

Policy on Heading the Ball

The South Texas Youth Soccer Association (STYSA) has adopted the following recommendations from the U.S. Soccer Concussion Initiative regarding heading the ball. All players and teams participating in STYSA sanctioned activities are subject to this policy.

- Players on U11 and younger teams are prohibited from heading the ball in practices and games.
 - If in the opinion of the referee a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick (IFK) shall 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 shall be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred. If in the opinion of the referee a player does not deliberately head the ball, then play should continue.
- Players on U12 and U13 teams shall be allowed to head the ball during games. Heading the ball in practices, for U12 and U13 players, shall be limited to a maximum of 30 minutes per week with no more than 15-20 headers per player, per week.
- There shall be no restrictions on heading the ball for U14 and older players.
- Coaches should enforce these restrictions by the age group of the team according to the specified policies.
- Referees should enforce these restrictions by the age group of the team according to the specified policies. Referees will not be assessing the age of individual players on the fields; they will enforce the policy for the age group.