

K-2 School Soccer League Rules, Coach Conduct / Parent Guidelines, Compliance, and Participating Team Commitment

Purpose

The purpose of our league is to provide a developmental and fun environment for teaching, engaging, and promoting soccer and life lessons.

We aim to teach through a collaborative environment that includes the coaches, players, parents, and participating schools/religious organizations, with the goal of mental, athletic, and physical development. Coaches and players will not engage in a win-at-all-costs mentality. Coaches will teach on the field during the games and will work together to fairly referee the game. The focus will be on teaching. For example, if a player improperly performs a throw-in, teach the player how to throw in and then allow another throw-in. Coaches shall promote fair play, sportsmanship, effort, and embrace mistakes.

Participating Team Commitment

As a participating team, you agree to support the league's stated purpose and embrace the league's developmental culture. You agree to respect the league rules, the fields, and the surrounding property, show up on time, and provide timely communication if issues arise. You will adhere to all state and other governing body rules and regulations for your sports program, including the training and compliance of your coaching staff. You warrant that your organization maintains liability insurance for your players and has signed the league's Hold Harmless, Indemnification, and Insurance Compliance Agreement. You further warrant that all of your players have registered with the league's registration system prior to play.

Field and Equipment

Format: 6v6 format, including goalkeeper

Ball Size: Size 3 ball for the K-1 games; size 4 ball for the grades 1-2 games.

Equipment: Shin guards are mandatory and should be checked by the team's coach before the game. A long sock should be worn to cover the guard. Coaches should also have players remove loose jewelry, wristbands, or other items that could cause injury during contact. This rule exists for the player's safety. Soccer cleats are highly recommended, and shoes should also be checked prior to the game to ensure the players are not wearing metal spikes or other shoes that could cause injury to other players.

Jersey: Each team should provide a shirt that distinguishes it from the other teams

Field: We will play at University School's Lower campus, located at 20701 Brantley Rd., Shaker Heights. Fields will be 30 yards wide and 45 yards long. The corner arc should extend about 1 yard into the field. The center circle should extend 3-4 yards from the center.

Goals: We will use 6-foot-high x 8-foot-wide goals. The goalie box should be about 3 yards deep and extend 3 yards on each side of the goal. Touchlines and Endlines should extend the length of the field, and the midline should extend the width of the field.

Game Format, Teams & Rules

Referee: Coaches will work collaboratively to referee a fair, competitive match that promotes competition, effort, learning, and the embrace of mistakes. All aspects of the coach's responsibilities shall focus on the league's stated mission and player safety.

Divisions: The league will host four divisions:

- Boys Kindergarten combined with 1st graders
- Boys 1st graders combined with 2nd graders
- Girls Kindergarten combined with 1st graders
- Girls 1st graders combined with 2nd graders

Team Size: To provide an optimal experience for players, we recommend targeting at least 50% of game time, with adequate rest for individual players. As a result, teams should target 9-12 players per game.

Game Duration: We will play two 20-minute halves with an approximate 5-minute halftime. There will not be extended play. Please be mindful that the team after your game needs 10-15 minutes to warm up before play, and to keep your game to the 45-minute game allocation. Please start on time.

Start/Restart of Play: We will start play each half with a kickoff. The coaches will determine which goal their team will defend for each half of play.

Free Kicks: All free kicks will be indirect; opposing players should stand at least 10 yards away from the kicker. We will NOT use penalty kicks. Free kicks will be awarded based on:

- Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
- Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
- Jumps at an opponent
- Charges an opponent
- Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
- Pushes an opponent
- Tackles an opponent to gain possession of the ball, making contact with the opponent before touching the ball
- Holds an opponent
- Spits at an opponent
- Handles the ball deliberately
- Plays in a dangerous manner
- Impedes the progress of an opponent

Goal and Corner Kicks: We will use both. Opposing players shall stand 10 yards away.

Heading: Heading is NOT allowed and will be awarded an indirect free kick for violations.

Substitutions: Substitutions will be awarded on any stoppage of play. Players should line up on the midline prior to substituting, and coaches will coordinate the substitution.

Throw-ins: We will use throw-ins, two hands on the ball, over the head, both feet on the ground. Coaches shall be mindful of the developmental purpose of the league and allow for learning opportunities.

Record and Score: We will not keep a record, we will not keep score, there will not be a division champion, and there will not be participation trophies. Just fun and learning.

Parent Guidelines

We recommend you provide the following statement to the parents of your participating athletes.

You play an important role in your child's sports experience, so we have provided guidelines to help maximize it. We hope you will focus on effort and attitude, not on results or score. Please recognize that players of this age pay close attention to adult reactions, emotions, and facial expressions as they seek acceptance, so try to keep your responses positive and constructive at all times. Please do not criticize coaches' calls, as you set an example for the team and your child. Please try to learn the names of all the players and support their plays as well as your child's. To this end, please be supportive and root for the other team's players and plays. Please be supportive of the parents from the opposing team. We hope you focus on the life lessons of sports such as teamwork, communication, perseverance, effort, and attitude. After the game, please resist the temptation to critique. Let your child calm down, ask a positive question such as "What was your favorite part of the game today?" and listen to their response. When things don't go their way, please recognize that they sometimes need time to decompress and may need time not to talk. When you speak with them, focus on confidence-building statements such as "I know you are upset about your missed goal, and you are the kind of kid who tries hard and will get it next time." These comments are intended as a brief summary. Please visit the [Positive Coaching Alliance](#).

Compliance

Coaches – IT IS THE INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL'S RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE ALL OF YOUR COACHES HAVE COMPLETED AND ARE CURRENT WITH THE FOLLOWING:

1. Current with all Concussion Training
2. Catholic Schools Only: Background Checks/Virtus Training
3. Watched the required video and read the handout for Lindsay's Law.

Parents – IT IS THE INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL'S RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE ALL OF YOUR PARENTS/PLAYERS HAVE COMPLETED THE STATE MANDATED REQUIREMENTS REGARDING LINDSAY'S LAW AND TO KEEP THE SIGNATURE FORMS ON FILE. THESE INCLUDE:

1. Required video
2. Required SCA Informational Handout

3. Required Signature Form

Compliance Resources

Concussion Training: Concussion training is highly recommended and is left to each individual school to implement. A potential course:

<http://nfhslearn.com/courses/61037/concussion-in-sports>

Lindsay's Law: Lindsay's Law is about Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) in youth athletes. This law went into effect in 2017. SCA is the leading cause of death in student athletes 19 years of age or younger. SCA occurs when the heart suddenly and unexpectedly stops beating. This cuts off blood flow to the brain and other vital organs. SCA is fatal if not treated immediately. Information on this new law can be found at [Lindsay's Law](#).

Coach Resources

Coaches Code of Conduct¹

Coaches are key to establishing and upholding the ethics in soccer. Their ethical standards and attitude directly affect the behavior of players under their supervision. Coaches are, therefore, expected to pay particular care to the moral aspect of their conduct.

Coaches must be aware that nearly all of their everyday decisions and actions carry ethical implications.

It is natural that winning constitutes a basic concern for coaches. This code is not intended to conflict with that. However, the code calls for coaches to disassociate themselves from a win-at-all-costs attitude.

Increased responsibility is requested from coaches involved in coaching young people. The health, safety, welfare and moral education of young people are a first priority, before the achievement or the reputation of the club, school, coach or parent.

1. Coaches must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat each equally within the context of the sport, regardless of gender place of origin, color, sexual orientation, political belief or economic status.
2. Coaches must place the well-being and safety of each player above all other considerations. Coaches must never place the value of winning over the safety and welfare of the players.
3. Coaches must adhere to all guidelines laid down by governing bodies.
4. Coaches must direct comments or criticism at performance rather than the athlete.
5. Coaches must not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward.
6. Coaches must encourage and guide players to accept responsibility for their own behavior and performance.
7. Coaches must ensure that the activities they institute are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of the players.

¹ Virginia Youth Soccer Association

8. Coaches must abstain from the use of tobacco products and alcohol while in the presence of athletes.
9. Coaches must co-operate fully with other specialists (e.g., other coaches, officials, sports scientists, doctors, physiotherapists) in the best interests of the player.
10. Coaches must always promote the positive aspects of the sport (e.g., fair play) and never condone violations of the Laws of the Game, behavior contrary to the spirit of the Laws of the Game or relevant rules and regulations, or the use of prohibited substances or techniques.
11. Coaches must consistently display high standards of behavior and appearance.
12. Coaches must not use or tolerate inappropriate language.
13. Coaches must regularly seek ways of increasing professional development and continuing coaching education

Coach Training/Player Lesson Plans:

Please find resources to help with lesson plans below.

www.usyouthsoccer.org

[Session Plans – Massachusetts Youth Soccer](#)