



Illinois Passes Law on Sports Safety, Concussions

Sponsored by State Senator Kwame Raoul (D-Chicago), the bill on its way to Governor Bruce Rauner would add to the state's strong body of law on sports safety with the following:

- Strengthens the “return to play” protocol, which requires kids showing the signs and symptoms of concussions to be pulled from play and not allowed to return until released by a medical personnel with specific training in head injuries;
- Would apply the protocol to elementary and middle schools;
- School districts would be required to establish a plan for the return of youth to both sports and academics;
- The “return to learn” protocol requires that a student who may have sustained a concussion to be afforded formal classroom accommodations, modifications of curriculum and monitoring by medical and academic staff while recovering from a brain injury;
- Requires concussion oversight team in school districts and charter schools;
- Includes park districts in the coverage of the law if they are directly involved in organizing youth sports activity;
- Specifies educational requirements of those who might have oversight or knowledge of a youth athlete's brain injury, including school nurses, game officials, and requires the active involvement of athletic trainers when they are present;
- There is no enforcement mechanism except for civil litigation;
- Strongly encourages non-school sports programs to provide educational materials to parents and young athletes.

Key Facts:

- There has been a 60% increase in emergency room visits for traumatic brain injuries among children and adolescents over the past 10 years. The age group that accounts for the highest number of emergency room visits for concussions is 10-14 year-olds.
- Senator Raoul grew interested in the legislative issue following incidents in which his son and daughter sustained concussions.
- Rep. Christian Mitchell of Chicago was the principal sponsor in the House.
- The vote was 104-1

What Can You Do?

- [Ask](#) Governor Rauner to sign the bill.
- Thank [Senator Raoul](#) and [Assemblyman Mitchell](#) @KwameRaoul @cljmitchell for their leadership

Links:

[SB7 Text](#)
[Sun Times](#)
[The Times](#)

[Safe Kids Letter of Support Before House Committee
Elementary & Secondary Education](#)

Supporters:

- Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago
- Illinois Athletic Trainers Association
- Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
- Illinois High School Association
- National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
- Northwestern Medicine
- Illinois Association of School Nurses
- Safe Kids Illinois and Chicago