

Keeping Quiet Can Keep You Out Of The Game

(NAPSA)—Parents and coaches can protect the children in their charge from the dangers of concussion.

Concussion is caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body that causes the brain to move rapidly inside the skull. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

Consider the case of Tracy. Her eyes focused on reaching for the rebound, she didn’t see the other player before she collided with her and hit her head. “I went to school the next day after the game, but I felt really sick.” The feelings of nausea, dizziness and blurred vision were all too familiar. When she was a 7th-grader, she had had a concussion and felt the same way.

When a key game came up two days later, Tracy felt dizzy and nauseous and she thought she had a concussion. “The coach told me to tell the trainer. I didn’t want to tell the trainer ’cause he would sit me out of the game. So I kept quiet but I shouldn’t have played.” As a starter for her high school basketball team, Tracy played hard to win the game but after the game she passed out in the locker room.

“They took me to the hospital and told me I had a concussion, which I knew but I didn’t know that my life was about to change.” Tracy continued to feel nauseated and had headaches, balance problems and difficulty concentrating and reading. “We had to put sheets on the windows to block out the light and I couldn’t watch TV because the lights and noise would make me feel sick. My mom also had to help me walk ’cause my vision was blurry and I felt so dizzy all of the time. But the hardest part was not being able to go



to school and missing most of my junior and senior years of high school.”

Symptoms from the concussion forced Tracy to stay at home. She visits the doctor every month and had to learn how to walk again because of her problems with balance. Three years after the injury, Tracy is beginning to feel better, but she still struggles with symptoms from the concussion. “I am 19 years old but I am living the life a teenager shouldn’t be living.”

According to researchers at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), each year, U.S. emergency departments treat an estimated 135,000 sports- and recreation-related traumatic brain injuries, including concussions, among children ages 5 to 18. While most people will recover fully, some, like Tracy, will continue to have problems that can affect the way they think, learn, feel and act.

A concussion is a serious injury. If you think you have a concussion, don’t hide it, report it. Take time to recover. *It’s better to miss one game than the whole season.*

To learn more about concussion and to watch a video about Tracy’s story, contact CDC at 1-800-CDC-INFO or visit CDC on the Web at www.cdc.gov/concussion.