More kids suffer TBI than ever before. Half a million children get medical treatment for TBI each year. U.S. emergency departments treat over 170,000 sports and recreation-related TBIs, including concussions, in children and teens, each year.

Children between 10 and 19 years old account for 70% of these visits. These visits have increased by 60% during the last decade.

Certain youth activities account for most TBI events in children and teens.

- Overall, the activities associated with the greatest number of TBI-related emergency visits included bicycling, football, playground activities, basketball, and soccer.
- Young children up to age 9 hurt themselves most often on the playground or when bicycling.
- Most injuries for boys ages 10-19 happen while playing football or bicycling; for girls the same ages, playing soccer or basketball or bicycling.

Stop your child’s play and seek medical attention if you are concerned. Prompt diagnosis and proper treatment is critical. More information is available on the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website at http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/youth.

Data Source for TBI stats: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control

Also, your school’s speech-language pathologist can help. In addition, you can find certified speech-language pathologists through the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association at www.asha.org/findapro

TBI can affect a child’s speech, language, and thinking skills, which can lead to:

- problems reading
- struggles with school work and poor grades
- hearing loss
- attention and memory problems
- increased time to process information
- trouble learning new things
- need for special help in school
- problems talking with friends or doing favorite activities
- trouble focusing on tasks and staying organized

Are there warning signs parents can look for? YES.

If TBI has occurred, your child may:

- appear dazed or stunned
- seem confused about what he or she is supposed to do in the game
- forget instructions
- be unsure about the game, score, or opponent
- move clumsily
- answer questions slowly
- lose consciousness (even brief loss of consciousness is a cause for concern)
- shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
- be unable to recall events that occurred before or after the hit or fall