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## *Paradise Soccer Club*

### *Soccer Goal Safety General Information*

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#### **Background**

As we begin each new season of Soccer, we all have to take the time to get educated on the safety risks associated with the game, outside the standard in-game or in-training risks. One of the biggest threats to everyone's safety on a soccer pitch is a soccer goal or net.

- Soccer is the most played sport in the world, being played in over 200 countries each year.
- In 2006, over 2.6 Million people played soccer in Canada.
- Over 13 Million people playing the game in the U.S.A in 2009.

Although soccer is often played in structured environments, it is also a popular past time, outside of the structured environment. In both cases, the risks of injury are high, with net or goal related injuries being at the top of the list. There are ~225,000 to 500,000 soccer goals in the U.S.A. The Consumer Product Safety Council recorded 4 deaths in 1990 and at least 41 deaths from 1979 – 2017 associated with movable soccer goals. An estimated 120 injuries involving falling goals were treated each year in ER's of the U.S.A from 1989 to 1993.

#### **Facts**

- The majority of goals are constructed of metal, and weigh between 150-500lbs.
- Typical injuries include: blunt force trauma to the head, neck, chest, and limbs
- In most cases, injuries occurred when the goal was tipped or was accidentally tipped onto the victim

### **Personal Note from an Actual Incident;**

*In 1990 I was in Grade 5. Summer holidays were fast approaching and on a particularly windy day the soccer goals at our school had tipped in the wind. School ended for the day, and a number of students went out and pushed the goal back upright so they could play. I joined them, playing until my mother arrived. Everyone had left the field besides two boys. A sudden gust of wind tipped the goal over. It fell and struck one of the boys. He was in my class. The stanchion, where the cross bar and goal post met, hit him directly on the head as the net fell. A mother that was picking up her own child ran to get the net off of him, while my mother, a nurse, ran onto the field to tend to him. He was dead on the field. It was a traumatic experience for the whole school, and one I will never forget. – RD*

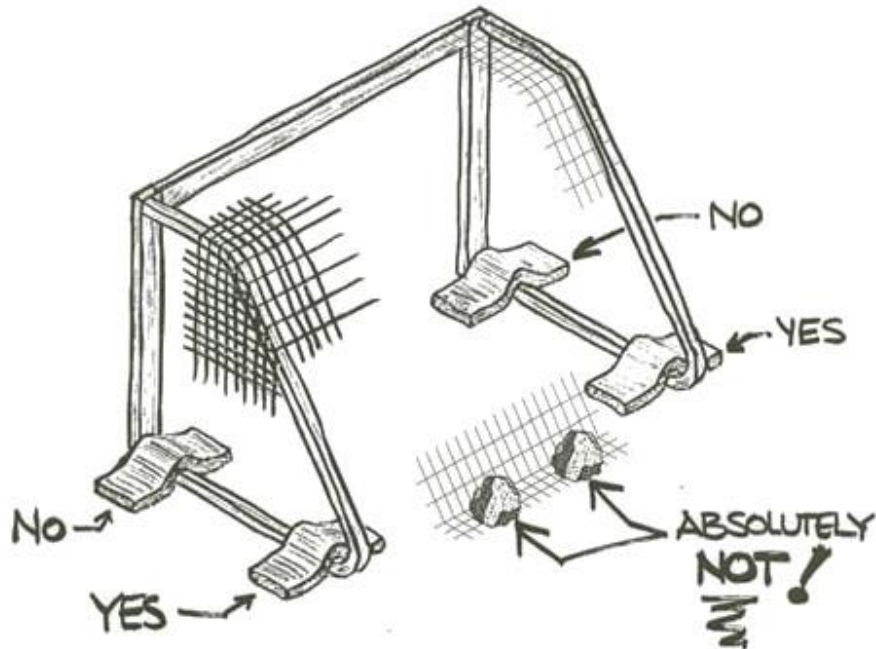
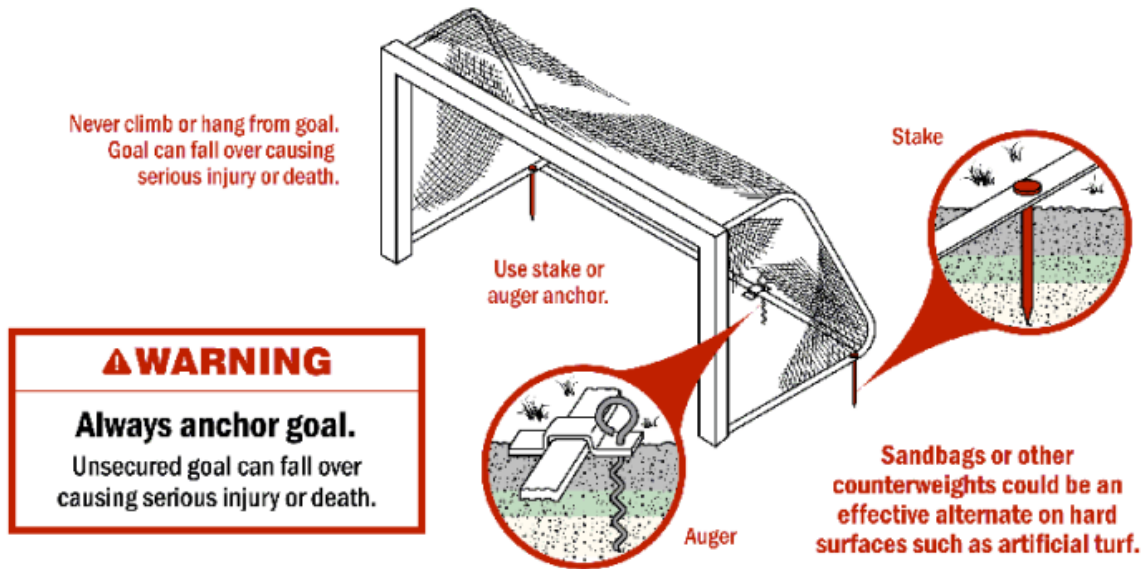
### **Still an Issue**

The above stats are from a few years ago, but goal related accidents are still a major problem.

- May 2008: An 8-year old Phoenix boy died when a goal post he was climbing on fell and crushed him
- Sept. 2008: San Luis boy dies when soccer goal falls
- January 2011: Soccer goal topples, kills Bentonville pupil, aged 9
- March 2011: School tragedy, goal post falls, kills Sts Peter and Paul student
- July 2012: 5-year old girl dies in Watson Lake, Yukon
- July 2014: Ontario girl, 15, dies after soccer goal incident
- March 2015: California, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade student critically injured (head), soccer goal post falls on him
- Sept. 2016: 6-year old girl hospitalized after soccer goal tipped onto her, hit her in the head
- Nov. 2016: Gust of wind pushed 150lbs soccer goal onto back of boy's head during recess game. Severe concussion, later diagnosed with learning disability because of concussion
- May 2017: High winds blow heavy metal net over, striking and killing 2-year old girl
- May 2017: Boy hanging by hands from goal post. 180-200lbs net tipped over, landing on his head. Despite efforts from friends, family, and paramedics, boy is killed instantly. Investigation still on going
- While tightening net to a goal post, father tips base of goal causing goal to tip, striking and killing 3- year old daughter

## Mitigation

The risk of movable soccer goals tipping can be mitigated through proper construction and anchoring. Goals can either be counterweighted at the back, or anchored to the ground. There are different types of anchors that can be used.



## **Conclusions and Safety Tips**

- Securely anchor or counterweight movable soccer goals at ALL TIMES
- Anchor or chain one goal to another, to itself in a folded down position, or to a nearby fence post, dugout, or any other similarly sturdy fixture when not in use. If this is not practical, store movable soccer goals in a place where children cannot have access to them
- Remove nets when the goals are not in use
- Check for structural integrity and proper connecting hardware before every use
- Replace damaged or missing parts/fasteners immediately
- NEVER allow anyone to climb on the net or goal framework
- Ensure safety/warning labels are clearly visible (UNDER the crossbar, on sides of posts AT EYE LEVEL)
- Fully disassemble goals for seasonal storage
- Always exercise extreme caution when moving goals and allow adequate manpower to move goals of varied sizes and weights
- Movable goals should ONLY be moved by AUTHORIZED AND TRAINED PERSONNEL
- ALWAYS instruct players on safe handling of and potential dangers associated with movable soccer goals
- Movable soccer goals should ONLY be used on LEVEL fields of play



## **Resources**

### **Guidelines for Goal Safety**

- <http://cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/soccer.pdf>
- <http://www.kwikgoal.com/upload/files/GoalSafetyWEBsm.pdf>

### **Incidents**

- <http://www.torontosun.com/2017/05/26/father-vows-to-ensure-sons-death-wont-be-in-vain>
- <http://www.nbcsandiego.com/news/local/Eastlake-Middle-School-Goal-Post-Accident-297044381/html>
- <http://anchoredforsafety.org/incidents.html>
- <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/soccer-goal-deaths-this-has-happened-before-1.2723639?cmp=rss>
- <http://www.cbc.ca/news/north/yukon-girl-5-struck-and-killed-by-tipped-soccer-net-1.1143781>
- [http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/Prep-school-tragedy\\_8542045](http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/Prep-school-tragedy_8542045)

### **PSC's Ongoing Commitment to Goal Safety**

PSC is committed to continually educating the Town of Paradise facility maintenance staff on the required standards and best practices with respect to goal post safety; specifically goal anchoring systems for fixed positions and portable goals as well as signage on goal posts about safety.

PSC Coaching staff will be educated on the issue of Goal Post Safety and It is the responsibility of Team Staff to educate their players/parents on goal safety. Always supervise and monitor their group for best practices when using goals (see above). Do not allow players to hang on goals.