

ROWAN'S LAW DAY



TOOLKIT FOR SCHOOLS



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ABOUT OPHEA

Ophea is a not-for-profit organization that champions healthy, active living in schools and communities through quality programs and services, partnerships, and advocacy, and is led by the vision that all children and youth value and enjoy the lifelong benefits of healthy, active living. Ophea is a registered charity.

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ROWAN'S LAW DAY TOOLKIT FOR SCHOOLS

ABOUT THE TOOLKIT

This Toolkit contains sample tools to support recognition of Rowan's Law Day at your school and to spark conversation among students, staff, parents/guardians and community about concussion awareness. You'll find:

- ✓ Information about Rowan Stringer and Rowan's Law Day
- ✓ A list of concussion awareness activities for schools
- ✓ Printable posters
- ✓ Ready-to-go social media posts for Facebook and Twitter
- ✓ Additional resources

Please select the tools that suit your school and students best or use them as a guide to inspire your own ideas.

ABOUT ROWAN STRINGER

A 17-YEAR-OLD GIRL WHO LOVED RUGBY

Rowan Stringer loved rugby. A competitive and keen athlete, she was captain of her high school's team. Tragically, in May 2013, 17-year-old Rowan died as the result of multiple head injuries she sustained while playing rugby. In the week before her last game, Rowan was hit twice while playing, likely sustaining a concussion after each blow. Her concussions went unreported, and she continued to play. Rowan suspected something wasn't right—she texted a friend about her condition and used Google to search for information about concussions. When she was hit again in her final game, Rowan suffered what is known as Second Impact Syndrome—catastrophic swelling caused by a second injury to a brain still healing from previous trauma. Rowan collapsed on the field on May 8, 2013, and died four days later.



ABOUT ROWAN'S LAW

Sample messaging for elementary school students:

Have you ever bumped your head or body? We likely all have! In sports and active games, there can be risk involved. Turns out, some bumps and bruises can really hurt our brains, and these may need a lot of time to heal. Therefore, Rowan's Law was created.

In 2018, a law called Rowan's Law was passed in Ontario in honour of Rowan Stringer. Rowan died while playing high school rugby because she got multiple head injuries over a series of 6 days.

Rowan's Law helps protect kids who play sports or play active games in schools just like you! Sometimes sports have an element of risk, and that's okay so long that we know how to approach that risk safely! Rowan's Law helps teachers, parents/guardians, and coaches learn about preventing concussions (also known as bumps and bruises to the brain). Rowan's Law also helps people who get concussions recover.

Thanks to Rowan's Law, all sports organizations and schools in Ontario must have rules in place around concussions. Even when we do our best to prevent injuries there is always some risk. Rowan's Law helps coaches, teachers, and parents/guardians know when a child has suffered a suspected concussion. It also lets the child know that they should immediately stop participating in physical activities and when they may safely return to play again.

Sample messaging for secondary school students:

In 2018, a law called Rowan's Law was passed in Ontario in honour of Rowan Stringer. Rowan died while playing high school rugby as the result of multiple concussions received over 6 days, leading to Second Impact Syndrome.

Rowan's Law, which came into effect in 2018, makes it mandatory for sport organizations and schools to inform themselves about the dangers of head injuries. Rowan's Law helps protect the player and helps students, coaches, parents/guardians, teachers, and officials learn about preventing concussions.

In September 2019, the Ministry of Education updated its concussion policy (PPM 158) to be consistent with Rowan's Law. Schools must comply with their school board's existing concussion policy (which includes having a return to school and return to physical activity plan for any student who has a concussion).

Rowan's Law is also about education. By increasing concussion awareness and knowledge, we can change Ontario's culture around sports, physical activity, and injury. Rowan's Law will make it easier for those who experience concussions to **SPEAK UP**, get the help they need, and take the time necessary for recovery, with the support of everyone around them.

Sample messaging for school staff:

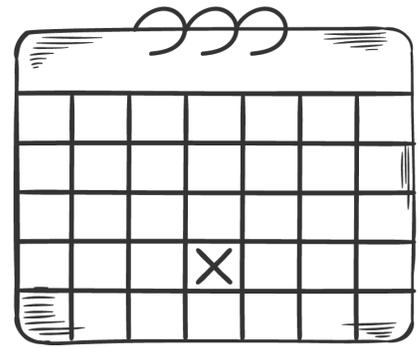
Rowan's Law, which came into effect in March of 2018, makes it mandatory for sport organizations and schools to inform themselves about the dangers of head injuries. Rowan's Law helps protect the player and helps students, coaches, parents/guardians, teachers, and officials learn about preventing concussions.

In September 2019, the Ministry of Education updated its concussion policy (PPM 158) to be consistent with Rowan's Law. Schools must comply with their school board's existing concussion policy (which includes having a return to school and return to physical activity plan for any student who has a concussion).

Rowan's Law is also about education. By increasing concussion awareness and knowledge, we can change Ontario's culture around sports, physical activity, and injury. Encourage your students to **SPEAK UP**, get the help they need, and take the time necessary for recovery, with the support of everyone around them.

ABOUT ROWAN'S LAW DAY

Mark your calendars and start planning! The last Wednesday in September every year (September 29, 2021) is Rowan's Law Day (#RowansLawDay) – a day to engage students, staff, and parents/guardians in activities that increase awareness about concussions and to share Rowan Stringer's story. The tips, tools, and links to additional resources in this Toolkit are designed to encourage and support your participation.



SPREAD THE WORD AT SCHOOL

Concussions in sport are a recognized health concern – but brain injuries are not limited to people who play sports. Everyone is at risk. Rowan’s Law Day is an opportunity to educate and engage students in a discussion about concussions and to use some of the following activities to promote awareness:

1. Printable posters

Download and print concussion education posters to post around your school. You’ll find posters (available to print as 8.5 x11 and 11 x 17) for both elementary and secondary students at:

<https://teachingtools.ophea.net/supplements/rowans-law-day-toolkit-schools/downloadable-posters>.

Posters can also be printed and coloured by younger students as part of your concussion awareness strategy. Consider having a colouring contest or having students create their own posters based on what they learn about concussion.

2. Share Rowan’s story & wear her favourite colour!

Share Rowan’s story with students and colleagues – and encourage your school community to wear purple (Rowan’s favourite colour) on Rowan’s Law Day (the last Wednesday of September each year – September 29, 2021).

3. Host a Virtual or In-Person Assembly

Host a school-wide virtual or in-person assembly to support student learning about concussions and the importance of speaking up about an injury to the head. For tips, view the Concussion Legacy Foundation Canada’s Team Up Speak Up speaker/school assembly program: www.concussionfoundation.ca/programs-projects/programs/.

Interested in having someone speak at your school? Try contacting your local Brain Injury Association

<http://obia.ca/abi-associations/> or public health unit <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/phu/locations.aspx>.

4. Announcements

Address concussion education in your school’s morning or end-of-day announcements using content from this Toolkit.

5. Sports Teams

Take the pledge to keep yourself and each other safe by reporting concussions. Visit

<http://teamupspk.org> for details.

6. Student projects & in-class discussions

Engage students using activities or projects that help them learn about concussions and that reinforce the message that a bump to the head or body may need medical attention and time to heal. It’s “OK” to take a break! Students who have had concussions may also share their experiences, encouraging others to SPEAK UP if they too are ever injured.

7. Connect with parents/guardians & community

Through social media channels, your school’s newsletter or via other means, consider sharing your school board’s concussion policy and some of the content from Ophea’s Rowan’s Law Day Toolkit with parents/guardians. It’s important that parents/guardians can recognize the signs and symptoms of a concussion so that they can protect their child and share in your school’s best practices to keep all students safe. Invite parents/guardians to learn more by visiting Parachute’s Concussion Guide for Parents and Caregivers at:

<https://parachute.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Concussion-Guide-for-Parents-and-Caregivers.pdf>

Moreover, parents/guardians, children/youth, and the broader community can help increase awareness about the signs and symptoms of a concussion by reviewing and sharing the Rowan’s Law: Concussion Awareness Resources

<http://www.ontario.ca/page/rowans-law-concussion-awareness-resources>.

8. Staff Education

Concussion awareness is a shared responsibility – which is why all staff at your school should know the signs and symptoms and be aware of your school board's concussion policy. Encourage your colleagues to make use of the following resources:

- The Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines: Concussions <https://safety.ophea.net/concussions>
- Ophea's Concussion Identification, Management and Prevention for Schools (updated annually) e-Learning module: <https://www.ophea.net/professional-learning/e-learning> was developed to increase awareness and understanding of concussion identification and management. The module also includes strategies and resources to assist in the education of concussion prevention. This e-Learning module is intended for all school staff including educators, administrators and support staff.

9. Get Social

Use your school's social media platforms to educate others about Rowan's Law Day and concussion awareness using #RowansLawDay and #HitStopSit. Share what your school is doing to participate.

10. Video

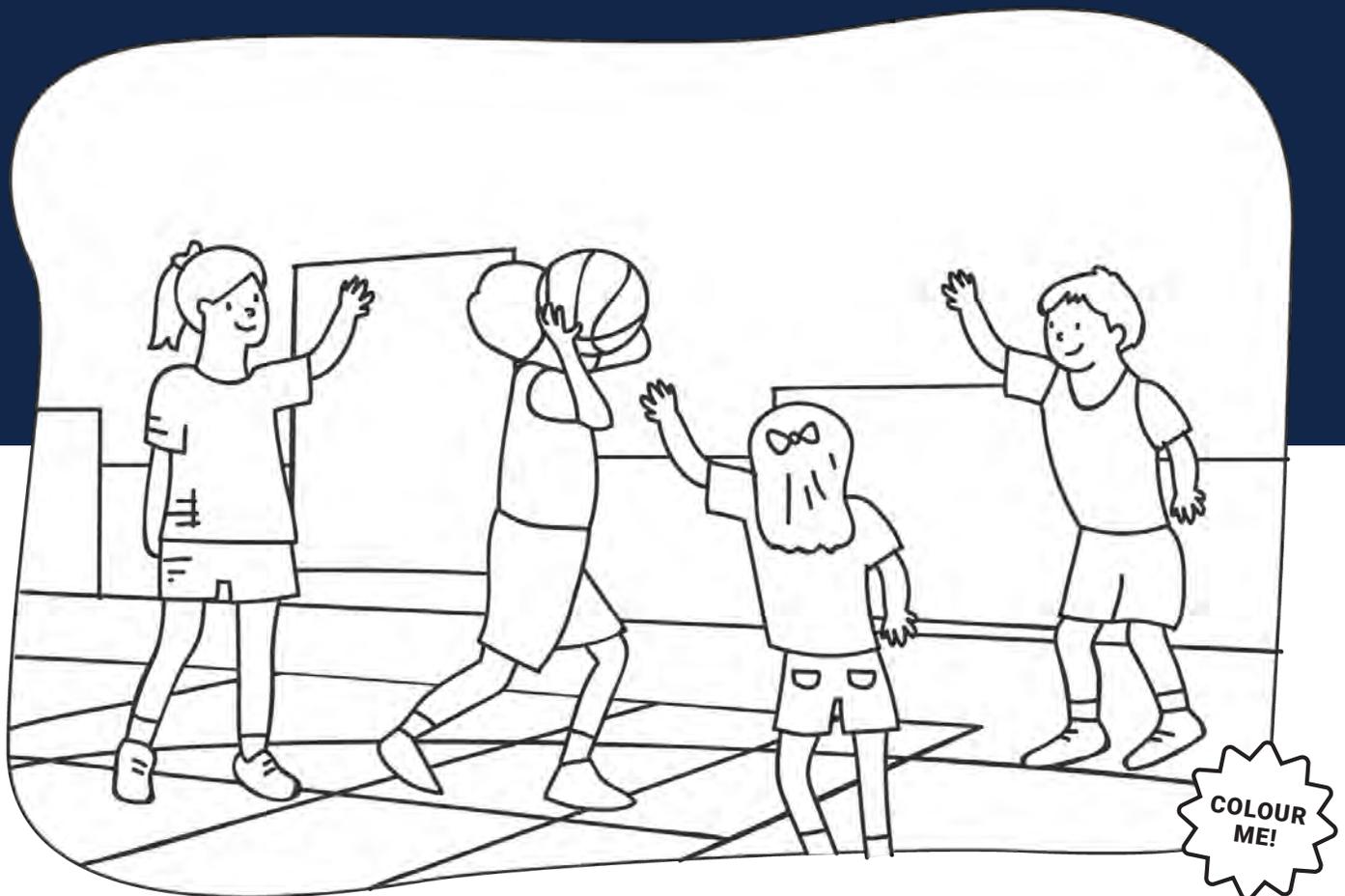
View these videos with your students and school community to promote awareness and spark discussion about head injuries and concussions:

- Dr. Mike Evans: Concussion 101 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zCCD52Pty4A>
- CBC: Rowan Stringer ignored concussion symptoms days before death <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/rowan-stringer-ignored-concussion-symptoms-days-before-death-1.3077245>
- CBC: Gordon Stringer is an advocate for brain injury awareness who has worked tirelessly to enact legislation and educate the public about concussions <https://newsinteractives.cbc.ca/longform/trailblazer-number-six/>
- What happens when you have a concussion? - Clifford Robbins <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xvjK-4NXRsM>
- The Risk: Know the Signs of a Concussion <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UvBDdBoLKjg>
- Rowan's Law <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pE-2rMk-yN0>

ROWAN'S LAW DAY

CONCUSSION SAFETY

A BUMP TO THE HEAD OR BODY CAN HURT
– SO TELL AN ADULT RIGHT AWAY



Did you bump your head or body? Do you have a friend who has? Sometimes a bump to the head can hurt your brain and needs special care and rest – this could be from playing sports, playing with friends, or even just rolling out of bed in the morning. When you hit your head or body, it's always a good idea to SPEAK UP and tell your parents/guardians, teacher, coach, or another adult you trust. They know just what to do to help you feel better. So, don't hide a bump to your head, SPEAK UP about it!

For more information on concussions including signs, symptoms and prevention, checkout:

Rowan's Law Day Toolkit for Schools | teachingtools.ophea.net/supplements/rowans-law-day-toolkit-schools | [#RowansLawDay](https://twitter.com/RowansLawDay)

ROWAN'S LAW DAY

CONCUSSION SAFETY

CONCUSSIONS ARE BRAIN INJURIES...
AND THEY NEED TIME TO HEAL



Bumped your head or body playing sports, being active, or hanging around with friends? Don't hide it, **SPEAK UP** and get help. A bump to the head can injure the brain leading to a concussion – and brain injuries need adequate time to heal.

If you or a friend or a teammate sustains a bump or blow to the head or body, know the signs and symptoms of a concussion. Sometimes symptoms are obvious right away, but sometimes they can take hours or even days to appear.

Symptoms include:

- Headache/pressure in the head
- Nausea
- Feeling drowsy
- Dizziness
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Difficulty thinking clearly or remembering
- Fatigue or low energy
- Blurred vision
- Feeling sad, irritable, nervous or emotional

Have you had a concussion? Want to help others prevent them and encourage those affected to get help? Spread the word about #RowansLawDay and join the discussion about concussion. For more information checkout:

Rowan's Law Day Toolkit for Schools | teachingtools.ophea.net/supplements/rowans-law-day-toolkit-schools | [#RowansLawDay](https://twitter.com/RowansLawDay)



LET'S GET SOCIAL!

Learning about concussion awareness is the first step to helping others. Once you've reviewed the tools in this Toolkit, please share them with:

- ✓ Other teachers
- ✓ Health and safety contacts
- ✓ School/parent council members
- ✓ Physical education professionals
- ✓ Coaches
- ✓ Parents/guardians
- ✓ School trustees
- ✓ Websites and chat groups geared to physical educators

You can also make use of the ready-to-use posts for Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram included in this Toolkit.

Here are a few tips to give your posts more impact:

- ✓ Social media posts generate more interest when there's a strong visual element to them. Be sure to add a photo to your posts whenever possible*
- ✓ When posting to Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter, you can tag [@OpheaCanada](https://www.instagram.com/OpheaCanada)
- ✓ When posting, consider asking your audience a question to encourage interaction (comments, sharing, liking) with your posts
- ✓ Use scheduling tools to pre-schedule your tweets and Facebook posts if this is easier
- ✓ Be sure to get some photos of your school community so that you'll have lots to share when posting*
- ✓ Make sure to use [#RowansLawDay](https://twitter.com/RowansLawDay) and [#HitStopSit](https://twitter.com/HitStopSit) to generate engagement

**ensure that you have permission to post images*



SOCIAL MEDIA POST IDEAS FOR TWITTER, INSTAGRAM, OR FACEBOOK!

The last Wednesday in September is #RowansLawDay! At our school, we'll be sharing Rowan's story & teaching our students & staff how to identify the signs & symptoms of concussions! #HitStopSit. Join us! A FREE Toolkit is available from @OpheaCanada! <https://teachingtools.ophea.net/supplements/rowans-law-day-toolkit-schools>

It's #RowansLawDay and we're learning about the signs and symptoms of concussion using this FREE Toolkit from @OpheaCanada. Get your school involved too and let's keep kids safe! <https://teachingtools.ophea.net/supplements/rowans-law-day-toolkit-schools> #HitStopSit

We're making sure staff, students, and parents/guardians know the signs and symptoms of a concussion and are marking #RowansLawDay by remembering Rowan and wearing purple. Here's a pic from our school today [\[add image of students/staff in purple\]](#)#HitStopSit

Everyone's at risk of head injury and concussion – not just athletes. Know the signs and symptoms of concussion: <http://hollandbloorview.ca/Assets/Concussion-center/Infographics.3.pdf> #RowansLawDay #HitStopSit

If in doubt, sit it out and check it out. #HitStopSit. Concussions aren't always immediately obvious. Know the signs and symptoms. #RowansLawDay <http://hollandbloorview.ca/Assets/Concussioncenter/Infographics.3.pdf>

Have you or a friend had a concussion? Share your experience to raise awareness and encourage others to SPEAK UP about and GET HELP for head injuries: <http://teamupspeakup.org> #RowansLawDay #TeamUpSpeakUp #HitStopSit

Rowan Stringer loved rugby and was captain of her high school's team. She died after multiple concussions went unreported. Know the signs and symptoms of concussion: <http://hollandbloorview.ca/Assets/Concussion-center/Infographics.3.pdf> #RowansLawDay #HitStopSit

It's not just coaches who need to know the signs and symptoms of concussions... because it's not just athletes who are at risk. We all are. We like this video, Concussions 101 by @docmikeevans, and encourage everyone to view it: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zCCD52Pty4A> #RowansLawDay

Have you ever had a concussion? Share your experience to raise awareness & encourage others to SPEAK UP about & GET HELP for head injuries. @ParachuteCanada has some great resources that explain what a concussion is & the signs and symptoms: <http://www.parachutecanada.org/injury-topics/item/concussion> #RowansLawDay

Thinking about toughing it out after a big hit? Think again. Concussions are serious. Know the signs & symptoms. Speaking up is brave, not weak. #RowansLawDay <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hfubMIBiwGg>



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following additional resources are provided to support concussion awareness and knowledge building for the school community. They are organized by the concussion component they focus on: awareness, identification, management, prevention, and training. As you review the resources, keep in mind that as per Policy Memorandum 158 <https://www.ontario.ca/document/education-ontario-policy-and-program-direction/policyprogram-memorandum-158>, each school board must develop and maintain a policy on concussions.

Awareness

Concussion Legacy Foundation Canada

Awareness raising, educational programs focused on sport-related concussion
<https://concussionfoundation.ca/>

Dr. Mike Evans

Concussions 101, a Primer for Kids and Parents
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zCCD52Pty4A>

Government of Ontario

Rowan's Law Official Concussion Awareness Resources and sample templates
<http://ontario.ca/concussions>

Hockey Canada

Concussion Toolbox
<https://www.hockeycanada.ca/en-ca/hockey-programs/safety/concussions/concussion-toolbox>

Holland Bloorview Concussion Centre*

Awareness infographics, developed specifically for children and youth
<http://hollandbloorview.ca/programsandservices/concussioncentre/concussioneducation/infographics>

- 6 things you should know about concussions
- Signs of a concussion
- I think I have a concussion, how can I get better?
- Sleep tips to recover from a concussion

Handbook for Parents and Kids
www.hollandbloorview.ca/concussionhandbook

Ophea*

The Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines
safety.ophea.net

**Content has been reviewed and updated as required to align with the Berlin Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport and the Canadian Guideline on Concussion in Sport.*

Parachute*

Awareness resources for all members of the school community

www.parachutecanada.org/injury-topics/item/concussion-resources-for-schools:

- Concussion Guide for Teachers
- Concussion Guide for Coaches
- Concussion Guide for Parents and Caregivers
- Concussion Guide for Athletes
- Concussion Ed, a free app available in the [Apple App Store](#).

Team Up, Speak Up

Pledge to do your part to fight concussions

<http://teamupspeakup.org>

Identification

Concussion in Sport Group

Concussion Recognition Tool 5

<https://bjism.bmj.com/content/bjsports/early/2017/04/26/bjsports-2017-097508CRT5.full.pdf>

Ophea*

The Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines (safety.ophea.net) Sample Tool to Identify a Suspected Concussion <https://safety.ophea.net/tools-resources/sample-tool-identify-a-suspected-concussion>

Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport*

Rowan's Law Official Concussion Awareness Resources and sample templates <http://www.ontario.ca/concussions>

Management

Holland Bloorview Concussion Centre*

hollandbloorview.ca/programsandservices/concussioncentre/welcome:

- I think I have a concussion, how can I get better?
- Sleep tips to recover from concussion
- **SCHOOLFirst**: Enabling successful return-to-school for Canadian youth following a concussion
- Concussion programs and services

Ministry to Tourism, Culture and Sport*

Rowan's Law Official Concussion Awareness Resources and sample templates

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/rowans-law-concussion-safety>

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Ophea*

The Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines safety.ophea.net

- Sample Documentation of Medical Assessment
- Sample Documentation for Concussion Management – Home Preparation for Return to School (RTS) and Return to Physical Activity (RTPA) Plan
- Sample Documentation for School Concussion Management – Return to School (RTS) and Return to Physical Activity (RTPA) Plan
- Sample Documentation for Medical Clearance

Parachute*

After a Concussion: Return-to-School Strategy

<https://parachute.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Return-to-School-Strategy.pdf>

After a Concussion: Return-to-Sport Strategy

<https://parachute.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Return-to-Sport-Strategy.pdf>

Government of Ontario*

Rowan's Law Official Concussion Awareness Resources and sample templates

<http://www.ontario.ca/concussions>

Prevention

Ophea*

The Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education Sample Concussion Prevention Strategies

<https://safety.ophea.net/tools-resources/sample-concussion-prevention-strategies>

Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport*

- Rowan's Law: Concussion Safety <https://www.ontario.ca/page/rowans-law-concussion-safety>
- Rowan's Law: Concussion Awareness Resources including e-booklets and videos <https://www.ontario.ca/page/rowans-law-concussion-awareness-resources>
- Hit. Stop. Sit. Poster <https://files.ontario.ca/mtcs-rowans-law-hit-stop-sit-poster-en-2019-05-14.pdf>
- Signs of a Concussion Poster <https://files.ontario.ca/mtcs-rowans-law-signs-of-a-concussion-poster-en-2019-05-14.pdf>

Training

Ophea*

Concussion Identification, Management and Prevention for Ontario Schools e-Learning module

<https://www.ophea.net/professional-learning/e-learning>

Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport*

Rowan's Law Official Concussion Awareness Resources and sample templates

<http://www.ontario.ca/page/rowans-law-concussion-safety>

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