



Brain Injury Association of New Jersey, Inc.

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Background and History of the Concussion in Sports Committee

In 2003, a public awareness survey in New Jersey revealed that despite the research, which established brain injury as a leading cause of death and disability among America's youth, public recognition of brain injury and the frequency of its occurrence is quite low. In addition, there is a lack of understanding that a concussion is a brain injury. Although most concussions resolve spontaneously, the consequences of a moderate or severe concussion can be serious, and some can alter the quality of a person's future.

The Brain Injury Association of New Jersey has a long-standing commitment to address prevention of brain injuries and to raise public awareness about the issues that surround brain injuries. In 2002 through a surcharge on New Jersey motor vehicle registrations the State of New Jersey established the TBI Fund. The Division of Disability Services, New Jersey Department of Human Service manages the Fund. The main purpose of the Fund is to act as the payer of last resort for post-acute care of residents with brain injury. Another purpose of the Fund is to provide public information and prevention education about brain injury; the Brain Injury Association of New Jersey is charged with this mission.

The Association's first response to this charge was to create the Public Information and Prevention Education Advisory Board (PIPE), which have been meeting for two years. Subsequently, as part of a strategic plan, the PIPE organized the Concussion in Sports Committee in October, 2004 to address the issue of concussion awareness and prevention in youth sports.

Considering that the nature of concussion is not uniformly understood among the athletic, educational, and medical communities of professionals who work with youth, the first action of the Concussion in Sports Committee has been to develop a consensus statement that defines concussion, discusses the features of concussion, and outlines the issues involved in return to play decisions. Concurrently the committee is developing a Concussion in Sports Summit to be held on February 24, 2006. The summit will provide an opportunity for a multi-disciplinary group of agencies and individuals to come together to develop a New Jersey Concussion in Sports Action Plan. The Concussion in Sports Summit will feature national athletes and experts in concussion management. Information will also cover diagnosis, treatment and prevention of concussions. Information about the Summit will be distributed as it becomes available.

For more information about the Concussion in Sports Campaign, please visit our website at www.bianj.org, or www.sportsconcussion.com.

A Chartered State Affiliate of the Brain Injury Association of America

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The Brain Injury Association of New Jersey is a statewide membership organization dedicated to providing education, outreach, prevention, advocacy and support services to all persons affected by brain injury and to the general public.