

# Research Matters

## Gaps in Concussion Management across School-aged Children

### WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO IDENTIFY GAPS IN CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT ACROSS SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN?

Gaps in school-based concussion management may negatively impact recovery and result in inadequate school supports for students.

### ABOUT THIS STUDY

Authors Snedaker, Lundine, Ciccia, Hader and O'Brien (2022) examined demographic characteristics, injury-related details, and physician recommended accommodations for 384 pre-kindergarten - 12th grade students over four school years. Based on their findings, the authors provide a summary of how concussion identification and management differ across age groups and sex.

### KEY FINDINGS

- Identification may be delayed for younger students.
- Students injured outside of school experienced the greatest variability in time to evaluation.
- Elementary/Middle School Differences
  - Male students sustained more concussions and were cleared more quickly than female students.
  - Students, especially females and those with injuries occurring outside of school, experienced longer time-to-evaluation than high school students.
- High School Differences
  - Students sustained more concussions at school and/or school sports than Elementary/Middle School students.
  - Students were evaluated and diagnosed more quickly than Elementary/Middle School students.
  - More females than males sustained concussions.

### STUDY IMPLICATIONS

Students experience differences in concussion identification and management according to their age group and sex. High School students are more likely to have their needs met through better designed protocols that don't work as well for younger students. Students, especially those in Elementary/Middle School, could benefit from policies that focus on identifying and managing concussion for all students, not just athletes. Younger students are most susceptible to experience gaps in concussion management and future research should characterize this more fully.

### REFERENCE

Snedaker, K. P., Lundine, J. P., Ciccia, A. H., Haider, M. N., & O'Brien, K. H. (2022). Gaps in concussion management across school-aged children. *Brain injury*, 36(6), 714-721. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02699052.2022.2034954>