

# THE EVOLUTION OF THE FOOTBALL HELMET

Football is a large part of our culture, from national past time to developing teamwork, leadership skills, and good sportsmanship in our youth. However, as with all sports, there is the potential for Traumatic Brain Injury. One of the best ways to reduce the risk of sustaining a TBI is to wear appropriate protective gear, such as helmets and pads. Here's a brief history of football helmets over the years, illustrating how the advancements in technology are making football a safer sport.

Helmets in the early 1900's were very basic and made of soft leather. As they did not cover the whole head, they offered little in the way of protection.

1900



1915

The "flat-top" variety of helmet was introduced in 1915. With more padding and resembling an aviator's cap, this style provided a bit more safety.

By the 1920's, helmet use was widespread. With soft leather still being used, injuries were common.

1920



1930

Helmets switched to harder leather in the 1930's and cotton padding was added. As football's popularity grew, so did the safety features.

In the 1940's, helmets became required by the NFL. A more form-fitting design was adapted, and team graphics appeared.

1940



1950

Helmets moved away from leather and into hard plastic shells in the 1950's. A single face bar was a new feature.

In the 1970's, face masks were worn by every NFL player, and full-face masks became common.

1970



1980

A typical helmet in the 1980's was formed of a molded polycarbonate shell over a layer of aluminum and vinyl foam.

The 1990's saw polycarbonate technology incorporated into face masks for added protection.

1990



2010

Modern helmets embrace new technologies, such as impact indicator features and helmets specially designed to reduce concussions.



Daggett Shuler is pleased to partner with the Childress Institute of Pediatric Trauma, whose mission is to discover and share the best ways to prevent and treat severe injuries in children.

