

U.S. Soccer: No heading for children 10 and under

by [Mike Voitalla](#), November 9th, 2015 7:02PM

The U.S. Soccer Federation announced a player safety campaign that eliminates heading for children 10 and under, and limits the amount of heading in practice for children ages of 11 to 13.

A U.S. Soccer release on Monday announced the resolution of the “Mehr” soccer concussion lawsuit, whose U.S. defendants were: USSF, United States Youth Soccer Association, American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO), U.S. Club Soccer and the California Youth Soccer Association:

“The United States Soccer Federation and the other youth member defendants, with input from counsel for the plaintiffs, have developed a sweeping youth soccer initiative designed to:

“(a) improve concussion awareness and education among youth coaches, referees, parents and players;

“(b) implement more uniform concussion management and return-to-play protocols for youth players suspected of having suffered a concussion;

“(c) modify the substitution rules to insure such rules do not serve as an impediment to the evaluation of players who may have suffered a concussion during games

“(d) eliminate heading for children 10 and under and limit heading in practice for children between the ages of 11 and 13.”

"We are proud to be leaders in the areas of concussion education and management," U.S. Soccer CEO/Secretary General **Dan Flynn** said in a statement. "The development of a player safety initiative was under way before the current lawsuit was filed. In constructing the concussion component, U.S. Soccer sought input from its medical science committee which includes experts in the field of concussion diagnosis and management, as well as from its technical advisors, and worked with its youth members to develop a true consensus-based program. We are pleased that the plaintiffs and their counsel recognize the steps we have taken and look forward to sharing the benefits of the youth concussion initiative with players, coaches, officials and parents."

The statement from **Steve Berman**, lead counsel for the plaintiffs: "We filed this litigation in effort to focus the attention of U.S. Soccer and its youth member organizations on the issue of concussions in youth soccer. With the development of the youth concussion initiative by U.S. Soccer and its youth members, we feel we have accomplished our primary goal and, therefore, do not see any need to continue the pursuit of the litigation. We are pleased that we were able to play a role in improving the safety of the sport for soccer-playing children in this country."