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Sports Concussion Awareness Day

The Sports Legacy Institute Supports Senate Bill 796

Brain trauma in youth sports is a growing public health crisis. The CDC estimates that 1.6 to 3.8 million concussions occur in youth sports and recreational activities each year. Boston University's Center for the Study of Traumatic Encephalopathy, which recently received a \$1 MM gift from the National Football League, has found that repetitive brain trauma in youth sports can lead to a brain disease – Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy, or CTE. CTE causes memory disorders, depression, loss of behavioral control and, eventually, dementia.

SLI supports Senate Bill 796 because it will protect the future of youth student-athletes at virtually no cost with 3 key principles:

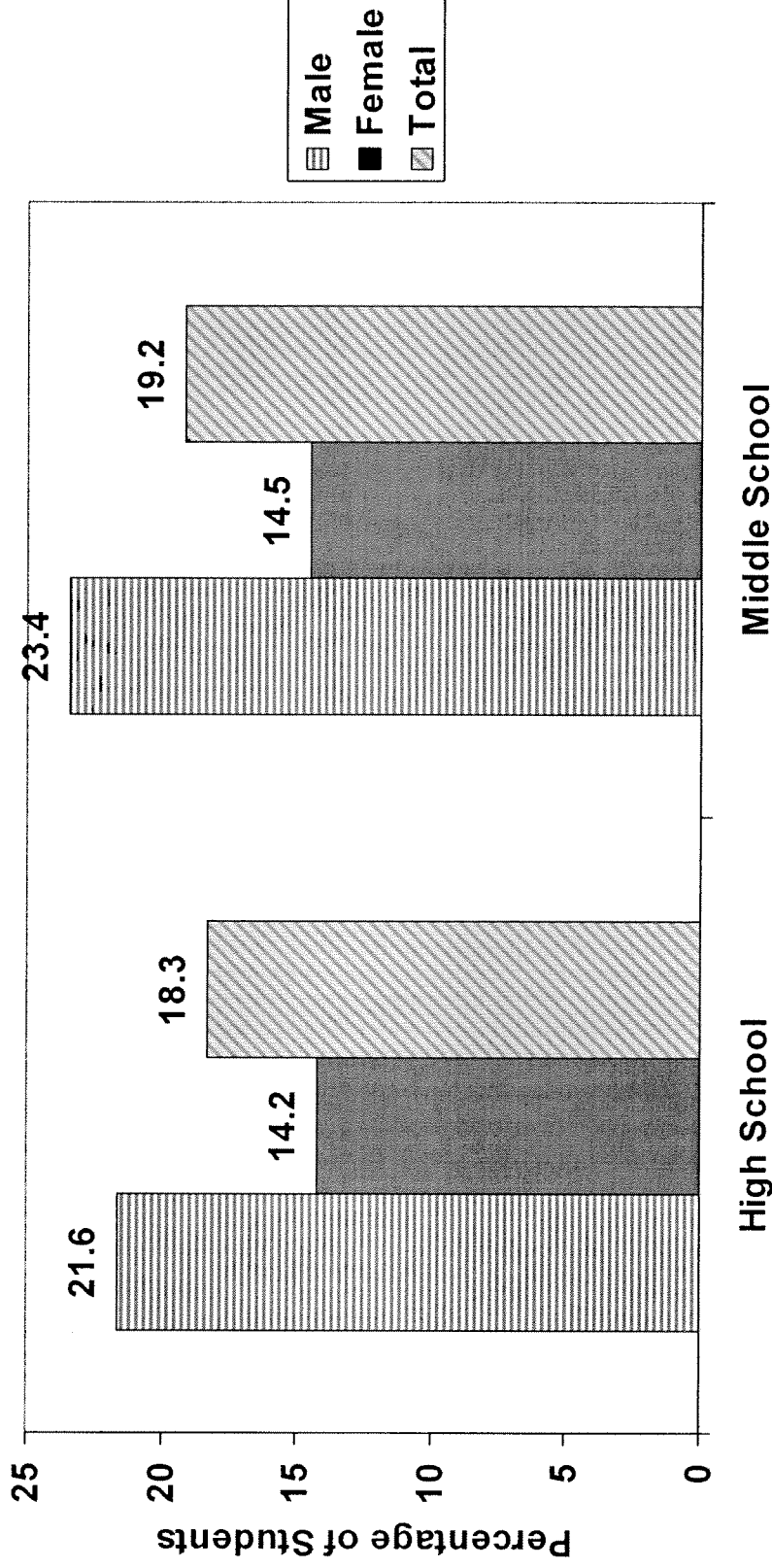
1. Coaches, athletes, and other stakeholders receive education on concussions.
2. Players that have suffered a concussion cannot return-to-play the same day.
3. Players that have suffered a concussion must receive medical clearance before returning to play.

Supporting evidence:

- Medical research shows that after a concussion, the brain needs time to recover, which can take days, weeks, or months. Return-to-play too soon can cause worsened symptoms, a longer recovery, and even sudden death from Second-Impact Syndrome. Studies show no youth athlete can 'recover' in less than a day;
- While up to 3.8 million concussions occur each year in youth sports, only about 10% are diagnosed by medical professional;
- Even when concussions are diagnosed, 40% of athletes return too early according to some guidelines;
- The CDC provides FREE educational materials through its "Heads Up" program, which will soon include online certification;
- Repetitive brain trauma has caused CTE in 15 of 15 college and former pro football players, indicating that great measures are necessary to protect athletes.

About the Sports Legacy Institute: The mission of the Sports Legacy Institute (SLI) is to advance the study, treatment and prevention of the effects of brain trauma in athletes and other at-risk groups. SLI was founded in 2007 to "Solve the Sports Concussion Crisis," and in 2009, SLI launched programs to also serve our military veterans. SLI is primarily focused on the study of the degenerative brain disease Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy, or CTE, a condition caused by repetitive concussive and sub-concussive brain injuries. SLI partnered with Boston University School of Medicine in 2008 to found the Center for the Study of Traumatic Encephalopathy.

Percentage of Massachusetts Students¹ Reporting Symptoms of a TBI² While Playing with a Sports Team in the Past 12 months, (MA Youth Health Survey, 2009)



¹ Includes only students who played on a sports team in the past 12 months.

² Reported they suffered a blow or jolt to head while playing with a sports team (during a game or practice) which caused them to get "knocked out", have memory problems, double or blurry vision, headaches or "pressure" in the head or nausea or vomiting.

Senate Bill 796

An Act Relating to Safety Regulations for School Athletics Programs

Senator Steven A. Baddour

Summary:

- Directs DPH to direct the Division of Violence and Injury Prevention to develop an interscholastic athletic Head Injury Safety Training program to apply to public schools and to any other school whose athletic programs are subject to Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association rules.
- Coaches, parent volunteers or trainers for an extracurricular athletic school activity, physician employed by a school and the marching band director must complete the Training Program.
- The training shall include current training in recognizing the symptoms of potentially catastrophic injuries. Students shall receive this training.
- DPH is further directed provide students participating in an extracurricular athletic school activity with the following:
 - a summary of department rules and regulations relative to safety regulations for student participation in extracurricular athletic activities; including protocol for post concussion participation or participation in an extracurricular athletic activity after becoming unconscious;
 - written information related to the recognition of symptoms of head injuries, information regarding the biology and short-term and long-term consequences of concussions.
- Directs DPH to develop forms to provide coaches with up-to-date information of their athletes head injury history to enable them to identify those students who are at greater risk for repeated head injuries. These forms would require students to provide information each season relative to their sports head injury history prior to receiving clearance to participate in an extracurricular athletic activity. These forms would

require the signature of both the student and their parent or legal guardian.

- This legislation establishes rules of conduct surrounding a student becoming unconscious during an extracurricular athletic activity.
- Records shall be kept by the superintendent of the school.
- Penalties for noncompliance will be established by DPH.
- This legislation does not waive any liability or immunity of a school district or its officers or employees nor does it create any liability for a course of legal action against a school district or its officers or employees. A volunteer is not liable for civil damages arising out of an act or omission relating to the requirements of this legislation, unless the act or omission is willfully or wantonly negligent.
- Directs the department to promulgate rules within 90 days of the effective date of this act; provided that these regulations shall become effective for the fiscal year following final approval of said regulations; provided, however, that not less than 12 months shall have elapsed between final approval of the regulations and the date of implementation in order to provide sufficient time to implement the regulations.