

Make Safety A Commitment And Your No. 1 Priority!!

Excerpted from an article by Dick Schindler for the National Federation News.

Coaches' Checklist

- 1) Keep the head up.
- 2) Discuss risk of injury.
- 3) Keep the head out of contact.
- 4) Explain how serious injuries occur.
- 5) Involve parents in early season meeting.
- 6) Have a set plan for coaching safety.
- 7) Clearly explain and demonstrate safe techniques.
- 8) Provide best medical care possible.
- 9) Monitor blocking and tackling techniques every day.
- 10) Repeat drills which stress proper and safe techniques.
- 11) Admonish and/or discipline users of unsafe techniques.
- 12) Receive clearance by doctor for athlete to play following head trauma.
- 13) Stress safety every day.
- 14) Don't glorify "head hunters".
- 15) Support officials who penalize illegal helmet contact.
- 16) Don't praise or condone illegal helmet contact.
- 17) Provide conditioning to strengthen neck muscles.
- 18) Entire staff must be "tuned in" to safety program.
- 19) Check helmet condition regularly.
- 20) Improper technique causes spinal cord injuries.
- 21) Helmet must fit properly
- 22) Be prepared for a catastrophic injury.
- 23) The game doesn't need abusive contact.
- 24) Player safety is your responsibility.
- 25) It's a game -- not a job -- for the players.

Keep The Head Out of Football

A 1976 rule change that eliminated the head as the initial contact point in blocking and tackling has significantly reduced head and neck injuries in the sport over the last decade.

Coaches can do their part to continue that trend by teaching correct techniques and emphasizing proper fundamentals at all times. That way, players can avoid catastrophic injury and coaches can avoid lawsuits.

Keep the head out of football