

P.L.2017, Joint Resolution No. 16, *approved July 21, 2017*  
Assembly Joint Resolution No. 115

- 1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating the third Friday in September of  
2 every year as Concussion Awareness Day.  
3
- 4 **WHEREAS**, A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that disrupts the  
5 normal functioning of the brain and can cause significant and  
6 sustained neuropsychological impairment affecting problem  
7 solving, planning, memory, attention, concentration, and behavior;  
8 and
- 9 **WHEREAS**, The symptoms of a concussion can last for days, weeks, or  
10 months, and may include prolonged headache, vision disturbance,  
11 dizziness, nausea or vomiting, impaired balance, confusion,  
12 memory loss, ringing in the ears, difficulty concentrating,  
13 sensitivity to light, and loss of smell or taste; and
- 14 **WHEREAS**, Young children and teenagers are more likely to get a  
15 concussion, and generally have a longer recovery time, than adults;  
16 and
- 17 **WHEREAS**, The most recent concussion-specific data from the federal  
18 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicates that 300,000  
19 concussions are sustained nationwide during sports related  
20 activities, and that more than 62,000 concussions are sustained each  
21 year in high school contact sports; and
- 22 **WHEREAS**, According to the University of Pittsburgh's Brain Trauma  
23 Research Center, the likelihood of suffering a concussion while  
24 playing a contact sport is as high as 19 percent per season of play;  
25 and
- 26 **WHEREAS**, It has been estimated that 34 percent of college football  
27 players have experienced at least one concussion, and 20 percent of  
28 college football players have endured multiple concussions, while a  
29 study conducted by McGill University indicated that 60 percent of  
30 college soccer players had reported concussion symptoms at least  
31 once during a single season of play; and
- 32 **WHEREAS**, A 2013 report on pediatric sports injuries, which was  
33 released by the non-profit advocacy group Safe Kids Worldwide,  
34 found that in 2012, 12 percent of all pediatric sports-related  
35 emergency room visits (or 163,670 visits in total), involved a  
36 concussion, and nearly half of those visits (47 percent) involved  
37 concussions in children aged 12 to 15; and
- 38 **WHEREAS**, The Safe Kids Worldwide report likely underestimates the  
39 number and percentage of pediatric concussion cases, since it  
40 focuses on emergency room visits only, and does not account for  
41 the four out of five childhood concussion sufferers (82 percent of  
42 childhood concussion sufferers) who seek care at their primary care

1 physician, at an urgent care center, or at a sports medicine clinic,  
2 rather than in a hospital emergency room; and

3 **WHEREAS**, It is important to properly identify and address a  
4 concussion when it occurs, and allow the brain to have adequate  
5 time to heal from the trauma, since the failure to do so may leave  
6 the victim vulnerable to repeat concussions and a resulting  
7 condition known as “second impact syndrome,” which can lead to  
8 severe mental impairment, brain swelling, permanent brain damage,  
9 and even death; and

10 **WHEREAS**, Despite the danger associated with concussions and second  
11 impact syndrome, the symptoms of a concussion are often ignored,  
12 particularly in the sporting activities where they are most common;  
13 and

14 **WHEREAS**, As many as seven in 10 young athletes report that they  
15 have continued to play sports even with concussion symptoms, and  
16 out of those, four in 10 reported that their coaches were unaware  
17 that they had a possible concussion; and

18 **WHEREAS**, Through the passage of P.L.2010, c.94 (C.18A:40-41.1 et  
19 seq.), New Jersey has already required schools, school districts,  
20 coaches, athletic trainers, school nurses, and school physicians to  
21 take certain specified actions to minimize the risk of concussion  
22 and better protect students who suffer a concussion while engaged  
23 in interscholastic sporting activities; and

24 **WHEREAS**, Medical knowledge surrounding concussions is  
25 continuously evolving, and it is important for parents, coaches,  
26 athletic trainers, and others to keep abreast of new information in  
27 this area, so that concussion response and care can continuously be  
28 improved; now, therefore,

29  
30 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*  
31 *State of New Jersey:*

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33 1. The third Friday in September of each year is designated as  
34 “Concussion Awareness Day” to raise awareness of the causes,  
35 dangerous effects, and signs and symptoms of concussion and  
36 second impact syndrome, particularly in young persons; to improve  
37 public understanding in regard to evolving concussion response  
38 standards and treatment methods; and to highlight the need for  
39 vigilance in recognizing and appropriately responding to the  
40 symptoms of a concussion, in order to prevent further serious  
41 injury.

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43 2. The Governor is respectfully requested to issue a  
44 proclamation recognizing “Concussion Awareness Day” in New  
45 Jersey, and calling upon public officials and the citizens of this  
46 State to observe the day with appropriate activities and programs.

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48 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

## STATEMENT

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3 This joint resolution would designate the third Friday in  
4 September of every year as “Concussion Awareness Day” in New  
5 Jersey.

6 A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that disrupts the normal  
7 functioning of the brain and can cause significant and sustained  
8 neuropsychological impairment affecting problem solving,  
9 planning, memory, attention, concentration, and behavior. The  
10 symptoms of a concussion can last for days, weeks, or months, and  
11 may include prolonged headache, vision disturbance, dizziness,  
12 nausea or vomiting, impaired balance, confusion, memory loss,  
13 ringing in the ears, difficulty concentrating, sensitivity to light, and  
14 loss of smell or taste. Young children and teenagers, moreover, are  
15 more likely to get a concussion, and generally have a longer  
16 recovery time, than adults.

17 According to the University of Pittsburgh’s Brain Trauma  
18 Research Center, the likelihood of suffering a concussion while  
19 playing a contact sport is as high as 19 percent per season of play,  
20 and it has been estimated that 34 percent of college football players  
21 have experienced at least one concussion, that 20 percent of college  
22 football players have endured multiple concussions, and that 60  
23 percent of college soccer players experience concussion symptoms  
24 at least once during a single season of play. A 2013 report on  
25 pediatric sports injuries, which was released by the non-profit  
26 advocacy group Safe Kids Worldwide, found that 12 percent of all  
27 pediatric sports-related emergency room visits (or 163,670 visits in  
28 total), involved a concussion, and nearly half of those visits  
29 involved concussions in children aged 12 to 15. While these  
30 statistics are significant on their own, the Safe Kids Worldwide  
31 report likely underestimates the total number and percentage of  
32 pediatric concussion cases, since it focuses on emergency room  
33 visits only, and does not account for the four out of five (or 82  
34 percent) of childhood concussion sufferers who seek care at their  
35 primary care physician, at an urgent care center, or at a sports  
36 medicine clinic, rather than in a hospital emergency room.

37 The failure to properly identify and address concussion  
38 symptoms when they arise may leave the victim vulnerable to  
39 repeat concussions and a resulting condition known as “second  
40 impact syndrome,” which can lead to severe mental impairment,  
41 brain swelling, permanent brain damage, and even death. Despite  
42 the danger associated with concussions and second impact  
43 syndrome, as many as seven in 10 young athletes report that they  
44 have continued to play sports even with concussion symptoms, and  
45 out of those, four in 10 reported that their coaches were unaware  
46 that they had a possible concussion.

47 Because there is evidence that concussion symptoms are often  
48 ignored, particularly in the sporting activities where they are most

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1 common, there is a need to improve public awareness of the  
2 seriousness of this condition, and better enable members of the  
3 public to recognize the symptoms of a concussion. In addition,  
4 medical knowledge surrounding concussions is continuously  
5 evolving, and it is important for parents, coaches, athletic trainers,  
6 and others to keep abreast of new information in this area, so that  
7 concussion response and care can continually be improved.

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