

Mark A. Anderson's

LAW TALK



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FALL SPORTS:

The Injuries You Want Your Kids to Avoid



Photo by Glen Ellman

Here is my daughter, Turner, playing a little rough on the soccer field this spring. Check out that illegal stiff arm! Yes, it does sometimes get rough in youth soccer!

Sports are a great way to keep kids healthy and active, but many times these sports can cause serious injuries that can severely affect adolescents' lives. And with school starting up again, that means fall sports like football, cheerleading and soccer.

For many children and teens, this can be the most dangerous time to be playing a sport because of the heat and the fact that the long summer break leaves many ath-

letes out of shape. Here we have listed common injuries for each type of sport and what athletes can do to avoid them.

Football

This is a no-brainer. Football is a contact sport, which means there is bound to be some pain on the football field. Good technique, however, can go a long way toward minimizing football injuries. High school athletes account for an estimated 2 million

injuries, 500,000 doctor visits and 30,000 hospitalizations annually.

Injuries to the knee and ankle are the most common in football, but brain injuries are by far the most dangerous. And even though helmets provide protection for the head, it does not protect the spinal cord. Bruises, sprains, fractures, and broken bones are also common with any contact sport. Practicing in the hot sun doesn't help, especially here in Texas where both the football and the heat are notorious.

Staying Safe on the Football Field

To make sure your football star remains healthy and out of the emergency room, The National Center for Catastrophic Sport Injury Research has these and other suggestions for keeping safe on the field:

- mandatory medical exams before players start the season
- proper conditioning
- medical staff at all games *and practices*
- strict enforcement of all regulations
- proper technique, especially in the case of tackling and blocking
- immediate medical attention for any player with signs of brain injury
- placement of an AED on the sidelines at all practices and games

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Fall Sports, Continued...

Cheerleading

Cheerleading is often regarded as a “non-sport,” but that couldn’t be farther from the truth. It is hard to ignore the athleticism required to perform those stunts and tumbling passes. Cheerleaders need to train and condition as much as any other athlete to refrain from injury.

The more impressive the stunt, the more impressive the injury. Cheerleaders have the potential to fall from more than ten feet high. Common injuries include broken bones, sprains, spinal injuries, and head injuries. Injuries can happen because of poor nutrition, non-cushioned surfaces, inadequate supervision or attempting a difficult stunt.

Staying Safe On The Sidelines

- Adhere to all rules and regulations
- Practice on mats or pads
- Wear well fitting shoes with proper cushion and support
- Have an emergency plan in place and

practice it

- Require proper spotting
- Gradually progress to difficult stunts and skills
- Require and use the proper techniques
- Learn how to identify eating disorders
- Treat all injuries as soon as they happen
- Increase flexibility
- Strengthen lower back, abdomen and shoulders
- Gradually increase intensity of practice

Soccer

Soccer has one of the longest seasons in sports, starting as early as the beginning of the summer for some leagues. Soccer injuries are high because they run a lot and they use their heads as an extra appendage.

Soccer injuries are known as either cumulative (overuse) or acute (traumatic).

Overuse injuries occur over time as a result of stress on muscles and joints that have not had time to heal. Acute injuries occur due to a sudden force or impact that

can be severe. Common injuries include sprains, tears, concussions, fractures, tendonitis and shin splints.

Staying Safe On The Soccer Field

- Follow the ACL Injury Prevention Program for Soccer Players
- Warm up thoroughly prior to play
- Use protective equipment (mouth guards, shin guards and eye protection)
- Use good technique and play by the rules
- Clean of courts before play - check for slippery spots or debris
- Have a first aid kit on hand
- Get adequate recovery
- Stay hydrated

It is important to remember that even though there are some risks associated with sports, they are fun and encourage interaction with others. It is a great way to develop skills and discipline, not to mention a great way to stay in shape and make friends. Just remember to play it safe.

Kids Left in Hot Cars:

Read this even if you think it could never happen to you

Before I became a Dad, I used to hear the stories about kids being left in hot cars and I would think that only idiots could do that. But once I became a Dad, I got scared that it could happen to me. I used to take Turner to pre-school and half the time she would fall asleep during our twenty five minute drive. When she was asleep, my mind would eventually start thinking about work and that usually means grabbing my phone (not to text, just to talk). My huge fear was that I would forget to take her to preschool and instead drive to work and leave her in the car. Believe me, I was absolutely paranoid of doing so.

With the recent toddler deaths in North Texas, several suggestions have been made to help parents remember that kids are on board. Here is a compilation of these suggestions.

- First and foremost, **always** put your cell phone, purse, or briefcase, and anything else you'll need that day, on the floor of the backseat. When you retrieve it at the end of the ride, **you'll notice your child.**
- **Seat** your younger (or quieter) child behind the front passenger seat, **where he's most likely to catch your eye.**
- Keep a teddy bear or other stuffed animal in the car seat when it's empty. When you put your child in the seat, move the animal to the front passenger seat, **to remind you that your baby's on board.**
- **Ask** your child's baby sitter or day care provider to always phone you promptly if your child isn't dropped off as scheduled.
- Make a habit of **always** opening the back door of your car after you park, to **check** that there's no kid back there.
- **Never assume** someone else -- a spouse, an older child -- has taken a young kid out of her seat. Such miscommunication has led to more than a few hot-car deaths.
- Invest in a device to help you remember small passengers. The **Cars-N-Kids monitor** plays a lullaby when the car stops and a child is in the seat (\$29.95). The **ChildMinder System** sounds an alarm if you walk away and leave your child in the seat (\$69.95).
- Put visual cues in your office and home. Static-cling decals reminding you to check the car seat are available at **Emmasinspirations.com** and **Kidsandcars.org.**

Great New Technology for Wireless Devices

NO MORE DISTRACTED DRIVING



Distracted driving is a big problem, especially for teens, which is why I headed up the Teens Against Distracted Driving program at several Fort Worth high schools this past spring. I am always happy to see a product that helps this dangerous problem.

I realize for many people, it can be hard to give up using phones while driving. Now, some people are turning to cell phone applications to help break their habit.

iZup, a mobile phone application from Illume Software, is one of many cell phone applications that limit phone capabilities while driving. The iZup originally was only compatible with the Android phone, but the application will soon work with AT&T Media Mall, BlackBerry App World, Verizon V CAST, App Store for Windows Mobile, and Sprint's Digital Lounge as well.

The application uses the GPS signal to lock it if it senses the phone is moving. The app sends all incoming calls to voice-mail and doesn't allow the user to dial. All text messages are saved until the user is done driving. However, the application

does allow calls to 911 while engaged.

There is a monthly fee that comes with this application after downloading it onto your cell phone. For a single-user, iZup is \$4.95 per month or \$49.95 per year at the full-year discounted price. There is also a family plan available which allows three to five phones on a single account for \$9.95 per month or \$79.95 per year. Five percent of the annual net proceeds support organizations that educate people on the dangers of cell phone use while driving.

To get the iZup application, those interested have to go onto www.getizup.com and follow the steps to buy iZup, based on your existing cell phone carrier. A text message will then be sent to your phone to download it. It is that simple.

Having this application on the phone removes that temptation to check your phone for a text message or use the phone to call somebody while you're driving. I think it's a great way to prevent distracted driving and it goes perfectly with my Teens Against Drunk Driving campaign and contest that took place earlier this year.

Drivers of all ages need to be attentive and focused while driving, and using a cell phone can endanger both your own life and the lives of others. This new phone application is such a great way to encourage people to just put the phone down and wait until they are out of the car to make a phone call or read a text.

Some of the current cell phone applications seem a bit trivial and unnecessary. The iZup, however, seems like a great way to save lives. I hope anyone who finds themselves consistently using their cell phone while driving will consider purchasing the application so the roads will be a safer place.

DON'T LEAVE YOUR HOME ALONE

A new application available for the Apple iPhone and iTouch lets users monitor security cameras at their homes from anywhere with their mobile device. **The iCam application, which can be purchased for \$4.99, streams real-time images from webcams at home to users' wireless devices.**

The iCam application alerts you when motion is detected at webcam. You can then choose to watch live footage of what's going on at your home. It lets you view up to four cameras on a single screen, and you can zoom in and out on individual cameras.

I recently saw a local news story about a man who was alerted to a home break in while he and his wife were on vacation in Connecticut. Because of his iCam app, he was notified when two men broke down through a glass door into his home. He called 9-1-1, and watched as minutes later the police came into his home with guns drawn. It turns out those burglars had already broken



into another house on the same street. They were apprehended all because of this iCam application!

The iCam application can be purchased from the Apple iTunes App Store.



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**BACK TO SCHOOL REMINDER: NO
CELL PHONES IN SCHOOL ZONES!**

Strangest Warning I Have Ever Seen

**PUSH OPEN
DO NOT KICK
MAY RESULT
IN INJURY**

We are all used to seeing warnings everywhere. Some make sense and educate us as to a danger we might not have known about, and some seem to be warning about the obvious. I realize that many people try to blame those pesky injury lawyers for all the warnings! But this summer I saw what has to be the strangest warning I have ever seen. I was at a rest stop on the famous Road to Hana in Maui, Hawaii. In the men's restroom, there was a sign painted on the door to the stall that said: **PUSH OPEN, DO NOT KICK, MAY RESULT IN INJURY.** I thought that was very strange. How many people actually kick open stall doors? Maybe they have a problem in that area with people kicking in stall doors and hurting others' knees? Who knows (and NO, I don't carry a camera with me in restrooms. This photo was taken with my phone).

If you have a strange warning sign you would like to share, I would love to see it. Just email it to me at mark@maafirm.com.