

Soccer Safety



True Story

An 11-year-old boy was playing on a soccer goal with some friends. The goal fell forward and struck the boy on the head. The boy died of blunt force head injuries.

-From the files of MECAP
(Medical Examiners and Coroners Alert Project)

The Facts

- More than 200,000 young people in the US seek medical treatment each year for soccer-related injuries.
- Nearly 8 percent of high school soccer players are injured in a season.
- Most soccer-related injuries are caused by illegal plays, poor field conditions or heading the ball incorrectly.
- The most severe injuries are related to soccer goal posts, with hospital emergency departments reporting approximately 90 goal-related injuries each year. Soccer goal posts have been responsible for 22 deaths in the past 20 years.

What You Can Do

- Make sure your child wears all the required safety gear every time he or she plays and practices.
- Insist that your child warm up and stretch before playing. Don't allow your child to shoot goals before warming up.
- Teach your child not to play through pain. If your child gets injured, see your doctor and don't allow your child to return to playing without the doctor's OK.
- Ask your child's doctor and coach whether it's safe for your child to "head" the ball, and if so make sure your child knows how to do it correctly to avoid head and neck injury.
- Make sure movable soccer goals are anchored to the ground at all times, not just during play. Goals have been known to tip over in strong winds or when climbed on, causing severe injuries.

Source: *SafeUSA.org*



Led By
**BLANK CHILDREN'S
HOSPITAL**
IOWA HEALTH SYSTEM

Safe Kids Greater Des Moines, led by Blank Children's Hospital, is a grassroots organization dedicated to preventing unintentional injury in children ages 0-14.

For more information call (515) 241-6293 or visit www.dsmsafekids.org.

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