



**NEWS RELEASE**

March 24, 2014

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**New Barrow Concussion Poll**  
**One-Fourth of Valley Parents**  
**Will Not Allow Kids to Play Contact Sports**

A new survey regarding concussions reveals that one out of four parents in the Valley will not allow their children to play contact sports. Concussion experts at Barrow Neurological Institute at St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center say this high percentage reflects the heightened fear many parents have about brain injuries suffered during sports.

"There is no doubt that concussions are an increasing concern with parents and students as we learn more and more about their short and long term effect on the brain," says Dr. Javier Cardenas, a neurologist and brain injury expert at Barrow. "We can use this poll as a baseline to gauge if new education and prevention programs will ease parents concerns in future years."

Barrow and Arizona have taken the lead in the United States on education and awareness of concussions. Barrow Brainbook, in association with the Arizona Interscholastic Association, is the nation's first mandated education and testing program for student athletes and the Barrow Concussion Network is the nation's most comprehensive concussion prevention and treatment program for students.

In a similar poll conducted one year earlier, 36 percent of Valley adults said they knew someone who had suffered a concussion. This year that percentage jumped to 53 percent. "More than half of Phoenix adult residents know someone who has suffered a concussion. This jump shows a remarkable new awareness of the problem we are facing across the Valley and across the nation," said Dr. Cardenas. "It is important to note that Arizona has been a leader, however, in trying to keep children safe with mandatory education and extensive prevention programs."

The study, commissioned by St. Joseph's, also revealed that most Valley residents still don't believe enough is being done to stop concussions. Women especially said more effort needs to be made.

Asked what should be done to reduce these injuries, the most popular response was better equipment, followed by better education and training. About one-fifth said the best way to stop concussions is to eliminate contact sports.

The telephone poll was conducted with 408 adults in February 2014 by West Group. The margin of error is plus or minus 5. March is Brain Injury Awareness Month.

— Barrow —

Dr. Cardenas is available for interviews. Please call 602-406-3319 to schedule.