

## NEWS

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### **Statement from the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment *Regarding 2012 Virginia Tech STAR Rating System***

**OVERLAND PARK, KANSAS, June 4, 2012** – *The National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) issued the following statement after recent release of the 2012 Virginia Tech STAR ratings.*

"The National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) advocates ongoing research on athletic safety in order to gain a deeper understanding of protecting athletes from concussions. However, NOCSAE does not recommend that parents and athletes form decisions on the safest and most effective equipment based on any single individual data point, rating, or measurement, including the Virginia Tech STAR football helmet rating system. Doing so may lead to inaccurate conclusions that one helmet brand or model has a measurably higher level of concussion protection than another for a particular athlete.

"As stated in the STAR FAQ on the Virginia Tech website, the STAR rating system is 'a theoretical calculation that is based on a probabilistic analysis of impact exposure and injury risk.' This theoretical calculation relies on a single head acceleration criteria to predict the probability of a concussion, which is a complex event involving different and changing forces, linear and rotational accelerations, impact duration, player concussion history, overall health, helmet fit, and potentially even genetics.

"Additionally, and perhaps of most importance, is that this ranking system, to the extent it may be predictive, is limited to only starting collegiate players wearing an adult large helmet. To quote again the Virginia Tech website ***'it is not safe to extrapolate the findings to youth football helmets. The STAR evaluation system was developed based on the head impact exposure of collegiate football players.'***

"There is no indication from the STAR system or published methodology that a large size in one model will test the same as a medium or small or youth size in the same model, and to assume that the STAR value will apply across the board for all sizes of the same model is not safe, and potentially harmful.

"NOCSAE urges parents and athletes to gather all the facts about football helmets and concussion protection from a variety of reliable sources. Athlete safety is too important to rely on only one partial measurement of helmet performance."

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"Commissioning research and establishing standards for athletic equipment, where feasible, and encouraging dissemination of research findings on athletic equipment and sports injuries."

**The National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment**

*For the most reliable information regarding helmets and concussion and injury protection and prevention, NOCSAE encourages athletes and parents to carefully review:*

- *Hang tags that come with all new football helmets that address the helmet's abilities and limitations*
- *Informational booklets developed by manufacturers that contain critical information about the helmet's abilities and limitations*
- *Warning information that is prominently affixed to the exterior of every helmet*
- *Free downloadable resources created by the Centers for Disease Control regarding concussion recognition, response and prevention. Those resources can be found at [www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports/](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports/)*

*For more information, please visit [www.nocsae.org](http://www.nocsae.org).*

#### *About NOCSAE*

*NOCSAE, the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment, is an independent and nonprofit standard-setting body with the sole mission to enhance athletic safety through scientific research and the creation of performance standards for protective equipment. Formed in 1970, NOCSAE is a leading force in the effort to improve athletic equipment and, as a result, reduce injuries. NOCSAE efforts include the development of performance and test standards for football helmets and facemasks, baseball and softball batters and catchers helmets, baseballs and softballs, ice hockey helmets, soccer shin guards, lacrosse helmets and facemasks and polo helmets. NOCSAE is comprised of representatives from a number of groups which have an interest in athletic equipment – including manufacturers, reconditioners, athletic trainers, coaches, equipment managers, sports medicine and consumer organizations. These diverse interests have joined forces in an attempt to arrive at a common goal of reducing sports-related injuries. NOCSAE is a nonprofit, charitable organization supported by individuals and organizations with an interest in athletics*