

US SOCCER PUBLISHES MODIFIED RULE FOR HEADING

In accord with the recommendations in US Soccer's Player Safety Campaign the Illinois Youth Soccer has banned heading for players aged 10 and younger for all Illinois Youth Soccer activities including but not limited to Illinois Youth Soccer Member League play, practices and tournaments. Following is US Soccer's Player Safety Campaign and modified rule.

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

The information contained in the initiative is intended to give U.S. Soccer Organization Members, as well as players, parents, team/club staff and coaches and referees, guidance and direction when dealing with head injuries and potential head injuries during soccer participation.

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

- Modify substitution rules to allow players who may have suffered a concussion during games to be evaluated without penalty
- Eliminating heading for children 10 and under
 - Please note that U11 is listed in the U.S. Soccer Concussion Initiative document because U11 players can be 10 years old at the beginning of the season
- Limiting the amount of heading in practice for children between the ages of 11 and 13

In addition to the safety initiatives, the following modified rule was published by US Soccer on February 12, 2016:

- When a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick (IFK) 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.

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