

To keep kids healthy and active in sports, remember C-O-A-C-H-E-S



CONDITIONING

Condition with a good warm up before practices and games. Start with about 10 minutes of jogging, jumping jacks or anything that brings the heart rate up gradually. Then stretch all major muscle groups, holding each stretch for 20-30 seconds.



OVERUSE INJURY PREVENTION

Overuse injuries can be reduced by making sure kids get rest breaks. In addition to rest during practices and games, kids should have at least one to two days off from sports each week, and ten consecutive weeks of rest from any given sport every year.



ADVANCE PLANNING

Advance planning can help coaches be prepared for emergencies. Make sure kids get [pre-participation physicals](#) from their doctor. Store parents' contact information in the coach's phone, have a first aid kit handy and have a plan in place for any medical emergencies.



CONCUSSION AWARENESS

Concussions are serious, but are sometimes hard to recognize when they happen. Coaches, parents and kids need to learn the [signs and symptoms of concussions](#), so everyone can be watching for them. A player with a suspected concussion must be sidelined until checked by a medical professional. A good rule of thumb: When in doubt, sit them out.



HYDRATION

Hydrating before, during and after practices and games is essential. Make sure athletes drink water 30 minutes before the activity begins and every 15-20 minutes during activity. Don't wait for kids to tell you they are thirsty. Making regular [hydration](#) breaks a habit is smart coaching.



EQUIPMENT

Equipment can do a lot to keep kids safe, but only if it is in good condition, fitted properly and worn for every practice and every game.



SAFETY TRAINING

Safety training is easier to get than you might think. Safe Kids Worldwide offers free tip sheets, concussion guides and fact sheets at safekids.org. In addition, Safe Kids coalitions offer free [Sports Safety Clinics](#) across the country.