

Help Protect Our Student Athletes from Concussions

Cosponsor the Protecting Student Athletes from Concussions Act (H.R. 3580)

Supported by (11): American Academy of Neurology, National Athletic Trainers' Association, National Council of Youth Sports, National Disability Rights Network, National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), National Football League (NFL), National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association, National PTA, Pop Warner Little Scholars, USA Cheer, US Lacrosse

Dear Colleague:

Concussions for student athletes are a growing problem that demands immediate attention. According to recent data:

- As many as 1.9 million sports and recreation-related concussions occur every year among people under age 18 in the United States.ⁱ
- Between 2002 and 2012, both the number of concussion-related emergency room visits in children ages 8 to 13 and the number of reported concussions among teens ages 14 to 19 tripled.ⁱⁱ
- Younger athletes are at greater risk from sports-related concussions than college or professional athletes because their developing brains are more susceptible to injury.ⁱⁱⁱ

These injuries not only affect students' future ability to compete in sports, but also can be detrimental to their academic performance and mental health.^{iv} Although it has traditionally been left to parents and coaches to make decisions about how to treat a student with a concussion, there is a growing consensus in the medical and education communities that more direct intervention and support from schools and medical professionals is necessary.

That is why I have introduced the **Protecting Student Athletes from Concussions Act**, which will provide necessary guidelines and support by making sure school districts develop and educate stakeholders on concussion management plans that include evidence-based procedures for treating students who have suffered concussions.

The Protecting Student Athletes from Concussions Act will:

Ensure nationwide compliance by bringing all states in line with evidence-based guidelines for the treatment of sports concussions as recommended by the American College of Sports Medicine and the American Academy of Neurology.

Promote safety and awareness by requiring states that receive federal education funding to form concussion management teams and develop concussion guidelines that educate student athletes, increase awareness of concussion signs, symptoms, and risks, and support physical recovery.

Ensure a focus on academic recovery by making sure students who have suffered concussions receive appropriate academic support, such as rest, gradual reintroduction to cognitive demands, and modified academic assignments, as they return to the classroom.

Establish “when in doubt, sit it out” policies that require students suspected of sustaining a concussion during a school-sponsored athletic activity to be removed from participation, prohibited from returning to play that day, and evaluated by a health care professional.

It is time for all states and all schools to have comprehensive, evidence-based concussion response strategies to ensure the health and safety of all of our student athletes is protected.

If you have any questions or would like to become a cosponsor of H.R. 3580, please contact Evan Smith at evan.smith@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

ⁱ <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/138/1/e20154635.full.pdf>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/313533.php>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12756388>

^{iv} <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3208826/>