

Practice Safety-First Coaching Techniques

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

Coach's Checklist

1. Keep the head up.
2. Discuss risk of injury.
3. Keep the head out of contact.
4. Explain how serious injuries can 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 a doctor for athlete to play following head trauma.
13. Stress safety every day.
14. Don't glorify head hunters.
15. Support officials who penalize for 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.