

White House Healthy Kids and Safe Sports Concussion Summit

On May 29, 2014, AOASM was represented at the White House Healthy Kids and Safe Sports Concussion Summit held in Washington, DC by AOASM Vice President, Dr. Rob Franks. Dr. Franks joined an impressive group of leaders in healthcare, research, professional athletes, business leaders, broadcasters, athletes and parents to discuss with President Obama the growing national concern over concussion in youth sport.

After an address to the group by the President, where he introduced a number of new funding initiatives both Federal and non-governmental, he turned the program over to a panel discussion to discuss ways to diagnose, treat and educate both healthcare professionals and the general public about the issues concerning youth concussion. The President emphasized the need to keep America's children active in sport for their various health and leadership and team building benefits, but also the commitment by the various professionals at the summit to keep America's children safe.

"They recognize this is an issue that is worth paying attention to." Obama said. "We've seen all 50 states pass laws requiring concussed athletes to get a medical clearance before they return to play. Folks from USA Hockey banned checking before 12 years old. In March, the NFL donated \$45 million to USA Football for their Heads Up Football program, which emphasizes coach training and player safety."

President Obama went on to outline other success stories and areas of progress, including the Center for Disease Control's public awareness campaign for parents, athletes, coaches, and school staff called [Heads Up](#). The site is a resource for both prevention and recognition information, and has been credited with helping parents and coaches recognize symptoms need for treatment.

While focusing on youth sports, the summit also discussed concussions and brain injuries suffered by service members. "And as part of a new national action plan we announced last year, we're directing more than \$100 million in new research to find more effective ways to help prevent, diagnose and treat mental health conditions and traumatic brain injury -- because the more we can learn about the effects of brain injuries, the more we can do to help our courageous troops and veterans recover." Obama stated.