdictions across Canada to implement activities during Concussion Awareness Week. These resources will be uploaded to a devoted concussion awareness week webpage on [Parachute's website](#) and linked on SIRC's website.

Target audience

Sport, recreation, and physical activity stakeholders (including school-based sport) in all provinces and territories across Canada. This includes athletes/participants, parents, coaches, officials, organizers, administrators, educators, and more.

Purpose

- Deliver key messages to address concussion in sport and recreation.
- Drive the target audience to access existing credible, evidence-based tools and resources.
- Equip provinces, territories, and community partners to participate in Concussion Awareness Week in their local area.

List of resources included in this toolkit

- Backgrounder and Key Messages
- Links to credible and evidence-based resources
- Activity Ideas
- Newsletter/E-blast Sample Message
- Proclamation Templates
- Social Media Guide and Shareable Graphics
- Media Release Template
- Activity Tracking Tool (Template)
- Activity Evaluation Tool (Template)
- Concussion Awareness Week Toolkit Evaluation Form

Backgrounder and Key Messages

About Concussion Awareness Week

Concussion Awareness Week was established in January 2021 to increase concussion awareness by providing information and encouraging action across Canada. Concussion Awareness Week is for everyone with a role in healthy active living – sport and recreation participants, parents, coaches, organizers, educators and more!

This year, Concussion Awareness Week is taking place from [insert dates].

Why Concussion Awareness Matters

Concussion is a serious public health issue affecting all Canadians. Early recognition of concussion, proper medical assessment, and appropriate management make a difference in recovery. But Canadians need simple, easy-to-follow steps on how to care for a concussion or where to find good information. Through efforts such as Concussion Awareness Week, we can provide this. The Concussion Awareness Week will share key messages with Canadians and help them access important resources.

Rowan Stringer's Story



Rowan's Law was named for Rowan Stringer, a high school rugby player from Ottawa, who 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 her memory and bring awareness to concussions and concussion safety.

Key Messages

The following messages have been adapted from *Concussions in Sport – Framework for Action: Recommendations for Federal-Provincial-Territorial Sport Physical Activity and Recreation Ministers (SPAR)* prepared by the FPT Workgroup on Concussions in Sport (2017).

Your Concussion Awareness Week activities can help bring these important messages to all Canadians:

- Concussion is an injury that should be taken seriously. But, like other injuries, you can take the proper steps to heal and get back to your favorite activities.
- Find out what you can do to prevent concussions in your sport or activity and know what to do if a concussion does happen. Do not let the risk of getting a

concussion keep you out of sport and physical activity.

- Learn the signs and symptoms of concussion to help you recognize when a participant might have a concussion. Not all people will show the same signs and symptoms, and they can show up hours after the injury.
- Check for signs and symptoms any time there is a significant impact to the head, face, neck, or body. It only takes one sign or symptom to suspect a concussion.
- Encourage everyone to speak up about how they are feeling. Tell a coach, parent, teacher, or another trusted adult if you think you might have a concussion.
- Follow the gradual stages for return to school, work, and sport. Returning to activities too quickly can slow recovery and bring on long-lasting effects.
- When you are healing from a concussion, you are not alone! A network of people and tools exist to help you.
- COVID-19 has impacted mental health and people suffering from concussions – source an evidence-based exercise toolkit that can help!

Recommended Resources

The following resources contain credible, evidence-based, and up-to-date information about concussion. Share these resources with your community throughout Concussion Awareness Week.

[Canadian Guideline on Concussion in Sport](#)

This Guideline from Parachute takes the best information we have about concussion from research and from Canadian experts and uses it to help Canadians understand the best way to recognize and manage concussions. It covers the seven areas of a comprehensive concussion protocol, from pre-season education through return-to-sport.

[Concussion Ed App](#)

This free mobile application from Parachute provides Canadians with essential concussion information on the go.

[We Are Headstrong Resources](#)

Sport Information Resource Centre (SIRC)'s website includes links to educational resources and marketing materials for the We Are Headstrong campaign, such as videos, posters, and social media content.

[NCCP Making Head Way Concussion eLearning Series](#)

This free eLearning series from the Coaching Association of Canada is designed to help coaches gain the knowledge and skills required to ensure the safety of their participants.

[Concussion Awareness Training Tool \(CATT\)](#)

This resource from the British Columbia Injury Research and Prevention Unit offers learning modules and additional resources for medical professionals, coaches, parents, school professionals, athletes, and workers/workplaces.

[Ontario's Concussion Portal](#)

Rowan's Law: Concussion Awareness Resources - Learn about the Concussion Awareness Resources that amateur athletes, parents, coaches, team trainers and officials are required to review.

[Massive Open Online Course \(MOOC\) – Concussion: Prevention, detection and management](#)

This free interactive online course is a collaboration between the University of Calgary and Université Laval. It provides an in-depth understanding of concussion prevention, detection, and management. It also guides participants through a reflective process toward implementing a concussion protocol in their setting. Visit the course webpage to sign up for an upcoming session.

[Government of Canada Website](#)

The concussion area of the Government of Canada website includes information on symptoms and treatment, prevention and risks, and concussion in sport and recreation.

Sharing Other Resources

Other resources can be shared during Concussion Awareness Week. We recommend that resources first be reviewed to ensure they reflect current best practice.

Beyond Concussion Awareness Week

Continuing to educate and inform Canadians about concussion is important all year long. Use the messages and resources in this guide including:

- March – Brain Awareness Week
- May – Mental Health Week
- June – Brain Injury Awareness Month
- July – National Injury Prevention Day
- September – National Coaches Week
- November – Fall Prevention Month
- December – Women’s Brain Health Day

Consult the Government of Canada’s [calendar of health promotion days](#) for updated annual dates.

Activity Ideas

Looking for ways to build concussion awareness in your community? Here are some activity ideas to help you participate in Concussion Awareness Week. These are examples and you are encouraged to use your own ideas! Remember, no matter how big or small, every effort contributes to making Canada a safer place to play, compete and get active.

- **Proclaim Concussion Awareness Week** in your province, territory, or local jurisdiction. Use the Proclamation Templates to get started.
- **Deliver a speech/Invite a member of Parliament or Council to deliver a speech at an online or in-person event, meeting or another forum.**
- **Host a virtual or in-person concussion information session.** Invite one or more guest speakers to deliver a public education session for the general public or specific audiences, such as sport teams, parents, coaches or health professionals. Not sure where to find a speaker? Try your local [brain injury association](#).
- **Provide information for families at a local event or community space.** Post information where people spend time, such as on recreation center or library boards or provide printed resources to parents and caregivers. If appropriate, engage them in conversation about concussion safety.
- **Teach kids about their brain and why it is important to protect it.** Try out fun activity ideas, such as making a Jell-O brain, or arrange for a local presentation from the [Parachute Brain Waves program](#).
- **Hold sports jersey day or another themed day at local schools.** Have a morning assembly or have teachers talk to their classes about concussion. Sharing personal stories is usually most effective.
- **Spark conversation among students, staff, and the school community about concussion awareness.** Access Ontario Physical and Health Education Association's [Rowan's Law Day Toolkit](#) which was developed to help schools and classrooms recognize Rowan's Law Day and encourage students to speak up about concussions.
- **Find opportunities to add concussion information to existing activities.** Holding a pre-season team meeting? Planning a PTA night? Delivering an info session on staying safe at home, at work or at play? Put concussion into the conversation with a few key messages and suggested resources.
- **Share messages and resources on social media.** Check out the Concussion Awareness Week Social Media Guide for tips on content, hashtags and who to follow.

- **Pitch a story idea to your local media outlet.** Use the Media Release Template to let media know about an event or activity you are hosting. Or share a story idea that makes concussion awareness relevant to your community.

Templates and guides

Newsletter/E-blast Sample Template

Sample e-mail message to partners

Help spread the word about Concussion Awareness Week!

Concussion is a serious public health issue affecting all Canadians. But we can make a difference by helping individuals and communities understand how to prevent, recognize, and manage concussions and where to go for credible information.

Concussion Awareness Week across Canada will take place from September xx to xx, 20xx. Everyone with a role in healthy active living – sport and recreation participants, parents, coaches, organizers, educators and more – can help increase awareness about this important issue. [Insert organization name] is getting involved by [insert information – e.g., sharing resources, participating on social media, hosting an event].

Help us spread the word by [insert ways they can support your activities/event] and by downloading the Concussion Awareness Week Toolkit. For more information, visit [insert link to your website or Concussion Awareness Week webpage] and follow [#hashtag] on social media.

Sample newsletter/e-blast

Concussion Awareness Week is taking place across Canada from September xx to xx, 20xx. Everyone with a role in healthy active living – sport and recreation participants, parents, coaches, organizers, educators and more – can help increase awareness about this important issue.

There are some simple ways you can make a difference, for yourself and others:

- Find out what you can do to prevent concussions in your sport or activity and know what to do if a concussion does happen. Do not let the risk of getting a concussion keep you out of sport and physical activity.
- Learn the signs and symptoms of concussion to help you recognize when someone might have a concussion. Not all people will show the same signs and symptoms, and they can show up hours after the injury.

- Check for signs and symptoms any time there is a significant impact to the head, face, neck, or body. It only takes one sign or symptom to suspect a concussion!
- Encourage everyone to speak up about how they are feeling. Tell a coach, parent, teacher, or another trusted adult if you think you might have a concussion.
- Follow the gradual stages for return to school, work, and sport after a concussion. Returning to activities too quickly can slow recovery and bring on long-lasting effects.
- Learn to stay well and get back to safe skills set to prevent injuries in returning to sport post-pandemic. Source various ways to take care of your mental health.

Ready to learn more? Here are some great resources to boost your knowledge:

- Complete a free learning module through the [Concussion Awareness Training Tool](#)
- Complete the Coaching Association of Canada's free [NCCP Making Head Way Concussion eLearning Series](#)
- Download the free [Concussion Ed app](#) for information on the go
- Access [SIRC's concussion resources](#) for the sport community

Share what you have learned with other Canadians using #ConcussionEd #HeadstrongCanada on social media.

Proclamation Templates

Provinces, territories, and other levels of government can use the Proclamation Template to officially proclaim Concussion Awareness Week in their jurisdiction. It can also be adapted for a specific day.

Community partners can send the Proclamation Template along with a Proclamation Request Letter to their local government (e.g., a mayor), asking them to declare Concussion Awareness Week in their area.

Proclamation Template

CONCUSSION AWARENESS WEEK

WHEREAS, sport and recreation are vital to the health, wellness, and development of youth in [Canada/Province/Territory]. Participation in these activities also comes with some level of risk.

WHEREAS, concussion is a significant issue in [Canada/Province/Territory]. Young people are overrepresented in sport and recreation-related concussions.

WHEREAS, Concussion Awareness Week is a week dedicated to raising awareness and seeking solutions to prevent, recognize, and manage sport and recreation-related concussion in [Canada/Province/Territory]. Everyone has a role to play in creating change amongst their peers, in their sport organization and in their communities.

THEREFORE, I/We, _____, _____ of _____, do hereby proclaim September xx to xx, 20xx as Concussion Awareness Week.

Proclamation Request Letter Template

[Mayor Name]

[Address]

[Date of Letter]

Dear [Mayor],

On behalf of **[Insert your organization's name]**, I am writing to you today regarding an official public proclamation recognizing Concussion Awareness Week September xx to xx, 20xx.

Concussion Awareness Week is a coordinated effort to increase concussion awareness by providing information and encouraging action in communities across Canada.

Concussions are a serious public health issue affecting all Canadians. Early recognition of concussion, proper medical assessment, and appropriate management make a difference in recovery. That is why Canadians need simple, easy to follow steps on how to care for a concussion and where to find good information. This week will highlight evidence-based key messages and resources for everyone with a role in healthy active living.

I am requesting that Concussion Awareness Week 20xx be publicly proclaimed in your jurisdiction to bring attention and awareness about preventing long-term consequences of concussion in your community.

I have enclosed a sample proclamation with suggested text for Concussion Awareness Week. I look forward to following up with your office shortly.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and support of this important issue.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Title]

[Organization]

Social Media Guide

What is Concussion Awareness Week?

Concussion Awareness Week was established in 2021 to increase concussion awareness by providing information and encouraging action in communities across Canada. Concussion Awareness Week is for everyone with a role in sport and recreation – participants, parents, coaches, organizers, educators and more!

This year, Concussion Awareness Week is taking place between September xx to xx, 20xx.

Who is this guide for?

This guide is for all organizations who use social media tools or online communication media in a professional capacity, including, but not limited to, the following: Facebook, X, Instagram, YouTube, Tik Tok or blogs.

Who to follow?

Get started by following the accounts below, and comment, share, like, re-post and re-tweet relevant content. We will be doing the same, with as many of you as possible, leading up to and throughout Concussion Awareness Week.

Parachute, Canada's national injury prevention charity

X

[@parachutecanada](#)

Facebook

[@parachutecanada](#)

Instagram

[@parachutecanada](#)

SIRC, Canada's sport knowledge and communication centre

X

[@SIRCTweets](#)

[@SIRCTweeter](#)

Facebook

[@sirc.canada](#)

Instagram

[@sirc canada](#)

Sport Canada

X

[@SportCanada_EN](#)

[@SportCanada_FR](#)

Facebook

[@SportCanadaEN](#)

[@SportCanadaFR](#)

Instagram

[@sportcanada.en](#)

[@sportcanada.fr](#)

Use Hashtags

Use these hashtags to amplify the concussion awareness message and help others interested in Concussion Awareness Week to find your content:

#ConcussionEd

#HeadstrongCanada

What to Share

Below are some sample posts which you can use on your social media channels (X, Facebook, etc.). You are also encouraged to come up with your own messages. Remember that posts on X can only be up to 280 characters in length.

During Concussion Awareness Week, consider sharing:

- The key messages and recommended resources provided in this toolkit
- Local activities and resources
- Stories that resonate in your community

Sample Posts:

Join us during Concussion Awareness Week, September xx- xx, and spread #ConcussionEd in your community. <Insert webpage URL>
#HeadstrongCanada

Find out what you can do to prevent concussions in your sport or activity and know what to do if a concussion does happen. Do not let the risk of getting a concussion keep you out of sport and physical activity.
<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/concussion-sign-symptoms/concussion-prevention-risks.html> #HeadstrongCanada
#ConcussionEd

A concussion is an injury that should be taken seriously. But, like other injuries, you can take the proper steps to heal. Keep it simple with the 4R's:
<https://sirc.ca/concussion> #HeadstrongCanada #ConcussionEd

Learn the signs and symptoms so you can recognize a possible concussion. Visit www.parachute.ca/concussion to learn more. #ConcussionEd
#HeadstrongCanada

Coaches have an important role to help keep participants safe. Here's what every coach should know about concussion: <https://www.coach.ca/making-head-way-concussion-elearning-series-p153487> #ConcussionEd
#HeadstrongCanada

See an impact to the head, neck, or body? Check for signs and symptoms of concussion. Learn what to do next at www.parachute.ca/concussion.
#ConcussionEd #HeadstrongCanada

Speak up about concussion symptoms. Tell a coach, parent, teacher, or another adult you trust if you think you might have a concussion. #HeadstrongCanada
#ConcussionEd

Media Release Template

Headline

Subheading

[City], September [xx], 20xx –Concussion Awareness Week, held across Canada from September xx to xx, 20xx, encourages everyone to get involved in preventing, recognizing and managing concussions.

Concussions are a serious public health issue affecting all Canadians. We know that early recognition of concussion, proper medical assessment, and appropriate management make a difference in recovery. That is why we want Canadians to know how to prevent concussions, how to care for one, and where to find good information.

[Quote from national partner - could be from Parachute, Sport Canada, etc.]

Concussion Awareness Week activities will be held in communities across the country, including

[Insert your location name]

[Insert your event details, if applicable]

[Insert your spokesperson quote, if applicable]

Resources are available for parents, community organizations, and others who may be interested. You can find them at [**<Insert URL>**].

[Insert boiler plate of local organization]

About Parachute

Parachute is Canada’s national charity dedicated to reducing the devastating impact of preventable injuries. Unintentional injury is the No. 1 killer of Canadians aged 1 – 34. The financial toll is staggering, with injury costing the Canadian economy \$29.4 billion a year. Through education, and advocacy, Parachute is working to save lives and create a Canada free of serious injuries. For more information, visit us at parachute.ca and follow us on [X](#) and [Facebook](#).

About SIRC

Incorporated in 1973, SIRC, the Sport Information Resource Centre, has been the leading and most trusted source to learn, share and support Canada’s sport community for over 40 years. We are committed to engaging with organizations and individuals involved in, or responsible for the development of, sport and fitness in Canada and around the world, to enhance the capacity of our shared community to foster growth and the pursuit of excellence. SIRC is funded in part by the Government of Canada.

For information: [Insert media contact information]

Activity Tracking Tool Template

Organization name:

Contact name and email:

Activities:

Date of activity (YYYY-MM-DD)	Type of activity (e.g., webinar, e-blast, blog post)	Reach (# participants or recipients)	Description (include a link if available)
EXAMPLE: 2022-09-28	Webinar	100	Concussion education webinar for parents. Participants were from Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta. Promotional flyer: www.website.ca/flyer.pdf
EXAMPLE: 2022-09-29	Social media	3,000 impressions	5 tweets

Please list any partners/collaborators involved in implementing your activities:

Activity Evaluation Tool Template

This tool can be used to evaluate learning activities such as information sessions, presentations, and events.

Thank you for participating in our Concussion Awareness Week event, [event title]! Please fill out this brief survey consisting of 5 questions to help us make future events even better. Your responses will remain anonymous.

1. Did you learn new information about concussion [or insert more specific topic]?
 - Yes
 - Somewhat
 - No

2. Please share up to three things you learned:

3. Overall, how would you rate the usefulness of this event?
 - Very low
 - Low
 - Moderate
 - High
 - Very high

4. Do you have any suggestions for future event topics or formats?

5. Please provide any additional comments you would like to share: