



There's more to lose than the game.
Use protective eyewear.

Help Kids Gear Up for the Game

Eye injuries are the leading cause of blindness in children in the United States, and many of these injuries are sports-related. Ninety percent of sports-related eye injuries in children can be prevented with the use of protective eyewear. Making sure your young athlete gears up with the right protective eyewear may save your child's sight.

Protective eyewear includes safety glasses and goggles, safety shields, and eye guards specially designed to provide the correct protection for a certain activity. Most protective eyewear lenses are made of polycarbonate, which is 10 times stronger than other plastics. Many eye care providers sell protective eyewear, as do sporting goods stores. Safety goggles that can be worn over prescription glasses may be purchased for less than \$10.

Talk to your eye care provider about protective eyewear for your child. Your eye care provider can provide protective eyewear that fits your child's prescription. He or she can help you select a correct fit and style for any sport.

"Children should use protective eyewear during sporting activities to avoid unnecessary eye injuries that can possibly result in permanent vision loss," said Paul A. Sieving, M.D., Ph.D., Director of the National Eye Institute, one of the National Institutes of Health.

At first, your child may resist wearing protective eyewear, saying that it isn't cool. But this doesn't have to be the case—protective eyewear now comes in a variety of styles and colors that can even match team uniforms. Don't let your child step onto the field or court unless he or she is wearing the proper safety gear from head to toe, including protective eyewear.

Game Time

While the use of protective eyewear is important for all activities, some sports carry a greater risk than others. For example, baseball is the leading cause of sports-related eye injury in children 14 and under and is considered a high-risk sport. Football carries a moderate risk. Check the table below for the risk categories of eye injury for various sports.

High Risk	Moderate Risk	Low Risk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseball • Basketball • Boxing • Hockey • Paintball • Racquetball • Softball • Squash 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Football • Golf • Badminton • Soccer • Tennis • Fishing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bicycling • Diving • Skiing • Swimming • Wrestling

Pediatrics Vol. 113 (3), Pages 619-622, Copyright 2004 by the American Academy of Pediatrics

For more information about protective eyewear for specific sports, visit the National Eye Institute Website at <http://www.nei.nih.gov/sports/>.

Protect your child's eyes. Help them gear up for the game with protective eyewear.