

AZ SOCCER CAMP, LLC

“HEADING” POLICY

As of 2016

The United States Soccer Federation has taken a step in an attempt to reduce concussions among youth soccer players, adopting a policy that bans players under 11 from heading the ball and reducing headers in practice for 11 to 13 year olds. The new rules do not apply to all youth soccer players in America, only those that play on teams under the auspices of U.S. Soccer, which includes all youth national teams and academies. These are only be recommendations to other leagues. Although not required, AZ SOCCER CAMP, will voluntarily follow these guidelines. Safety of our campers/players and staff are always a priority.

The direct act of heading the ball isn't necessarily a problem. The study used by the USSF found that only 4.7% of boys' concussions and 8.2% of girls' concussions were due to head contact with the ball. Most concussions come from banging heads with another player, but also from hitting the turf.

Effective 2016, AZ SOCCER CAMP is implementing an indefinite 'ban' on repetitive heading practices for all campers/players. Please note that heading the ball is a part of the game of soccer, and heading the ball is not being 'banned' completely at AZ SOCCER CAMP. We will ban any form of repetitive 'heading' practice exercises, e.g. players in pairs serving the ball to each other repetitively, over and over again to perform headers.

Examples of scenarios where you could still see heading in training sessions: Any small sided or full sided game, crossing and finishing sessions, set piece exercises and in careful heading instruction with a stationary soccer ball.

