

Concussion Policy

NYSA/Oklahoma Celtic recognizes the potential danger and long-term health consequences of this often difficult to diagnose form of traumatic brain injury. We follow the concussion guidelines set for by US Soccer below:

U.S. Soccer announced the [U.S. Soccer Concussion Initiative](#), which provides guidelines that were implemented beginning in January 2016. US Club Soccer clarified the following implementation guidelines as it relates to concussion initiatives and heading for youth players:

- **The Federation is recommending, and US Club Soccer is requiring immediately, new rules as it relates to heading, as follows:**
 - Players in 11-U programs and younger shall not engage in heading, either in practices or in games.
 - Limited heading in practice for players in 12-U and 13-U programs. More specifically, these players shall be limited to a maximum of 30 minutes of heading training per week, with no more than 15-20 headers per player, per week. There are no heading restrictions in games.
 - Clubs should be aware of circumstances in which individual consideration is needed. For examples:
 - A 10 year old playing at 12-U or older should not head the ball at all.
 - An 11 or 12 year old playing at 14-U or older should abide by the heading restrictions in practice.
 - Referees should enforce these restrictions by age group according to the specified rules. Referees will not be assessing the age of individual players on the field; they will enforce the rules for the age group.
- **Leagues and organizations are free to set their own standards, as long as the minimum requirements outlined above are met.**
- **In adherence to these new requirements, referees have been instructed by U.S. Soccer of the following rule addition:** *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.*
- **Modified substitution rules also took effect January 1, 2016, as follows:** *Any player suspected of suffering a head injury may be substituted for evaluation without the substitution counting against the team's total number of allowed substitutions during the game.*
- **US Club Soccer strongly recommends that all coaches, staff members, parents and players watch the following ["Concussions in Soccer"](#) video produced by U.S. Soccer:**