

Sports Safety



True Story

A 6-year-old was at soccer practice with his team. He was the goalie of the team and was struck in the head by the soccer goal when it fell over. The goal was not secured to the ground. The cause of death was cardio respiratory arrest due to head injuries.

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

The Facts

- More than 3.5 million children ages 14 and younger suffer from sports- and recreation-related injuries each year.
- Most organized sports-related injuries (62%) occur during practice instead of games. Despite this fact, parents often do not take the same safety precautions during their child's practice as they would for a game.
- Injuries associated with participation in sports and recreational activities account for 21% of all traumatic brain injuries among children.
- Sports injuries account for approximately 55% of nonfatal injuries at school.
- Collision and contact sports are associated with higher rates of injury. However, injuries from individual sports tend to be more severe.

What You Can Do

- Children should always wear appropriate safety gear during games AND practice.
- Protective equipment, safe playing conditions and enforcement of safety rules help reduce the number and severity of sports and recreation injuries.
- Ensure appropriate adult supervision is available.
- Proper stretching and warm-up exercises need to be part of both practices and games.
- Do not allow an injured child to re-enter the game or resume activity prior to proper healing/rehabilitation.



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.