



## OATA Position Statement on Youth Sports Concussion Law

July 27, 2010

On May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2010, Governor Brad Henry signed into law Oklahoma Statute 25 – 155 of Title 70, formerly known as SB 1700. This bill was proposed and passed in response to the increasing numbers of our student athletes, an estimated 1.4 million in the US, who sustain concussion and head injuries while participating in athletics.

The law provides that “a youth athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury during a practice or game shall be removed from participation.” The law goes on to state that “a youth athlete who has been removed from participation...may not participate until... evaluated by a licensed health care professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussion and receives written clearance to return to participation from that health care provider.” With early recognition, diagnosis and proper treatment, these student-athletes can return to play with a lesser chance of suffering a second catastrophic head injury.

Licensed by the Oklahoma Board of Medical Licensure and Supervision, Athletic Trainers are one of the few professions that meet the criteria outlined by this law. Licensed athletic trainers are the only health care professional specifically educated and trained to work with athletes. These professionals are able to provide immediate diagnosis and treatment of injuries, reducing severity, rehabilitation time, and reducing the chance of career-ending injuries. The licensed athletic trainer is a highly educated health care professional who is well educated in the care, treatment, and prevention of concussions and head injuries.

The Oklahoma Athletic Trainers' Association (OATA) and its over 300 members would like to encourage coaches, athletic directors, administrators, parents, and student-athletes if they sustain a concussion or would like more information on head injuries and concussions please contact a licensed athletic trainer. Please visit [www.oata.net](http://www.oata.net) for the most up to date information regarding athletic training, concussion management, and other sports medicine related topics.

Please remember dealing with head injuries and concussions should not be taken lightly; it's better to miss one game than the whole season. ***“When in doubt, sit them out.”***