

**RESOLUTION OF THE
TENNESSEE PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION**

MOUTHGUARD USE FOR ALL TSSAA CONTACT SPORTS

WHEREAS, it is estimated that every athlete in the United States has a 10 percent chance of sustaining an injury to the face or mouth during each season of play and has a 45 percent chance of an oral-facial injury during his/her playing career; and

WHEREAS, mouthguards help cushion blows that might otherwise cause broken teeth and injuries to the lip, tongue, face, or jaw, as well as reducing the severity and incidence of concussions; and

WHEREAS, it is well documented and demonstrated that mouthguards have a significant effect on reducing sports-related oral and facial traumatic injuries; and

WHEREAS, the American Dental Association, the Academy for Sports Dentistry, and the Tennessee Dental Association support the use of properly fitted mouthguards; and

WHEREAS, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) is the national service and administrative organization of high school athletics, provides programs and services that its member state associations can use, and publishes playing rules in 16 sports; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Secondary Schools Athletic Association, and active NFHS member, requires mouthguard use for football players only, with team penalties being assessed for non-use; and

WHEREAS, additional sports in secondary schools also place participants at risk for oral-facial injuries.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Tennessee Public Health Association urges the National Federation of State High School Associations and the Tennessee Secondary Schools Athletic Association to adopt rules that require every participant in high-risk contact sports use a properly fitted mouthguard during practice and competition.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be provided to the National Federation of State High School Associations, Tennessee Secondary Schools Athletic Association, Tennessee Department of Health, Tennessee Dental Association, Tennessee Dental Hygienists Association, Tennessee Medical Association, and Tennessee Nursing Association.

Barbara Medlin
President

Doris G. Spain
Executive Director

Karen Pershing
Resolutions Committee Chair