

Chicago Dental Society Launches Oral Safety Campaign

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Raising visibility for oral health and safety through the promotion of mouthguard use among young athletes is the goal of Protect and Play, a new public education program the Chicago Dental Society (CDS) announced today. Through Protect and Play, CDS -- a professional dental association that promotes oral health as key to overall health -- is informing kids and families about the importance of wearing a mouthguard when playing sports. While three million teeth are knocked out yearly in youth sports, nearly 67% of young athletes participate in activities without wearing mouthguards.

"Too many children engage in sporting activities without the proper protection, which puts them at risk for preventable traumas," said CDS Board President Lou Imburgia. "To prevent these injuries, our CDS dentists are opening their doors to make sure that every young athlete in their community has access to a custom mouthguard so they can stay active and safe."

Mouthguards are particularly important as the risk of tooth injuries is 60 times higher without proper protection. As an essential part of any athlete's gear, not only do mouthguards protect the teeth, tongue, cheeks and jaw, but they also can prevent head and neck injuries.

Through Protect and Play, CDS dentists are making custom mouthguards more affordable for more families by offering a 50 percent discount to youth athletes. CDS also proudly sponsored Chicago Blackhawks Youth Hockey camps and Inflatable Rink events this summer -- where CDS dentists have been on site to talk with parents about the importance of mouthguard use.

Visit [cds.org/mouthguard](https://www.cds.org/mouthguard) for details and a list of participating dentists.