

Methuen Youth Soccer Association, Incorporated



POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS

PARENT HANDBOOK SPRING 2018



Last Revised: February 15, 2018

Methuen Youth Soccer Association, Incorporated

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Dear Parents:

Today I heard a comment made about me behind my back. I started to turn around and look, but then decided better of it and kept my eyes on the field. My wife hears things like this more often than I do, because many of you don't know who she is. She tells me what you say. I have received angry emails, full of "suggestions," about who should be playing where and how I... lost that day's game for the kids. I thought I'd write an open letter to all of you parents, even though I might never send it. I'll start it this way: "I am a volunteer."

I'm the one who answered the call when the league said they didn't have enough coaches. I understand that you were too busy. I have some news for you. I'm not retired. I'm busy too. I have other children and a job, just like you do. Not only do I not get paid to do this – it costs me money. I see you walk up to the game 15 minutes after it started, still dressed for work. Do you know I've already been here over an hour? Imagine if you had to leave work early nearly every day. I've never seen you at a practice. I'm sure you're plugging away at the office. But I'm out here, on the field, trying my best to teach these children how to play a sport they love, while my bank account suffers.

I know. I make mistakes. In fact, maybe I'm not even that great of a coach. But I treat the kids fairly and with respect. I am pretty sure they like coming to my practices and games, and without me or someone like me, there'd be no team for them to play on. I'm part of this community too and it's no picnic being out here on this stage like this. It's a lot easier back there with the other parents where no one is second-guessing you.

And I also know you think I give my son or daughter unfair advantages. I try not to. In fact, have you ever considered that maybe I'm harder on him than on the others? I'm sure he hears plenty of criticism at school from classmates, who hear it from you at home, about what a lame coach I am. And if, even unconsciously, my kids are getting a slight advantage because I know them better and trust their abilities, is that the worst thing in the world, considering the sacrifice I'm making? Trust me, I want to win too. And if your son or daughter could guarantee we'd do that, I'd give them the chance.

After this game is over, I'll be the last one to leave. I have to break down the field, put away all the equipment and make sure everyone has had a parent arrive to pick them up. There have been evenings when my son and I waited with a player until after dark before someone came to get them. Many nights I'm sure you've already had dinner and are relaxing on the couch by the time I finally kick the mud off my shoes and climb into my car, which hasn't been washed or vacuumed for weeks. Why bother cleaning it during the season? Do you know how nice it would be if, just once, after a game one of you offered to carry the heavy gear bag to my car or help straighten up the field?

If I sound angry, I'm not. I do this because I love it and I love being around the kids. There are plenty of rewards and I remind myself that while you're at the office working, your kid is saying something that makes us all laugh or brings a tear to my eye. The positives outweigh the negatives. I just wish sometimes those who don't choose to volunteer their time would leave the coaching to the few of us who do.

Letter from a Volunteer Coach
(Author Unknown)

Early and Late Bloomers in Youth Sports: Lessons for Parents & Coaches

Every child is on their own unique developmental timetable

By [BROOKE DE LENCH](#)

Some children are early bloomers who enjoy success in sports because they develop faster, not because they have more raw athletic talent. Some children - even if they appear to only be average athletes or lag behind his peers - may be late bloomers whose athletic talent will only become apparent later when they are teenagers; they may ultimately be more gifted athletes.

The unfortunate fact is that, in a society and youth sports culture that places such a heavy emphasis on winning, an early bloomer enjoys advantages that may continue long after peers have caught up and, in many cases, passed him in terms of skill proficiency. As a result, a late bloomer will be put at a significant disadvantage in getting the attention of coaches and the playing time he needs to develop his skills, and may get so frustrated that quitting the sport becomes the only viable option.

Destined for stardom?

It was a glorious autumn Saturday morning in New England: bright sunshine, temperature in the mid-50's, breezy, the fall foliage at its brilliant peak. Like millions of mothers across America, I was standing with a group of parents at a local elementary school, coffee mugs in hand, watching our sons and daughters play a co-ed, short-sided (7 on 7) recreational soccer game.

While I kept my eye on my three sons whenever they were in the game, I couldn't help but notice one of their teammates, a boy named Jake, who was around their age. It was the first time I had seen him play. It was obvious by the way he ran up and down the field, the skill with which he dribbled the ball, and the strength and accuracy of his shots on goal that, at least at age nine, his soccer skills were more advanced than those of my sons and the other players.

After Jake scored what must have been his fourth or fifth goal of the day, I turned to my husband and said, "I have no way of knowing, of course, but I am willing to bet right now that Jake is going to be captain of the high school varsity." He said, "Well, a lot can happen between now and then, and it is impossible to predict whether he will still be this good when he is seventeen or eighteen, but if he continues to play like this, I wouldn't want to bet against you."

From that point forward, I made a point of following Jake's athletic career. He continued to shine on the soccer field. His select club team won the state championship three years in a row; he was a four-time first-team conference all-star and Offensive Player of the Year in his junior and senior years, and team MVP during his senior season. As captain of his high school varsity, he was a four-year starter and a first-team All-State selection. After an outstanding high school career, Jake played college soccer, ending his college career with a total of four goals and one assist after appearing in a total of forty-five games, all as a sub, for a major university on the West Coast, where he earned conference honorable mention All-Academic honors.

Guessing game

How could I predict that Jake would become a successful high school athlete and play at the collegiate level? I couldn't, of course. I didn't have a crystal ball, or some kind of special ability to spot talent. It was just a lucky guess. As it turned out, the success Jake had as a nine-year old was because he actually was blessed with natural athletic talent. But research suggests that only one in four children who are star athletes in elementary school will still be stars when they reach high school. Predicting

whether a preteen athlete will be a good enough high school athlete to land a college scholarship or even influence the admissions process is thus almost impossible.

As a 2004 article in the *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance* [1] observes, because athletic success involves multiple factors, including genetics, mental attitude, access to training, and money, any attempt to predict future achievement based on how skilled your daughter is at age nine, ten or eleven "is likely to be futile." Each child follows her own unique developmental timetable. While chronological age provides a rough index of developmental level, differences among children of the same age can be and often are great. In other words, as one expert observes, while "development is age related, it is not age *dependent*."

Advantages for Early Bloomers

Here are some of the advantages an early bloomer tends to receive:

- more positive reinforcement and encouragement from adults;
- earlier and more extensive socialization into sports;
- access to better coaching, facilities, and competitive experiences (i.e., places on "select teams") [1] and
- the benefit of a "residual bias" from being viewed as a talented athlete at an early age.

As a 2004 article in the *Journal of Sports Behavior* [2] observes, "Early selection for elite sport participants [thus] can become a self-fulfilling prophecy for athletes and coaches. Players begin to think of themselves as talented and are thus likely to invest more time and effort into their sport with predictable results. As the identity of previously selected players becomes known to coaches and administrators, they watch those players more closely lest they miss an elite performer."

Downsides to being Early Bloomer

Although numerous advantages are conferred on an early bloomer, if your child experiences early success in sports, such success also has some downsides.

An Early Bloomer:

- is often able to **exploit his or her physical ability** without having to work as hard at developing skills as less precocious players in order to stay competitive. When the others catch up physically, they may end up being better players because they have been forced to develop their skills while they grew into their bodies.
- often has to try to **live up to heightened expectations**; this may lead him to practice and play more (e.g. multiple teams during the same season, for instance) than his young body can handle in order to live up to his reputation. Playing under this kind of pressure often leads to burnout and all that extra wear and tear on his body can lead to overuse injuries.
- may **define himself by whether he wins or loses**; if he or she is unable to maintain the success he had early in his athletic career, if that self-image is shattered, the results can be disastrous and may lead her to quit sports altogether.
- may tempt her parents to push her to **specialize too early and/or train too hard**. Excessive training too often leads to burnout and/or overuse injuries, some of which

don't show up until high school or college, but can be traced to excessive training when the player was nine, ten or eleven. Parents need to avoid being lulled into valuing short-term success more than their child's long-term future. If they don't, they may be placing their child's physical safety and emotional health at risk.

Parenting Late Bloomers: Emphasize Skill Development

If your child is an average athlete or lags behind his peers, he may be a late bloomer. Late bloomers receive markedly less social support and reinforcement from parents, coaches, and peers. Worse, the adults charged with the responsibility of evaluating "talent" - most of whom don't understand developmental variability in children - may unfairly nip her athletic career in the bud by concluding that he or she lacks the potential to play sports at the highest competitive levels. Denied a place on a select, middle school, or high school sub varsity team, the late bloomer is more likely to drop out of sports rather than keep playing until he blossoms (that is, achieves his full athletic potential).

Here are **six important lessons** for parents of potential late bloomers:

- **Take a balanced approach.** Do not get too down if your child is not immediately a superstar or too high if he is. The important thing is that he continues to play, to develop and learn new skills.
- **Emphasize the process and the journey**, not the results achieved; therefore,
- **Avoid praising the *outcome* and instead praise *effort*;**
- **Help your child see herself as a whole person**, not just as an athlete;
- **Be realistic about possible reasons for early athletic success.** Make sure your child understands that early success is not a guarantee of future success (and vice versa).
- **Select a sports program that understands child development.** Pick a program that recognizes that variability in the way children's athletic talent develops by offering all children a chance to play as long as they want to.

Adapted from the book, *Home Team Advantage: The Critical Role of Mothers in Youth Sports* (HarperCollins 2006) by Brooke de Lench, founder and Editor-in-Chief of MomsTeam.com.

- Brady F. Children's Organized Sports: A Developmental Perspective. *J Phys. Ed, Rec & Dance*. 2004;75(2):35-38.
- Glamser F, Vincent J. The Relative Age Effect Among Elite American Youth Soccer Players. *J Sport Beh*. 2004;27(1):31-38.

General Policies & Procedures

1 AUTHORITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The rules contained herein shall govern members of this Association in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the Constitution and Bylaws of this Association, MAYSA, USYS and USSF. All competition shall be governed by the rules stated herein unless the rules of a specific competition determine otherwise.

Each team shall be responsible for the conduct of its players', coach, manager, team assistants and parents and it is the responsibility of each team to ensure that its actions, on or off the field, do not bring disrespect upon this Association. Each League shall be responsible for the conduct of those persons associated with its operations and it is the responsibility of each League to ensure that its actions do not bring disrespect upon this association.

2 REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

In-Town Program & Travel Registration Dates

There will be scheduled regular registration periods and late registration periods (league and space dependent) per soccer season set by the Methuen Youth Soccer Association (MYSA) Board of Directors (BOD).

In-Town Program & Travel Registration Fees

The MYSA EXECUTIVE BOD will approve registration fees annually. Registration fees must be paid per child per season. Regular Registration will include the normal fee for the season and Late Registration will include an added late charge designated by the MYSA EXECUTIVE BOD. Registration Fees are non-transferrable between players.

In-Town Program & Travel Registrations

All Methuen and Massachusetts Youth Soccer Association Approved registrations must be fully completed and submitted at time of registration. Failure to do so could prohibit a player from participating in the MYSA program. The Registrar shall have the right to not accept any improperly completed registrations.

In-Town Program Registration Time

Registration for U5 - U13 In-Town players will officially close on March 1st (Spring Season) and August 1st (Fall Season). Once any age group or all In-Town registrations are closed, no more registrations may be accepted unless a Late Registration period (league and space dependent) is created. The MYSA BOD will determine those dates each season and they will be posted via our website.

In the event that MYSA is contacted by a parent or parents after the close of registration the Division Director will review the request. At the Division Directors discretion and depending on league size and availability, the registration request will be approved or denied.

In-Town Program Team Formation

The Division Directors, will form teams from the pool of registered players after the regular registration closes.

In-Town Program Player/Coach Registration and Affiliation

An In-Town player is considered registered and affiliated with MYSA if he/she has properly completed a registration, paid the appropriate fee(s) and has been accepted by MYSA.

A coach is considered registered and affiliated with MYSA if he/she has properly completed a registration, Concussion Awareness course, Nutrition Course and CORI form and has been accepted by MYSA. Each Member of the Coaching Team must be registered and affiliated with MYSA and will be given a lanyard that must be worn at all Games and Practices. This is necessary to provide liability insurance coverage for Coaches, Players and MYSA.

Methuen Uniforms used outside of Methuen Youth Soccer/ECYSA/MA Youth Soccer Sanctioned Events are not permitted.

Travel Registration

A Travel player is considered registered and affiliated with MYSA if he/she has properly completed a registration and paid the appropriate annual fee (and any late fees that may be applicable) and has been accepted by MYSA. Players currently on a Travel team shall register online and pay for the full year, which are the fall and spring seasons. In-Town or new players who are eligible for Travel must register online and pay for the full year, which are both fall and spring seasons. All players who want to play and who are eligible for a U10, U12 or U14 Travel team must tryout. Travel tryouts take place every May. Late registrations will only be considered on an as needed basis.

For the upcoming Travel Season (fall and spring) all Travel players MUST be registered and paid in full by June 1st of the current year.

Failure to do so will result in a \$25.00 late fee and a player can lose their spot on the team they made to another player that is in good standings with their registration. Once their registration is complete and their fees are paid, the player can be placed back into the system and may be assigned to any team still needing a player.

Failure to complete registration and pay fees can result in the player not being eligible to participate in Methuen Youth Soccer (Travel Program) for that season.

Current Travel players registering or that have registered must comply with Travel Team policies and procedures. This applies to U10 - U14 Travel teams.

U16-U19 Travel Teams (Spring Only)

There are no tryouts, registration is opened in the fall prior to the spring season they want to play. Team selection is based on regular registrations. Teams are built based on the numbers and skill set of those players. The same rules apply for registration and being paid in full as the U10-U14 Travel Teams.

Travel Player/Coach Registration/Affiliation

A Travel player is considered registered with the Essex County league if he/she is properly affiliated with MYSA and listed on the proper affiliated roster for the team he/she is playing for and has a current and valid identification card, stamped by the Essex County Registrar.

A Travel coach is considered registered and affiliated with MYSA if he/she has properly completed a registration, Concussion Course, Nutrition Course, Cori Form and online state forms and has been accepted by MYSA. Each Coach and Assistant Coach(es) of each team must be registered and affiliated with and will be given a lanyard that must be worn at all Games and Practices. This is necessary to provide liability insurance coverage for Coaches, Players and MYSA. Additionally, Essex County Travel Coaches and Assistant Coaches for each team in the Essex County league shall have a Coaches identification card with photo stamped by the Essex County Registrar.

Methuen Uniforms used outside of Methuen Youth Soccer/ECYSA/MA Youth Soccer Sanctioned Events are not permitted.

In- Town Program & Travel Registration Payments

All fees must be paid in full at the time of registration by credit card. Registration fees are non-refundable, except for a medical condition prior to the start of the season. Uniform fees will be refunded if uniforms have not been ordered. Any checks that are returned due to insufficient funds will be assessed an additional \$15 penalty fee to cover bank charges and MYSA administrative cost. Failure to pay may prohibit a player from participating in the MYSA program. The Board of Directors will determine the amount of the fees annually.

Non-Methuen Resident Player Registration Policy

MYSA will continue to allow the youth from other towns to play in MYSA Intown program. Children wishing to participate in MYSA In-Town program are NOT required to have a waiver from their town organization in order to play.

MYSA will continue to allow the youth from other towns to play in the MYSA Travel program provided the follow conditions are met: If the child is a Methuen resident at the time of their initial registration into MYSA and they continue to play within MYSA no waiver is required if they move to another town with a like program. If the child lives outside of Methuen and their town offers a Travel program that they are eligible for then a waiver will be required from that town program/association before MYSA will accept the child's registration.

Out-of-State residents must attain a waiver from their State Soccer Registration Office (In-Town and Travel) and a Town Soccer Waiver (Travel Only).

Online Registration Agreement (This agreement is made by the process of registering your child online)

By registering this child, I agree that I am the legal parent/guardian, I have not falsified information and that the registered child may be subject to age verification before they are authorized to take the field of the registered player. I agree to all terms listed in this document by both Methuen Youth Soccer and MA Youth Soccer.

By completing this registration, I hereby give consent for emergency medical care either by a licensed EMT, ATC or as prescribed by a duly licensed Doctor of Medicine or Doctor of Dentistry. The care may be given under whatever conditions are necessary to preserve life, limb or well being of my dependent.

I understand and agree to the no Refund Policy for the registration after submitted as the league incurs fees and creates teams based on the submitted registration. I also understand and agree that my

request is just that, a request, and it may not be granted. I understand there is no refund for things including but not limited to: not being placed on the team with a friend/coach or on a practice night I request for my child.

MA YOUTH SOCCER REGISTRATION AGREEMENT

FOR PLAYER REGISTRATIONS

I, the registrant, hereby agree and acknowledge the following:

- (1) Recognizing the possibility of injury or illness, and in consideration for US Youth Soccer and members of US Youth Soccer accepting my child as a player in the soccer programs and activities of US Youth Soccer and its members (the "Programs"), I consent to my child participating in the Programs. Further, I hereby release, discharge, and otherwise indemnify US Youth Soccer, its member organizations and sponsors, their employees, associated personnel, and volunteers, including the owner of fields and facilities utilized for the Programs, against any claim by or on behalf of my child as a result of my child's participation in the Programs, including being transported to or from the Programs. I hereby authorize the transportation of my child to or from the Programs.
- (2) My child has received a physical examination by a licensed medical doctor and has been found physically capable of participating in the sport of soccer. I have provided written notice attached to this release setting forth any specific issue, condition, or ailment that my child has that may impact my child's participation in the Programs. I give my consent to have an athletic trainer and/or licensed medical doctor or dentist provide my child with medical assistance and/or treatment and agree to be financially responsible for the reasonable cost of any such assistance and treatment.
- (3) When necessary, I understand that an uploaded or provided photo will only be used for printing on a credential (i.e. ID, Pass Card, Roster) and will not be used for any other purposes without express consent. I consent to Massachusetts Youth Soccer and its affiliates taking photographs, video recordings, and/or sound recordings in documenting the activities of Massachusetts Youth Soccer's programs and services. I hereby grant Massachusetts Youth Soccer and its affiliates' permission to use the negatives, prints, motion pictures, video recordings, audio recordings, or any other reproduction of the same for Massachusetts Youth Soccer and its affiliates' educational and promotional purposes in manuals, on flyers, the internet, or other publications.
- (4) My child and my child's parents and guardians will abide by the rules, policies, procedures and protocols as provided by US Youth Soccer and members of US Youth Soccer, including Massachusetts Youth Soccer and all affiliated member organizations. This includes but is not limited to Birth Date verification by birth certificate, proof of residency in the State of MA and Doctor Physicals/Notes as needed.
- (5) I understand and give permission for my child to participate in practices and games where they may be on the field with players of younger or older ages. I understand and accept there may be risks involved when playing with players of different ages. I am aware that if I do not accept such risks I may remove my child from the field.

I have read this release and waiver of liability and fully understand its terms. I understand that I waive substantial rights by electronically signing this form. I agree to waive all such rights above including the right to file a legal action or assert a claim for personal or physical injury or death of any kind. I electronically sign this release form freely of our own free will.

FOR ADULT REGISTRATIONS

I, the registrant, hereby agree and acknowledge the following:

- (1) Recognizing the possibility of injury or illness, and in consideration for US Youth Soccer and members of US Youth Soccer accepting myself as a participant in the soccer programs and activities of US Youth Soccer and its members (the "Programs"), I consent to my participating in the Programs. Further, I hereby release, discharge, and otherwise indemnify US Youth Soccer, its member organizations and sponsors, their employees, associated personnel, and volunteers, including the owner of fields and facilities utilized for the Programs, against any claim by or on behalf of myself as a result of my participation in the Programs, including being transported to or from the Programs. I hereby authorize the transportation of myself to or from the Programs.
- (2) When necessary, I understand that an uploaded or provided photo will only be used for printing on a credential (i.e. ID, Pass Card, Roster) and will not be used for any other purposes without express consent. I consent to Massachusetts Youth Soccer and its affiliates taking photographs, video recordings, and/or sound recordings in documenting the activities of Massachusetts Youth Soccer's programs and services. I hereby grant Massachusetts Youth Soccer and its affiliates' permission to use the negatives, prints, motion pictures, video recordings, audio recordings, or any other reproduction of the same for Massachusetts Youth Soccer and its affiliates' educational and promotional purposes in manuals, on flyers, the internet, or other publications.
- (3) I will abide by the rules, policies, procedures and protocols as provided by US Youth Soccer and members of US Youth Soccer, including Massachusetts Youth Soccer and all affiliated member organizations.

I have read this release and waiver of liability and fully understand its terms. I understand that I waive substantial rights by electronically signing this form. I agree to waive all such rights above including the right to file a legal action or assert a claim for personal or physical injury or death of any kind. I electronically sign this release form freely of our own free will.

3 ADULT CORI & REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Effective August 14, 2015 a new Adult Registration and CORI registration procedure was implemented and on June 1, 2017 the Adult Registration and CORI Request processes were merged.

- Adults must be a member of an affiliated organization, complete the Mass Youth Soccer Adult/CORI Registration process and be CORI Approved in order to participate in any Massachusetts Youth Soccer Association activities.

Detailed instructions on the new procedures can be found at: ADULT/CORI REGISTRATION:
http://www.mayouthsoccer.org/members/adult_registration/

Every adult associated with all organizations who may have the opportunity to have direct and unmonitored access to children is required by state law to complete the CORI certification process. (Massachusetts CORI Reform - Chapter 385 of the Acts of 2002). The first step of the process will be for all adults to properly register with Mass Youth Soccer using the new Adult Registration process on ShareView.

Using the above requirement of all adults who may have the opportunity to have direct and unmonitored access to children, the following individuals will be required to register:

- Coaches (all types)
- Team Managers, including designated team parents assigned team management responsibilities
- Board members (Officers, Directors, Administrators, Committee Chairs, Appointees, etc.)
- Referees (Note: All USSF Referees will complete their CORI registration through MSRC).
- Trainers (Permanent or Temporary)
- Volunteers
- Organization Employees
- Concession Workers
- Tournament Organizers, Employees, Volunteers
- And, any other persons age 18 or older who may have the opportunity to have direct and unmonitored access to children.

NEW - One Step Adult Reg and CORI Submission Process:

Adult Registration and CORI submissions have been merged. The new Adult/CORI Registration process will register you to your organization and you will also complete the Volunteer Application/Disclosure Statement/Consent for a Criminal Offense Record Inquiry (CORI) Check to Massachusetts Youth Soccer simultaneously.

1. To register, hover over the red ADMINISTRATION tab and click on the Adult/CORI Registration web page link, then use the registration link provided on that page.

***Please print the CORI Agreement form at the end of your CORI submission. This form should be brought to your local organization's CORI Submitter - please do not send your CORI Agreement Form to the State Office.

4 LIMIT DEFINITION

The term “youth” as applied to the Constitution, Bylaws, general procedures and specific rules of this Association, Mass Youth Soccer, the USYS and the USSF, shall mean a youth player who has not reached age of nineteen (19) years prior to August 1st immediately preceding the start of any seasonal year in which they apply for registration.

5 CHECK POLICY

When paying by check, your child's registration will not be complete until the check has cleared your bank. Once cleared, your child is eligible to be placed on a team.

Checks are not accepted during Early Bird Registration, last week of Regular Registration and during Late Registration.

Please note: If your check is returned by your bank for insufficient funds, MYSA will charge a \$15 returned check fee and will require another form of payment, cash or credit card.

6 REFUND POLICY

When signing your child up for soccer you are making a commitment to participate in our program. Teams are created based on your registration entry.

Should your child decide that he/she does not want to play, MYSA will not issue a refund for registration fees. Uniform fees will be refunded if uniforms have not been ordered.

Should you move out of Methuen please notify the Methuen Youth Soccer Registrar at registrar@methuensoccer.org as to what, if any, fees are refundable.

The only exception to this policy is an injury or illness prior to the season start; that will prevent your child from participating for the season. A physician's letter is required. MYSA will issue a full refund once this is received.

7 MOVE UP “PLAY-UP” POLICY

MYSA is not able to honor any “Play-Up” Requests for any Travel or In-Town League. Underage Players (players playing in an age group older than their actual age) is not permitted.

8 MOVE DOWN “PLAY-DOWN” POLICY

MYSA, as required by MAYSA, is not able to honor any “Play-Down” Requests for any Travel or In-Town League. Overage Players (players playing in an age group younger than their actual age) is not permitted unless an ADA waiver is provided as per our insurance regulations.

9 PHOTO POLICY

Methuen Youth Soccer Association (MYSA) respects your right to privacy. MYSA receives photo submissions for our gallery page on our website and Facebook page. By registering your child for enrollment in MYSA, you grant MYSA, or any persons acting for or through them, the right to take, use, reproduce, assign, and distribute photographs, films, videotapes, and sound recordings of your child for use in public relations, slide shows, newspapers, and/or advertising for MYSA, as well as for inclusion on the MYSA website and Facebook page(s). MYSA will not display names or other personal information with the photographs on the website or Facebook page.

You hereby release and discharge MYSA from any and all claims and demands ensuing from or in connection with the use of the photographs, including any and all claims for libel and invasion of privacy. If you do not agree to this waiver, please contact the Registrar at registrar@methuensoccer.com to opt out of MYSA's posting policy.

10 CO-ED POLICY

MYSA reserves the right to combine U7/8, U9/10 and U11/12/13 registered players into Co-ed teams depending on the number of children registered to play.

MYSA will make every effort to create separate teams for boys and girls. However, as seen in past seasons, sometimes this is not possible. Therefore, MYSA reserves the right to combine U7/8, U9/10 and U11/12/13 registered players into Co-ed teams depending on the number of children registered to play.

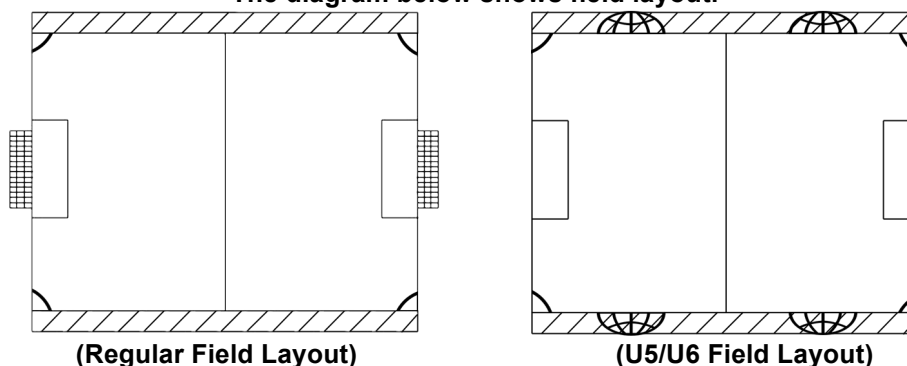
If you choose not to have your child participate in a Co-ed U7/8, U9/10 or U11/12/13 division, you will not receive a refund on registration fees. All other fees such as Uniform Fees and Fundraising fees will be refunded.

11 PLAYING RULES

METHUEN YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION U5 INTOWN LAWS OF THE GAME

1. No abusive language is to be used at any time by coaches, players, or spectators.
 - Coaches - If another coach or player uses abusive language, stop play and give them a verbal warning.
 - If the abusive language continues, ask the coach or player to leave the game and the field of play. If they refuse to leave the field, abandon the game.
 - If a parent uses abusive language, stop the game and give the parent a verbal warning.
 - If the abusive language continues, ask the parent to leave the game and the field of play.
 - Coaches please notify the Division Director immediately upon this type of occurrence.
2. The field of play must be rectangular

The diagram below shows field layout.



3. Goals: Goals must be anchored securely to the ground. Portable goals (Pug Nets) may be used if they satisfy this requirement.
4. The Ball: Size three (3).
5. Teams and games are co-ed.
6. The Players Equipment:
 - Shin Guards must be worn, NO EXCEPTIONS.
 - Uniform Shirt must be tucked into shorts or pants.
 - Soccer cleats (no toe or metal cleats) or Sneakers may be worn
 - No jewelry of any type may be worn on the field. Parents: please do not pierce your child's ears prior to or during the season, as the studs will need to be removed.
 - Medical alert necklaces or bracelets may be worn but must be taped down.

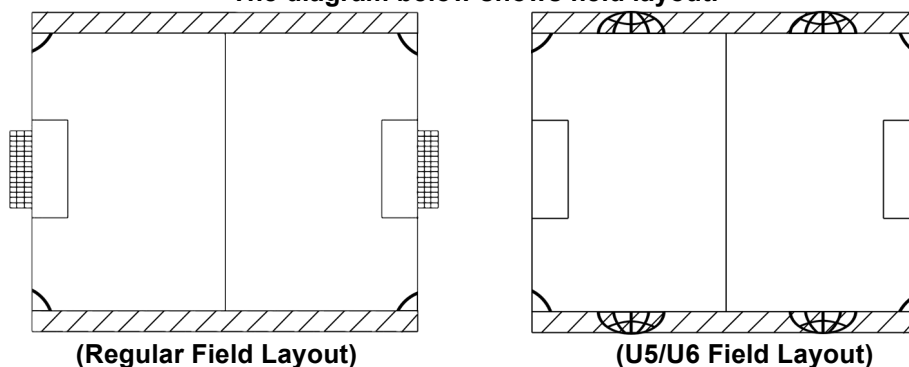
7. The Duration of the Match: 60 minutes of play will be divided into two 30-minute sessions. The first 30 minutes will be designated for practice. Practice plans can be found on the website under the coach's corner. The remaining 30 minutes will be designated for a game. Two 15-minute halves shall be played.
8. The Number of Players: two teams play a match, minimum of 3 vs. 3 and a maximum of 4 vs. 4. There are NO goalkeepers.
9. Substitutions: At any stoppage and unlimited.
10. Playing time: Each player SHALL play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time.

* An 8-Week Practice Plan can be located on our webpage under the COACHING tab, TRAINING SESSIONS drop down menu on <http://www.methuensoccer.org/> It is recommended to follow these guidelines to keep the children learning the same skills per week as a league, but not required.

**METHUEN YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION
U6 INTOWN LAWS OF THE GAME**

1. No abusive language is to be used at any time by coaches, players, or spectators.
 - Coaches - If another coach or player uses abusive language, stop play and give them a verbal warning.
 - If the abusive language continues, ask the coach or player to leave the game and the field of play. If they refuse to leave the field, abandon the game.
 - If a parent uses abusive language, stop the game and give the parent a verbal warning.
 - If the abusive language continues, ask the parent to leave the game and the field of play.
 - Coaches please notify the Division Director immediately upon this type of occurrence.
2. The field of play must be rectangular.

The diagram below shows field layout.



3. Goals: Goals must be anchored securely to the ground. Portable goals (Pug Nets) may be used if they satisfy this requirement.
4. The Ball: Size three (3).
5. Teams and games may be coed.
6. The Players Equipment:
 - Shin Guards must be worn, NO EXCEPTIONS.
 - Uniform Shirt must be tucked into shorts or pants.
 - Soccer cleats (no toe or metal cleats) or Sneakers may be worn
 - No jewelry of any type may be worn on the field. Parents: please do not pierce your child's ears prior to or during the season, as the studs will need to be removed.
 - Medical alert necklaces or bracelets may be worn but must be taped down.

7. The Duration of the Match: 60 minutes of play will be divided into two 30-minute sessions. The first 30 minutes will be designated for practice. Practice plans can be found on the website under the coach's corner. The remaining 30 minutes will be designated for a game. Two 15-minute halves shall be played.
8. The Number of Players: two teams play a match, minimum of 3 vs. 3 and a maximum of 4 vs. 4. There are NO goalkeepers.
9. Substitutions: At any stoppage and unlimited.
10. Playing time: Each player SHALL play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time.

* An 8-Week Practice Plan can be located on our webpage under the COACHING tab, TRAINING SESSIONS drop down menu on <http://www.methuensoccer.org/> It is recommended to follow these guidelines to keep the children learning the same skills per week as a league, but not required.

METHUEN YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION U8 INTOWN LAWS OF THE GAME
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1. No abusive language is to be used at anytime towards the referee, by coaches, players, or spectators.
 - If a coach or player uses abusive language, play will be stopped and they will be given a verbal warning. If the abusive language continues, the coach or player will be asked to leave the game and the field of play. If refusal to leave the field occurs, the game will be abandoned by the Referee.
 - If a parent uses abusive language, the game will be stopped and the coach will be notified. If this continues and the coach does not stop the parent, the game will be abandoned by the Referee. **Referees are not talk to the parents!**
 - The Development Director will be called by the Referee immediately upon this type of occurrence.

2. For any foul, the game will stop (it will restart with an indirect kick):
 - First and second offense is a verbal warning to player and coach.
 - Third offense the player is out for the rest of the half.
 - Fourth offense the player is out for the remainder of that game.

3. **Fouls include:**
 - **Slide Tackling**
 - **Abusive Language or Insubordinate Behavior**
 - **Tripping**
 - **Kicking Opponent**
 - **“Hand Ball” (intentional redirection from shoulders down)**
 - **High Kicks (anything above the waist)**
 - **For Keeper with hand possession of ball - Charging or kicking the ball away**
 - **Holding**
 - **Elbowing (with a jabbing motion)**
 - **Head Balls (intentional redirection of the ball from head or forehead or attempts to head)**

4. **ALL KICKS ARE INDIRECT! No Direct Kicks or Penalty Kicks are awarded!**

5. **No OFFSIDES.**

6. Games should be a minimum of 5 v 5 and a maximum of 6 v 6, which includes the keeper.

7. Two opportunities for throw-ins will be allowed. The Referee will explain to them the correct way. If the 2nd throw-in is incorrect, the opposing team is awarded the throw-in.

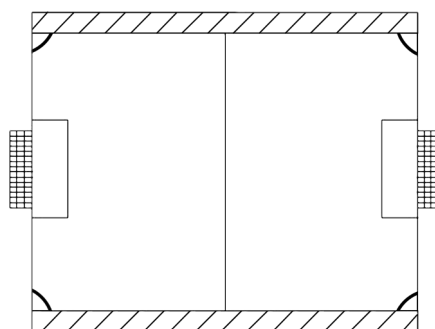
8. Corner Kicks – If the ball goes out of bounds during a corner kick it becomes a goal kick.
9. No goal kick, keeper throw, or keeper punt can travel past the half line (mid-field) in the air. If this happens then an indirect kick is awarded to the opposing team nearest the spot where the ball crossed the half line.

During a goal kick, the opposing team must be behind the mid-line until the ball is touches (this can be by a player or keeper)

- **Clarification: If the ball rolls past the midline, bounces off a player or the ground before crossing the midline it is considered a fair ball.**

10. The keeper needs to step out of the goal to get the ball in play after they make the save. They cannot go back into the net with the ball. If this happens, it will not be called a goal; however the Referee will instruct the goalkeeper and allow play to continue.
11. If a player is injured, play will stop immediately and the other players will be moved away (do not have them “take a knee”). **Injury stoppage of play, results in a drop ball.** The player will not be touched by the Referee. The coach will be called out immediately. **Remember: Safety first is very important.**
12. Games are **2 – 20 minute halves, with a 5-minute half-time.** Time is stopped for Subs. The coaches are urged to move quickly.
13. Substitutions:
 - At the 5 minute mark as called by the referee.
 - **No substitutions on the fly.**
14. Coaches – During the Game only three (3) Coaches may be on the field at any given time. A Coach can help the Keeper, but will stand no closer than the Corner Mark on the Team Sideline and **MAY NOT** stand behind the net.

The field of play must be rectangular. The diagram below shows the Regular field layout (insert corner marks) Goals must be anchored securely to the ground with stakes or sand bags.



METHUEN YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION U10 INTOWN LAWS OF THE GAME

1. No abusive language is to be used at anytime towards the referee, by coaches, players, or spectators.
 - If a coach or player uses abusive language, play will be stopped and they will be given a verbal warning. If the abusive language continues, the coach or player will be asked to leave the game and the field of play. If refusal to leave the field occurs, the game will be abandoned by the Referee.
 - If a parent uses abusive language, the game will be stopped and the coach will be notified. If this continues and the coach does not stop the parent, the game will be abandoned by the Referee.
Referees are not talk to the parents!
 - The Development Director will be called by the Referee immediately upon this type of occurrence.
2. For any foul, the game will stop (it will restart with an indirect kick) If within the 14-yard line the ball is placed closest to where the foul occurred (the defending team will be reminded they can set up a wall):
 - First and second offense is a verbal warning to player and coach.
 - Third offense the player is out for the rest of the half.
 - Fourth offense the player is out for the remainder of that game.
3. **Fouls include (Please refer to the Red/Yellow Card List on Page 30 and use verbal warnings in place of cards):**
 - **Slide Tackling**
 - **Abusive Language or Insubordinate Behavior**
 - **Tripping**
 - **Kicking Opponent**
 - **“Hand Ball” (intentional redirection from shoulders down)**
 - **High Kicks (anything above the waist)**
 - **For Keeper with hand possession of ball - Charging or kicking the ball away**
 - **Holding**
 - **Elbowing (with a jabbing motion)**
 - **Head Balls (intentional redirection of the ball from head or forehead or attempts to head)**
4. **ALL KICKS ARE INDIRECT! No Direct Kicks or Penalty Kicks are awarded!**
5. There will be **OFFSIDES** starting at the **14-yard line down to the goal line**.
6. Games should be a minimum of 6 v 6 and a maximum of 7 v 7, which includes the keeper.
7. At any kick-off, the opposing team players must be outside of the center circle.
8. Two opportunities for throw-ins will be allowed. The Referee will explain to them the correct way. If the 2nd throw-in is incorrect, the opposing team is awarded the throw-in
9. Corner Kicks – If the ball goes out of bounds during a corner kick it becomes a goal kick.

10. No goal kick, keeper throw, or keeper punt can travel past the half line (mid-field) in the air. If this happens then an indirect kick is awarded to the opposing team nearest the spot where the ball crossed the half line.

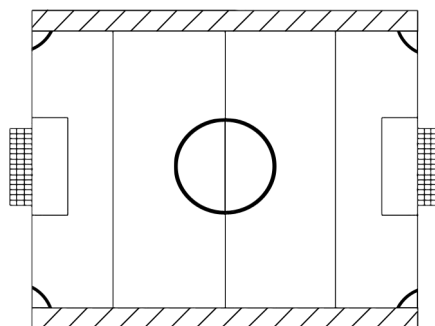
During a goal kick, the opposing team must be behind the mid-line until the ball is touched (this can be by a player or keeper)

Any goal kick or free kick awarded to the defending team inside its own 14-yard line must clear the 14-yard line before **ANY** player can touch the ball. If any player touches the ball inside the 14-yard line the kick is retaken.

- **Clarification: If the ball rolls past the midline, bounces off a player or the ground before crossing the midline it is considered a fair ball.**

11. No pass backs. Any ball passed to the Keeper by their team must be kicked out and may not be picked up. Use of hands on a pass back results in an indirect kick for the opposing team.
12. If a player is injured, play will stop immediately and the other players will be moved away (do not have them "take a knee"). **Injury stoppage of play, results in a drop ball.** The player will not be touched by the Referee. The coach will be called out immediately. **Remember: Safety first is very important.**
13. Games are **2 – 25 minute halves (running time), with a 5-minute half time.**
14. Substitutions:
- At approximately every 4 ½ minutes, coaches will be responsible for having their subs at the midfield line of the sideline.
 - At the next out of bounds, the Referee will then stop and allow for subs to come in.
15. Coaches – During the Game only three (3) Coaches may be on the field at any given time. A Coach can help the Keeper, but will stand no closer than the Corner Mark on the Team Sideline and **MAY NOT** stand behind the net.

The field of play must be rectangular. The diagram below shows the Regular field layout (insert corner marks) Goals must be anchored securely to the ground with stakes or sand bags.



<p style="text-align: center;">METHUEN YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION U13 INTOWN LAWS OF THE GAME</p>
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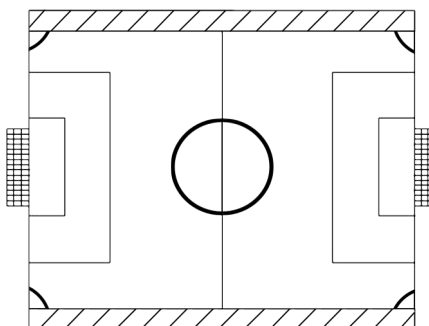
1. No abusive language is to be used at anytime towards the referee, by coaches, players, or spectators.
 - If a coach or player uses abusive language, play will be stopped and they will be given a verbal warning. If the abusive language continues, the coach or player will be asked to leave the game and the field of play. If refusal to leave the field occurs, the game will be abandoned by the Referee.
 - If a parent uses abusive language, the game will be stopped and the coach will be notified. If this continues and the coach does not stop the parent, the game will be abandoned by the Referee.
Referees are not talk to the parents!
 - The Development Director will be called by the Referee immediately upon this type of occurrence.
2. For any foul, the game will stop (restart depends on foul, see below). If within the penalty box, a penalty kick will be awarded. The ball is placed on the penalty dot, all other players must be outside the penalty box and arc. Goalkeeper must stand on the goal line to start. For direct kick penalties, the defending team will be allowed to set up a wall:
 - First and second offense is a verbal warning to player and coach.
 - Third offense the player is out for the rest of the half.
 - Fourth offense the player is out for the remainder of that game.
3. **Fouls include (Please also refer to the Red/Yellow Card List on Page 30 and will use Yellow/Red Cards):**
 - **Slide Tackling**
 - **Abusive Language or Insubordinate Behavior**
 - **Tripping**
 - **Kicking Opponent**
 - **“Hand Ball” (intentional redirection from shoulders down)**
 - **High Kicks (anything above the waist)**
 - **For Keeper with hand possession of ball - Charging or kicking the ball away**
 - **Holding**
 - **Elbowing (with a jabbing motion)**
 - **Head Balls (intentional redirection of the ball from head or forehead or attempts to head)**
4. Yellow & Red Card Procedure (U13 Only)
 - Yellow and Red Cards are kept in the shed.
 - Red Card – Player is dismissed for the remainder of the game
 - Yellow Card – Player sits out for 5 minutes
 - Report from game if card(s) given – Sent to Development Director (Both Referee and Coach must fill the form out)
5. Restart for Fouls
 - Indirect Kicks: Head Balls at any time as well as fouls on Page 28.
 - Direct Kicks: Contact Fouls as well as fouls on Page 29, which are outside the Penalty Area.
 - Penalty Kick: Contact Fouls as well as fouls on Page 29, which are inside the Penalty Area.
6. There will be **OFFSIDES** starting at the **mid-line down to the goal line**.
7. Games should be a minimum of 7 v 7 and a maximum of 9 v 9, which includes the keeper.

8. At any kick-off, the opposing team players must be outside of the center circle.
9. There will be one opportunity for throw-ins. The Referee will explain their mistake to them, then award the opposing team the throw-in.
10. Corner Kicks – If the ball goes out of bounds during a corner kick it becomes a goal kick.
11. Goal kicks, keeper throws, or keeper punts must touch the ground or another player before it reaches the opponents penalty area.

During a goal kick, the opposing team must be behind the penalty box until the ball is touched (this can be by a player or keeper)

Any goal kick or free kick awarded to the defending team inside its own penalty box must clear the penalty box before **ANY** player can touch the ball. If any player touches the ball inside the penalty box the kick is retaken.
12. No pass backs. Any ball passed to the Keeper by their team must be kicked out and may not be picked up. Use of hands on a pass back results in an indirect kick for the opposing team.
13. If a player is injured, play will stop immediately and the other players will be moved away (do not have them “take a knee”). **Injury stoppage of play, results in a drop ball.** The player will not be touched by the Referee. The coach will be called out immediately. **Remember: Safety first is very important.**
14. Games are **2 – 30 minute halves (running time), with a 5-minute half time.**
15. Substitutions:
 - At approximately every 4 ½ minutes, coaches will be responsible for having their subs at the midfield line of the sideline.
 - At the next out of bounds, play will stop and to allow for subs to come in.
16. Coaches – During the Game only three (3) Coaches may be on the field at any given time. A Coach can help the Keeper, but will stand no closer than the Corner Mark on the Team Sideline and **MAY NOT** stand behind the net.

The field of play must be rectangular. The diagram below shows the Regular field layout (insert corner marks). Goals must be anchored securely to the ground with stakes or sand bags.



**METHUEN YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION
U10-U19 TRAVEL LAWS OF THE GAME**

Travel Rules are specified for each Division by Essex Country Youth Soccer Association (ECYSA). Methuen Youth Soccer Association (MYSA) requires all participants to represent this League in a positive light within ECYSA. All Rules and Regulations for the Travel League can be located on the ECYSA website at: <http://www.ecysa.org/>

12 MODIFICATIONS TO THE LAWS OF THE GAME

**METHUEN YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION
MODIFICATIONS TO THE LAWS**

FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION (FIFA) laws of the game (attached as an appendix) apply unless modified in the Basic Rules. The laws are modified for players under 16 and for small-sided soccer vs. full-sided soccer.

Some of the modifications include:

- *Size of the field of play*
- *Number of players*
- *Size, weight and material of the ball*
- *Width between the goalposts and height of the crossbar from the ground*
- *Duration of the periods of play*
- *Substitutions*
- *Offside*
- *No slide tackling*
- *No penalty kicks in U8 or U10*
- *Adopt some of the ECYSA small sided rules*

13 FIFA LAWS OF THE GAME

**METHUEN YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION
FIFA LAWS OF THE GAME**

The FIFA Laws of the Game can be located on our Website with this link in PDF form:

http://www.methuensoccer.org/wp-content/uploads/fifa_laws_of_the_game.pdf



14 INDIRECT FREE KICK GUIDELINES

METHUEN YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION INDIRECT FREE KICK GUIDELINES

INDIRECT FREE KICK

(IFK)

results of non-contact fouls and misconducts

Offside

Plays in a dangerous manner

Impedes the progress of opponent (non-contact)

Prevents keeper from releasing ball

Stoppage in play other than foul

Violation PK procedure by kicking team

(ball does not enter goal)

2nd touch by kicker/thrower on restart (not dropped ball)

GOALKEEPER	Holds ball excessive amount of time before release. (1 st time verbal warning)
	Handles ball after teammate kick or throw-in (inside own Penalty Area)
	Touches ball with hand after releasing it into play prior to touch by another player (inside own Penalty Area)

15 DIRECT FREE KICK GUIDELINES

METHUEN YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION
DIRECT FREE KICK GUIDELINES

DIRECT FREE KICK
(DFK)
results of contact fouls
PK awarded if in defensive Penalty Area

Kick – or attempt to

Trip – or attempt to

Strike – or attempt to

Jump

Hold

Push

Tackle

Charge

Impeded with contact

Spits

Interference (by substitute, team official or sent-off player)

Hand ball

Remember:

Careless, Reckless & Excessive

DFK (PK)

Caution/Warning & DFK (PK)

Dismiss from game & DFK (PK)

16 YELLOW/RED CARD GUIDELINES

<p>METHUEN YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION YELLOW/RED CARD GUIDELINES</p>
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Yellow Card / Warnings:

- Unsporting Behavior
- Dissent – disputing the referee’s decision
 - Persistent Infringement

Red Card / Dismissals:

- Serious Foul Play
 - Violent Conduct
 - Spitting
- Denying goal – Handling
 - Denying goal – Foul
- Language and/or Gesture
- 2nd Yellow Card/Warning

17 HEAD BALL POLICY

Effective immediately, the Massachusetts Youth Soccer Association Board of Directors has voted in and will implement the following policy and modified laws of the game for heading. *This requirement is for all Mass Youth Soccer affiliated activities, including but not limited to, Mass Youth Soccer affiliated member organization league play, practices and tournaments.*

Mass Youth Soccer's current Concussion Protocol remains in effect pending further adoption by the Board of US Soccer's Recognize to Recover (R2R) program initiatives. Mass Youth Soccer will post and appropriately distribute any additional changes, stemming from the R2R program, to rules, policies, guidelines, etc. when determined and as timely as possible.

HEADING

For all Mass Youth Soccer and all Member Organizations the following will be adhered to:

Heading Not Permissible (U8 - U13 InTown – U10 - U12 Travel)

All players in U13 or younger InTown and U12 or younger Travel, shall not engage in heading either in practice as an isolated skill being taught away from any form of opposition or other aspects of the game, using lightweight balls (foam, balloon, etc.) to teach proper technique. This will only be practiced during practice sessions designated by the MYSA Challenger Trainer. ***These age groups shall not engage in heading during a game.***

Limited Heading in Practice, No Limit in Games (U14 Travel Only)

For all players in U13/U14 Travel, heading training will be limited to a maximum of 30 minutes per week with no more than 15-20 headers per player, per week. No limit of heading in games.

Heading Training (U14 Travel Only)

Mass Youth Soccer and all Member Organizations are to inform all coaches to teach and emphasize the importance of proper techniques for heading the ball.

Heading Infraction (U8 - U13 InTown)

For those players designated as not being permitted to head a ball in games as identified in the above section *Heading Not Permissible* the following modified law 12 will apply.

An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player, in the opinion of the referee: Deliberately heads or attempts to head the ball.

If, in the opinion of the referee, a deliberate header or attempt to head occurs within

U10 - the 14-yard line the ball is placed closest to where the foul occurred (the defending team will be reminded they can set up a wall):

U13 - the penalty box, the ball is placed closest to where the foul occurred (the defending team will be allowed to set up a wall).

If, in the opinion of the referee, a player does not deliberately head or attempt to head the ball, then play should continue.

Heading Infraction (U10 - U12 Travel)

For those players designated as not being permitted to head a ball in games as identified in the above section *Heading Not Permissible* the following modified law 12 will apply.

An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player, in the opinion of the referee: Deliberately heads or attempts to head the ball.

If, in the opinion of the referee, a deliberate header or attempt to head occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick will be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred.

If, in the opinion of the referee, a player does not deliberately head or attempt to head the ball, then play should continue.

18 MASS YOUTH SOCCER CONCUSSION POLICY

The Massachusetts Youth Soccer policy on concussions is intended to be clear and unambiguous so as to accurately reflect the seriousness of concussion-related injuries and our unwavering commitment to keeping our children safe.

A player removed from participation as a result of a head injury or symptoms similar to those of a concussion shall not be permitted to return to play to any extent until they have provided their team coach with a written unconditional "Medical Clearance to Return to Play" from a licensed Medical Doctor.

It is our expectation that this policy will clarify protective measures for all involved in youth soccer in Massachusetts and simplify communication between coaches and parents when concussion related issues arise.

19 PARENTS CONCUSSION FACT SHEET



A Fact Sheet for PARENTS

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump or blow to the head. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

You can’t see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?

Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians

If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs and symptoms of a concussion:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes

Symptoms Reported by Athlete

- Headache or “pressure” in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Just “not feeling right” or “feeling down”

HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD PREVENT A CONCUSSION OR OTHER SERIOUS BRAIN INJURY?

- Ensure that they follow their coach’s rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity. Protective equipment should fit properly and be well maintained.
- Wearing a helmet is a must to reduce the risk of a serious brain injury or skull fracture.
 - However, helmets are not designed to prevent concussions. There is no “concussion-proof” helmet. So, even with a helmet, it is important for kids and teens to avoid hits to the head.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD HAS A CONCUSSION?

1. SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION RIGHT AWAY.

A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to regular activities, including sports.

2. KEEP YOUR CHILD OUT OF PLAY.

Concussions take time to heal. Don’t let your child return to play the day of the injury and until a health care professional says it’s OK. Children who return to play too soon—while the brain is still healing—risk a greater chance of having a repeat concussion. Repeat or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.

3. TELL YOUR CHILD’S COACH ABOUT ANY PREVIOUS CONCUSSION.

Coaches should know if your child had a previous concussion. Your child’s coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach.

It’s better to miss one game than the whole season.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/Concussion.

20 PARENTS CONCUSSION SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS



SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS OR GUARDIANS

If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs and symptoms of a concussion:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets sports plays
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
- Can't recall events after hit or fall

SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE

- Headache or "pressure" in the head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not "feel right"

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD HAS A CONCUSSION?

1. **Seek medical attention right away.** A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to sports.
2. **Keep your child out of play.** Concussions take time to heal. Don't let your child return to play until a health care professional says it's OK. Children who return to play too soon—while the brain is still healing—risk a greater chance of having a second concussion. Second or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.
3. **Tell your child's coach about any recent concussion.** Coaches should know if your child had a recent concussion. Your child's coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

FILL IN THE NAME AND NUMBER OF YOUR LOCAL HOSPITAL(S) BELOW:

Hospital Name: _____

Hospital Phone: _____

Hospital Name: _____

Hospital Phone: _____

For immediate attention, CALL 911

It's better to miss one game than the whole season.

For more information and to order additional materials **free-of-charge**, visit:

www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports

July 2007

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION



21 HEAD-TO-TOE POLICY

<p style="text-align: center;">METHUEN YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION HEAD-TO-TOE POLICY</p>

Prior to every game it is the responsibility of the Parent first, then Coach and finally Referee to make sure that every player is properly dressed and ready for play.

A Head-to-Toe check must be performed. The concern is that every player be dressed appropriately for play according to the rules and policies of the league.

No player should be allowed on the field of play if they are deemed to be wearing dangerous equipment. Dangerous equipment includes the following, but is not limited to this list below. If there are any questionable items not list below, consult with a MYSA Board Member present on the field. If there is no MYSA Board Member present, please your best judgment and then you must report the item to the Development Director after the game for clarification:

- Any cast or splint, regardless of any padding.
- No metal of any type. This includes but is not limited to, zippers, buttons on pants and rivets on pants and sweatshirts.
- Hair Control barrettes of hard materials (i.e. metal, plastic).
- Earrings of any type. **Band-Aids or Taping is not considered safe.**
- Jewelry of any sort. (Medic-Alert & religious articles may be worn if taped securely to the body by the player or player's parent/guardian).
- Joints of leg braces that have abrasive edges (i.e. metal rods, plastic slats, showing Velcro).
- Hats or other headgear (other than new protective padding headgear made specifically for soccer head ball or only in cold weather plain skull caps with no frills, tassels or hard decorative items may be worn by players).

Other important points of clarification:

- Common eyeglasses are no longer made of glass and are safe and permitted.
- Ace bandage, cloth or tape wrappings are safe. No metal clips allowed.
- Sneakers are safe if there are no rough edges. However, appropriate soccer footwear is recommended. No other sport cleat is allowed and there will be no toe cleats, metal cleats or modified cleats accepted.

Required Equipment:

- Uniform (includes team shirt and team socks that must be worn over shin guards)
 - Sweatpants may be worn as long as there are no dangling ties.
 - Sweatshirts with hoods may be worn as long as hoods are tucked into uniform shirt and have no ties, metal rivets or zippers

22 RAIN POLICY

<p style="text-align: center;">METHUEN YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION RAIN POLICY</p>
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Soccer plays in the rain. Unless the fields or weather (thunder and/or lightning/snow/torrential downpour) are deemed unsafe, the leagues will play.

Rainouts or unplayable field conditions may be determined by the referee at the field as games are active or the league official the morning of the games.

Once a field is closed, the entire park location is closed to avoid confusion to all teams playing as well as the chance of rapidly deteriorating conditions throughout the rest of the playing field. Once a field (park) is closed, it will be closed for the remainder of the day and not be reopened.

The league will send out an e-mail to teams, update the website and/or Facebook page with these cancellations.

23 PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

As some of you may know, inappropriate conduct by parents and other spectators has become an increasing problem for youth sports organizations. To deal with this problem in an effective manner, Methuen Youth Soccer Association (MYSA) has adopted the Parent Code of Conduct, which is detailed below. This Code of Conduct goes beyond our existing Zero Tolerance Policy to protect Officials. We have also adopted the Zero Tolerance Policy – Physical Abuse Policy for violators of the Code of Conduct. The Board of MYSA urges all of you to take these policies to heart so that we will all have a safe, enjoyable and successful season.

Parent Code of Conduct

1. Applaud good plays; don't dwell on bad plays.
2. Kids imitate their parents. If you are disruptive or act like a jerk, your kid, and possibly others, will act in a similar fashion.
3. The stands are not a place to shout personal instructions.
4. There is more to life than soccer. Encourage your child to participate in other activities.
5. Respect the coach's decision and abilities. Don't force your kids to decide whether to listen to you or to the coach.
6. Stress fair and sensible play. Nobody needs to get hurt because someone is not playing by the rules.
7. Stress the long-term importance of practice over the short-term excitement of games.
8. Stress the importance of teamwork.
9. Never lose sight of the fact that you are a role model.
10. Don't yell if your kid makes a mistake. Point out what they do well. Positive reinforcement goes a long way.
11. Take time to learn the rules of the game.
12. Remember that coaches and administrators are usually volunteers. A "thank you" every once in a while is often a nice reward.

24 PARENTAL GUIDELINES

METHUEN YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION KEYS TO PARENTAL PERFORMANCE
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- Let the coaches, coach. This includes goal setting and psyching up your child for practice and post game critiques. Having more than one "coach" confuses children.
- Do not bribe or offer incentives. Leave motivation to the coach. Offering money for scoring goals, for example, distracts your child from concentrating properly in practices and games.
- Support your child unconditionally.
- Support all players on the team. Your child's teammates are not the enemy. When they are playing better than your child is, they have a wonderful opportunity to learn.
- Encourage your child to talk with the coaches. "Taking responsibility" – whether about playing difficulties or missing an upcoming match – is a big part of soccer.
- Understand and display appropriate game behavior. When you cheer appropriately, you help your child focus on the parts of the game they can control (positioning, decision-making, skills, etc.). If they begin focusing on elements they cannot control (field conditions, the referee, the weather, etc.), they will not play up to their ability.
- Pass the reality test. If your child's team loses but they played their best, help them see this as a "win". Remind them to focus on the process, not the end result. Fun and satisfaction should come from "striving to win". Conversely, do not let them be satisfied with "winning" if it comes from inadequate preparation and performance.
- Keep soccer in its proper perspective. The game should not be larger than their life. If your child's performance produces strong emotions in you, suppress them. Keep your own goals and needs separate from your child's. Remember that your relationship with your child will continue long after their soccer days with MYSA end.

25 ZERO TOLERANCE – PHYSICAL ABUSE POLICY

All parents and guardians of MYSA players are subject to the Zero Tolerance Physical Abuse Policy as described below.

1. Any parent/guardian that attempts to cause physical injury or makes the threat thereof to any individual associated with MYSA shall be subject and his/her children shall be subject to immediate suspension from MYSA play and/or other league involvement, for up to one year at the sole discretion of the MYSA Board.
2. A second instance of an attempt to threaten or cause physical injury shall result in up to a three-year suspension for the player(s) and the parent/guardian from any involvement with MYSA.
3. All individuals associated with MYSA are expected to uphold the values of honesty, good sportsmanship, and respect for the integrity of team participation and team play within MYSA and other related sports organizations.
4. Referees or MYSA administration will stop the game, if and when parents, guardians, or spectators displaying inappropriate or disruptive behavior interfere with coaches, players, or other spectators during the game. Referees or MYSA officials will identify violators to the coaches for the purpose of removing parents or spectators from the spectators' viewing and game area. Once removed, play will resume. Lost time will not be replaced and violators may be subject to further disciplinary action by MYSA or local civil and criminal statutes. Inappropriate and disruptive behavior listed above shall include, but not be limited to:
 - Use of obscene or vulgar language in a boisterous manner to anyone at any time.
 - Taunting players, coaches, officials or other spectators by means of baiting, ridiculing, threat of physical violence, or actual violence.
 - Throwing of any object in the spectators' viewing area, players' area, or playing fields, or parking areas, directed in any manner in order to intimidate or harm another person, or create a safety hazard.

26 ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY ON OFFICIALS

METHUEN YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY ON OFFICIALS
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Because of physical and verbal abuse against referees MASSACHUSETTS YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION along with ESSEX COUNTY YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION other soccer organizations have adopted a **ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY ON OFFICIALS**. This policy as described below is in effect for **METHUEN YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION**.

It is the responsibility of ALL coaches to maintain the highest standards of conduct for themselves, their players and supporters in all matches. Abusive and obscene language, violent play, violent conduct, fighting and other behavior detrimental to the game will not be tolerated. A coach's responsibility for referee support and spectator control includes the times prior to, during and after the game at the field and surrounding areas.

All persons responsible for a team and all the spectators shall support the referee.

Failure to do so will undermine the referee's authority and has the potential of creating a hostile environment for the players, the referee and all the other participants and spectators.

Consequently, **ECYSA (supported by MYSA)** has adopted the following rule:

No one is to address the referee during the game!!

A. Persons Responsible for a team (Coach and Asst Coach) Exceptions:

During the game:

- Responding to a referee initiating a communication
- Making Substitutions
- Pointing out emergencies or safety issues

At half time or at the end of the game:

- A coach or assistant coach can ask a referee to explain a rule(s) in a polite and constructive way
- A polite and friendly feedback can be given to the referee
- Absolutely no sarcasm, no harassment and no intimidation

Penalties:

- Any Major Infraction Warning (Caution) or Dismissal (Ejection) depending on the seriousness of the infraction (FIFA)

- Initial Minor Infraction A verbal warning

B. Spectators Exceptions:

During the Game:

- Referee initiating a communication.
- Pointing out emergencies or safety issues.

Penalties:

- 1st Infraction: The Referee, at the next stoppage of play, should ask the coach to quiet the offending spectator.
- 2nd Infraction: A verbal warning. The Referee, at the next stoppage of play, should ask the coach to warn the spectator that the next infraction will be a removal of the spectator or the referee will abandon the game.
- 3rd Infraction: The Referee, at the next stoppage of play, shall instruct the coach to direct the spectator to leave the field. The referee should abandon the game if the spectator does not leave the field.
- If the referee abandons the game, the referee shall report to the Development Director.

TO OUR PARENTS:

PARENTS, WE APPRECIATE ALL YOUR SUPPORT. SOCCER IS A BEAUTIFUL GAME THAT ONLY GETS MORE ENJOYABLE AS YOU WATCH YOUR KIDS AND THEIR FRIENDS' SKILL AND UNDERSTANDING RISE. AS LONG AS YOUR KIDS ENJOY IT, PLEASE KEEP BRINGING THEM BACK! WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING THEIR SMILING FACES EVERY SEASON!

