

Learning Accommodations for Students Following a Concussion

Physical

Headaches:

- Provide avenue for ensuring student stays hydrated
- Allow frequent rest breaks with equipment as needed (ear/headphones, music, relaxation tapes, etc)
- Limit or restrict noisy subjects (music, woodworking, auto mechanics, etc)
- Limit or restrict noisy environments (assemblies, cafeteria, hallways, etc)
- Allow the use of noise cancelling ear plugs/headphones
- Allow sunglasses/hat in classroom
- Seat student away from window
- Dim light, pull shades

Tires easily:

- Limit time spent doing school work
- Allow frequent rest breaks with equipment as needed (ear/headphones, music, relaxation tapes, etc)
- Allow student to leave class/school early
- Allow student to start school later in the day
- Modify the student's attendance requirements, classes and/or timetable
- Reduce backpack weight
- Schedule activities/subjects during student's best time of day

Sensitive to light:

- Allow sunglasses/hat in classroom
- Seat student away from window
- Dim light, pull shades
- Reduce exposure to computers, smart boards, videos
- Reduce brightness on screens

Sensitive to noise:

- Limit or restrict noisy subjects (music, woodworking, auto mechanics, etc)
- Limit or restrict noisy environments (assemblies, cafeteria, hallways, etc)
- Provide a quiet work space (library, learning support or counselling room, etc.)
- Provide a quiet place for lunch, recess
- Allow the use of noise cancelling ear plugs/headphones
- Allow student to leave class early to avoid noisy hallways

Dizziness/balance problems:

- Allow student extra time to get to next class
- Allow student to use elevator, if available

Cognitive

Cognitive fatigue:

- Limit time focusing on school work
- No new learning
- Allow frequent rest breaks
- Reduce work load
- Decrease academic expectations
- Prioritize essential school work
- Reduce repetition of work
- Allow for extra time to complete work, tests
- Allow alternative forms of testing (quiet space, oral, one to one, open-book, technology, etc)
- Provide shorter assignments, tests
- Provide smaller chunks to learn
- Provide peer to read aloud to student
- Schedule high cognitive demand tasks to be followed by less demanding work

Difficulty concentrating:

- Provide a quiet place to work
- Limit time focusing on school work
- Decrease distractions
- Work on one task at a time
- Provide smaller chunks of school work
- Allow for extra time to complete work
- Use class notes/technology
- Allow alternative forms of testing (quiet space, oral, one to one, open-book, technology, etc)
- Provide shorter assignments, tests
- Provide peer to read aloud to student
- Provide extra support or learning assistance (TA, LA teacher, parent, peer, etc)
- Allow preferential seating (front of class, away from windows, doors, other distractions, etc)
- Limit or restrict noisy subjects (music, woodworking, auto mechanics, etc)
- Limit or restrict noisy environments (assemblies, cafeteria, hallways, etc)

Difficulty remembering:

- Provide written instructions for tasks, homework
- Use peer tutor or partner
- Check comprehension
- Use class notes/technology so student can review
- Use student agenda, communication book
- Provide smaller chunks to learn
- Provide extra support or learning assistance (TA, LA teacher, parent, peer, etc)
- Use recognition rather than recall for testing
- Use repetition
- Allow use of class notes for testing
- Use visual reminders (schedules, checklists, calendars, sticky notes, etc)
- Use visual cues (highlighting, underlining, pictures/diagrams, colour coding, etc)
- Use memory strategies (categorizing, associations, chunking, rehearsal, mnemonics, visualization, etc)

Emotional

Sad/depressed:

- Allow time for socialization
- Provide supportive feedback and reassurance
- Provide avenues for student to express themselves
- Provide avenue for student to utilize support services within the school (school counsellor, school psychologist, etc)
- Provide extra support or learning assistance (TA, LA teacher, parent, peer, etc)

Anxiety:

- Set appropriate goals with the student
- Allow student to leave class when needed
- Set a signal for the student when they need to leave the classroom
- Provide supportive feedback and reassurance
- Provide avenues for student to express themselves
- Provide avenue for student to utilize support services within the school (school counsellor, school psychologist, etc)
- Provide extra support or learning assistance (TA, LA teacher, parent, peer, etc)
- Reduce workload
- Allow alternative forms of testing (quiet space, oral, one to one, open-book, technology, etc)
- Decrease academic expectations
- Prioritize essential school work
- Allow for extra time to complete work, tests

For more information about learning accommodations, see the Resources section of the Concussion Toolkit for School Professionals.

Based on the Return to Learn protocol by G. F. Strong School Program (Vancouver School Board), Adolescent and Young Adult Program, G. F. Strong Rehabilitation Centre