

Canadian High School Coaches' Experiences, Insights, and Perceived Roles With Sport-Related Concussions

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There is a need to improve concussion education and prevention efforts for youth athletes and those responsible for their care. The purpose of this study was to understand Canadian high school coaches' insights and perceptions of concussions. Using a case study design, eight high school coaches were interviewed and the data were analysed using a hierarchical content analysis. Findings indicated that participants primarily acquired information about concussions through their own experiences as athletes and parents, and from reports in the sports media. The coaches' felt their role with concussions was to teach athletes safety techniques during practices and competitions and to encourage them to accurately report their concussion symptoms. In addition, participants forwarded a number of recommendations to improve the dissemination of information to coaches. Results from this study will add to a limited body of concussion research with youth sport coaches. Participants' insights provide researchers and clinicians with information about coaches' perceived role with sport-related concussions.

Keywords: coaching science; brain concussion; qualitative research; concussion education; concussion-reporting

Concussions have been termed the silent epidemic because of the injury's prominence in North America and around the world (Carroll & Rosner, 2012). Specific to sport, youth athletes often experience more severe concussion symptoms and take longer to recover than adults (Davis & Purcell, 2014), facts that are concerning given the injury's high incidence rates in youth sports (Lincoln et

al., 2011; Marar, McIlvain, Fields, & Comstock, 2012). Among youth sport participants, high school football, ice hockey, soccer, and basketball athletes have reported a high incidence of concussions (Lincoln et al., 2011; Marar et al., 2012). Evidence also suggests that athletes underreport concussions (Delaney, Lamfookon, Bloom, Al-Kashmiri, & Correa, 2015; Kroshus, Baugh, Daneshvar,