Pottsgrove Soccer Club

www.Pottsgrove Soccer.com

Parents Manual



Keys to having a Successful Soccer Season for Your Family!

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Welcome to the Pottsgrove Soccer Club family!

Pottsgrove Soccer Club would like to thank you for registering your child in our programs. At Pottsgrove Soccer Club, we pride ourselves in delivering a player centered approach to Individual Development, having high standards of good sportsmanship and fair play throughout entire club and having dedicated Board Members, Coaches, Referees and Parents continually striving to keep the club as one of the model sports club in the area.

Pottsgrove Soccer is a non-profit organization, built upon the effort of our volunteers from coaches to our board members to everyone in between, and our success in fostering the game of soccer, and developing young boys and girls of our community is directly related to that dedication.

On the following pages, you'll find a great deal of information that paints a picture of what a season out on the pitch entails. You'll find technical information pertaining to the actual game-play, information on your role as a parent on the team, a calendar of events, and much more.

Please take the time to read through this informative Parents Guide, and visit our website for even more info.

Good Luck & have fun out there!!!

Rob Deckert

President of Pottsgrove Soccer Club

Board of Directors

Pottsgrove Soccer is governed by a Board of Directors who meets the first Monday of the month @ Pottsgrove Middle School Library. Current Board Members are as follows:

Executive Board Members	
President – Rob Deckert	V.P. – John Charbonneau
Secretary – Dave Vaughan	Treasurer/Intramural Director – Bob Coons
Travel Director - Chris Paul	Registrar – Dee Gallion
General Board Members	
Grant Manager – Paul Fisher	U4/U6 Coordinator – Elizabeth Paulus
Snack Bar Manager - Dee Gallion	VAF Coordinator - Jeanine Deckert
Grievance Officer – Bob Mohollen	Field Mgr Ed Windrim
Newsletter Editor – Stephanie Kawcynzski	Community Relations Director – Julee Schirmacher
Fundraising Coordinator - Dina Sargent	Schedule Coordinator – Michael Anderson
Referee Coordinator – Aaron Palmer	Parent Coordinator – Rachel Palmer
Equipment Manager – Aaron Raudabaugh	Uniform Coordinator – Ann Maletsky'
Director of Player Development – Paul Heverly	SCSL Coordinator – Doug Hawkins

If you are interested in volunteering for the club or joining the Board, please reach out to one of the executive board members.

Calendar of Events

The following is a rough guide as to important dates and events that occur throughout the Soccer Season:

- **End of July** Fall Registration closes, and age group coordinators begin to recruit coaches, build teams, set schedules, and other preparations.
- *Mid to Late August* -Rosters are released to coaches; uniform & equipment pickup dates are sent out;
- Late August Field Day
- Late August / Early Sept.- Coaches hold team meetings and are allowed to begin training
- Early September Season begins
- 2nd or 3rd Week of Sept Picture Day
- Late October/Early November Fall Season Ends
- Mid November Spring Registration Opens
- Early to Mid-February Spring Registration closes, and age group coordinators begin to recruit coaches, build teams, set schedules, and other preparations.
- Early March -Rosters are released to coaches; uniform & equipment pickup dates are sent out;
- Mid to Late March Coaches hold team meetings and are allowed to begin training
- Late March Field Day
- Early April Season begins
- 2nd or 3rd Week of April Picture Day
- Late April to Early May Travel team try-outs
- Mid to Late May Spring Season Ends

Specific dates for the items above will be distributed prior to the start of the Fall and Spring seasons.

COMMUNICATION

We want to ensure that information is communicated to the parents of the players quickly and efficiently. To do so, Pottsgrove Soccer is employing several ways to reach each member of the organization.

We will use the following means to communicate Club information, and we will strive to keep it consistent among these sources (most timely in order listed):

- Pottsgrove Soccer Club Website (www.pottsgrovesoccer.com)
- E-Mail lists
- Pottsgrove Soccer Club Facebook Page ("Pottsgrove Soccer Club")

If you have not received e-mail notifications from Pottsgrove Soccer Club, but would like to, please send an e-mail to <u>pottsgrovesoccerregistrar@comcast.net</u> requesting placement on the e-mail list.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

You entrust your child's safety and athletic experience to Pottsgrove Soccer Club and its volunteers, and as such the parents of the players have responsibilities in that as well.

- Please do not smoke near the fields or in the bleachers
- Arrive 15 minutes before games and 5 minutes before practices
- Encourage your child rather than reprimand
- No rude behavior to coaches and referees will be tolerated
- Most importantly remember that you are modeling behavior to the children!

PARENTS' EXPECTATIONS OF COACHES

- Provide a safe environment for your children
- Hold a Parent's Meeting prior to the first practice/game
- Follow a well-developed player centered curriculum for training sessions
- Conduct themselves in a professional manner
- Have Fun

BASIC EQUIPMENT FOR PARENTS

- Comfortable lawn chair –comfort is important because you are going to be spending a lot of the time sitting in that chair watching youth soccer players having FUN!
- Comfortable clothing –you will out in the sun, the rain, the heat and the cold. Dress to be comfortable so you can sit in that chair and watch youth soccer players having FUN!

- Pop-up Tent for Travel Parents The tent will be essential to keeping out of the sun/rain during an all-day tournament and providing shelter for your team players to rest in between games.
- A sense of humor and joy at watching youth soccer players having FUN!

EQUIPMENT AND SAFETY RULES

Pottsgrove Soccer Club prides itself on providing a fun safe experience for all of its players. As part of the soccer experience, Pottsgrove Soccer will provide the following:

- Each child with a uniform including a Shirt/jersey, shorts and socks.
- A safe playing field with secure goals and properly attached nets
- Coaches trained in Concussion management
- Provide each coach with the necessary equipment to conduct a fun productive practice including balls, cones and pinnies

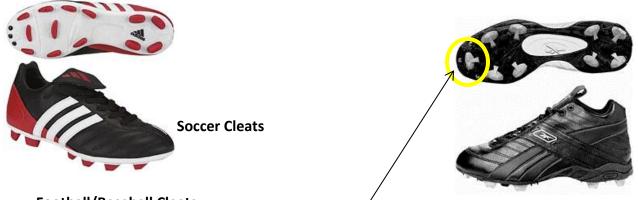
To ensure the safety of all of our players, we require players to wear shin guards (socks must be worn over guards). If the child is not wearing shin guards, they will not be permitted to play.

In addition to wearing shin guards, we expect all players to follow the safety rules below:

- Eyeglasses must have an elastic headband
- No hats or headgear unless it is soft billed, no billed, or required due to religion
- No exposed hard casts or metal leg/arm braces
- No jewelry that dangles (long earrings, necklaces, bracelets)
- Cleats are highly recommended, however they are not required for U4 or U6
- Under no circumstances may baseball cleats be used (no metal material or toe cleat)

Soccer Cleats vs. Baseball Cleats

You cannot play soccer in baseball cleats but you can play baseball in soccer cleats.



Football/Baseball Cleats

Have a front toe cleat which makes them dangerous for soccer. The toe cleat can catch in the ground when dribbling or kicking and cause knee and ankle injuries.

If you have any questions about soccer cleats, please reach out to your coach or age group coordinator, they will be glad to help.

EPYSA RULES PER LEAGUE

Pottsgrove Soccer is a member organization of EPYSA. All games are played under the rules outlined by US Youth Soccer & EPYSA. A link to the rules is below

http://www.epysa.org/resources/official_rules_for_small_sided_games

FIFA RULES:

Where no separate guidelines are given by EPYSA, Pottsgrove Soccer uses the FIFA Rules. A link to the rules is below:

http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/footballdevelopment/technicalsupport/refereeing/laws-of-the-game/index.html

POTTSGROVE SOCCER CLUB PROGRAMS

Pottsgrove Soccer has 3 soccer programs within the club: Intramural, Recreational and Travel. Assignment to each level is based on age and ability level. Below is a summary of each level of soccer within the club.

Intramural/Recreational Soccer

Our Intramural and Recreational teams are for players of all skill levels. The number one goal of intramural and recreational soccer is for the players to have fun. Players benefit from the opportunity for social interaction with other players their own age and physical fitness aspects of the game while also developing better soccer skills.

There is no selection/tryout process in the Recreational or Intramural divisions. Skill evaluations may be held to form teams in a fair and balanced method, but all players who register are assigned to a team as long as space is available on team rosters.

At this level, coaches are parent volunteers who have received appropriate Club training for the level they coach.

The intramural division consists of those players in the age groups between U4 – U10. At this age level the focus is on "igniting a passion for soccer" while focusing on individual player development. In these divisions, coaches stress the technical skills need to be successful as players advance through the different levels of the club and beyond. Each team session is designed around increasing the number of touches each player gets on the ball as well as having fun as part of a team. Standings for the age group and scores for individual games are not kept, so coaches can focus on player development and not take a "win at all cost mentality." Teams are Coed at the U4 & U6 level, but individual Boys and Girls teams play at the U8 and U10 level. All games are played on Friday, Saturday or Sunday at Gerald Richards Park.

As players "graduate" to U12 and above they will move to our Recreational division. The teams in the recreational division are co-ed due to the number of players in the club. The teams in the Recreational division play in the Suburban County Soccer League which currently consists of Pottsgrove Soccer, Amity Soccer Club, Boyertown Soccer Club, Coventry Soccer Association, Methacton United, Perkiomen Valley Soccer, Phoenixville Area Soccer Club and West Mont United Soccer Association. Teams will play half of their games at Gerald Richards Park or the surrounding area fields and the other half of the games will be at one of the above clubs. Some local travel is involved in this division.

Below is an outline of the different rules and requirements for each recreation/intramural age division.

		Roster		Days on			
Age Group	Ball Size	Min	Max	Field		Game Length	Refs
U4	3	6	9	1	3v3/4v4	~ 20 min	Coaches
U6	3	6	9	2*	3v3/4v4	~ 30 min	Coaches
U8	3	8	12	3**	6v6/7v7	4 Q (12 min)	Ref
U10	4	8	12	3	7v7/8v8	2H (25 min)	Ref
U12	4	10	14	2	8v8	2H (30 min)	Ref
U14	5	11	18	2	11v11	2H (35 min)	Ref
U16	5	8	14	2	7v7	2H (40 min)	Ref
U19	5	8	14	2	6v6	2H (45 min)	Ref

League Guidelines

* Friday Night Showcase Optional Practice Weekly

** Weekly U8 Practice All teams together

League Rules Highlights

	Goal			Penalty			
Age Group	Keepers	Free Kicks	Goal Kicks	Kicks	Corner Kicks	Offsides	Substitution
U4	Ν	Ν	Ν	Ν	N	Ν	Coach Discretion
U6	Ν	Ν	Y*	Ν	Y*	Ν	Coach Discretion
U8	Y	Direct	Y	Ν	Y	Ν	At Quarter/stoppage or injury
U10	Y	Direct	Y	Y	Y	Y	At Half/stoppage or injury
U12	Y	Direct	Y	Y	Y	Y	At Half or injury
U14	Y	Direct	Y	Y	Y	Y	At Half or injury
U16	Y	Direct	Y	Y	Y	N	On Fly
U19	Y	Direct	Y	Y	Y	N	On Fly

* At Coaches Discretion

For more information on our Intramural/Recreational divisions, please feel free to contact your Age Group Coordinator.

Travel Program

The third division of Pottsgrove Soccer is our Travel division. The Travel division offers a more competitive brand of soccer for some of our "best" players. Below are some of the main differences between Travel and Rec/Intramural Soccer:

Travel vs. Recreational/Intramural Soccer

Travel soccer does not necessarily mean traveling great distances. The majority of our games are within 30 to 50 minutes of Pottsgrove/Pottstown and are played on weekends. Travel teams are for serious soccer players who are dedicated to the sport and committed to improving their skills on their own (at home) throughout the year – not just at regular practice sessions. These games are more competitive and the "away" games can be as much as an hour and half from their home field. The following are points of consideration for travel team players:

1) Travel Teams will be considered for U9 through U19 boys and U9 through U18 Girls. The availability of travel teams will be based on the interest level in each age group.

2) Tryouts are held once a year in May for the seasonal year beginning August 1st and continuing through next spring/summer. The goal is to pick the best players for the travel teams.

3) Travel teams play both a fall and spring season. Players in the travel program are expected to play in both seasons.

4) Travel teams play in the Reading Berks Junior Soccer League, Delco Soccer League or PAGS League. They generally play six to ten league games in both the spring and fall sometimes with a playoff tournament at the end of the fall season.

5) Often times, travel teams play in other tournaments throughout the year. In the past, many travel teams have elected to play in a fall tournament (before the start of the regular fall season), and a spring tournament (after the end of the regular spring season). Some teams also play in a Winter Indoor League in the area.

6) Travel teams have additional costs beyond just a registration fee. Travel players are responsible for purchasing the team uniform, additional fees for tournaments and other costs not covered by Pottsgrove Soccer.

How do I know what's right for my child and my family?

Before committing to a travel soccer team, you should evaluate several things about your child and your lifestyle:

- Am I, the parent, willing to make the financial commitment of the club fees and travel expenses for a seasonal year?
- Am I, the parent, willing to make the commitment of getting my child to two practices per week during the season? Pottsgrove Soccer's travel teams typically practice mid-August through mid-December, and February 1-end of May.
- Am I, the parent, willing to make the commitment of getting my child to games on the weekend, even out of town games which could require extensive travel?

- Am I, the parent, willing to allow my child to play some games on Sunday or even during a weeknight in the event of a reschedule?
- Am I, the parent, willing to make the commitment of getting my child to play-off/tournament games if their team advances requiring additional travel expenses?
- Does my child have time in their schedule? Can he/she balance school, homework, school sports, and/or other extracurricular activities to commit to a competitive team?
- Does my child want to play soccer competitively for a year rather than only 6-8 weeks as in a recreational program?

If you answered "yes" to the questions above, then Travel Soccer could be right for you and your family!

For more information on our Travel Programs, please feel free to contact Chris Paul, our Travel director.

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Recognizing that youth soccer should be a fun and learning activity for children that promotes teamwork, learning and the spirit of the game, all Pottsgrove Soccer Club parents will abide by the following code of conduct.

- I/We will encourage good sportsmanship through my actions, by demonstrating positive support for ALL players, coaches and officials at every game or practice.
- I/We will remember that the game is for the athletes and not for the parents.
- I/We will demand a drug, alcohol and tobacco free environment for my athlete and agree to assist by refraining from their use at all Pottsgrove Soccer Club events, home or away.
- I/We will demand my athlete treat other players, coaches, officials and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex or ability.
- I/We will treat all players, coaches, officials and spectators with dignity and respect in the language, attitude, behavior and mannerisms.
- I/We will refrain from becoming involved in any confrontational situations (including being loud and abusive) at a game or practice and will, instead, follow the established procedure for filing a complaint.
- I/We will provide support for coaches and officials working with the athletes to provide a positive experience for all.
- I/We will promote the emotional and physical well-being of the athletes ahead of any personal desire to win.
- I/We will inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my athlete of the safety of others.
- I/We will inform the coach within a reasonable amount of time, of any absence from a game or practice my athlete might incur due to sickness, planned vacation or any other reason.
- I/We will explain the rules and expectations to my athlete so they may gain a better understanding of the sportsmanship involved in soccer.

It is so noted that any parent(s) that fail(s) to abide by the aforementioned rules and guidelines, may be subject to disciplinary action. This action could include but is not limited to the following: verbal warning, written warning, parental game suspension, parental season suspension, parental disbarment, player removal and player suspension. These actions may not be necessarily taken in an escalating manner and Pottsgrove Soccer Club reserves the right to select and apply any penalty dependent on the situation.

To report an incident or to file a complaint with the club, please contact the Grievance Coordinator or the Board President. Contact information is available at <u>HTTP://www.pottsgrovesoccer.com</u>. If you do not have internet access, please address any board member and request to be contacted.

In the case a grievance has been filed with a PSC board member, the club will follow the Grievance Policy outlined below when warranted.

Grievance Policy

The guidelines outlined in our grievance policy are basic guidelines and may not cover all of the issues that may present themselves over the course of a soccer season. In the event that an incident presents itself that cannot be resolved between the parties involved, the following grievance steps will be taken. The policy is intended to comply with the general requirements for grievances, disputes and appeals of the United States Youth Soccer Organization By-laws.

The Policy is intended to cover the grievances of coaches, participants, parents, spectators, and Pottsgrove Soccer Club (PSC) Board Members.

In the event of a grievance:

1. Any person and/or persons wishing to file a grievance must do so in writing and/or email to the Board President or Grievance Coordinator within 7 days of the occurrence. Contact information is available on pottsgrovesoccer.com.

2. The PSC Board President will notify the person and/or persons involved in the grievance within 7 business days of receiving the notification and advise the parties involved of the nature of the grievance, dispute, or appeal, the names of all parties, a copy of the grievance, dispute, or appeal, and shall advise the persons involved that the Grievance Coordinator will gather the related information, which may include eyewitness accounts, written information, (i.e. handbook, registration forms, etc.,) and other such information.

3. If the Grievance Coordinator decides that the incident that initiated the grievance and/or the grievance itself has no merit, they will render their decision immediately. If the Grievance Coordinator finds that it warrants further consideration, the following steps will be initiated in a timely matter.

a. The Grievance Coordinator will notify all the parties involved 7 business days in advance of a date to hear the grievance.

b. All persons wishing to address the Grievance Coordinator, either for or against the grievance, shall notify him or her that they would like to be put on the hearing agenda within 5 business days of the notification.

c. Each person will be allotted adequate time to address the coordinator. If any person cannot address the coordinator in person, they will be allowed to submit in writing their response to the grievance. The Grievance Coordinator shall have the opportunity to ask questions of the individuals involved. A written record of the hearing will be kept, but a formal transcript will not be taken or required.

d. After gathering all individual statements the Grievance Coordinator will consider the grievance and render their decision.

e. All parties will be notified within 7 business days by either a follow up meeting and/or certified mail as to the Coordinator's decision. The Grievance Coordinator's decision will be Final. The Coordinator will inform the PSC Executive Board of the decision and it will be noted in the minutes of the next board meeting.

f. If the decision of the Grievance Coordinator determines that probation or suspension from the PSC is warranted, then the Executive Board will take into consideration the period of probation or suspension recommended by the Coordinator and implement the decision. The decision may also include follow-up meetings and/or observations as to the probation period, before the incident is resolved and reinstatement has occurred.

If you have questions about the grievence policy, please do not hesitate to contact our Club President or one of the Executive Board Members.

How You Can Help Your Coach Without Really Trying

- Our young players need support from their coach, from their teammates, and particularly from you. Our highly trained and motivated coaches will do their part. Your ENTHUSIASM for each practice and game will be CONTAGIOUS to your child. Please be punctual for practices and games!
- Don't assume a practice or game is canceled just because there is a monsoon brewing or it's been snowing for a few days straight. Cancellations will be decided by the coach for practices and by a soccer board member for games.
- You can best help the coach by introducing yourself at the first practice. Let him or her know of any special information that may pertain to your child (wearing of contacts, any allergies, etc.) Many coaches can identify some kids' parents only by the make of the car they drive as they slow to shove the kid out the door at the edge of the field.
- As you have probably already discovered, soccer games can be very exciting. Only the most passive parent will
 not become emotionally involved in the game. When you do, we ask that you confine your comments (screams)
 to the positive. We've seen certain Mom's jumping up and down, shrieking at the Referees, certain Dads
 bellowing out at his kid (trying to "coach" him or her) to no avail. This does not help your kid or your reputation
 in the stands.
- Speaking of Referees, please keep in mind that he or she is in charge of the game. Realize that they are human (unlike baseball umpires), and sometimes make mistakes (like baseball umpires). But, historically, most of the dissent in a soccer game is not caused by a Referee problem, but as a result of people not understanding the laws of the game, and how they are applied, so please take time to learn about Soccer. We will help you with that below.
- Follow the Club's Code of Conduct

Dealing with the Coach

- Ask the coaching philosophy, team rules and guidelines
- When to ask questions -Don't ask questions during a game or in front of a small group that you wouldn't want asked of you.
- Ask the coach how you can help, during practice and games –Get involved.
- Be supportive -Always role model positive behavior, support the Pottsgrove Soccer and your child's program.

How You Can Support Your Child

- Find out why YOUR child wants to play soccer! Ask the real questions?
 - Why do YOU want to play soccer?
 - What is fun about soccer for YOU?
 - What do YOU like to hear from ME before, during and after YOUR GAMES?
- Once you have asked the questions, LISTEN to the answer and learn....
 - Shape your support to meet your child's expressed desires; make his/her dreams come true.
 - Ask yourself "What can I do to assist my child in being successful in meeting his/her goals for participation in soccer?"

Being a Good Soccer Parent

- Support Your Child Give encouragement and show interest in their team; teach your child that hard work and an honest effort are often more important than victory.
- Always Be Positive Parents serve as role models, so work to be a positive role model; support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from youth sports activities.
- Your Child Wants to Have Fun Remember that your child is the one playing soccer, not you; take care not to impose your own standards and goals on them. Emphasize enjoyment, development of skills and team play as the cornerstones of your child's early sports experiences.
- Reinforce Positive Behavior Positive reinforcement is the best way to help your child achieve their goals and their natural fear of failure.
- Don't be a Sideline Coach or Referee Coaches and referees are usually parents just like you; they volunteer their time to help make your child's youth soccer experience a positive one. Coaches may have teaching points they are conveying during a game or practice session that may not be apparent initially. If you have a question about a coaches methods or strategy, take the time to voice your concerns after the game or in a separate meeting with the coach. Leave coaching to coaches and avoid placing too much pressure on your youngster about playing time and performance.
- Always remember Soccer is just a game. Keep soccer in perspective versus the other activities in your child's lives. Make sure your child keeps a balance in their life. Encourage participation in multiple sports and activities while placing academics first.
- Be realistic about your child's future in sports recognizing that only a select few earn a college scholarship, compete in the Olympics or sign a professional contract.

Teaching Sportsmanship

Here are six things you can do to show your child (and other parents) what being "a good sport" means:

1. Cheer for all the children, even those on the other team What a surprising difference it can make on the sidelines and in the stands when parents make an effort to applaud a good effort or a fine play -no matter whom makes it.

- 2. Talk to parents of the other team: They are not the enemy.
- 3. Be a parent, not a coach: resist the urge to critique. Children dread their parent going over their performance in detail, pointing out all their mistakes. Sometimes just being there shows your children what being a good parent is all about. Leave the coaching to the coaches: this includes motivating, psyching your child for practice, after game critiquing, setting goals, requiring additional training, etc.
- 4. Thank the officials-Find a few moments to compliment the officials for their hard work after a game (especially if your child's team loses) you will be rewarded with the pleasure of seeing a surprised smile in return.
- 5. Keep soccer in its proper perspective: Soccer should not be larger than life for you. If your child's performance produces strong emotions in you, suppress them. Remember your relationship will continue with your children long after their youth soccer days are over. Keep your goals and needs separate from your child's experience.
- 6. Have fun: That is what the children are trying to do!

Referees

What about Referees?

- The main goal of the referee is to make the game safe and fun for the children.
- Being a referee is not as easy as it appears. They are another coach on the field for small sided games.
- Remember, many referees are brothers and sisters of soccer players or soccer players themselves. Others are fellow parents trying to just help youth soccer players have FUN!
- Recognize that the referee is doing his/her best. It may not be what you saw, but the goal is to let the game be played so that children can have FUN!.

Let the Referee Call the Game

- Helping the referee to call the trip or a foul only confuses children.
- Disagreeing hurts you child's respect for the referee, and may hurt the view of the referee towards your child's team.
- Criticism causes referees to quit rather than become better. Many referees quit due to being yelled at by parents.
- As you cheer for the players, cheer for the referees too

Some things to think about when you are a parent of a youth soccer player. The links below are some videos put together by the FA (England's Soccer Federation) about parental actions at youth soccer contests. Please review and think about what kind of spectator and parent you would like to be.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=86LmKa1Sig4

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOf81jcqyYc

The two videos below from the FA look at how a parent's actions affect their child's involvement with youth soccer. We encourage you to review and think about how your actions affect your player.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=endscreen&v=q2VcHmZS0cA&NR=1

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=endscreen&v=ogg6re89VTo&NR=1

How You Can Help Out the Club

Pottsgrove Soccer Club is always looking for volunteers to help the club reach their goals. In order to keep registration fees low we have a volunteer activity fee. A \$20 Volunteer Activity Fee (VAF) per family is charged each season. This fee will be reimbursed to you as cash the week following the completion of our volunteer time/activity. VAFs will be reimbursed if you coach a team, serve on a club committee (i.e. Fund Raising), help out at Field Day or work the snack bar.

Some additional ways you can contribute to the club include the following:

- Volunteer for a New Board Positions
- Volunteer as a Coach/Team Parent
- Become a Referee
- Volunteer Time to help w/ special events
- Sponsor a Team

Please contact a board member to discuss opportunity to contribute.

SNACK BAR

Prior to the start of each season, the Snack Bar Coordinator will post on Volunteerspot the open shifts for the snack bar for the season. Parents will have a small window to sign up for shifts to earn back their VAF. Once all parents have had the opportunity to sign up for shifts, the remaining snack bar shifts will be offered up to all members. Any parents working additional shifts will receive \$20 for each shift worked.

Only Parents should work the snack bar. If you bring your kid to the snack bar, they may NOT handle money.

During the season, the snack bar is open during all games and during assorted practices during the week. The Snack Bar offers candy, snacks, hot dogs and an assortment of drinks. Pottsgrove Spirit wear can also be purchased at the snack bar.

If you have any questions about working in the snack bar or any merchandise items, please contact our Snack Bar Coordinator.

Appendix

The next several pages contain some important information to assist you as your child continues to play youth soccer. Many of these articles forces us to look at sports parenting with a new perspective. We hope you find this information valuable.

TEN THINGS PARENTS CAN DO TO HELP A COACH

- 1. Deliver your child to practices and games on time.
- 2. Say only positive things on the sidelines.
- 3. Communicate with the coach but not on the field.
- 4. Don't shout instructions to your child during the game.
- 5. Call the coach if your child is going to miss a game or practice.
- 6. Don't allow sleepovers or late movies the night before a game.
- 7. Focus on effort, not winning.
- 8. Support the coach, especially regarding lineup and discipline.
- 9. Feed the kids before games and practices.
- 10. Write the coach a thank-you note. Better yet, have your child write one.

Above list from: Sports Illustrated for Kids, April 1995

The Key to Success on The Soccer Field is Eating Proper Food! from www.soccer-training-guide.com

When I started my soccer career I realized that this was the sport for me. However, I didn't know anything about nutrition for soccer.

Carbohydrate, protein and glycol were like rocket science for me. This part of soccer is the most technical and can be hard to grip in the beginning. But don't worry about that.

This nutrition guide will help you understand why you must eat properly in order to perform well on the soccer field.

Soccer is seen by many as the world's biggest sport with over 130 million players around the world!

Poor Research

Still, the research has been poor and there are people out there believing that Atkins diet and soccer is a great combination!

But times are changing and new researches are being conducted. New reports suggest that you should use the same diet as marathon runners!

Now you probably wonder what a soccer player and a long distance runner have in common, especially since the game of soccer involves fast running and bursts of energy comparing to the continuous long running that is the hallmark of marathon runners.

However this connection doesn't seem to be so extraordinary when you consider what is actually happening during a soccer game.

In a general soccer match you will usually run in a range from 3-7 miles. You will also sprint for about 500-1000 yards, accelerate 20-50 times and also change your direction very often.

Carbohydrates

As a soccer player you will never cover a marathon distance of 26 miles or more (unless you have some super Duracell rechargeable batteries :-))

The slow and fast running which you utilize on the field may easily deplete your glycogen stores. To avoid that you need to eat quality carbohydrates.

Research has shown that amateur soccer players only eat 1300 calories of carbohydrate/day, which is far below the recommended level of 2300 to 2900 calories.

Are you one of them? I suggest you correct this immediately if you have dreams of a long career in soccer.

The main energy source for your muscles is the glycogen. Glycogen is produced from carbohydrates you eat (apples, bananas, bread, milk etc.).

It is vital for your performance to have enough glycogen. If not, you will have a fatigue feeling, your concentration will be poor and recovering from a match or practice will take longer time.

If your glycogen fuels are low in the beginning of a game, you will most likely have few carbohydrates left in your muscles at the beginning of second half.

This simply means that your performance will decrease significantly. You will for example run slower, sometimes by as much as 40-50 % compared to your first half of the match.

Your cover distance will also be reduced by 25% or more with low glycogen fuels.

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Do I Need to Eat Fat?

Well, as soccer player you will burn many calories but the fat should still be minimized in your soccer food because it is not an efficient provider of energy.

This doesn't mean that a diet for soccer players should not contain fat, instead, you should try to keep it low, because in long running sports, like soccer, your body will use glycogen fuel which is found mainly in carbohydrates.

What About Protein?

As soccer player you need normally to eat 0.6 to 0.8 grams of protein per pound of your body weight per day (1.4 to 1.7 g/kg/day).

Protein is a vital part of your soccer diet as it will repair your muscles as well as boost your immune system.

You may also use protein as fuel before practicing sessions or a big match but it doesn't give you any boost of energy as carbohydrates do. Some good sources of protein include fish, chicken, milk and yogurt.

The Importance of Water

During your practice or matches, your body will lose a lot of water - especially during the warm weather months.

By drinking water you will be able to keep your body hydrated which will give a boost on the field.

This is one of the most important parts of nutrition for soccer players and you should really put effort in getting it right.

Sports Drinks

Sports drinks usually claim to boost your performance but they are just full of fast carbohydrates that will just increase your blood sugar for a short while.

However, this will not increase your performance to some high level. My advice is to plan your meals and only consume sports drinks when you really don't have time to eat.

When to Eat?

The recommended energy diet for soccer players state that you should eat at least 700 grams of carbohydrate 3-4 hours before the start of your game.

After the end of the match you should attempt to consume enough carbohydrate to replace all the fluid you have lost during the game.

Summary

The importance of proper nutrition cannot be emphasized enough. Simply put, without eating right you will never reach your maximum potential which will in turn decrease your chances of reaching your goals no matter how many different soccer skills you master!

PARENTS: Make Your Child A Winner by Gary Williamson, NTSSA State Coach

I often hear the comment "Oh well it's just a game!"

I wonder?

Playing on a soccer team can be an important experience in your child's life. Participation can help your child physically and personally. However, placing your child on a soccer team does not guarantee a beneficial experience.

As a parent you can help your child have a positive experience in playing soccer.

The type of support you give your child can make soccer fun and rewarding or the cause of anxiety and stress. You can motivate your child and help to develop a healthy, positive self-image.

Here are some suggestions:

• Children play soccer to have fun.

They also play to learn and improve their skills, to enjoy exciting times, to be with friends, and to stay in shape. In order to maintain or improve your child's motivation for playing soccer, find out why they like to participate and support their reasons for playing.

• Success in Soccer is more than just winning.

Young children equate winning with success and losing with failure. If children win a game, they feel good or worthy. If they lose they feel incompetent or unworthy. This attitude toward winning can be discouraging to children, unless they are always winning. One of your most important roles, therefore, is to help your child keep winning in proper perspective. Try to redefine success in terms of the actual performance or how well your child and the team played. Focusing on the performance rather than the outcome helps keep the game in perspective.

Your child may also need guidance in how to deal with success. In winning, two things can happen. Long run success may come to easily that the competitive game loses its challenge. Your child may become complacent and/or arrogant. Conversely the pressure to win may result in a lack of motivation if your child dreads playing in fear of failure. Your child may not be able to perform well and may want to quit. Give encouragement and positive support if this is the case. It is important that you assist your child in understanding their contribution to the team's overall performance.

• Winning is fun

Your child needs to know that striving to win is important. Being successful in soccer also means making improvements and striving to do one's best. You can help develop this winning attitude in your child by encouraging maximum effort during practices and games, rewarding their improvements in mastering skills, and supporting your child to try their best. The will to win is important but the will to prepare to win is of greater value.

• Losing is inevitable if your child plays soccer.

Your child must learn to accept themselves after a loss, this is an important part of participation in the game. Instead of finding excuses it is important for your child to understand the reasons why the team lost. Such reasons may include

superior competition, too many mistakes, poor preparation to compete at this level, or maybe the players have a poor attitude. Whatever the reasons your child needs to regroup. Focus on better preparation physically and mentally for training and the next game so he/she can do better next time. This is a valuable lesson.

• Realistic goals will help your child.

Compare current performances with past performances to determine whether your child has been successful. Your child must experience success at a level that demands his/her best effort. When your child's skill level improves they realize that effort equals success, and will feel a sense of accomplishment.

• Encourage skill improvements, good plays, and good behavior.

Remember to praise effort—not just good performance—this will motivate your child to try hard. The best way to encourage is by praising or with physical response: a pat on the back, thumbs up, or smile. Try to avoid giving money or other material rewards, which may turn play into work and have a negative effect.

• Mistakes are part of learning the game of soccer

Your child will make plenty of them. When your child makes a mistake, they know. They do not need reminding by you. That's when they need your encouragement: "Great try!" "Good run!" "You'll get it next time!" "Super game!". You cannot play the game for your child. Let them make decisions and learn through trial and error. Be patient and assist. If your child displays continual frustration, you can help by giving ideas, or practicing with your child on his/her skills to correct mistakes.

• Avoid criticizing and punishing your child for mistakes

If you do your child may fear failure. In turn this could lead to stress and worry about not performing well and to dread the possible disapproval of parents, coaches, and teammates. Never be negative to someone else's child. It hurts the child and parents. It also creates unwanted tension. Negative criticism hinders rather than improves performance for the individual and the team.

• Fulfill your responsibility

As the number and variety of soccer teams flourish, it becomes increasingly necessary for you to investigate the suitability of the different programs for your child. You have the right and responsibility to ask questions before allowing your child to participate on a soccer team. Seek to find a compatible match between the philosophy of the program and the reason why your child wants to participate in soccer.

WORDS OF CAUTION

• Identifying with your child is perfectly natural

You want your child to be successful. Be careful not to live out your own dreams through your child. Seeing a child's performance in sports as a reflection of one's self-worth and success can result in parents setting unrealistically high goals for their child. This can place pressure to perform beyond their capability, a major cause for stress in soccer for children.

• Be a good role model

Be mindful of your behavior at games. You expect your son or daughter to show good sportsmanship and self-control. As the parent you need to exhibit appropriate behavior yourself, no matter how frustrating it may be to see a poor call or bad play.

• Let the coach....COACH

During games and practices, leave the coaching to the coach. It confuses players when they receive instructions from more than one source. Your child has the ball, their mind is racing, here comes a defender or two, a split second decision is necessary. Then suddenly from the sidelines: "Shoot!", "Pass!", "Cross!", "Kick it!"

"Hustle!". Confused your child hesitates and is stripped of the ball. Then we hear from the sidelines: "Why didn't you shoot?". Children go out on the field to do their best, and they expect their parents to do the same.

Many of the adult leaders are unpaid volunteers. As a parent, you should be realistic in your expectations. However, the adult leaders that your child is associated with should possess some basic characteristics, which are favorable to the development of young people. Adults you would like to see your child imitate.

• Failure

Avoid punishing your child when their team loses. If you do, losses are viewed as personal failures, a blow to their selfworth. Teach your child how to cope with failure. Help your child to understand that no one does <u>everything</u> well. Show your child that failure presents a challenge and provides an opportunity to learn. Allow your child "space" to do things alone. This may require more patience on your part, but it will pay off in the long run. Respect your child's feelings and thoughts.

• Realistic expectations

You must be sensitive to your growing child as they develop physically, mentally and socially. You must realize that your child is not a miniature adult, and they have a right to play in an environment that is developmentally appropriate to their age and ability.

• It's Just A Game!

There is no guarantee that soccer can instill self-discipline or build character. There are plenty of good lessons mixed with soccer instruction and participation. Experiencing "the game" is of greater value than cheap trophies. Success comes from self-discipline, perseverance, paying the price, and playing within the rules. Adversity builds resilience. Teamwork brings rewards. Unique individual talents and achievements are also highly valued. As a parent I hope you are teaching your child more than just the ability to run faster or kick the ball harder or winning the game at all costs.

Playing the game of soccer is fun, but there are times when we must ask, at what cost? Do you want to win so badly that your family turns out to be the losers? If recreational soccer adds to the stress it should relieve because you focus on the score, the game has become more important than the children who play it.

For example, when the youth coach defeated their arch rivals at the local league game, it cost them one red card and five yellows. Moreover, one player was "taken-out" (injured for the season), and three players will miss the next game through injury. All this in addition to the referee's report of unsporting behavior and verbal abuse by players and adults who constantly berated the opposition and officials during the game.

After the game one of the parents congratulated the coach on his victory, and the coach replied, "Another such victory, and we are ruined."

Build a Soccer Champion in Your Own Yard

By Coach V • SoccerU.com

Have you ever watched <u>youth soccer</u> games and noticed a few players who really stood out as talented? Did you watch with amazement as they dribbled through the crowd of defenders and then finished with that <u>perfect shot</u>?

The fact is that all sports, not just soccer, have certain athletes that just seem to amaze us. We as parents want our kids to develop as well, but how do we start? How do we get them to improve? The answer may be right outside your window in your back yard.

The Common Thread

First, let's take a look at **Tiger Woods**. Wait a minute, why a golf player? Because his name is known worldwide and we can all relate to his story. For most of his developing life, who was his coach and trainer? Who was his only putting coach as he progressed into the pro years? The answer to both was his dad, Earl.

Was **Earl Woods** a professional golfer? Not at all, he was a career Army man that had a passion for the sport. He loved golf and he loved his son. He was able to blend time spent together and building a passion for the game, with learning and improving. Much of this time was right in their backyard "messing around", having fun and exposing a child to new skills and thoughts.

There were hours and hours of performing repetitive skills in the form of games and challenges. The same applies for so many great soccer players of our time and we as parents can learn from this example.

Parents Are the Key

Ask any great soccer player who played a major role in their soccer growth and 90 percent of the time the answer will be mom or dad. The <u>SoccerU</u> series was developed specifically with this in mind. Whether it was the level of support or the time spent in the back yard just messing around, parents are often the engine behind developing talent--not the coach.

Each night, I drive by our local public fields. Sure enough, there is a parent and child on the field working on skills or just messing around together. These small little sessions play such a major role in a youth player's development, I can't stress them enough.

Last year I worked with several former Division I college players and the same was true. Their parents were the reason they were able to achieve such success. None of these parents were pro soccer players so how did they help that struggling child? I will explain.

Developing Players

Let's say that a young soccer player, over their development cycle, needs to learn and master 75 <u>core skills</u>. These will include everything from learning the difference between an offensive header and defensive header to receiving a pass under pressure to proper first touch.

Whether the skill is basic like dribbling or advanced like performing a volley kick, each of these individual skills must be shown, taught and practiced repeatedly. However, you'll notice that over the course of a soccer season players may only learn one to four new skills. Often after learning them, they seldom return to practice them in a repetitive session. At that pace they will hit the competitive level without ever really refining all the core skills.

Lack of Time

The first thing you realize when you become a soccer coach is that you are missing one thing: time. Working in the group means that all the players must be trained together. All their levels of skills, behavior and learning must be viewed as a whole, and one on one/individual training is almost never done. One to three hours a week for few weeks in the spring and fall is simply not enough time. You are also supposed to get this "motley crew" to play together as a team and hopefully win at least one game.

You will quickly see how many youth soccer players can hit the middle school and even high school level with very few <u>refined technical skills</u>. As players get older the focus switches to competing. We often see less and less time spent on core technical training which is a huge mistake.

Thousands of Touches

Charlie Cook, the director of Coerver Training USA, emailed me last year. He was reflecting on watching the national team and a player that received a long air pass. The player, without any effort, gently touched the ball once and killed it into his path.

Cook quickly pointed out that this was not a God-given talent. This player was not born with this touch nor did he learn it by just playing the game. He learned it by practicing it over and over--thousands of touches and repetition until this skill was a part of his nature. His point was clearly made. To have a skill become natural or instinctive, it must be repeated over and over until we no longer have to think about it. It becomes a habit that the player performs without thought.

Head to the Backyard

We, as parents, must become teachers. We must be able to identify skills in their raw form and learn how to perform them correctly ourselves. We then must be able to tell and show a child visually how to properly perform the skill. After many short repetitive sessions it will eventually allow them to feel it and let it become part of their nature. Until we do this, it will never become an instinctive habit.

Parents however, sometimes feel lost and don't know where to begin, how to progress or even how to teach these skills. You do not have to become a professional soccer player. You simply must learn to teach what your child will not be taught during the normal development cycle of their soccer career. Hence the 10 hours of skills breakdown on <u>SoccerU</u>.

Frustration Watch

A simple warning for parents is to be aware that younger players often become frustrated easily. Our goal is to keep it fun and make sure the child feels like these are THEIR sessions and not forced on them.

Keep them short and mix them in with what the child wants to do. Maybe they want to be goalkeeper, maybe they want to take penalty shots on mom or dad. Whatever it is, keep the training divided in half--half learning and repetition and half fun and games. Create challenges and even have fun goals to achieve. There is nothing better than a challenge between the child and parent.

Get Involved

In the United States, pickup games and free play soccer have almost become extinct. The extra hours of needed play and skill work now has to come from the parent.

When I meet a talented young soccer player I always ask them, "Who taught you how to play?" Every single player over the past two years has responded the same way, "My Mom / Dad."

Make sure you realize the importance of "off program" training and make sure you understand the importance of the back yard. Cherish this time as not only soccer training, but bonding as well. Always remember that they are kids first, not soccer players, and nothing says "good work" like a stop for ice cream on the way home.

The Happy Soccer Book

A worldwide information booklet for youth soccer coaches and parents.

All Soccer Parents Are Good.

(Some just don't know it.)

Do you know the number one reason children leave the sport of soccer?

They simply decided they weren't having fun anymore.

A big cause of this?

Parents that care too much.

One of the biggest problems we have to deal with as parents is the fear of failure for our children. This is a good thing because it means we love them and care about them. However, because this is an EMOTION it can often get out of hand very quickly.

This information will help you enjoy the game of youth soccer more and allow your children to love the game without undue parental pressure or fear. It will also help deliver some needed "common rules and understandings" that keep everyone happy.

Someone has to say it. There are many things that NEED to be said, but quite often we as coaches and parents don't say them. We want to "keep the peace" and make the sport fun, but it is often uncomfortable to say some things or get these messages to ALL the parents.

This booklet will help all involved in our great sport of youth soccer. Of course, the ones that will benefit most are the CHILDREN. If you have an individual that is attending games and isn't following these "ground rules", simply hand them a copy of this booklet or email it to them. Share it with all the teams you play against as well. Remember, we all start off as BAD spectators; learning to be a good one takes practice.

Are we late again?

Please try and have your child to practices and games at least on time, if not early. Coaches spend a great deal of time prepping for practices and games. While they won't say it, being late kind of shows them you really don't appreciate their work. Showing up late also makes everyone else stop while drills are rearranged. Thanks for being on time.

Do you have the right equipment?

Let's face it, kids are kids. Many simply don't prepare and forget simple things that make a big difference. (Shin guards, water bottles, socks, balls, etc.) Please remember to check the gear and make sure they have it all. We highly

recommend you teach your child to do this and make it their responsibility. A final check before leaving the house is a good idea.

We have to miss a game or a practice.

There is a lot more to life than soccer. If you have an important family matter simply call the coach and let them know in ADVANCE. Spending an hour on lineups and then having to rework them at game time is not fun. Please try and let them know several days in advance.

Winning or Learning?

What makes a good youth coach? One that says, "I don't care about winning, I want my players to develop skills and have fun." The problem is that we as parents often put pressure on coaches and players to win. We look at scores, records and points at much too young of an age.

Let's face the TRUTH; winning is fun and losing stinks. However, both are equally valuable to the maturing child. (and parent) The main focus for youth players should be...

- 1. Have fun and build a love for the game.
- 2. Improve and mature as an individual and grow their soccer skills.
- 3. It's not about winning or losing. The questions should be: Did we learn from it?

What is said after the game?

Please make sure that you ALWAYS keep a positive attitude after the game. (Both in the car and at home.) It is MUCH too easy to start talking about a bad ref or something a player or coach, "should have done". It's a GAME silly. Life goes on so enjoy it. Ignore the negative and talk about the positive. If a child starts talking negative, ask them to make 2 positive comments about the game. ("It is over" is not a positive comment.) Always point out positive performance issues and not the result of a match.

"That stupid Ref!"

Did you know that most youth referees are learning just like your child? Did you know they often have to do 3 times the work as a professional referee? Most pro games have a ref and 2 sideline officials. Most youth games only have one ref and they have to do it all. Never, and we mean never, criticize a ref for making mistakes or bad calls.

Guess what? There is a good chance that the ref's parents or of even wife and children are sitting next to you. Speak as though the ref's 8 year old child is sitting next to you. Our sport is losing more and more referees every year because of parental comments, criticism and shouting. If you can't stop complaining about the ref's, we suggest that you become one. You will never shout out a negative comment again if you do.

Sideline coaching?

One of the key elements of a youth player developing is their ability to make decisions on the field. This means making good choices and bad ones too. Players should NEVER listen to any one during the match except 3 people.

- 1. Their coach.
- 2. The referee.
- 3. Their teammates.

Parental coaching or "side line coaching" should be ignored by players on the field. Also realize that there are other parents sitting quietly on the sides trying to enjoy the game. Sitting next to the "loud parent" is a horrible experience and takes away from the beauty of our game.

Parents should...

Offer praise and applause for good plays and good behavior for their team.

Offer praise and applause for good plays and good behavior for the OTHER team.

They are all kids and trying their best. Let them know you appreciate it.

Thank the other team.

We often encourage our children to show good sportsmanship and at the end of the match shake hands with the other team. Not a bad idea to pass on to the ADULTS as well. Make sure you thank the other parents and coaches. As players leave the field, congratulate the other team's players too.

If any negative comments are made from the opponent's parents or coaches, simply BITE YOUR TONGUE and offer a smile. Remember, it's only a game and there are too many other issues in life to deal with. If this happens we recommend you email a copy of this booklet to the other teams coach or program.

Did you know that a hand ball is legal?

Many parents shout out infractions they think the ref is missing. The problem? Many parents do not know the rules of the game. As an example...

Many "hand balls" in youth soccer are not intentional and therefore not called. Children simply turn away from shots and the shot strikes their arm or hand. This is not a handball. There needs to be some intent to stop or deflect the ball. Simply protecting your "face" is not intent to change the play. Youth refs understand this and allow many such calls to go. "Let them play", should be the rule. Spend some time learning the rules and understand that in youth soccer there is always a little flexibility.

Why did he take Tommy out? Why is Susie playing forward, she's a defender?

Good youth coaches know that all children should have equal playing time. They should also have the experience of playing different positions. This often may cause us to lose a game or two. Guess what? That is youth soccer so get used to it. This is part of the growing and learning experience and is vital in our sport.

Can I stand on the sideline?

The sideline or touchline is the long side of the field border. Many youth fields now have a separate "spectator line" which is about 6 feet away from the sideline. This is for safety. If your fields do not have a "spectator line" please stay 6 feet away from the sideline at all times. Please make sure objects such as chairs and coolers are also this distance away as they can cause serious injury.

(Note: Parents are not allowed on the coaching side of the field.)

I have a problem. Should I talk to the coach?

If there is ever a problem with a child, parent or anyone around the fields, please feel free to talk to the coach. That is the right place to start. If you have a problem with the coach, do not address it with other parents or players. Talk to the coach about in private later that week.

Little Timmy got hurt!

Nothing "yanks at the heart" like a child getting hurt during a game. However, there are some rules to follow.

- 1. Never run onto the field if your child or another is hurt. The ref will address the situation and if needed the next action is to call out the coach to field. The injury will be reviewed by the coach and if additional care is needed he will make sure it is handled.
- 2. Any injury during a game should be reported to the coach. He should file an injury report to the league or administration.
- 3. If your child has any medical conditions please make sure you let everyone know.
- 4. If your child has an injury before a game or practice, please make the coach aware of it.

He's a coach, not a babysitter.

It is common for parents to drop off kids at practice and then pick them up afterwards. Please make sure you are on time to pick them up. While the coaches care about ALL the kids, constantly staying late waiting on THAT parent gets old. Don't be THAT parent.

On the similar issue, a coach should never leave a child alone during or after practice. Children should not be allowed to leave practice unless the parent is there to pick them up. If an emergency comes up, please let the coach know.

The behavior issues?

Coaches have a tough role. Not only do they have to deal with their players, they have to deal with parents, league administrators, refs and other coaches. (Not to mention their kids, spouse, job, etc.) From time to time coaches need to deal with behavior issues. This is often done between player and coach directly, but don't be offended or shocked if the coach asks you to get involved in dealing with your child. It's simply a part of growing up and makes the coach's job a little easier.

Soccer homework?

Most youth soccer coaches agree. We wish we had more practice time. We encourage all parents to spend time with their child at home working on basic skills such as dribbling, passing, juggling, and just getting the feel of the ball on their feet. This "soccer homework" not only helps the player improve, but also creates a great bonding growth between parent and child. ALWAYS keep these sessions fun and never demand it or use it as punishment.

One of the best "home games" for the younger player?

Soccer Maze – Soccer Mine Field

It only takes an area of about 10 feet x 10 feet.

Set up cones or anything similar. (Plastic or paper cups work great.)

Spread them out randomly so they are approximately 2 - 3 ft. apart.

One person at a time starts.

Touch the ball with every step while moving forward, backward and sideways.

Use both feet and every side of the foot. (Laces, inside, outside and sole.)

See how many touches they can make without letting the ball touch a cup or cone.

Next it is Mom's or Dad's turn.

This game is great fun, works on essential ball touches and creates a great ball handler.

(Loser has to take out the trash or do dishes.)

Kids will play this game for hours and not even realize how much they are improving their touch and dribbling skills.

We hope you learn to love the game as much as we do. If you have ANY questions, always ask.

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SECTION: SUN CITIES/SURPRISE COMMUNITY; KIDS AND SPORTS; Pg. 6 HEADLINE: 10 WAYS TO MAKE KIDS QUIT BYLINE: TOM KUYPER, Special for The Republic Copyright 2005 The Arizona Republic All Rights Reserved The Arizona Republic (Phoenix) September 30, 2005 Friday Final Edition

Research shows that approximately 70 percent of all kids who participate in youth sports will drop out by the age of 13. Here are my top 10 ways that parents and coaches contribute to this statistic:

- 1. Persuade your child to play only one sport. Specialization in youth sports has become very popular. Year-round club sports with year-round commitment and financial obligations have caught the eyes of many parents. The pressure to be good, and the time spent with practice and games, creates burnout. Burnout ultimately leads to quitting.
- 2. Yell a lot. Get on the referees for every bad call. Get upset with your child's coach and complain a lot about playing time. Embarrassing your kids in public will help them to become one of the 70 percent.
- 3. Become all-consumed. Spend hours on the phone plotting out your child's next few years. Find new teams for them to play on if things don't go just your way. Plan out their weekends for them, including extra practice time.
- 4. Become the self-appointed, personal statistician. Success to some parents means numbers on a stat sheet. Performance-based approval is too much pressure for kids. It is so important that our kids are affirmed by their efforts and character. False expectations and previous statistics can become guidelines that somehow say failure if comparable results are not produced.
- 5. Place family time as a second priority. No more hanging out in the back yard playing silly nonsense games. You have drills to work on. And, remember your percentages were down last game, so we have some work to do. Playing Marco Polo in the pool can wait.
- 6. Talk about the importance of a college scholarship on a daily basis. Kids are perceptive and pick up on your motives. If you want to build up pressure for a long time, this one will do it.
- 7. Make sure it's all about winning. If you lose sight of the real important things to be learned, then life skills get overshadowed by misplaced values. Youth sports are a ready-made platform for learning commitment, teamwork, hard work, sportsmanship, and how to win and lose. These are the things that the kids take with them for the rest of their lives. Not many adults can even remember what place their third-grade baseball team finished in. It's the heart issues and role modeling that stick around forever.
- 8. Take all the fun out of it. Studies show that kids play sports to have fun. One of the most simple but profound things a child said to me during an interview was that she played sports because it was supposed to be fun, and if it wasn't fun, then she asks herself why she would even play.
- 9. Use punishment to try to correct a mistake. I see too many coaches who use push-ups as a corrective tool for missing free throws. Practicing more free throws is the answer. Instead of running laps for striking out, how about spending that time with more batting practice?
- 10. Make practice long and boring. Being creative is a valuable ingredient. Do drills in a way that the kids are all moving and having a good time. Make sure there are always scrimmages and game time.

Improving Your Skills as Spectator by Stacy DeBroff

At almost any game, you are bound to hear some parents yelling loudly from the sidelines, their voices carrying over the others. You'll see parents screaming at the ref, shouting out instructions to their children (such as "run faster" or "down the left side"), hollering, gesturing, and jumping out of their seats. You'll also, no doubt, experience parents berating their children from the sidelines ("Focus, Sam!") or being ecstatic depending on the play of the moment, and in general, modeling inappropriate and immature behavior. Also, in the anonymity of a crowd, you'll often hear parents screaming things that they might otherwise never say. Many team coaches have resorted to insisting that parents sit sequestered on the opposite side of the playing field from the kids.

Given the tremendous amount of anxiety and ambition parents bring to the table when it comes to their child's activities, it's not surprising that parents are losing their cool on the sidelines at youth sporting events. In many areas of America, this behavior has gotten out of hand. Take, for instance, an argument between two fathers after a youth hockey practice in Massachusetts that cost one of them his life. In Florida, a furious parent shot a referee at a child's soccer match. In California, a baseball coach for 8-year-olds went into the stands wielding an aluminum bat to silence a hostile crowd during a game. Theoretically, it all sounds perfectly easy to stay calm and positive, until one kid on the opposing team elbows your 6-year-old in the ribs for the third time during a soccer game. It's hard not to lose yourself in the tension of your child's competition.

The word fan is short for fanatic, and at times, you will inevitably find yourself struggling to keep from acting angry, frustrated, or emotionally out of control at your child's games or meets.

For some coaches and leagues, their toughest job has become training parents to act appropriately. Many youth leagues have adopted "zero-tolerance" policies in which a referee can stop a game at any time to demand that a verbally abusive parent leave the premises. Over 14 states have passed laws imposing stiffer penalties for assaulting an amateur sports official. In addition to issuing codes of conduct for parents, many leagues have volunteer parents serving as "culture keepers" to keep the peace at competitive games.

Just like an athlete who needs improvement, you can refine your performance on the sidelines. Let the coach be the only one giving instructions to the team or individual players. Leave it up to your coach to talk with your child on the sidelines when she takes a break in the action. When your child hears you calling out instructions to her on the field, she may easily think you are yelling at instead of trying to help her. Games typically get competitive enough without having numerous adults screaming out conflicting instructions.

Figure out what really gets to you as a spectator at your child's games, whether it's seeing your child get pushed, a bad or missed call by the referee, your child not playing well, your child constantly sitting out, or feeling impatient with your child's lack of skill development.

Anticipate these inevitably frustrating moments so that you can modulate your response. Empathize with the referee, who's most likely trying his best, and acknowledge that your child's team may be simply outmatched in a particular game, your child may just be having a bad day, or the opposing players have resorted to rough play because they're losing.

Your child learns self-control by watching you display it on the sidelines. Actions speak louder than words. Your child will be constantly observing and learning how to react during competitions from you. If you're a poor sport, your child will surely follow suit. Being calm and positive will set the standards for your child, who will often rely more on how you act than how you tell her to behave. If you tell your child to display selfcontrol and be respectful and gracious to opponents, but then she sees you losing your cool or yelling at a game, your efforts will be completely undermined.

Sideline Do's and Don'ts DO's

- Be your child's biggest fan by attending as many games as you can, offering support and encouragement.
- Make your job on the sidelines that of your child's unconditional positive supporter, especially when he's having a tough game. Let the coach be the one to offer up any criticism, skill pointers, or game strategy.
- Becoming angry or letting your disappointment show when your child doesn't perform well will leave her questioning whether this means you love her less. Instead, be supportive and help your child keep the competition in perspective.
- Cheer and call out encouragement instead of directions. Cheer enthusiastically for great skills, not just for scoring.
- Always cheer positively. Root for all the kids on the team, not just your own, and not against their opponents. "Sam, get the ball!" from the sidelines becomes, "Go Vipers" or "Go defense."
- Limit yourself to a few generic words of praise, such as "Great goal" "Nice pass" or "Go Panthers!" Doing so will not only take pressure off your child, but it will also inspire other parents to tone it down as well.
- Smile, show confidence and faith in your child. Your child will watch you closely during a performance and will feel dejected by your cries of frustration, or shouts to try harder.
- Thank the coaches, referees, or umpire at the end of the competition for their hard work.

DON'T

- Don't yell at your child from the sidelines, as it only serves to confuse and potentially embarrass her. Doing so destroys your child's concentration. Moreover, you put her in a no-win situation if you end up yelling out advice that contradicts that of her coach.
- Do not lose your temper no matter how bad a call from a referee is or what your child's opponent or their parents do or say. Walk off the stress or leave. Getting angry accomplishes nothing. Just as you don't want your child to embarrass you, don't embarrass her.
- If you get more worked up and excited than your child, something's wrong. Take a break from attending a game to regroup and gain perspective.
- Watch nonverbal disapproving signals you give your child, particularly looks of disappointment or disgust. In addition, realize that being silent or not giving your child any feedback after a game will likely be taken as implicit criticism.
- Put away your video camera, as it takes competitive performance pressure off your child and can make him feel self-conscious in the midst of a game.
- Don't shower your child with extravagant praise. Your child will quickly pick up on it, when you're cheering madly and all she did was pass the ball once to a teammate.

• Don't offer your own negative critique about your child's performance after a game. Your child most likely already feels badly about any mistakes she made.

Copyright 2005, MomCentral, Inc., all rights reserved. A dynamic national speaker, consultant, corporate spokesperson, and writer, Stacy DeBroff is President and founder of Mom Central, Inc., a company devoted to providing pragmatic tips and advice to strengthen busy families and enhance the home environment. Stacy has also written several best-selling books on household and family organization including *The Mom Book: 4,278 Tips for Moms* and *Sign Me Up! The Parent's Complete Guide to Sports, Activities, and Extracurriculars.* Stacy is a renowned parenting guru and has shared her advice on New England Cable News as their in-house expert, producing her own live weekly segment for the morning news, and has also appeared on network television including NBC's *Today Show* and the CBS *Early Show.* Stacy holds a B.A. in Psychology and Comparative Literature from Brown University, and a J.D. from Georgetown University.

Let them dribble By Mike Woitalla

It's one of the most common screams heard on the youth soccer fields of America: "Pass it! Pass it! Pass it!"

Unfortunately, parents and coaches often aim their shouts at young players who are at a stage of their development when they should be encouraged to dribble.

Becoming a confident dribbler is the first step to developing a comfort on the ball necessary to be a good passer and shooter. Discouraging young players from dribbling is like telling toddlers to shut up when they're learning to speak. "This whole routine of 'pass, pass, pass' is unrealistic for the young age groups and it's been pounded into so many of our kids for so long I would argue a little that it helps explain why we lack outstanding dribblers on our national teams," says Sam Snow, U.S. Youth Soccer's Director of Coaching Education.

Former U.S. women's national team coach Tony DiCicco addresses the issue in his instructional book, "Catch Them Being Good":

"At a youth soccer game you'll probably hear parents and coaches on the sidelines yelling, 'Pass the ball! Pass the ball!' ... "When we continually tell our young players to pass the ball, we're not allowing them to develop their full potential, especially those who have the ability to take their opponents on and beat them one-on-one. As a result, we run the risk of diminishing a player's artistry and potential."

Mia Hamm credits pickup games she played with her older brother and other children as a key to her success, because, "I was able to dribble all I wanted."

Youth coaches often emphasize teamwork before children can comprehend the concept. Those who sit back and let the children explore the sport at a natural pace will usually find that the players begin to ask each other for the ball. And there are ways to create a practice environment in which all the players get a share of the ball without forcing them to pass.

Small-sided games ensure that all players are close to the action. Coaches can play along in practice and aim their passes at players who haven't gotten enough touches. You can even throw an extra ball into the scrimmage.

That passing is a crucial part of the game at the older age levels doesn't mean it should be demanded of young children.

"You can learn the tactical side of the game later," says Landon Donovan. "But if you don't learn at an early age to be good on the ball, then it's just useless."

The U.S. Soccer Federation's Player Development Guidelines point out that "At the younger ages (6 to about 10), soccer is not a team sport. On the contrary, it is a time for players to develop their individual relationship with the ball. "Do not demand that the more confident players share the ball. Encourage them to be creative and go to goal. Do the same for the rest of your players."

A FATHER'S COVENANT

(To his current and future sons and daughters)

Jack (8), Dublin (6), Finn (4) and Savannah (1)Keating, I'm writing this piece while you are all young. I have been coaching for a long time now and have seen the good, the bad and the ugly in youth sports. As you may know I played soccer for a long time; my first toy that I can remember was a yellow and black plastic soccer ball and for my third birthday I got a soccer jersey from a professional club. I played for my school starting at age 6. I started club soccer at age 8. I played both school and club soccer all the way through to college and in my last few years of high school I played in men's leagues and eventually in the South African professional league (NPSL). I had to leave home to escape conscription (forced to fight) in the apartheid army and came to America and played college soccer. Then I started coaching and the real learning began. I've learned a lot about adults and children through coaching, and even more about how adults treat their children when it comes to soccer. Some of it is not so great and some of it is exactly how it should be done. I haven't encouraged you to play soccer yet and probably won't but there is a fair chance that you will ask to play sometime starting soon and I'll let you (but you can't get cleats until you've played at least a year or more). At such time I will become a 'soccer dad'. And I'll have to follow the same kind of rules that I ask other soccer parents to follow. Every day I ask parents not to be hypersensitive. This means not getting upset over things like changes (like when you get a new coach or when a training session gets rescheduled) or wins and losses (especially at State Cup) or being on a team other than the A team (in a big club like mine, can you imagine how many unhappy parents there are if only the A team parents are happy?!) I don't want to be like that. I want to make sure you hold me accountable (responsible) for being a good soccer dad so I'm going to write down some promises and make them public so that you (and your mama) can let me know if I'm doing okay as a soccer dad and remind me about my promises if I break one. So here goes (and remember, I'm going to do my best, okay?):

1. Before we ever get involved with 'organized' soccer I promise to play lots of soccer with you in the back yard

2. I promise that we will play more pickup games in the backyard (like I used to with my two brothers) than you'll ever play with an 'actual' team

3. I promise to spend time watching your coach inaction before I let you play for him/her. I'll be watching to see if he kicks the ice bucket when he loses or smiles regardless of the score, yells at his players through the game or offers quiet but clear help from the sidelines, challenges you with real soccer situations in practice or sticks you in lines and runs drills for hours, makes you do cold stretches and run laps at the beginning of practice or creates excitement and energy with his first activity at practice, makes you sit and listen to long speeches after games or insists that you go and have pizza; gives you a hard time for arriving late at practice (even though it's my fault) or seems excited to see you when you arrive, arranges practices and scrimmages on Sundays or tries to keep that day free

4. I promise that we will never skip a family holiday for a soccer game, come back early from our summer vacation so that you can attend tryouts, or miss the opportunity to see relatives over Thanksgiving, Christmas and other public holidays because of a tournament.

5. I promise that if it is more fun playing on the "F" team than on the "A" team that you will play on the F team and trust me when I tell you that I'll know which team suits you best.

6. I promise that I will never lose sleep or get anxious over soccer, call other parents to discuss the coach, arrange meetings with coach to discuss your 'development' (this isn't your spiritual, emotional or academic education we're talking about after all, it's a game), or spend time writing page-long emails to coach about you or 'the team'.

7. I promise not to be that unhappy parent who makes the other parents on the sideline equally unhappy. You'll find me most of the time watching your games from my chair in a quiet corner of the field wearing my i-pod, smiling at your errors and your skill. I've been where you are at, a thousand times.

8. I promise to skip MANY of your games, and in doing so show you that my life does not revolve around your (in)ability to kick a little round object filled with air around a grass field. In fact, I'll spend many of your practices and games hanging out with your mama, who arrived on the scene before you guys, or I'll use the time to exercise myself

9. I promise to watch many of your games, especially the ones that you ask me to be at

10. I promise I'll never make a choice between paying for family needs and soccer. The former will always get paid first (sorry-you can wear your brothers' old cleats for the rest of the season)

11. I promise that I will **ground you** from soccer for a month if I ever hear you say "practice was boring", "this player on my team stinks", "I'm better than this player", or "I deserve to be on that team". This is the greatest game ever invented boys! If you need to be on an A team, need to have an overpaid coach train you, need to receive constant cheer leading to feel motivated and continue with the sport, or just have to be with certain friends to enjoy this beautiful game, you don't get it [and if I ever act like one of those sappy dads who spoil their children by fighting their battles for them, the kind that you hear me complain to mama about every now and then, have mama hurt me. She knows how.]

12. I promise that if you turn out to be a pretty good player, and start getting recruiting calls from other coaches and parents, that I will treat the calls the way you've heard me treat telemarketers: "Thank you. I'm not interested. Please put me on your 'do not call' list. Have a nice day." I will not turn tryouts into the NBA draft, courting the superficial (fake) advances of other club coaches, shopping you around different clubs, reinforcing the illusion that you are a superstar. More important to me is your modesty and the appreciation of a good thing.

13. I promise that if I arrive at a soccer meeting and realize that your coach hasn't been invited and that parents are there to talk about him behind his back that I will voice my disapproval at this tactic and leave immediately.14. [Scratch promise #13. I'm not going to soccer meetings. I've got better things to do with my time. Coach can email me the meeting minutes]

15. I promise you that you will play on a team where you will play most of the game. Again, that may be the F team boys. Soccer is meant to be played, not watched from the bench

16. I promise you that if you treat this game well, and use the gifts you are given with humility that the game will repay you for a lifetime. And I will try my best to leave it in your hands. I've already had my time.

Pappa-Summer 2010 John Keating



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from the side of the ball carrier. However, it is illega against a player without the ball or from behind. Charge: To run into an opponent. This is legal if done

is awarded a direct free kick. the ball with his hand or arm. The opposing team keeper in the penalty area) deliberately touches land ball: A foul where a player (other than the

is awarded. obstructed with either hands or arms, a direct kick Holding: When an opponent's movement is

the game and is on the field with the players. The not to blow the whistle referee makes the final determination whether or ball is out of bounds, when a player is potentially to signal to the referee and to the players when the to the referee only. ARs as they are called, use a flag opposite sidelines. Their job is to provide assistance referees each patrol one half of the field, from referee keeps the official time. The assistant players and enforces the rules. The referee officiates Officials: (Referees) The official protects the offside, or they have seen a foul committed. The

an opposing player, a direct kick is awarded. ripping: If a player uses any part of his body to trip

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Comer Arc

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be the first to cross the line of defense. defender) must be nearer to the goal line than the defenders (usually the goalkeeper and one other games) Occurs when a player positions himself Offside: (Does not apply in U6-U10 small-sided attacker. The person advancing with the ball must and the second-to-last opponent. No fewer than two nearer to the opponent's goal line than both the ball

advantage by being in that position. When a player in the opinion of the referee, involved in active play, to the defense. who is in an offside position receives the ball from interfering with play or any opponent or gaining an offside is called and an indirect free kick is awarded a teammate or is involved directly in the play, an the moment the ball is played by a teammate, he is, A player in an offside position is only penalized if, at

not replace this player and will play shorthanded for the remainder of the game. Immediate ejection from the game. The team may Red card: (Serious misconduct, violent play offensive language or intentionally denying a goal).

cards in one game, it is an automatic behavior. If a player is shown two yellow referee for dangerous or unsportsmanlike ejection from the game. Yellow card: (Caution) Shown to a player by the

scored directly from a corner kick. where the ball went out of bounds. A goal can be endline. The kick is taken from the comer nearest defense knocks the ball out of bounds over their own Corner kick: Awarded to the attacking team if the

goal kick. unlikely, but a goal can be scored directly from a touched by another player. Extremely rare and area, and must clear the penalty area before being the end line. The kick is taken from within the goal attacking team knocks the ball out of bounds over Goal kick: Awarded to the defense when the

determined by the severity of the infraction. away from the ball (modified for small-sided games) defending team must be a minimum of 10 yards from the spot in which the infraction took place. The nfraction of the rules. The kick is generally taken Free klick: Awarded by the referee due to an here are two kinds of free kicks (direct and indirect)

striking, tripping, pushing and hand balls. in which a goal can be scored directly by the kicker Some touls resulting in a direct kick are holding committed against another player. This is a free kick Direct kick: Awarded when a serious foul is

be scored unless the ball is touched by a second an indirect kick are offside and dangerous play player. Some minor fouls or infractions resulting in been committed. On an indirect kick, a goal cannol rules has taken place or a less serious foul has Indirect kick: Awarded when an infraction of the

Penalty kick: A direct kick is awarded to the attacking team when a major foul is committed by a defender inside his own penalty area. The kick is taken from the penalty spot. Only the kicker the ball is kicked The goalkeeper must be on the goal line until and the keeper are allowed in the penalty area

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GAMES VISIT USYOUTHSOCCER. ORG OR CALL YOUR FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SMALL-SIDED STATE ASSOCIATION

positive encouragement and support. Set a good example on the sidelines by offering Sportsmanship is important for kids to learn.

bringing suncreen, rain jackets, blankets, etc Weather can be unpredictable. Be prepared by

before and after their practices and games to bring plenty of water for kids to drink both and sports drinks are also good for replenishin; Healthy snacks like orange wedges, grapes Proper hydration is key to a good game. Be sure rients after strenuous activity.

practice or game time. Get to the soccer field early. Players need quate time to warm up and stretch before



gard a foul by the defensive team if a stoppage the violation. This allows the team on offense to in play would benefit the team that committe maintan its playing advantage. dvantage: A decision by the referee to disre-

dribbling or shooting beat: To get the ball around an opponent by

the goalkeeper oward the goal for a one-on-one showdown with Freakaway: When an attacker with the bal akes it past the last defender and is on his way

the opposing team. of its defensive zone, ending an offensive threat by suring: Happens when a team kicks the ball ou

of the goal. Cross: A kick made near the sideline toward the middle of the field to get the ball closer to the front

ball must be kicked from inside this arc, the four comers of the field. On a comer kick, the wher arcs: A quarter-circle located at each of

Chip: A short, lofted pass or shot.

the feet while controlling it. fibble: The basic skill of advancing the ball with

t has touched the ground. etween two players and may only be played once prop ball: A restart when the ball is dropped

the goal line. Used to designate where goal kicks Boal area: A rectangular area extending from ire taken.

Hat bloc Three or more goals scored in a game by a single player.

off the ground. talf-volley: A kick of the ball just as it is rebounding

eader. When a player controls or strikes a bal

part of the body (no hands or arms). Used for practice and developing coordination. ugging: Keeping the ball in the air with any

by dribbling or passing him from receiving the ball or advancing the ball Marking: Closely defending a player to prevent

attacking team. the defending team resulting in a direct kick nside this area, results in a penalty kick for the nands within their penalty area. Any foul against ided games). Goalkeepers only can use their ards from the goal line (modified for small enalty area: Rectangular area extending 18

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is done using the chest, thigh or foot. down and control a moving ball. Most often this eceiving: When a player uses his body to slow

on the ground feet first into the ball. take the ball away from a dribbler by sliding ilde tackle: An attempt by a defender to

an opponent's feet. ackle: A move to take the ball away from

must be thrown from behind the player's head. Both feet must be on the ground and behind use their hands. Used to bring the ball back in the sideline, idelines. Two hands must be used and the ball play after it has crossed out of bounds on the hrow-In: The only time a field player may

air, before it touches the ground. Can be for a Volley: A kick made while the ball is in the searance or to shoot on goal.

the goal against a free kick. Vall: Players stand as a line or wall to protect

in the air, using their head

Goals are at each end of the field. Each team defends THE OBJECT OF THE GAM

and thighs to control and advance the ball. The goalkeeper opponent's goal. Players will often use their head, chest their goal, while trying to score in their opponent's. Players primarily use their feet to advance the ball towards their Is the only player allowed to use their hands, but only inside their penalty area. A "goal" is scored when the entire ball crosses the goal line, inside the goal. A goal is worth one point, Games may end in tie scores. Some competitions may to determine a winner, have over time periods, or use penalty kicks

H they feel time was lost due to substitutions, injury or players/ bounds, throw-ins or free kicks. References may add extra time Keeps the official time and does not stop the clock for out-ofteams wasting time. Teems switch sides of the field after halftime. The referee for older ones. A halftime break can be 5 to 15 minutes. minutes for younger alse groups, and up to 45 minutes Cames should be divided into halves, ranging from 25 For Under-6 and Under-8 age groups, games should be dhided into quarters ranging from 8 to 12 minutes

fluid as any player may score a goal and all players may drop back to defend. defenders and a goalkeeper. Positions are very three forwards, three midfielders, four backs, required formations, but most teams will use each team during the game (younger age There are typically 11 players on the field for groups have fewer players). There are no

surrounding the goal. that come toward it. Only the keeper can put his responsible for defending the goal and any shots hands or arms on the ball, in the penalty area Goalkeeper: The goalkeeper (or keeper) is

role is to advance the ball and score goals. or strikers) are the team's primary offense. Their Forwards: The forwards (also called attackers

it to the forwards to score goals. is to assist both of these groups. Generally, they'll forwards and in front of the defense and their job receive the ball from the defenders and advance Midfielders: Midfielders play behind the

may use depending on the type of formation a team on when their team possesses the ball. Specialized everyone plays offense and defense, depending detensive positions are sweepers and stoppers Defenders: (Also called fullbacks) in soccer

may be used less frequently. Typically in youth groups and more competitive levels, substitutes players receive equal playing time. In older age In recreational play it is recommended that all the game, but is eligible to come off the bench throw-ins and goal kicks. and when their team has posession of the ball or the referee's permission during a stoppage of play games, substitutes may only enter the field with Substitutes: Any player who does not star

KICKOFF TAKES PLACE AT THE CENTER OF THE FIELD AND IS USED TO START PLAY AT THE BEBINNING OF A GAME, AFTER HALFIME, OR AFTER A GOAL IS SCORED. A GOAL CAN BE SCORED DIRECTLY FROM A KICK OFF





A Fact Sheet for PARENTS

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump or blow to the head. Even a "ding," "getting your bell rung," or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

You can't see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?

Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians

If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs and symptoms of a concussion:

- · Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- · Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- · Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes

Symptoms Reported by Athlete

· Headache or "pressure" in head

Nausea or vomiting

- Balance problems or dizziness
- · Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- · Sensitivity to noise
- · Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- · Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Just "not feeling right" or "feeling down"

HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD PREVENT A CONCUSSION OR OTHER SERIOUS BRAIN INJURY?

- Ensure that they follow their coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity. Protective equipment should fit properly and be well maintained.
- Wearing a helmet is a must to reduce the risk of a serious brain injury or skull fracture.
- However, helmets are not designed to prevent concussions. There is no "concussion-proof" helmet. So, even with a helmet, it is important for kids and teens to avoid hits to the head.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK Your child has a concussion?

 SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION RIGHT AWAY. A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to regular activities, including sports.

2. KEEP YOUR CHILD OUT OF PLAY.

Concussions take time to heal. Don't let your child return to play the day of the injury and until a health care professional says it's OK. Children who return to play too soon—while the brain is still healing—risk a greater chance of having a repeat concussion. Repeat or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.

3. TELL YOUR CHILD'S COACH ABOUT ANY PREVIOUS CONCUSSION. Coaches should know if your child had a previous concussion. Your child's coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach.

It's better to miss one game than the whole season.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/Concussion.