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For immediate release

This Autumn we need to protect our Kids from Sports Injury

With the junior winter sporting season getting underway over the next two weekends it is important to be aware that sports injuries to children peak during the autumn months.

Each year an average of 4,300 children attend the Princess Margaret Hospital Emergency Department (PMH ED) due to a sports-related injury. This accounts for 22.5% of all injury presentations to the PMH ED. The proportion of sports-related injuries has increased over the last five years from 20.4% during the 2011/2012 financial year to just under a quarter of all injuries (24.2%) during 2015/2016.

Older children aged between 10 and 14 years are at greater risk of sustaining a sports-related injury. This is possibly due to a decrease in rule modification as children get older and a higher number of older children participating in competitive sports in comparison to younger children. Males also account for two thirds of all sports-related injuries.

“Sport and physical activity are a vital part of childhood development, allowing children to improve physical, cognitive and social skills with others. Injury risks however, are often perceived as a barrier to participation,” said Kidsafe WA Chief Executive Officer, Scott Phillips.

Australian Rules Football is the most commonly recorded activity associated with sporting injuries, followed by soccer, basketball, rugby and netball.

Common injury presentations include sprains and strains, fractures, bruising, cuts, dislocations and internal injuries. These are most commonly sustained to the upper and lower limbs as well as the facial, head and neck/torso areas.

To reduce your child’s risk of sports-related injury Kidsafe WA recommend the following:

- Ensure your child wears appropriate protective equipment for their chosen sport. This may include mouthguards, eyewear, helmets, protective padding, footwear and gloves.
- Drink water to stay hydrated while participating in sporting activities
- Always warm up and cool down before and after sporting activities.
- Children should participate in sports that have modified rules and equipment appropriate to their development. Modified sports include AusKick, Minkey, NetSetGo and Kanga Cricket.
- Do not allow children to play sport while tired, ill or injured. Ensure the appropriate recovery time is allocated.
- Sporting grounds and facilities should be checked regularly for damaged playing surfaces, fencing, lights, posts, padding and rubbish.

For more information on how to protect your children from injury visit: www.kidsafewa.com.au

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