Youth Athletics Heat Cancellation Policy

If the air temperature is above 95 degrees we will cancel.

If the Heat Index ("feels like" temperature), which is the combination of temperature and relative humidity, is above 100 degrees we will cancel.

Rev 6/25/02

Preventing Heat Stress in Children and Adolescents

Kids love summer. When adults are wilting through the sweltering days, kids seem to breeze through July and August with barely a dent in their energy levels. But children are in fact much more susceptible to heat stress than adults.

Heat stress, or heat exhaustion, is characterized by dizziness, weakness, nausea, headache, and cramps. The skin feels cold and damp, and blood pressure may be low. (Heatstroke is a much more acute and dangerous reaction to prolonged or excessive exposure to heat, when the body temperature is above 105 degrees, the individual stops sweating, any may be paralyzed or lose consciousness - all symptoms signaling a failure of the body's heat regulating system).

Parents, coaches, camp counselors and kids themselves need to be aware that when the temperature is above 95 degrees children and adolescents have markedly lower exercise tolerance than adults. And the hotter the air temperature and higher the humidity, the more susceptible children and adolescents are to heat stress.

High humidity can be a factor even without extremely high air temperatures; 70% of heat stress is due to humidity, 20% due to solar radiation, and only 10% to air temperature.

Children's bodies have greater surface area to body mass ratio, so they absorb more heat on a hot day (and lose heat more rapidly on a cold day). Also, children have considerably lower sweating capacity than adults, and so they are less able to dissipate body heat by evaporative sweating and cooling.

Children are less likely to feel thirsty during prolonged play and exercise, and sometimes they just don't want to be interrupted. They need to be reminded to drink water or another beverage. Salt tablets are not recommended.

To prevent heat-induced illness in children and adolescents, the Committee on Sports Medicine and Fitness of the American Academy of Pediatrics (in Pediatrics, Volume 106, July 2000 pages 158-159), emphasizes that:

Children need time to become acclimated to a warmer climate by gradually increasing their level of exposure and of exercise.

The duration of exercise and rest periods should be adjusted according to the humidity, air temperature, and degree of sun exposure experienced by the players.

Children should be well hydrated before starting prolonged physical activity.
They should drink liquids periodically during activities even if they do not feel thirsty:
5 ounces of cold water or a flavored salted beverage like a sports drink each 20 minutes for a child weighing 40 lbs.; 9 ounces every 20 minutes for an adolescent weighing 132 lbs.

-Committee on Sports Medicine and Fitness of the American Academy of Pediatrics