

**Welcome to Fall Soccer**

**General Information:**

- Game start times will be staggered as much as possible to minimize parking and traffic problems.
- Players may play on ONE TEAM ONLY in ONE AGE BRACKET ONLY. No exceptions and result in forfeit.
- Players must play at least half of each game. No players should monopolize play time.
- Games will be played every Saturday beginning at 9am and running until all teams have played. Almost every team will have one (possibly two) game(s) on a weekday evening.
- The Sports Office will be in direct contact with you throughout the season via email and Facebook.
- **Photographers** are coming September 30th for Micro and U6 and October 7th for U8 and above.
- Please take special note that there is a **ZERO tolerance policy** at the Y. If at any point Y representative sees anyone conducting themselves in an overly aggressive manner, if they aggressively approach a Y employee, or if they are verbally abusive, they will be asked to leave the property immediately.
- No teams may practice before September 11th.
- First Aid kits are located in the Sports Office, by Field 1, Field 10, Field 14.
- Coaches shirts: we will order two Coaches shirts per team. If you don't have an Assistant yet, we will order an XL.

**Other Issues:**

- Referee no-shows. If a ref is not present at game time, we ask the coaches to either 1) try or ref the game themselves, 2) ask a couple of parents to ref the game, or 3) **as a last resort** we will try to reschedule the game. Any cancelations will be made up within the scheduled season. The season will not be extended. Note that games will take preference over practices.
- Rain-outs. Rainouts may or may not be rescheduled. In the event of a rainy day, **WE WILL CONTACT YOU** via email, on the Coaches Facebook Page, or The Rained Out App. if games are cancelled.
- **Team Sponsors.** We will need a **guaranteed commitment from sponsors no later than September 15<sup>th</sup>.**
- **Final team rosters and game schedules will be ready as soon as possible, but no later than September 8<sup>th</sup>.** What you have tonight IS NOT your final roster. Please do not arbitrarily choose players as I will create your team after tonight's meeting.

**ALL COACHES: Before you leave tonight, make sure the following items are accomplished:**

1. Team info sheets are turned in. Indicate **your** jersey size and your assistant's on the sheet.
2. Your tentative practice times.
3. Your "draft roster" is turned in with your name on it. Do not keep this roster.
4. Your information/rules packet is picked up.

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## YMCA Youth Co Ed Soccer

### General Information for Parents/Coaches

#### **What do my players need to be ready for soccer?**

We will provide your player with a jersey and a pair of socks. Your players will need cleats (U8 above), shin-guards, ball and shorts. **Any additional jersey ordered will be associated with a \$10 fee.**

#### **When should we contact our team?**

You should contact your team within 24 hours of receiving your roster.

#### **When do practices and games start?**

Practices will begin the *week of* **September 18th** for the U6-U17 divisions and games begin **September 30<sup>th</sup>**. Your team should have one (1) or two (2) practices per week depending on their age group. Practices are Monday through Friday, 5:30pm OR 6:30pm.

For Micro, the first half of the season are practices, the second half are games. Practices begin September 30<sup>th rd</sup> and games begin October 28<sup>st</sup>. All practices and games for Micro take place on **Saturdays only** and are located at the Oakbrook Sports Complex. Micro practice fields are split between teams so make sure parents know where to find you.

The Y does not provide end of season trophies.

No team may practice before September 18th without permission from the Sports Office.

We ask that you indicate on the Team Info sheet any weekends that you know you cannot have a game during the season and turn it in at the end of the coaches meeting. **Once the season has begun we will make NO game changes.**

#### **League Structure**

- The league is structured according to the following age divisions:
  - Micro-Soccer: 3 years ONLY
  - U6: 4-5 years
  - U8: 6-7 years
  - U10: 8-9 years
  - U12: 10-11 years
  - U14: 12-13 years
  - U17: 14-16 years
- **Age Restrictions** - Please be advised that age divisions are set up to accommodate players of that particular age. We can move a player up if needed but we absolutely cannot move a player down. The age cut off for Fall Soccer is September 1<sup>st</sup> Micro players must be 3 entire season.

#### **Coaches Clinic:**

- Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup> @ 11am at the Oakbrook Sports Complex

### Prayer and Character Development

- We strive to develop players' character and implement Christian principles through 2 main practices.
  - Prayer – Before the start of each game and after the final whistle blows, both teams gather around the center circle for a prayer. The prayer can be lead by a coach, a player, a parent, or the referee.
  - Character Wrist Bands – Upon request, Coaches can pick up character bands that represent the YMCA core values: Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility. Coaches will be rewarding players who display such qualities with these wristbands. It is our hope that by being recognized for displays of good character, players will continue to take such actions in their everyday lives at home, school, and on the field of play.

### Pictures

The photographers will be at the Oakbrook Sports Complex the second Saturday (**October 7<sup>th</sup>**) for **Micro and U6 teams only** and the third Saturday (**October 14<sup>th</sup>**) for **U8 and above**. *These are the only two dates available for pictures.* Your child's coach will inform you of the photographers' location. You will need to have your child at the photographers' location or the location designated by your child's coach one (1) hour before game time on that particular weekend. Your coach will provide you with order forms. Pictures will be available for pick up on the second-to-last Saturday of the season. If your team cannot make pictures on the designated dates, the Coach is responsible for contacting the photographers to set up a makeup picture day. We ask that NO parents are allowed behind the photographer's tent and no one should take pictures with phones or cameras. If you do not have a game either weekend, please contact the Sports Office.

### Character Development

#### The YMCA Challenge

At the YMCA, we are committed to quality programs that enhance the spirit, mind and body of all. Through the delivery of these programs we strive to incorporate and enhance the character values of caring, honesty, responsibility and respect. YMCA coaches must be willing to take the YMCA challenge to accept and demonstrate these character values.

This can be partially accomplished by providing an environment in which the four character values are fostered. Coaches, parents and officials are all role models and their behavior should be conducive to character development. The four values should be demonstrated by all at each game and practice.

**CARING** is demonstrated throughout the youth sports program. A coach's attitude and the way he/she communicates with his/her players helps demonstrate this value. Remember to treat the players the way you would like to be treated if you were learning a new skill or task. Players can exemplify caring by applauding for players injured during a game or by being supportive of teammates during games and practices.

**HONESTY** is an important component of our programs. For the youth sports coach and his/her players, honesty and integrity should be put before winning and performance. Once again, this concept is best demonstrated by your example to your team. It should be maintained in all interaction with parents, players, and officials. The same should be true for your players in their interaction with teammates, opponents, coaches, and officials. An example of this would be admitting to a foul or penalty rather than attempting to "get away with one".

**RESPECT** is shown by both players and coaches during a season. First and foremost is to show respect for the officials and for the calls he/she makes. To dispute, mock or second guess calls does not show respect for their position of controlling the game. Respect can also be shown during interaction between players and coaches. An example of this is the ability of both players and coaches to listen to one another.

**RESPONSIBILITY** as a YMCA youth sports coach includes areas such as being on time, personal appearance, teaching basic skills, and overall leadership in the program. The participants should also be aware of the responsibilities of being on a team. These include paying attention at practice, working with others as a team, and most of all, treating others the way they would like to be treated.

**Rules of Play- Showing RESPECT on the field for Refs**

Our referees base their rules, regulations, and procedures off of USSF rules. At the Y, our goal is to teach soccer but also to focus on mentoring children. The goal of the referees is to maintain the flow of the game while teaching when needed. There will be times the referees may stop the game to explain a call or instruct a player on proper play. However, their main objective is to keep the ball rolling and make the appropriate calls. To read the Laws of the Game, see the appropriate equipment (including what NOT to wear), and understand the fouls/penalties better, feel free to visit the official site for referees at <http://www.ussoccer.com/referees/laws-of-the-game>.

**We appreciate your SUPPORT of our referees on and off the field.**

## THE YMCA PHILOSOPHY OF YOUTH SPORTS

### Seven Pillars of YMCA Youth Sports

What we want youth sports to be in the YMCA is stated in our Seven Pillars of YMCA Youth Sports.

**Pillar One** - Everyone Plays. We do not use tryouts to select the best players, nor do we cut kids from YMCA Youth Super Sports. Everyone who registers is assigned to a team. During the season everyone receives equal practice time and plays at least half of every game.

**Pillar Two** - Safety First. Although some children may get hurt playing sports, we do all we can to prevent injuries. We ask you to develop your players' fitness levels gradually so they are conditioned for the sport. And we ask you to constantly supervise your young players so that you can stop any unsafe activities.

**Pillar Three** - Fair Play. Fair play is about playing by the rules - and more. It's about you and your players showing respect for all who are involved in YMCA Youth Sports. It's about you being a role model of good sportsmanship and guiding your players to do the same. Remember, we're more interested in developing children's character through sport than in developing a few highly skilled players.

**Pillar Four** - Positive Competition. We believe competition is a positive process when the pursuit of victory is kept in the right perspective. The right perspective is when adults make decisions that put the best interests of the children above winning the contest. Learning to compete is important for children, and learning to cooperate in a competitive world is an essential lesson of life. Through YMCA Youth Sports we want to help children learn these lessons.

**Pillar Five** - Family Involvement. YMCA Youth Sports encourages parents to be involved appropriately along with their child's participation in our sport programs. In addition to parents being helpful as volunteer coaches, officials, and timekeepers, we encourage them to be at practices and games to support their child's participation.

**Pillar Six** - Sport for All, YMCA Youth Sports is an inclusive sport program. That means that children who differ in various characteristics are to be included rather than excluded from participation. We offer sport programs for children who differ in physical ability, financial circumstances, and years of experience. We offer programs to all children regardless of their race, gender, religious creed, or ability. We ask our adult leaders to encourage and appreciate the diversity of children in our society and to encourage the children and their parents to do the same.

**Pillar Seven** - Sport for Fun. Sport is naturally fun for most children. They love the challenge of mastering the skills of the game, of playing with their friends, and of competing with their peers. Sometimes when adults become involved in children's sport, they over organize and dominate the activity to the point of destroying children's enjoyment of the sport. If we take the fun out of sport, we are in danger of our children taking themselves out of sport. Remember that these sports are for the kids; let them have fun.

### Coaches Teaching Values to Players

A Values Coach provides the leadership needed to promote sportsmanship, fair play, and the four character values (caring, honesty, responsibility, and respect) to the players, parents and spectators. The Values Coach can be the person who is constantly on the lookout for players demonstrating the four values and recognize them for doing so. There are a few important things to remember when teaching values to children:

1. Ask open ended questions rather than giving the answers.
2. BE YOURSELF. Children respect an adult who listens and speaks honestly.
3. Demonstrate caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility in your actions during all interactions with your team.
4. Hold a team discussion at the end of every practice. This is the time for players and coaches to get together to talk.
5. Give each person the chance to respond or "pass". Don't feel you need to comment on their responses. You can reinforce participation with nods, smiles, and short words like "yes", "thank you" etc.
6. When the discussion comes back to you, summarize the responses to show that you were listening. Add your own feelings if it's appropriate.

### Code of Conduct

#### Parent/Coach Behavior

It is important for us, as adults, to conduct ourselves in a positive manner in order to create an atmosphere for our children that is conducive to learning, sportsmanship, and development. The YMCA has a ***Zero Tolerance Policy*** for parents throughout the season. If any of these rules are broken, you will be asked to leave the property immediately. Please follow these rules throughout the season in order to provide the best experience possible for you and your child.

**Facility Supervisors and officials have the authority to ask any spectator or coach, who does not display conduct consistent with the YMCA philosophy, to leave the game area. This includes inappropriate comments to the officials, staff, or other participants.**

- Spectators/Parents are not permitted to *talk* to or yell at referees.
- Spectators/Parents are not permitted to stand or congregate behind goal lines or goals or by the team's benches.
- Spectators/Parents are not permitted on the field of play at any time, unless instructed to by the referee or coach in the case of an injured player.
- Spectators/Parents should stay a minimum of 3 feet from the sideline at all times.
- Spectators/Parents are not permitted to use foul language, taunt, or make inappropriate comments about, or gestures toward, other parents, spectators, players, coaches, or referees.
- Spectators/Parents should only use language that is supportive of the children on the field of play.
- Spectators/Parents should be supportive of both teams and lend encouragement at all times.
- Spectators/Parents are not permitted to engage in any form of physical or verbal confrontation on YMCA property.
- Spectators/Parents should approach the coach in a professional and respectful manner with questions or concerns regarding their child or the team.

As with any rule, there are of course consequences for actions that are deemed infractions of the rules. Any spectator/parent infringing upon the above stated rules will be subject to the following consequences:

- First Offense – Warning by the referee, coach, or Director. Depending on the severity of the infraction, the spectator/parent may be subject to a ban from the YMCA property.
- Second Offense – Spectator/Parent will be required to leave the YMCA property. Depending on the severity of the infraction, the spectator/parent may be subject to a ban from the YMCA property.
- Third Offense – Spectator/Parent will be banned from YMCA property. If you have any concerns, please report them to a YMCA staff member located in the Snack Shack or to the Sports Director at 843-821-1028, or by e-mail at [LaurenM@summervilleymca.org](mailto:LaurenM@summervilleymca.org) . Your concerns will be addressed in a timely manner.

## **Child Abuse Prevention**

### **Purpose**

In response to an increasing number of abuse and neglect cases being both reported and confirmed locally, but also on a national scale, we have established some guidelines and procedures to raise awareness of child abuse and to minimize the potential for abuse/neglect occurring within our programs and facilities. This is mandatory for coaches.

### **Strategies to Prevent Child Abuse**

1. The YMCA has, in place, a comprehensive pre-employment screening procedure to screen out staff and volunteers not suited for working with children. All of our volunteers go through a criminal background check.
2. The YMCA will take any allegation or suspicion of child abuse seriously.
3. Staff and Volunteers understand their legal obligation to report suspected abuse.
4. Staff and Volunteers understand what practices may be considered abusive and the difference between what may be considered appropriate and inappropriate touch.
5. Staff and Volunteers protect themselves and the YMCA by agreeing not to be alone with YMCA youth or program participants outside of YMCA programs or facilities (i.e.: babysitting, take children on trips, etc.) Players may not go to coaches' homes, unless their parents are with them.
6. Coaches should monitor the release of participants on their teams to ensure a child is never left alone or picked up by a stranger.
7. Profanity, inappropriate jokes and any other type of harassment is prohibited.
8. Coaches will respect children's rights not to be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable. Side hugs, pats on the back and high fives are appropriate contact for coaches to have with their players.
9. Coaches must use positive techniques of guidance including positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison, and criticism.

### **Reporting Child Abuse**

- When you suspect that a child has been abused, whether at, or outside of the YMCA, you must report the information immediately to the Sports Director.
- It may be necessary to remove the child out of an activity if they appear to be in pain or are withdrawing from the group. In this case, make sure the child is with an adult that they trust.
- Do not discuss the situation with anyone except the Director.
- You will be asked to write down the facts or assumptions that you have made.
- The Director will make the appropriate phone calls.

Remember, you are not making the determination that child abuse has actually occurred. You are reporting that you suspect child abuse.

## **Risk Issues**

**Bad Weather:** In the case of bad weather on a practice night, the YMCA will cancel practice via email, Facebook Page, or the Rained out app. In case of a late storm or pop up storm, it is up to the coach to determine if practice should take place or not and to contact their team in the event of a cancellation. The YMCA will not reschedule missed practices.

Unless extreme conditions exist, games may not be called until the game time. Minor weather conditions may result in games being postponed. As soon as cancellations are made coaches will be contacted and asked to contact their team. Information will also be posted on the YMCA Facebook Page and via email. Every effort will be made by the YMCA to make-up cancelled games.

**Lightning:** Activities will be stopped and all people asked to move inside to a safe location when either of the following occurs:

1. Cloud to ground lightning is observed and less than 30 seconds pass from seeing the lightning and hearing the thunder from the flash
2. In cloud lightning is occurring directly overhead. The outdoor activities can be considered safe to continue 30 minutes after the last lightning is seen.
3. Coaches can make calls on site when Director is not present.

**Tornado Warning:** In the event of a tornado warning, practices and games should be discontinued. Return to the building or seek shelter nearby. Practices and games may only continue when the warning has ended and no dangerous weather conditions are present.

### **Missing Children**

If you notice a child in your care is missing:

1. Determine through a quick search that they are really missing (never leave other children unattended).
2. Arrange for other adults to continue searching while you call the YMCA to notify the staff in charge. The YMCA will send help and call the parents.
3. Activate the 911 system.

### **Unattended Children**

Occasionally, parents drop off their children and don't return on time to pick them up. The coach is responsible for that youth until the parents arrive. Always attempt to call the parents and emergency contact person if a child has not been picked up. Don't transport the child home. Do not put a child in your vehicle without another adult present. If you have no choice but to drive the child to the YMCA, always call the YMCA and tell them the name of the child and your expected arrival time.

## **Emergency Medical Plan**

### **What to do When a Child Gets Hurt.....**

1. Acknowledge what happened and take care of the child (band-aids, ice packs, ice cubes, etc... administer first aid, seek medical attention etc.).
2. If the parent is not present notify them immediately, even if the injury is minor. If someone other than the parent transports the child, tell that guardian and then call the parents to follow up.
3. If the injury is serious make every attempt to notify the parents or emergency contact and let them make the judgment for treatment. If they are unavailable or the injury demands immediate attention, you make the determination of whether to seek medical assistance.
4. If you are not comfortable providing medical attention or feel the situation needs someone with more medical training, contact 911.
5. Notify your YMCA Director. If the injury occurs during a game, please make sure the YMCA Director is aware of the situation. If a serious injury occurs at your practice, please notify the YMCA so that they can follow up with the family involved.



## Injury Prevention

Know the risk factors of the sport specific physical activity that your child is participating in. Make sure that the athlete has the appropriate protective equipment to prevent injury. Help your athlete develop strength, flexibility, and endurance. *Encourage your child to report pain and injury.*

**Warm Up:** Warm up activities are slow sustained stretching exercises, calisthenics and slowly increasing the intensity of motion. A good warm up should increase your body temperature, respiration, and heart rate, followed by stretching muscles with a slow static stretching.

**Cool Down:** Gradually reduces workout intensity. Have athletes walk at a slow rate until their heart rates get near normal. Follow up with light stretching.

**Over Use Injuries:** It is very important that coaches and parents are proactive and ask pointed questions if they suspect an athlete is injured or overly fatigued. Athletes commonly continue to play when fatigued or injured and may not report an injury to their coach.

**Dehydration Prevention:** Make sure your athlete has the proper amount of liquids and is staying properly hydrated. Fluid should be caffeine free. Athletes should have water breaks every 10-20 minutes and more often when exercising in extreme heat.

**Heat Related Injuries:** Know the signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Make sure athletes are in appropriate clothing and receiving fluids & rest periods during high heat conditions

**Concussions:** Athletes need to be in proper protective gear for their sport. In the event of a head injury athletes need to be cleared by a medical professional before returning to play.

## Injury and Risk Prevention Guidelines

### DONT'S

To further protect the youth, the YMCA, and yourself, avoid these things:

1. Don't administer medications. This includes aspirin and sun screen.
2. Don't transport the injured child/youth yourself. If you feel the youth needs medical attention notify the parents or call 911.
3. Don't give a diagnosis of injury unless you are a physician. Just state the symptoms and what happened.
4. Don't leave any youth unattended without adult supervision.
5. Don't give a statement to the media concerning an incident. Direct them to the Athletic Director.

### DO'S

1. Regularly inspect your playing area and equipment for hazards. Report dangerous conditions right away and do not let your athletes play until it is safe.
2. Warn your players of potential injuries which can occur in sports and point out their responsibility for the health of teammates and opponents. List common injuries and how to prevent them.
3. Make sure that players do not participate in physical activities when hurt.
4. Make sure that players warm up/cool down before all practices and games.
5. Supervise all activities and teach strict observance of game rules. "Horsing around" is a common cause of injuries.
6. Prevent heat injuries by encouraging regular water breaks and including brief rest periods.
7. Advise players about proper playing equipment. For example, teach players how to prevent blisters by wearing footwear that fits correctly.
8. **Never be the only adult on site.** An accident requires a lot of attention. Always take a first aid kit if you have one. A first aid kit is left in the mailbox of the sports office or in the snack shack. Please alert the sports office if you take any supplies during practice so we can make sure to keep it stocked.

### Facility Use Guidelines

Property rules are put in place in order to ensure a safe, clean, and enjoyable atmosphere for all spectators and players. Please follow these rules and be considerate of the YMCA property and the people around you.

- **NO SMOKING** anywhere on YMCA property – not in your car, not close to the tree line, not in the bathroom, not in the parking lot – nowhere, PLEASE.
- **NO PETS** are permitted on YMCA property – no dogs, cats, ferrets, pigs, birds, snakes, fish – no PETS.
- **NO ALCOHOL** is permitted on YMCA property – no O’Doul’s or Busch NA either.
- **NO WEAPONS** are permitted on YMCA property – no guns, bow-and-arrows, knives, clubs, axes, flails, swords – no WEAPONS.
- **NO SOLICITING** is permitted on YMCA property unless given permission by the Oakbrook Branch Director.
- **NO SPEEDING** is permitted on YMCA property. The speed limit on YMCA property is 10mph.
  - Adhere to all STOP signs located on the property.
  - Adhere to all NO PARKING signs on the property.
  - Adhere to all CAUTION areas located on the property – do not park in or enter these areas.
- Please dispose of all TRASH in the cans provided throughout the property.
- Please park in designated parking areas and park in such a manner as to be considerate of others’ need to enter and leave parking areas without being encumbered.
- Please report any restroom problems to the staff in the Snack Shack.

### Team Meeting

**As soon as you get your roster call your team**, introduce yourself and give them information about the team meeting. Remind them of when and where the first practice is if they do not already have this information.

- **While you have the parents on the phone ask if their child has any special needs and what his/her ability level is. Make sure the jersey size is correct and the child is of the correct age.**
- Ask parents about their experience with the sport and if they will be around to help instruct and help during practices and games

1. Start your meeting by passing out game schedules, rosters and any other season information.
2. Have parents check the team roster for mistakes and add extra emergency numbers or contact information that may not be listed.
3. Arrange for a parent who will be at every practice to help with drills, lavatory duty, supervision. If you need an assistant or a backup, now is the time to find them.
4. If no parent is available to be an assistant coach have a signup sheet ready for each parent to pick a week to be the assistant coach. This spreads the duties out among the parents and does not leave you stranded without any assistance.
5. This is also a good time to find a team parent who can help with phone calls and organizing team functions. (Ex. pictures, snacks, cancellations, etc.)
6. Go over the code of conduct in handbook and make certain that each parent understands what is expected of them. Remind them that they will be asked to leave if the rules are broken.
7. Let your parents know your expectations of them and their child. Find out what they expect from you. If the expectations are unrealistic, now is the time to address them.
8. Go over your coaching philosophy including, how you will work with the kids, your approach to games and practices, and issues like discipline and commitment.
9. Indicate how important practice time is. It can be negative for a child and the team when a player arrives at a game without the necessary information and preparation to be a successful member of the team. Keep in mind that if kids are not at practices it is most likely something going on with their family and is not their fault. Do not punish the child for what is out of their control.
10. Review the league rules. A lot of the YMCA rules are age appropriate, allowing kids to gain a better understanding of the game as the child matures and moved up through age groups. Parents need to know these special rules so they are not reinforcing their child to do something that is incorrect for the age group.

## Practices

The key to a good practice is **organization**. Know what you want to do and don't worry if you don't get through it all or have to deviate from the plan. If a drill is not going as you planned, ditch it and move on. Don't waste your time during your short practice. Here are other tips for running an effective practice.

1. LEARN EVERYONE'S NAME FAST. Use name tags if you need to. But nothing is worse than calling the kids by the wrong names or not being able to get someone's attention because you don't know their name.
2. Get to the practices early. Even if you did all of your planning ahead of time you will want time to familiarize yourself with the field, have your equipment ready and feel prepared before your players and parents start to arrive.
3. Make sure every child present is on your roster. If someone shows up that is not on your roster, then most likely they are not on your team. Get the person's name and contact the Sports Director as soon as possible so they can clear up the problem. Friends and neighbors may not participate in practices or games. Only the Sports Director may add a player to your roster.
4. Kids will be excited at the beginning of the practice, but also a little nervous. It is okay to start warming up and do some light running before you talk with them.
5. Be organized. Have your practice planned out in detail. Go over the practice plan with your assistants before the practice.
6. Do not forget to spend time warming up and stretching. Remember, we are trying to develop good fitness habits.
7. There are usually 1-2 practices scheduled before the first game. These practice sessions should be used to provide the basic rules, skills and procedures needed for the first game. During these practices, the players should learn:
  - a. Positions – Each position and its role should be explained. Stress the need for each position and how players need to work together.
  - b. Strategy – Teach basic defense and offense by using controlled scrimmages.
  - c. Basic skills – Use drills to teach the basic skills and rules needed to fully participate and perform in the sport.
8. Use a variety of drills that work on the same skill to mix things up. Make sure that the drills cater to the age, skill and developmental level of your athletes. The goal of drills should be challenging but attainable.
9. Remember your objectives. Participating in sports helps to increase the self esteem of the athletes and develop character in youth. When you explain a drill or make a statement to a player, think of it as a self esteem drill or a character development statement.
10. Spend a minimal amount of time instructing and lecturing young athletes, have a limited attention span and need as much hands on time as possible. Get all the athletes involved as much as possible. Standing in line is not a good use of practice time. Instructions should be brief and to the point.

## Providing Feedback During Practices & Games

- Recognize what players are doing correctly.
- Demonstrate skills as much as possible, kids learn better by having an example to follow.
- Always be positive and genuine in your comments.
- Try to state a compliment followed by a correction and then another compliment
- How you communicate is as important as what you are saying.
- Speak clearly, in an appropriate tone and volume
- Watch your athletes for signs of confusion or frustration
- Use terms and language your athletes can understand
- Show athletes you are interested and be enthusiastic
- Make sure to spread your attention around to all your athletes.
- Always encourage your athletes to try their best and let them know how proud you are of them.

## Practice Session Outline

### Warm Up

Warm up activities prepare the body for more intense activity, thus reducing the risk of injury. Each practice must begin with some simple warm up exercises. The following are tips for leading warm-up exercises with children:

- A. Demonstrating the exercise while giving verbal instruction
  1. Explain the purpose of the exercise.
  2. Speak in words the players can understand.
- B. Exercising with the players (be a positive role model)
  1. Give all players an opportunity to lead the exercises.
  2. Make sure all players can see and hear the leader.
- C. Discussing good habits with the players while exercising.
  1. Suggest positive thoughts like "jog one lap and think about the best thing that happened to you this week".
  2. Remind players about the YMCA house rules.
    - (a) Speak for yourself
    - (b) Avoid put-downs
    - (c) Take charge of your actions
    - (d) Listen to others
    - (e) Show respect
- D. Using a variety of exercises
  1. Allow players to help select the exercises.
  2. **Never use exercise as a form of punishment.**

### II. Skill Development

The skill development component should be age appropriate and organized so that everyone is involved. Use individual and partner drills frequently. Arrange players so that everyone has room to practice at the same time. This allows a player to make mistakes without fear of being ridiculed in front of teammates and ensures plenty of activity.

This part of practice consists of two parts:

- A. Practice previously taught skills (all players benefit from working on fundamentals)
  1. During this part of the practice, players should work on improving skills they already know.
  2. Ask for player input on what skills they need to work on based on previous practice sessions or games.
- B. Teach new skills (at least one new skill per practice should be taught, using the existing skills for a foundation).
  1. Give players something new to try at each practice
    - (a) Briefly explain the skill.
    - (b) Demonstrate the skill (coach or player)
    - (c) Let players try the skill.
- C. Keep instructions to a minimum as players are practicing skills
  - (a) Give encouragement.
  - (b) Try to correct errors in a positive way.

### III. Play (20 minutes)

Scrimmages are fun and they increase the likelihood that skills learned in practice will be used in games. Include activities that simulate the contest conditions players will face and that will develop useful team skills.

- A. Rotate players so they all get to play all positions.
- B. Scrimmage using simplifications of the game (e.g. half field)
  1. Play for specific periods of time, not score.
  2. Focus on one or two rules or skills at a time.
  3. Control the scrimmage by periodically stopping play and pointing out learning opportunities.
- C. In older age groups, allow players to take turns at being an official or assistant coach.

## **Games**

Game should be the fun reward for all the hard work put in by both the players and coaches at practice. Games should always be a positive experience for players if parents and coaches keep the right perspective.

### **Before the Game**

1. Arrive early, so your players have time to find you and the team.
2. Decide who is playing in each quarter/half beforehand, but be prepared to make adjustments if necessary
3. Find any necessary volunteers, and fill out proper line up sheets if applicable.
4. The performance of most athletes will increase if competition pressures can be reduced. A brief pregame talk gives you the opportunity to put the importance of the game in its proper perspective.
  - a. Remind players of the skills they have been practicing and tell them to concentrate on performing these skills rather than worrying about what their opponents will do.
  - b. Emphasize the need to think and play as a team and not to criticize teammates. Above all, stress the importance of behaving properly at all times, not arguing with officials and having fun.

### **During the Game**

1. Relax and enjoy, remember we are having fun. To be a good coach you do not always have to give advice. It is okay to spend some time smiling and being supportive by clapping and not talking.
2. Try to be enthusiastic and compliment players on good performances. Remember, everyone on your team deserves encouragement, not only the best players.
3. Substitute players, allowing everybody to play at least half the game regardless of the score. Make sure no player plays the entire game.
4. When players come out of the game, first try to say something positive about their performance, and then give them ideas and suggestions for improvements, followed by a positive compliment. Do not focus on what a player is doing wrong, focus on what you would like them to do right.

### **After the Game**

1. Always congratulate the other team by shaking their hands and thank them for their participation.
2. Talk to your team about the positive things that happened during the game, regardless of the result of the game.
3. Help us to clear the playing area of people connected with your team, so the next game may get underway.

## **Sportsmanship – Winning and Losing**

Coping with winning and losing is, of course, an essential part of playing sports. Ideally kids first learn about how to deal with victories and defeats from their parents even before the youngster's lace up their first pair of sneakers. But as the coach, it is up to you to reinforce the appropriate behavior for winning and losing.

### **When They Win...**

Every player will tell you that it is more fun to win than it is to lose. But as the coach you should strongly remind your team that "winning with class" is how you expect them to play. As such, if you spot one of your players taunting or humiliating an opponent when your team is way ahead in the game, simply call "time out" and have the player sit the bench next to you. Explain to him or her that such behavior will not be tolerated by you and unless they can learn to control themselves, they will not be allowed back into the game. Don't worry. The ultimate fun is in playing and the child will quickly modify their ways to get back into the action. If they do happen to repeat the offensive actions again, put them back on the bench until the lesson is learned. Make sure the parents are aware of why the child was on the bench and spend time in your next practice talking about appropriate behaviors with your team.

### **When They Lose...**

Many times, especially for younger kids, a loss will be accompanied by tears of disappointment. As the coach, understand that losing is for many players a new and painful experience. Console them, praise them for their efforts, but never embarrass them. Tears are a normal reaction for young players who have just felt the sting of a defeat. Your job is to reassure them that today "Just wasn't our day," and that "We played well, but the other team played a little better." Those are the kind of thoughts you want your team to hear. Kids are resilient and for most players the bitterness of a loss and the tears that go with it often disappear quickly. Within minutes they will bounce back and be asking about what their next activity for the day will be. The best guideline to follow is to always remember that good sportsmanship starts with you! Players quickly watch, monitor and copy their coach's behavior. How you handle and react to a loss or victory will affect how your team does the same.

## **Coaches Troubleshooting Guide**

### **Discipline**

It does not make sense to have a long list of rules. The best coaches make a few rules stand out. Make sure all the kids on the team understand not only the rule, but why it is important and the consequences for breaking it. Make sure that all discipline is positive and not degrading.

### **The Ball Hog**

Especially in younger teams there is occasionally the one player who likes to control the ball and take all the shots. If you sense this happening, have a chat with the player. Compliment their skills and encourage them to include all the players on the team. Give them a challenge like having everyone on the team touch the ball before a shot is taken. This approach recognizes the player's talent but it also suggests the fact that the team should come first.

### **Running Up the Score**

At some point your team may have a game where it is clear that your team is going to win –and win big. Do you allow your kids to keep running up the score? No, that is not good sportsmanship. Call a time out and challenge your team to do so many passes before a shot is taken, or focus on other skills. You still want them to work hard but redirect them to focus more on their skills and less on scoring.

### **Vacations/Schedule conflict**

Ask parents for a list of days in which their child will not be able to make games. This will help you when putting together your subbing schedule for the next games and will not leave you scrambling beforehand to change your plan. Remember, we only reschedule games if absolutely necessary due to the ref schedule and coaches who have multiple teams.

### **Pushy Parents**

What do you do when you have a parent who always wants to give you a piece of his or her mind? Give them 10 uninterrupted minutes to speak. Then look them in the eye, thank them for their feedback and respond to their suggestions and comments. If you have a parent with a bunch of ideas, or someone who thinks they can do it better than you, ask them to be an assistant coach. The invitation may get them to back off, or even better, you may have a new assistant and they will have to do everything they were asking you to do.

### **Player Problems**

If you are having any type of problems with a player, it is your job to communicate the problem to the parent(s) immediately. Most of your problems are solved just by making the parents aware. Adopt a philosophy of stopping small problems before they become large problems.

- If you discipline a player in practice (i.e. having them sit by the side for 5 minutes) always indicate what behavior was unacceptable and what behavior is more appropriate. And inform the parents of what took place, so they can work with the player on their behavior outside of practice.
- If behavior problems become frequent, ask a parent if they would please attend the whole practice/game, so that they can deal with the problem and you can then focus on the other players.
- If your efforts with the parent seem to be ineffective, notify to Sports Director for further support.

## **Working with officials**

Youth Sports officials are usually parents, other coaches, high school or college students. Most of these people are learning how to officiate through practical experience. Coaches and parents should try to be sympathetic rather than critical of the official's role.

1. Officials do make mistakes and miss calls. It does not help the game or players to embarrass the official by pointing out errors in front of everyone.
2. We want to maintain a positive playing environment and cutting down officials on the field is not positive.
3. Calls will not start to go your team's way if you ride on officials all game long.
4. You may **not** address an official in an aggressive manner. A better approach for coaches is to wait until half time or until the game is over, thank the person for officiating the game and then express your observations.
5. Most officials want to improve and appreciate constructive criticism, when it is given in a positive and respectful manner.
6. Keep in mind that the officials work for the YMCA and are not obligated to discuss their job with coaches, parents or spectators after each game. Should an official not want to speak with you, please respect their wishes and direct your feedback to the Sports Director.

### **Working with Parents**

Coaching a youth league team is exciting and rewarding. But from time to time, you may experience difficulty with parents. Some may want their children to play more, or they might question some of your judgments as a coach. This is normal, so do not feel that you are alone if this happens. Here are a few thoughts to remember when dealing with parents.

1. Always listen to their ideas and feelings. Remember, they are interested and concerned because it is their children who are involved. Encourage parents to communicate with you. It is always best to get concerns out in the open.
2. Express appreciation for their interest and concern. This will make them more open and at ease with you.
3. No coach can please everyone. Do not try. Give the parents a response to their concerns but do not feel like you need to give a lengthy justification for every decision you make.
4. Most important, be fair. If you treat all players equally, you will gain their respect.
5. Handle any confrontations one-to-one, and not in a crowd situation. Try not to be defensive. Do not argue with a parent. Listen to their viewpoint and thank them for it, then give them your response. If they have an issue that you cannot resolve, refer them to the Sports Director.
6. Ask parents not to criticize their (or other) children during a practice or game. Do not let your players be humiliated, even by their own parents
7. Do not blame the players for their parents' actions, if negative. Try to maintain a fair attitude.
8. If you have a parent who always wants to contribute, put them and their ideas to work. Ask them to write out their practice ideas or to come to practice to run a few drills. Get them involved and give them a job to support the team, do not shut them out. You can never have too many assistants if they all know their role and purpose.
9. Always remember that you are dealing with all types of children and parents with different backgrounds and ideas. One of your main challenges as a coach is to deal with these differences in a positive manner so that the team's season will be an exciting and enjoyable experience for all.

Our hope is that the provided information allows for a successful, FUN, season for you and your team. Please keep this packet with you while at practices and games, and refer to it as necessary. If you need any further assistance this season, please feel free to Call Lauren or email at [LaurenM@summervilleymca.org](mailto:LaurenM@summervilleymca.org).

We are looking forward to a great season!

Lauren McConnell  
Youth Sports Director  
SummervilleYMCA.org

## Summerville Family YMCA

### Youth Soccer

#### The 7 Most Commonly Misunderstood Rules – Clarification

In order to give you, the parent or coach, a better understanding of some of the rules of soccer we offer you these 5 most commonly misunderstood rules of the game. It is important that we understand a few of the basic rules in order to create an atmosphere that is conducive to learning, understanding, and development of our players.

**HANDBALLS** - The rule for a handball includes any part of the body from the tips of the fingers to the shoulder. The proper way to determine a handball is to view it from the perspective of whether or not a player "handled" or made an action to "handle" the ball. A ball that is kicked or thrown and hits a player's hand or arm IS NOT a handball. The referees must use their judgment in determining whether or not a handball was accidental or a purposeful attempt to gain an advantage. This is a judgment call by the referee and cannot be argued. Restart is a direct kick.

There are also occasions when the keeper cannot use his or her hands: 1) If the keeper is outside of their box, 2) If a back-pass occurs. A keeper cannot pick up a pass that came directly from one of their teammates. In these situations, the keeper may only use their feet. Situation (1) is a direct kick, (2) is an indirect kick.

**TWO-TOUCH RULE** - A player cannot touch the ball twice in a row when putting the ball into play. If a player kicks or throws the ball to begin play, they cannot touch it again until another player has made a play on the ball. This applies to all kicks and throw-ins with the exception of a drop-ball restart. During a goal kick, if the ball does not leave the penalty area, the kick will be retaken.

**FOULS** - Soccer is a contact sport. Bumping and going shoulder-to-shoulder while competing for the ball IS permitted - even if one of the players falls to the ground. Players can and will be kicked during the game. Such activity and contact is considered fair play. However, hands and elbows must not be used. Some tripping of players also occurs. If a player is deemed by the referee to be making a legitimate attempt at the ball or if a player contacts the ball resulting in the opposing player tripping, the play is legal. However, desperate attempts at the ball or intentional tripping, is illegal. This is a judgment call by the referee and cannot be argued. Play resumes with a direct or indirect kick, depending on the infraction. Kick determination is made by the referee.

**OFFSIDE** - An offensive player cannot be ahead of the ball and involved in a play unless there is a defender between them and the keeper. This rule is to prevent a player from "cherry picking" - hanging out at the goal, waiting for the ball. It is not a violation of the rules for a player to situate themselves in such a location until the player becomes involved in the play. Offside will be called when the ball is kicked to the player, not when the player receives the pass. Players cannot be called offside when they are on their own half of the field or during a corner kick, goal kick, or throw-in. Offside rule will be enforced in the U10 - U18 age divisions. Play restarts with an indirect kick.

**GOALS** - A player can score directly from a kick off. A player cannot score directly from a throw-in. If a defender accidentally causes the ball to go into their goal, it counts as a goal for the opposing team, unless the goal occurs during a goal kick. This would result in a corner kick for the opposing team.

**DIRECT and INDIRECT KICKS** - Play can begin with both direct and indirect kicks. Examples of the most common follow:

Formal starts such as centerfield kickoff, goal kicks and corner kicks are all direct. A goal may be scored without the ball touching another player from these restarts. Direct kicks also apply to handball infractions and tripping fouls.

Indirect kicks apply mainly to offside and dangerous play situations. Dangerous play may be from a high kick or playing on the ground, or too aggressive play. Dangerous play is solely the referee's call to make. A high kick is generally considered dangerous when the foot raises above the hip area and is in close proximity to other players. A referee considers the players, skill involved, proximity to other players, etc. when making these calls.

**SUBSTITUTIONS** - A team may substitute on their own throw-in possession, during either team's goal kick, or during center kick-off (after goal is scored or half time). There is no substitution during a corner kick or a penalty kick. If there is a player injury, that player may be substituted.



## Summerville Family YMCA

### Youth Soccer League Rules (General)

#### Micro Soccer

**Field:** U6 size field, 70' x 55'

**Ball:** size 3

**Players:** 8 per team, 4v4

**Time:** 45 minute practices, 4: 6 minute quarters

**Equipment:** shoes (cleats optional), shin-guards, ball, shirt, shorts, socks

**Referees:** none/coach

**General Rules:**

- No Headers per concussion protocol
- No offside calls
- No Goalies
- Ball goes out of bounds – no whistle, coach to put ball back in play, play-on
- No over-aggressive play
- Begin play with kickoff from center circle with forward progression

**Emphasize FUN!**

#### U6

**Field:** 70' x 55'

**Ball:** size 3

**Players:** 10 per team, 5v5

**Time:** 4: 7 minute quarters

**Equipment:** shoes (cleats optional), shin-guards, ball, shirt, shorts, socks

**Referees:** none/coach

**General Rules:**

- No Headers per concussion protocol
- No offside calls
- Ball goes out of bounds – no whistle, coach to put ball back in play, play-on
- No over-aggressive play
- Begin play with kickoff from center circle with forward progression
- No goalies
- Defensive players are allowed

**Emphasize FUN!**

#### U8

**Field:** 135' x 90'

**Ball:** size 3

**Players:** 12-14 per team, 7v7

**Time:** 4: 10 minute quarters

**Equipment:** shoes (cleats), shin-guards, ball, shirt, shorts, socks

**Referees:** 1

**General Rules:**

- No Headers per concussion protocol
- No offside calls
- Throw-ins – feet on ground, ball behind head
- No sliding or over-aggressive play
- All free kicks are indirect (no penalty kicks)
- Begin play with direct kickoff from center circle with forward progression
- **Emphasize FUN!**

U10**Field:** 180' x 120'**Ball:** size 4**Players:** 14-15 per team, 8v8**Time:** 2: 25 minute halves**Equipment:** shoes (cleats), shin-guards, ball, shirts, shorts, socks**Referees:** 1 or 2**General Rules:**

- No Headers per concussion protocol
- Offside calls will be made
- Throw-ins – feet on ground, ball behind head
- No sliding or over-aggressive play
- Direct and Indirect kick rules apply
- Penalty kicks are taken 8 yds. from goal line
- Begin play with direct kickoff from center circle with forward progression
- **Emphasize FUN!**

U12**Field:** 225'x135'**Ball:** size 5**Players:** 16 per team, 10v10**Time:** 2: 30 minute halves**Equipment:** shoes (cleats), shin-guards, ball, shirts, shorts, socks**Referees:** 2**General Rules:**

- No Headers per concussion protocol
- Offside calls will be made
- Throw-ins – feet on ground, ball behind head
- No sliding or over-aggressive play
- Direct and Indirect kick rules apply
- Penalty kicks are taken 10 yds. from goal line
- Begin play with direct kickoff from center circle with forward progression

**Emphasize FUN!**U14**Field:** 300' x 180'**Ball:** size 5**Players:** 18 per team, 11v11**Time:** 2: 35 minute halves**Equipment:** shoes (cleats), shin-guards, ball, shirts, shorts, socks**Referees:** 2**Generals Rules:**

- Headers are allowed
- Offside calls will be made
- Slide tackles allowed, must be clean and not over-aggressive at referee's discretion!
- Throw-ins – feet on ground, ball behind head
- Direct and Indirect kick rules apply
- Penalty kicks are taken 12 yds. from goal line
- Begin play with direct kickoff from center circle with forward progression

**Emphasize FUN!**

U17

**Field:** 300' x 180'

**Ball:** size 5

**Players:** 15 or 18 per team, 9v9 or 11v11 (dependant on number of participants in league)

**Time:** 2: 35 minute halves

**Equipment:** shoes (cleats), shin-guards, ball, shirts, shorts, socks

**Referees:** 2

**Generals Rules:**

- Headers are allowed
- Offside calls will be made
- Throw-ins – feet on ground, ball behind head
- Slide tackles allowed, must be clean and not over-aggressive at referee's discretion!
- Direct and Indirect kick rules apply
- Penalty kicks are taken 12 yds. from goal line
- Begin play with direct kickoff from center circle with forward progression