



Soccer Safety Guidelines

Soccer programs have risks that place participants in physical harm. A collision with another player is the most common cause of injury and typically involves head to head contact. Other brain related injuries in soccer involve contact with objects like the ball, goal posts, or the ground. The following guidelines should be followed when participating in the sport of soccer to prevent injury.

Facility & Equipment

- Field dimensions need to meet WIAA regulations for play/safety.
- Make sure athletes wear all the required safety gear every time he or she plays and practices.
- Younger teams should use the appropriate size and weight ball during practice and play.
- Goal posts should be padded and properly anchored to the ground. A new standard requires that safety notice be fixed to goal posts stating: "Warning: Always anchor goals. Unsecured goals can fall over causing serious injuries or death".

Supervision & Instruction

- Don't tolerate horseplay or unsportsman like conduct. Avoid purposeful pushing and tripping.
- Collision with other players should be discouraged and avoided.
- Heading the ball, especially by younger players should be discouraged.
- Teach players to pay attention to the game at all times.
- Insure students wear shoes appropriate for the playing surface. Insure athletes do not wear chains, rings, and metal wristbands. If they wear glasses, they should be secured and have shatterproof lenses.
- Use a whistle.
- Make sure all players warm up and cool down.
- Ensure proper hydration of athletes.

MOVABLE SOCCER GOALS

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has issued guidelines for the installation, use and storage of movable soccer goals. The CPSC reported 21 deaths from 1979 through 1994 and approximately 120 injuries involving falling soccer goals during the period of 1989 through 1993. Many of these soccer goals were **homemade** by high school shop classes, custodial members or local welders.

Soccer goals are usually constructed of metal and are extremely heavy, typically weighing between 150-200 pounds. The majority of deaths and injuries are a result of blunt force trauma to the head, neck, chest, and limbs. Most occur when the goal accidentally tips over onto the victim. **All** of these accidents could have been prevented if the soccer goals had been anchored firmly in place. Most incidents investigated by the CPSC occurred when soccer goals were unattended.

The following guidelines can help prevent deaths and serious injuries resulting from falling soccer goals.

- **Carefully** consider the design of the soccer goals. Choose professionally manufactured designs that are carefully constructed with counterbalancing measures to prevent tip-over hazards. **Do not allow** installation of **homemade** equipment on school grounds.
- **Secure movable soccer goals at all times.**
- **When in use** - secure goals to the ground at the rear of the goal, making sure the anchors are flush with the ground and clearly visible. Do not use net pegs to anchor the movable soccer goal. Net pegs **should be used only to secure the net to the ground.** Use the following methods, depending upon the soil type, soil moisture content, and total goal weight:
 - Auger style
 - Semi-permanent
 - Peg or Stake style (varying lengths)
 - J-Hook Shaped Stake style
 - Sandbags/Counterweights
- **When not in use** - remove the net, and secure goal by one of the following methods:
 - Place goal frames face to face and secure at each goalpost with lock and chain
 - Lock and chain to a suitable fixed structure such as a permanent fence
 - Lock unused goals in a secure storage room after each use
 - If applicable, fully disassemble the goals for seasonal storage
 - If applicable, fold the face of the goal down and lock it to its base
- CHECK goals for structural integrity and proper connecting hardware before every use. Damaged or missing parts or fasteners should be replaced immediately. **Document** inspections and repairs.