



COACHING 12U



OUR 12U (“UNDER 12”) DIVISION IS FOR CHILDREN BORN IN 2014 AND 2015. MOST PLAYERS WILL BE 11 OR 12 YEARS OLD, A MIX OF MOSTLY 5TH AND 6TH GRADERS, WITH A FEW 4TH GRADERS WHO TURNED 10 BACK IN THE FALL. THERE ARE SEPARATE BOYS AND GIRLS 12U DIVISIONS. MOST PLAYERS ARE RETURNING EXPERIENCED PLAYERS, BUT NOT ALL.

KIDS THIS AGE:

- ⚽ Friendships & self-esteem important; respond well to **positive instruction and encouragement**
- ⚽ More likely to embrace **competition** with peers
- ⚽ Strength, stamina, coordination all increasing
- ⚽ More readily able to grasp **strategy and tactics**

MANAGING A PRACTICE:

- ⚽ You will need to plan **two weeknight practices**
- ⚽ Practices run **one hour** between 5pm-8pm
- ⚽ Choose the location from among many fields available; you may share the field w/ another team
- ⚽ Parents are to ensure their child has their own **size 4 ball**, a water bottle, shinguards and shoes or cleats (also: no jewelry)
- ⚽ **Make a plan** – warmup, pair up for basic technical activities (passing, throw-ins, etc.), build up to small sided matches (2v2, 3v3), full-team **scrimmage**
- ⚽ Bring something new each week – get ideas for age-appropriate activities on our website [here](#)
- ⚽ Repeat the kids’ favorite activities and remind them throughout the season how they are getting better
- ⚽ Say, Show, Do, Review + **No laps, lines or lectures!**
- ⚽ Maximize the time they have their **feet on the ball**
- ⚽ **Development points:** passing strength & accuracy, advancing the ball, penetration, **charging & shielding**, using the width of the field, crossing & finishing, corner kicks, goal kicks, free kicks, defensive help, offsides
- ⚽ Take frequent water breaks
- ⚽ Most importantly, **have fun!** It’s the #1 reason kids play AYSO soccer
- ⚽ Anytime you take the field with the kids, be sure to have a physical copy of each player’s **medical waiver**
- ⚽ Your call on **inclement weather**, but leave the field immediately if you hear thunder or see lightning; only return 30+ mins after last thunderclap
- ⚽ For every practice and game, Coach is the last one to leave the field

YOUR REQUIRED TRAINING:

- ⚽ No soccer experience necessary
- ⚽ Most can be done **online** from your couch 😊
- ⚽ Must complete: Safe Haven, Concussion Awareness and Sudden Cardiac Arrest – all on ‘AYSO’; Safesport requires a separate login
- ⚽ Must also complete **in-person 12U coaches training** administered by a certified trainer
- ⚽ Background check and training paid for by AYSO
- ⚽ Full details for registration, certification and training can be found on our website [here](#)

GAME TIME:

- ⚽ Games are scheduled for **1 hour 15 mins on Saturday**
- ⚽ We play **9v9** (8 position players + 1 keeper)
- ⚽ **30 minute halves** + quarter breaks determined by refs
- ⚽ Make a **lineup** before the game: **Everyone Plays** at least two quarters; try not to specialize too much (yet)
- ⚽ Connect with the opposing coaches before the start of the game
- ⚽ A **referee** will be provided by AYSO
- ⚽ Help create an environment where the referee is respected & **no one** should be challenging calls
- ⚽ **“Live” substitution** is allowed on stoppage of play
- ⚽ Endline out of bounds = **goal kick** or **corner kick**;
Sideline out of bounds = **throw-in** (get it right or turnover)
- ⚽ **Free kicks can be direct or indirect** depending on the foul; kick is taken from the spot of the foul
- ⚽ **Keeper** can punt, roll or toss the ball to a teammate
- ⚽ All players: **no headers** and no slide tackles
- ⚽ **Offside** is called only if a player has an advantage (behind the last defender) when ball is played to them
- ⚽ Lopsided game? Turn focus to passing, but connect with the other coach and **keep things positive!**
- ⚽ Coaches coach, Parents cheer! (See [Parent Pledge](#))
- ⚽ **Good Sportsmanship:** shake hands, thank the ref