

## Concussions a greater problem for Black youth

Written by Jazelle Hunt, Washington Correspondent  
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WASHINGTON (NNPA) – Despite the flurry of news about NFL lawsuits over concussions, the problem affects far more athletes at the high school and junior high school level, according to the federal government statistics.

In 2009 alone, nearly 250,000 youth age 19 or younger were treated in emergency rooms for sports and recreation-related injuries that included concussions, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Between 2001 and 2009, the rate of such visits rose 57 percent.

Concussions occur when the brain is shaken violently against the skull. Although concussions are the most common brain injury, widespread awareness and concern about this issue in the world of student athletics is fairly recent.

But it is especially relevant for Black communities, particularly young men most likely to die from traumatic brain injuries, according to the CDC. And according to data from research nonprofit, Child Trends, 50 to 60 percent of Black American high schoolers were on a sports team in 2011.

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