



# NORTH SHORE GIRLS SOCCER CLUB

APPROVED: MAY 2021

## POLICY

### HEADING POLICY for ALL NSGSC PROGRAMS

NSGSC will support heading the ball as one strategy for play, this policy is intended to train heading techniques using a safe, gradually-tiered, age-appropriate approach.

NSGSC's policy on heading the ball is obtained from the US Club Soccer's, a member of US Soccer Federation, recommendations which are substantiated by concussion litigation resolution and concussion research.

- NSGSC shall provide "concussion awareness" resources on its website for members, parents, players, and coaches in order to educate them on the risk and prevention of head injuries when playing soccer.
- NSGSC shall provide coaches in each age group and at each level of play with education on concussion awareness and header policy.
- NSGSC shall require coaches in each age group and at each level of play to complete mandatory concussion awareness training.

#### U11 AND UNDER

- No player shall head the ball in practices or games
- Coaches in this age group shall be educated during training clinics about the risks of concussion associated with heading the ball and instructed not to allow players to head the ball in practices or games.

#### U12 AND U13

- Players shall practice limited heading of the ball during practices only, no player shall head the ball in games
- Specifically, players shall be limited to a maximum of 30 minutes of heading training per week, with no more than 15-20 headers allowable per player, per week.
- Coaches in these age groups shall be given the following heading training:
  - Coaches shall be educated during training clinics about the risks of concussion associated with heading the ball
  - Coaches shall be instructed to limit players in practices to a maximum of 30 minutes of heading training in a single week, with no more than 15-20 headers per player, per week.
  - Coaches shall be trained how to teach heading properly during practices
  - Coaches in these age groups shall also be instructed not to allow players to head the ball in games.



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## U14 AND UP

- Heading the ball is allowed in practices and games
- Coaches in these age groups shall be given the following heading training:
  - Coaches shall be educated during training clinics about the risks of concussion associated with heading the ball
  - Coaches shall be trained how to safely teach and coach heading techniques during practices and game

*NOTE: Our Heading Policy itself follows the US guidelines; however, enforcement of the policy will be handled differently. Our aim is to create a research-informed, aligned culture of safety around heading the ball vs. enforcement. To that end, we are asking all of you (coaches, players, parents, and other club members) to join us in aligning to the policy and helping us to create a culture around it. The game would “play on” in the event of a header, but we would ask that the coach and parent of that player have a conversation with the them as soon as possible to remind them of the policy, and its importance for their safety.*