

## Recreational Program Benefits

UYSA provides, through its Leagues, a fun based program to introduce soccer to our youngest players, 5-10 years old and those older players who do not desire to move to a competitive level of play. This program combines learning in a fun and positive environment and the excitement of play through small-sided games. As part of this program, a set of well thought-out practice sessions have been prepared to assist coaches in introducing children to the fundamentals of soccer techniques through fun practice games and then put these newly learned skills to use by playing small-sided games against other teams. The program operates under the simple belief that kids learn by playing. Thus, everyone plays in virtually 100% of the time in practices and at least equally in games. It is UYSA's goal that by creating a developmentally appropriate and fun-filled environment, children can be provided with the foundation to enjoy the game of soccer for many years to come.

### UYSA Believes the Program Benefits

#### Players

- Practice sessions designed around activity and fun: no lines, short explanations, fun games, lots of touches on the ball, conducive to learning, learning by playing.
- Small-sided games maximize active participation and touches on the ball.
- Allows the Game to be the teacher!!
- Equal Playing Time.
- Ensures that their introduction to the game of soccer is fun!!
- Cultivates an affection and appreciation for the game of soccer.

#### Coaches

- Provided with short, age appropriate, introductory training in coaching youth soccer through the youth module program.
- Take what they have learned in the youth module and continues to nurture their introduction to the game.
- Developmentally appropriate practice curriculums that allow first time coaches to create a fun environment conducive to learning for their players.
- Small-sided age appropriate practices and equal playing time in games for players, alleviates pressures of winning, balancing playing time and positions.
- No scores or standing are kept, this program is about fun not competition.
- Cultivates an appreciation and affection for the game of soccer.

#### Parents

- Program facilitates the education of parents and provides perspective emphasizing the development of youth, not winning at all costs.
- Creates a positive environment for their children to learn and have fun.
- Small-sided game format alleviates parental pressures of playing time, their child being stuck in a position and stresses development, not winning.
- Their kids are guaranteed to learn and have fun playing soccer in this program, what parent wouldn't like that!
- Inexpensive program is run and administered in your local community by your neighbors for the kids in the local area.
- Screening of adult volunteers.
- Cultivates an affection and appreciation for the game of soccer.

#### Leagues

- It is a great program with the focus being on the development of everyone involved: players, coaches and parents.
- Eases recruiting of volunteer coaches and facilitates the likelihood of them continuing to coach.
- Program design alleviates potential burnout at young ages and instead cultivates a love for the game.
- Great recruiting tool to attract new members at the youngest age levels entering youth soccer for the first time. Instruction, games, playing almost 100% of the time during practices.
- Easy program to run as both a fall and spring program (minimizes fields required and league administrator time commitment).
- Provide uniforms and equipment
- Scheduling of teams and fields

- One practice and one game per week during the Spring and Fall seasons.
- Insures neighborhood control of the program.

#### Referees

- Non-profit umbrella
- Teams are formed by neighborhood and balanced to assure each team is playing on an equal level.
- Provides the opportunity for players to move up to higher levels of play as their age, individual desire and skills develop.
- Reflects the philosophy of player development expressed in state and national coaching schools. UYSA Provides
- Guidance and assistance in administering a recreation program through the state office and the local District and League.
- Professional education, age appropriate, short training classes for each coach consisting of the following sections:
  - Overview
  - The Players
  - Small-sided Games
  - Essential Concepts
  - Practice Sessions
  - Team Management
  - Coaching
  - Injury Prevention and Care
- Coaching Clinic opportunity - running through a practice session with your coaches.
- Recreation level, small sided, inexpensive tournaments for the recreational player and teams such as the Tide America Cup.
- Liability and secondary medical insurance for participants
- Risk management including criminal background checks, financial oversight, and safety of fields.
- TopSoccer for the physically/mentally handicapped
- Code of ethics
- Website
- Common set of rules and procedures
- State and National recognition for volunteers
- Ongoing support by the UYSA, Director of Development, State Technical Director and the State Office.
- Access to US Soccer Federation and US Youth grants for field and program development, approximately 2 million per year

As a means of providing insight as to how we have come to develop this program and why certain games work so well in practice sessions, we have done so with an understanding of the physical, mental and social characteristics of the age groups that we are dealing with. It is for these reasons that it is so important that the activities we utilize in training sessions are "Developmentally Appropriate" for that age group. Be sure to keep these things in mind as you go through your season and reference them from time to time, just to keep things in perspective.