

US Youth Soccer Parent Education Program

US Youth Soccer provides a healthy activity through its recreational and small sided games programs. These programs emphasize FUN and de-emphasize winning at all costs. Every child is guaranteed playing time, and the game is taught in a fun and enjoyable atmosphere.

Relax and Prepare for FUN!

Kids love soccer because it is fun!

- From an early age, every child loves to play with a ball. Soccer is just playing with the ball, except with others and with a few simple rules. Soccer is having FUN!
- The rules at the basic level are: the ball is shared with your teammates; the ball is kept away from your opponents; everyone has to “play nice”; every child gets their time with the ball and everyone has FUN!

Basic equipment for soccer parents

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

Code of Conduct for Parents

- Be your child’s best fan and support him/her unconditionally.
- Help your child to focus on the performance and not the result.
- Support all the players. Do not criticize anyone. Remember – children don’t mean to make mistakes.
- When you take your child home after a match or training session, please be supportive and always focus on the positive aspects of his/her game.
- Do not criticize your child’s coach to your child or other parents. If you are not happy with the coach, you should raise the issue with the coach.
- Do not criticize the opponents, their parents or their officials.
- Never audibly dispute a referee’s decision. They will make mistakes occasionally. We all do. If you abuse or shout at the referee, you are breaking the rules of the game and risk generating a fine for the club.
- Parents/carers must not enter the field of play.
- Develop a responsibility in your child to pack his/her own gear, clean their boots, and take a bottle of water to practice and games.

Six Guidelines for Soccer Parents

- Cheer
- Relax and let them play
- Yelling directions = Distraction
- Remember, they are your genes ;)
- Have reasonable expectations
- Meet with the coaches

Four Emotional Needs of Players

Children have four basic emotional needs in organized sports:

- To play without unhealthy pressure to win, imposed by parents and coaches
- To be treated like children, not miniature professionals
- Adult role models whose sportsmanlike behavior helps make participation fun
- To play without adult-imposed pressure for financial gain inspired by professional or big-time collegiate sports.

What Does My Player Need?

BALL – each child should have his or her own age appropriate ball (#3 for U6/U8) and bring it to team practice.

SHIN GUARDS – the pull-on “legging” type with foam padding protecting the front of the leg from ankle to shin - an absolute requirement for games, should also be worn for all practices.

SOCCER SHOES – recommended, but not required by most clubs. Soccer cleats for most recreational play must be rubber or molded plastic (no metal cleats), and no less than 3/8 inch in diameter. Baseball or football type shoes with square or rectangular cleats are not legal for soccer.

WATER BOTTLE – fresh water should be available to your child at each practice and game.

SHIRTS, SOCKS, SHORTS – one of these items will be provided for each player by your club. Be sure you are aware of your club’s policies for games and practices.

Teaching Sportsmanship

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

- Cheer for all the children, even those on the other team.
- Talk to parents of the other team: they are not your enemy.
- Be a parent, not a coach: resist the urge to critique. Just being there shows your children what being a good parent is all about.
- 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 that your relationship with your children will continue long after their youth soccer days are over. Keep your goals and needs separate from your child’s experience.
- Have FUN: that is what the children are trying to do!

BCYSC - Coach's Manual

WHO CAN COACH?

No experience is necessary to start coaching a youth soccer team. The minimum age is 18 years old for the head coach. Younger teenagers wishing to coach may do so by being the assistant coach. However, the more you know about the game, the more comfortable you will feel about coaching and the more enjoyable experience for the child. With that in mind, STYSA, BYSA and BCYSC requires that coaches obtain licenses during their first year of coaching. The cost for attending the clinic is reimbursed by the club upon receiving your license.

Around registration time each season, BCYSC and BYSA provides coaching clinics for different levels of experience. The clinics usually consist of two sessions, depending on the level, and will teach you some very good coaching techniques. There are also knowledgeable people at BCYSC who will be more than happy to give you pointers and tips about drills, technique, and rules. Check the schedule for BYSA coaching clinics or call a member of the board and they will get you in touch with someone that can help you. Don't be shy. Clinics are also held by neighboring associations if you have schedule conflicts.

Coaches become role models for their team members. Coaches should set good examples for sportsmanship, patience, and understanding. Remember that you will be working with children of different ages, experience, maturity levels and ability.

All coaches must turn in an adult information form and are required to apply through the Kid Safe program managed by STYSA. This is basically a background check for volunteers for the safety of our kids.

COACHING REQUIREMENTS

Field Maintenance: Before and after practices and games, it is the coach's responsibility to ensure that the field is clean of trash and ready to be played on.

Medical Releases: Be sure to keep your team's medical release forms with you at every practice and every game in case a player is injured. At the beginning of the season, make sure they are completely filled in and properly signed.

Safety: Everyone should be discouraged from climbing trees or from climbing or hanging on the goals or nets.

Health: Smoking and consumption of alcoholic beverages during BCYSC activities set bad examples for the kids and is not allowed on the field complex. Pets should be left at home, some soccer complexes prohibit dogs.

Security: Every coach should make sure all members of his/her team have been picked up before the coach leaves the area.

Licensing: At least a U6/U8 or U10/U12 Youth coaching module or appropriate coaching license is required by the end of your first year of coaching, if you wish to continue.

Player Assignments: Every player must play half of each game, except for reasons of illness, injury or discipline. Players should be rotated among the various positions, not confined to playing a single position. Every player should be given reasonable opportunities to score a goal during the season.

Criticizing Players: The coach should expect mistakes made by the players. Criticism, threats, blame, yelling, humiliating, ridiculing and showing biases should be avoided. Don't expect players to do things during a game that you haven't successfully taught them during practice. Emphasize the

positives. For example, “Wow, what a kick! Way to be there! Nice move! Good job!” Make sure every player on your team gets plenty of this. Parents should be encouraged to cheer for all the players, not just their own.

Sportsmanship: Adults present on the BCYSC fields are expected to set good examples for the children. Coaches are responsible for the actions of their team's parents and may be red-carded (sent off, ejected) by the referee, if needed. If there are problems with the way a game is called, the coach may protest the game. Notice of the protest must be given to the referee and the opposing coach immediately following the game.

Winning: BCYSC tries to balance teams as closely as possible to ensure good competition. If perfect equalization could be achieved, every team would have as many victories as defeats. The coach should emphasize good, effective playing of the game. Both the winning team and the losing team should leave the field feeling good about the experience. After a loss, compliment your players on their level of play. Keep in mind that we are primarily a recreational soccer club. We want to stress sportsmanship, learning and enjoying the game. There should not be pressure to win, but just to play as well as possible and have fun.

PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

Credentials: Coaches are required to have STYSA Member Passes for the current season. Club's registrar will give the Member Pass card to you when they are ready. You need to attach your picture, sign the card, laminate it and wear to all practices and games.

Official Roster: Obtain from the club registrar an official team roster and copies of the kids' registration forms, which are to be served as Medical Release forms.

Notification: You are to notify the players on your team as soon as you get the names from your division manager or registrar. Let them know you're the coach, what team they are on and when you will be calling again with practice times.

Practice Times: Practices are typically held two nights a week during the season with a game on Saturday. The fields at the soccer complex are available by reservation only through your division manager. Teams must adhere to their assigned practice times if practicing on the BCYSC fields, due to the limited availability of practice space.

Uniforms and Shin Guards: BCYSC provides the shirt, shorts and socks for all the players. Team Parent will be responsible for turning in kids' uniforms and parents' jerseys order, for picking it up from the club, and for distributing among the players and parents. Shin guards are required at all practices and games. The referee will not allow a player to play without shin guards on, with the socks on the outside, pulled up covering the entire shin guard. Typical turf or rubber-cleat soccer shoes can be worn. Tennis shoes are fine, also. Sliding shorts are allowed to be worn underneath, provided they are the same shade as the uniform shorts. Sweat pants may also be worn in cold weather, provided the uniform shorts are on the outside, subject to an OK by the referee. Headgear is now approved for use by players.

Home Team: The home team shall furnish an appropriate size game ball acceptable to the referee.

Coaching from the Sidelines: Under-8 Coaches can give positive and tactical instructions from the sidelines.

Club Standings: BCYSC does not keep any standing for its teams.

Tournaments: Your team is allowed to go to any commercial tournament of your choice provided the tournament does not interfere with regularly scheduled games.

The Soccer Experience: BCYSC is here to provide fun for all our children, experienced in a environment exhibiting sportsmanship and tolerance. We adults are here for the benefit of the kids. They are not here for our benefit. We want the upcoming soccer season to be a positive experience for every child. Our objectives as coaches are to teach them how to play as part of a team, to teach them soccer techniques and tactics, and to ensure that they have fun, both in practice and during the games. This will help create a love of the game that they can carry with them as they move on through life.

Many of the lessons the players pick up on these soccer fields will stay with them the rest of their lives, even if they don't go on to be world famous soccer players. With you, the coach, as their teacher, they will learn self confidence, team play, sportsmanship, physical and mental coordination, how to function under pressure, how to shrug off mistakes and push for success. You will structure the environment in which this fun and this learning can occur.

*You are to be congratulated for being willing to accept this important responsibility.
You will probably find it to be an immensely rewarding experience.*

Mechanics of the Game

Starting the Game: The game starts with a kick-off. The ball is positioned at the center of the field. The players of each team must be on their team's end of the field. In addition, the players of the team not performing the kick-off must be outside the center circle.

The team taking (that is, performing) the kick-off designates a player to take (perform) the kick. The ball must be kicked onto the opposing team's half of the field of play. The ball is not in play until it has traveled its own circumference (about a yard). The kicker may not touch the ball again until another player (on either team) has touched it. All players must remain on their team's side of the field until the ball is kicked.

Playing the Game: The basic principle of the game is that each team wants to keep control of the ball, to maneuver it as close as possible to the opposing goal, and to shoot it at the goal from the most advantageous position possible. The defending team wants to keep the ball away from their goal, and to take control of the ball away from the attacking team, thereby becoming the attacking team and putting the opposing team on defense.

In essence, it's a game of "keep-away". You don't want to give control of the ball to the other team.

Remember to make sure that each member of your team gets to play at least half of the game and in each half.

Ball Out of Bounds: The ball remains in play until the entire ball is totally outside the outermost edge of the field boundary line.

Throw-in: When the ball goes out of bounds *across the "touchline"* (the line bounding the field along the side), play is restarted with a "*throw-in*". The team which last touched the ball loses control to the opposing team, one of whose players throws the ball back into play

For a *throw-in* to be legal:

- (a) the ball must be thrown from behind & over the head
- (b) it must be thrown using both hands
- (c) the thrower must face the field
- (d) at the instant the ball leaves the thrower's hands, some part of both feet must be on the ground, either on or outside the side line
- (e) the ball must be thrown-in from the place where it went out of bounds

The thrower may not touch the ball again until it has touched another player.

A goal may not be scored on a direct throw-in.

Goal kick: When the ball goes out of bounds *across the goal-line*, but not between the goal posts and under the cross-bar, and *it was last touched by the attacking team*, the defending team restarts play by taking a *goal kick*.

The ball can be placed on the ground anywhere inside the goal box or goal arc for younger teams. It is then kicked by one of the players, and is considered in play as soon as it passes outside the penalty box or the goal arc.

Until the ball is kicked, all opposing players must remain outside the penalty box or 3 yards from the goal arc. If the ball doesn't pass outside the penalty box or goal arc, the kick is retaken. Most often, the team taking a goal kick wants to clear the ball as far away from the goal as possible. If possible, the kicker wants to direct the ball to one of his teammates in an advantageous position to begin an attack.

Corner kick: When the ball goes out of bounds *across the goal-line*, but not between the goal posts and under the cross-bar, and it *was last touched by the defending team*, the attacking team restarts play by taking a *corner kick*. The ball is placed inside the quarter-circle arc at the corner of the field nearest to where it went out of bounds. No defensive player may be within 6 yards until one of the attacking players kicks it. Usually, the corner kick is treated as an opportunity to place the ball immediately in front of the opposing goal, with attackers in position to try to set up a shot.

A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.

The kicker may not play the ball a second time until it has touched another player.

Goal: If the ball goes out of bounds between the goal posts and under the crossbar, regardless of which team last touched it, a *goal* is scored against the defending team. A goal is worth one point. At the end of the game, the team with the most goals wins. If both teams have the same score, the game is a draw.

After a goal is scored, the team against which the goal was scored restarts play by taking a kick-off, with the ball positioned at the center of the field.

Half Time: The game is divided into four quarters of 10 minutes for U7, separated by 2 minutes breaks and 5 minute halftime.

Water or sports drinks are usually supplied by one of the parents designated to supply refreshments for that particular game. Providing fruit at half time will actually decrease performance in the second half and is discouraged for older teams.

When the intermission is completed, the teams switch ends of the field and the team that did not take the opening kick-off restarts play by taking the opening kick-off of the second half.

Fouls and Misconduct: For U6-U8 age divisions, all fouls are penalized by giving the team against which the foul was committed an *indirect free kick* from the point where the foul was committed (but in all cases outside the opponent's goal arc or goal box).

On an indirect kick, **another player (on either team) must touch the ball** before a goal can be scored. If on an Indirect Free Kick the ball is kicked into the goal without anyone else touching it (other than the kicker) the goal does not count and the other team is awarded a goal kick.

It's a foul for any player except the goalkeeper, inside his own team's penalty box, to intentionally touch the ball with his arms or hands. In U6-U8 there is no goalkeeper, so the "hands" rule applies to every player on the field.) Dangerous or reckless play is a foul, including "high kicks" near other players who could potentially be injured. You may not spit, use foul or abusive language, grab, trip, etc. Players, coaches, or spectators may not yell derogatory remarks. You may not verbally or physically abuse or argue with the referee or assistant referees. The general philosophy on calling fouls is that they must be intentional. However, committing an otherwise unintentional foul by conducting oneself in a reckless manner is considered intentional. For example, the "hands" foul is often called, even when the player didn't see the ball coming, because he had his hands and arms extended where the ball could hit them. Whether or not an act is intentional is up to the judgment of the referee, and is not subject to appeal. A foul should not be called if calling it gives the offending team an advantage. In general, it is important to let the flow of the game continue as much as possible. If players are committing numerous incidental fouls simply because they don't know any better or just don't have the playing skills to do better, the referee should use good judgment in deciding what to call. The important thing is to call fouls fairly and evenly for both sides and to avoid danger to the players. Both players and their parents should be educated about these principles, so they don't get upset at a referee who may in fact be doing a fine job of controlling the game!

Knowing the Rules of the Game

1. Understand the object of the game. The object of the game is to score more goals than the opponent scores. A goal is scored when any part of the ball passes the goal line. Goalies in their own penalty area are the only players on the pitch who can use their hands. All other players may use any part of their bodies except their arms.

2. Know the positions of soccer.

- **Goalie:** this person protects the net and is the only one on the field who can use their hands in the penalty area. The goalie has to be flexible, quick to anticipate, and good at communication.
- **Defenders.** Defenders usually stay behind the half-way line in an effort to help prevent goal from being scored against them. They make good outlet passes and are usually bigger physically than other players.
- **Midfielders.** Midfielders do the most running, as they play a combination of defense and offense. They usually orchestrate the attack. They're exceptionally good at holding onto the ball and passing.
- **Forwards/strikers.** These are the ones who get the most cracks at shooting the ball. They need to be quick, agile, and able to shoot a stunning shot. They also need to be excellent headers.

3. Know that kickoff starts the game and the beginning of the second half. One team starts the game by kicking off. The opposite team gets to kick off after halftime. At the time of kickoff, each team's players need to be entirely on their half of play. Once the whistle has blown and the ball is kicked, the players can move freely into both halves of play, provided they are not offside.

4. Understand offside. Offside is one of the more crucial rules in soccer, and it's designed to keep soccer players from bunching a lot of their players near the opponent's goal at all times.

- A player is offside when he/she is:
 - Ahead of the ball, as well as
 - In the opponent's half, as well as
 - Behind the last defender when the ball is passed to him by one of his teammates

Offside is judged at the exact instant the ball is played/contacted. Officials often listen for the thud of the foot meeting the ball as it is passed forward. The attacker may move to an offside position after the thud, but not before.

- An attacker may never be declared offside on:
 - Throw-ins
 - Corner kicks
 - Goal kicks
 - A ball played by an opponent

A player is not offside unless he affects the play. If the player in the offside position has no effect on the play, there should be no offside call.

5. Understand throw-ins. Throw-ins happen when the ball fully travels outside the area of play. Possession goes to the team who *wasn't* the last to touch it. This team gets to throw the ball in from the place where it went out of bounds.

- A player throwing can get a running start, but must generally stop near the area where the ball went out of bounds.
- A player must bring the ball up with both hands behind his or her head and release the ball over his head with both hands.
- A player cannot lift his or her feet off the ground while they are throwing the ball. Both feet must stay on the ground.

6. Know the Misconducts and the Major Fouls.

Misconducts: there are 8 misconducts, 4 of which can be committed by the goalie

1. Dangerous play to an opponent
2. Impeding the progress of an opponent
3. Obstructing the goalie from releasing the ball
4. Goalie touching a ball after he has received it directly from a teammate from a throw in
5. Goalie touching a ball after receiving a ball deliberately kicked to him by his teammate
6. Goalie touches the ball after he has released it and it has not touched another player
7. Goalie takes more than six seconds to release the ball after he has controlled it.
8. Commits an offence not mentioned above which receives a caution (yellow card).

Major Fouls: There are 10 major fouls. For a foul to occur, three things must exist: action is on the field; ball is in play; and the action is directed against the opponent or the opposing team.

The first six offences must, in the judgment of the referee, be done in a careless, reckless or excessive force manner:

1. Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
2. Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
3. Jumps at an opponent
4. Charges an opponent
5. Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
6. Pushes an opponent

The last four:

7. Tackles an opponent to gain possession of the ball, making contact with the opponent before touching the ball
8. Holds an opponent
9. Spits at an opponent
10. Handles the ball deliberately (except for the goalkeeper within his own penalty area)

7. Know the grounds for a yellow card (caution). A referee issues a yellow card as a warning to a player. Two yellow cards result in a red card, after which that player must leave the game permanently. Reasons for yellow cards include:

- Unsporting behavior
- Dissent by word or action
- Persistent infringement of the Laws of the Game
- Delay of the restart of play

- Entering or leaving the field of play without the referee's permission

8. Know the grounds for a red card (ejection). A red card can be given out before a yellow card if especially dangerous play is involved, although a red card usually results from two yellow cards. Reasons for red cards include:

- Serious foul play
- Violent conduct
- Spitting at an opponent or any other person
- Denial of an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick.
- Denial of a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (this does not apply to a goalkeeper within his own penalty area)
- Use of offensive, insulting or abusive language
- A second caution (yellow card) in the same match

9. Know the difference between a direct free kick and an indirect free kick.

An indirect free kick will be given to a team whose opponents commit misconduct.

A direct free kick will be given to a team whose opponents commit a major foul.

On a direct free kick, the kicking team may score a goal directly from the kick, without the ball touching another teammate first. On an indirect free kick, the ball must be touched by another teammate before going into the goal.

The referee indicates an indirect free kick with an upraised arm, like the letter I in "indirect". A direct free kick is indicated by pointing in the direction the kick is to be taken.

The player taking a direct or indirect free kick may decide to kick the ball before the opponents have moved ten yards away. This is called a quick kick. It is considered unsporting for opponents to stay intentionally closer than ten yards from the ball, and they may be punished with a caution.

10. Know that a foul inside the penalty box results in a penalty kick. A penalty kick happens when a defender fouls an opponent in his or her own penalty box. All other players except the goalie and the player taking the penalty kick must be at least 10 yards from the ball, and outside the penalty area. The goalie must stand with both feet on the goal line and may move side to side but not off of it before the ball is struck. The ball is placed on a designated area called the penalty spot. After the ball is hit, it is live, meaning that if it ricochets off the goalie or post, it can be played by either team.

11. Know the difference between a corner kick and a goal kick. If the ball goes over the goal line (but not into the goal) and was last touched by the defending team, the ball goes to the closest goal line corner and becomes a corner kick, with possession going to the attacking team. If the ball goes over the goal line (but not into the goal) and was last touched by the attacking team, the ball goes to the edge of the 6-yard box and becomes a goal kick, with possession going to the defending team. The goalie usually takes a goal kick.

Essential Skills

1. Learn how to dribble. Dribbling is controlling the ball while running. If you want to keep the ball in your team's possession, you're going to need to dribble well. Dribbling is all about touching the ball strong enough to carry it forward, but light enough so that it stays by your side — and away from opponents.

- You can dribble with the inside of your shoe, above the toe (with the foot pointed down toward the ground), and even with the outside of the shoe. The safest way to dribble is probably with the inside of your shoe, but in different situations, you'll have to use different parts of the shoe.
- Learn to dribble at different speeds. When you're running down the sideline and you've beaten your man, your dribbling will look a lot different from when you're taking on a defender head on.
 - When you're dribbling slower, you usually keep the ball close to your side at all times. This way a defender has to make a move to take the ball away.
 - When you're dribbling faster, you can sometimes kick the ball further away and *run to* the ball. This is usually if you've already beaten your man. You do this because most players can run quicker off the ball than they can while dribbling it.

2. Learn how to pass. Passing is all about putting the ball exactly where you want it. In order to pass a soccer ball, kick the ball using the inside of your foot. This will give you less power but more accuracy. Once you master the basic pass, you can then try to slice and hook the ball in order to pass it to one of your teammates.

- Pay attention to where your planter foot is placed. Your planter foot should be right next to the ball, your toe pointed in the direction you want the ball to travel.
- Anticipate where a player is going to be. Because you're often going to be passing on the fly, kicking the ball to an open space *where you want your teammate to be* is essential. If your teammate is running, always kick the ball ahead of them so that they can run to the ball.

3. Know how to shoot. If you're really close to the goal and all you need is accuracy, you can shoot using the sweet spot of the inside of your shoe, like a pass, but usually, you're going to be farther away and will need power as well as accuracy, of course.

- Set your planter foot and aim the toe of the planter foot to where you want the shot to travel and always have a slight look at the target before you shoot.
- You don't have to get much of a running start, but you do want to bring your foot back, bending it as you do in order to get more power.
- Hit the ball on the middle laces of your shoe, with your foot pointed down at the ground. Keep your foot pointed down at the ground as you follow through.
- Use your hips to swing through the ball. Bring your foot across your body if necessary to generate even more power. This should cause both feet to lift from the ground.

4. Think about moving off the ball. Some estimates say that professional soccer players run 6 to 8 miles during a 90 minute game. That's a lot of running. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that a lot of the running you'll be doing is when you *don't have the ball*. Learn how to get into open space, how to run to where your teammate expects or wants you to be, and how to run past a defender who's guarding you.

5. Learn how to defend. Defending the goal is an underrated achievement. It can be extremely difficult staying on your man or getting the ball away from your man.

INSURANCE

STYSA provides secondary accident insurance for the registered players. It's secondary to your own health insurance. The insurance runs from August 1st to July 31st for the seasonal year that the player registered for. The insurance can only be used when a player is injured while playing on a STYSA certified field. The club's fields are certified each year. *If your team wishes to practice at any other location, you have to notify the club with a written request providing the address of the location, so the club can include that location into the fields' certification process.*

CARE AND PREVENTION OF INJURIES

Most often you'd only need to provide an understanding shoulder to cry on in case of minor scrapes and bumps. But you should also know about the more serious injuries and their suggested treatments. It's a good idea for you to put together a first aid kit of your own and carry with you on the fields as part of your equipment bag.

Head Injury/Concussion: The services of a medical professional are **mandatory** for any serious head injury.

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. This usually occurs from a blow to the head from the head or the foot of another player, from a player running into the goalpost or by a player having his feet taken out from under him and landing on the back of his head - which causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. Head injuries which render the player unconscious are serious and can be life threatening.

Symptoms: possible dizziness, headache, disorientation, ringing in the ears, vomiting. For more information and a check-list of possible signs, see "*Parent/Athlete Concussion Information Sheet*" and "*Concussion Signs and Symptoms Checklist*"

Your response should be:

1. ***Remove the athlete from play.*** Look for signs and symptoms of a concussion if your athlete has experienced a bump or blow to the head or body. When in doubt, keep the athlete out of play.

2. ***Ensure that the athlete is evaluated by a health care professional experienced in evaluating for concussion.*** Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Health care professionals have a number of methods that they can use to assess the severity of concussions. As a coach, recording the following information can help health care professionals in assessing the athlete after the injury:

- Cause of the injury and force of the hit or blow to the head or body
- Any loss of consciousness (passed out/knocked out) and if so, for how long
- Any memory loss immediately following the injury
- Any seizures immediately following the injury
- Number of previous concussions (*if any*)

3. **Inform the athlete's parents or guardians about the possible concussion and give them the Information sheet on concussion.** Make sure they know that the athlete should be seen by a health care professional experienced in evaluating for concussion.

4. **Keep the athlete out of play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating for concussion, says they are symptom-free and it's OK to return to play.** A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first - usually within a short period of time (hours, days, or weeks) - can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of having long-term problems. In rare cases, repeat concussions can result in edema (brain swelling), permanent brain damage, and even death.

If a concussion occurs and the player is rendered unconscious, the injury must be handled in a very serious manner. Call 911. Immediately check the injured player's breathing and heartbeat, and then attempt to revive him. Applying ice to the neck or keeping the player flat on his back while lifting his legs will usually bring an unconscious player around. He should be kept as comfortable as possible.

Only when he has been revived and stabilized should he be removed from the field. Under no circumstances should he return to the field of play. He can return to play after a doctor has examined him.

Nose Bleed: place the player in a sitting position with the head forward. Apply pressure to just below the bridge of the nose for about 10 minutes. Use ice when necessary.

If you suspect a head or neck injury, do not try to control the bleeding. Instead, stabilize the head and call 911.

Heat Stroke: Immediate transport to a hospital is **mandatory** for a heat stroke. Lower the body temperature.

Heat stroke occurs when the body becomes unable to control its temperature: the body's temperature rises rapidly, the sweating mechanism fails, and the body is unable to cool down. Body temperature may rise to 106 degrees Fahrenheit or higher within 10-15 minutes. Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not given.

Symptoms: high body temperature, hot/dry/red skin, sweating mechanism is blocked, pulse is rapid and strong, confusion, throbbing headache, dizziness, nausea.

Your response should be:

1. Make immediate arrangements to transport the player to a hospital.
2. Get the player to a shaded area.
3. Remove clothing and keep the player cool using any means available to lower the body temperature such as ice or cold water bath or cold drinks.
4. If emergency personnel is delayed, call the hospital emergency room for further instructions.

Avoid heat strokes by: being aware of weather conditions and by being certain that players take numerous (every 7-10 minutes) water breaks when training in hot weather. Teach players to be pre-hydrated before games and practices.

Heat Exhaustion: Have the player rest, cool off, drink plenty of liquids.

Heat exhaustion is the body's response to an excessive loss of the water and salt contained in sweat. Those most prone to heat exhaustion are elderly people, people with high blood pressure, and people working or exercising in a hot environment.

Symptoms: cool/moist skin or heavy sweating, paleness, tiredness, weakness, headache, dizziness, nausea, muscle cramping, fainting.

Your response should be: Have the player lie down and rest in a cool place. Make sure the player drinks plenty of cool liquids. Though heat exhaustion is not life threatening, it must be taken seriously and treated immediately as it may progress to heat stroke if left untreated.

Broken Bones: Immediately call an ambulance. Keep calm and prevent the player from going into shock.

Keep the player comfortable, and, if possible, block his vision of the broken limb. Keep the player warm and talk to him calmly and quietly. Do not remove the player from the field regardless of the game situation. If anyone observed the injury, they should describe what happened to the medical person.

Sprains: The treatment is ***RICE*** – Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation.

Sprains happen a lot in soccer. Players can sprain an ankle, a knee, or a wrist.

Your response should be:

1. ***Rest:*** immediately get the athlete off the injured limb.
2. ***Ice:*** apply ice to the injury
3. ***Compression:*** apply a firm wrap to hold the ice on the injured area. This is NOT a tourniquet.
4. ***Elevate:*** elevate the injury in order to discourage more blood moving to the injured area. Avoid at all cost the theory of “running it off”. Avoid applying heat to a sprained area.

Cramps: A cramp to a muscle can occur either from a blow, an overextension by the player himself, or from sheer fatigue and lack of drinking fluids. For a fatigue cramp, apply pressure opposite to the extension that caused the cramp. If the cramp occurs because of a blow or overextension, apply ice to minimize swelling. Provide cool place, rest and fluids.

Blisters: Apply ice.