

# Goal Safety

As concerned administrators, coaches and parents, we want to remind you all of the seriousness of goal safety. As we have visited several fields throughout our association in recent months, we have seen an alarming number of unsecured or poorly secured soccer goals.

We urge you all to have a soccer goal safety strategy in place, with good reason. From 1998-2008, the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has received reports of at least eight deaths and an estimated 2,000 emergency room visits by children under 16 years of age that were related to soccer goal tip-overs and structural failures. According to Anchored for Safety, a nonprofit initiative for promoting soccer goal safety awareness, five soccer goal-related deaths have occurred in the past two years.

According to US Youth Soccer, unanchored or improperly secured soccer goals account for seven of the top twenty insurance claims, nationally, in youth soccer. Three were fatalities and four resulted in injury to the players. The personal impact on players, families, teams and clubs is devastating. The combined financial losses amount to over \$5 million, not including additional time or expense to defend the organizations. Playing on school or municipal fields does not absolve your organization of the responsibility or liability. Please urge those organizations that you partner with or rent space from to address this issue.

As we progress further into the new soccer season, please remind your coaches and referees to inspect, BEFORE EVERY PRACTICE, TRAINING ACTIVITY, AND GAME:

- (1) All goal posts and nets for safety, that they are properly anchored and secured.
- (2) The field and areas around the field that are being used.

## Goal Safety Policy Resources

- [US Youth Soccer presentation on Goal Post Safety](#)

## Goal Safety Policy Statement

Delaware Youth Soccer recommends use of these guidelines regarding the installation, use and storage of soccer goals by all of its members. As advocates for the healthy development of children, we need to be concerned with the soccer goal post safety. Delaware Youth Soccer urges all of its organizations to review their policies and procedures and to implement and enforce a program of goal post safety.

While these guidelines should be effective in reducing the risk of goal-related injuries, they should not be construed as the only methods to minimize injuries associated with soccer goals. Please contact us if you have questions or would like additional information on this subject.

## SOCCKER GOAL INJURIES AND DEATHS

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), most soccer goal post related deaths and injuries involved either unsecured or homemade goals. Injuries frequently occurred during horseplay such as climbing on the goal or attempting to do chin-ups, thereby tipping the goal over. All goals, whether homemade or manufactured, should be properly secured to the ground to avoid injuries or deaths associated with tip-over.

## ANCHORING SOCCER GOALS

There are several different ways to properly anchor soccer goals. The number and type of anchors used will depend on factors such as soil type and goal weight. Anchor types include:

- Auger-style anchors that are screwed into the ground
- Semi-permanent anchors, which require a permanently secured base buried underground with the use of tethers or bolts to secure the goal

- Peg, stake or j-hook style anchors that are driven into the ground
- Sandbags or counterweights for indoor facilities

## GOAL STORAGE

The CPSC reports most accidents occurred when the goal was unattended. When goals are not being used always:

- Remove the net

Take appropriate steps to secure goals such as:

1. Place the goal frames face to face and secure them at each goalpost with a lock and chain.
2. Lock and chain to a suitable fixed structure such as a permanent fence.
3. Lock unused portable goals in a secure storage room after each use.
4. Fully disassemble the goals for seasonal storage.

## CONCLUSIONS/SAFETY TIPS

It is suggested that soccer coaches, officials, parents and players follow these safety guidelines:

- Securely anchor or counter-weight portable goals at all times.
- Store movable soccer goals in a place where children can not access them.
- Never climb on the net or goal framework.
- Remove nets when goals are not in use.
- Check all connecting hardware before every use and replace damaged or missing anchors immediately.
- Ensure safety/warning labels are clearly visible.
- Fully disassemble goals for seasonal storage.
- Always exercise extreme caution when moving goals and allow adequate manpower to move goals of varied sizes and weights. Movable soccer goals should only be moved by authorized adults.
- Movable soccer goals should only be used on level (flat) fields
- Instruct players to avoid unsafe use of goals.