

# Parent Topics

## Help Kids Gear Up For The Game

(NAPSA)—More and more, parents are keeping an eye on ways to protect their youngster's vision.

It helps to know that eye injuries are the leading cause of blindness in children in the United States and many of these injuries are sports related. Fortunately, 90 percent of sports-related eye injuries in children can be prevented with the use of protective eyewear. Making sure your young athlete gears up with the right protective eyewear may save your child's sight.

### What Vision Protection Looks Like

Protective eyewear includes safety glasses and goggles, safety shields and eye guards specially designed to provide the correct protection for a certain activity. Most protective eyewear lenses are made of polycarbonate, which is 10 times stronger than other plastics. Safety goggles that can be worn over prescription glasses can also be found.

Talk to your eye care provider about protective eyewear for your child. Your eye care provider can provide protective eyewear that fits your child's prescription. He or she can help you select a correct fit and style for any sport. Many eye care providers sell protective eyewear, as do sporting goods stores.

"Children should use protective eyewear during sporting activities to avoid unnecessary eye injuries that can possibly result in permanent vision loss," said Paul A. Sieving, M.D., Ph.D., director of the National Eye Institute, one of the National Institutes of Health.

At first, your child may resist wearing protective eyewear, saying



Photo courtesy of Liberty Sports

**Protect your child's eyes. Help her gear up for the game with protective eyewear.**

that it isn't cool. But this doesn't have to be the case—protective eyewear now comes in a variety of styles and colors that can even match team uniforms. Don't let your child step onto the field or court unless he or she is wearing the proper safety gear from head to toe, including protective eyewear.

### Game Time

While the use of protective eyewear is important for all activities, some sports carry a greater risk than others. For example, baseball is the leading cause of sports-related eye injury in children 14 and under and is considered a high-risk sport. Football carries a moderate risk.

### Learn More

For information about protective eyewear for specific sports, visit the National Eye Institute at <http://www.nei.nih.gov/sports>.