

Fluid Guidelines

As one of the best means to preventing heat illness, the U.S. Soccer Federation recommends parents and coaches ensure children are well hydrated before practice and games. During activity, young athletes should drink on a schedule before they feel thirsty and consume five to nine ounces of fluid every 20 minutes (a child who weighs less than 90 lbs. needs five ounces of fluid and a child weighing more than 90 lbs. needs nine ounces of fluid).

"It's crucial that kids drink enough fluids before, during and after activity," said Oded Bar-Or, MD, a contributor to the development of the guidelines and professor of pediatrics and director of the Children's Exercise and Nutrition Centre at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. "Research we conducted shows that when drinking plain water, children don't drink enough to avoid dehydration. Compared to water, kids will drink 90 percent more of a flavored sports drink with electrolytes like Gatorade to fully hydrate. It's important parents and coaches have these types of fluids available for children during activity."

The U.S. Soccer Federation Youth Heat Stress Guidelines were developed under the consultation of Oded Bar-Or, MD, professor of pediatrics and director of the Children's Exercise and Nutrition Centre at McMaster University and Bill Prentice, PhD, PT, ATC, professor of exercise and sports science and trainer for women's soccer at the University of North Carolina.

The U.S. Soccer Federation plans to incorporate the Youth Soccer Heat Stress Guidelines into its coaches' curriculum that will reach thousands of youth soccer coaches across the country.

Founded in 1913, U.S. Soccer is one of the world's first organizations to be affiliated with FIFA, the Federation Internationale de Football Association, soccer's world governing body. As the governing body of soccer in all its forms in the United States, U.S. Soccer has helped chart the course for the sport in the USA for 88 years. In that time, the Federation's mission statement has been very simple and very clear: to make soccer, in all its forms, a preeminent sport in the United States and to continue the development of soccer at all recreational and competitive levels.

For additional information about the U.S. Soccer Federation, please visit its Web site at www.ussoccer.com.