



U.S. Soccer Concussion Initiative March 2016

Effective immediately, in accordance with the recommendations in [U.S. Soccer's Player Safety Campaign](#), Minnesota Youth Soccer Association prohibits heading for players participating in all U10 and younger age groups for all MYSO soccer programming including but not limited to Minnesota Youth Soccer League play, practices and tournaments.

Concussion Initiatives

As part of U.S. Soccer's Player Safety Campaign, U.S. Soccer unveiled the [U.S. Soccer Concussion Initiative](#), providing guidelines that the federation implemented in January of 2016.

The information contained in the initiative is intended to give U.S. Soccer Federation Members (e.g. Minnesota Youth Soccer Association), players, parents, team/club staff, coaches and referees guidance and direction when dealing with head injuries and potential head injuries during soccer participation.

Heading Rules:

Included in the U.S. Soccer Concussion Initiative are specific changes to rules for heading in certain age groups. Those changes include:

U11 and under:

- **Games:** Players are **not** permitted to head the ball during games in U11 and younger age groups.
- **Training:** There is **no** heading during training for children in U11 and younger age groups.
- **Rule Modification:** When a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred. If a player does not deliberately head the ball, then play should continue. The referee will make the decision of whether or not the header was deliberate.

U12-U14 Ages:

- **Games:** Players **can** head the ball during games.
- **Training:** There is a **limit** to the amount of heading in practice for children in the U12-U14 age groups. Training is to be limited to a maximum of 30 minutes per week with no more than 15-20 headers per player, per week.
- **Rule Modification:** There are **no** rule modifications to the U12-U14 age groups for heading during games. At the U12-U14 age group players are permitted to head the ball in games.

For more information, please refer to the [frequently asked questions](#), which should help clarify questions regarding the new initiatives.