

Kindergarten Soccer – Spring 2017 Coaches' Information

Coordinators: Merrill Barnes, Tara Karyanis, Jenn Martin, Sera Miller, Mira Woods, Debra Stump, Matt Feiner, Cheryl Hersh
newtonkindergartensoccer@gmail.com
www.kindergartensoccer.org

Locations: Oak Hill Middle School, 130 Wheeler Rd. The field assignments each week will be posted on the left hand side of our website under “Field Assignments.”

Rosters: You will receive your team roster in an email from Blue Sombrero.

Blue Sombrero: We use Blue Sombrero for our registration system, but we are not currently using it for game schedules or to make the team rosters publicly available. For all information regarding game schedules, cancellations, etc., visit our webpage, kindergartensoccer.org. The website is on all the t-shirts.

Initial contact with your players: *The week of April 2, please contact each of your team members.*

Here is the information you should communicate to each family:

- The name and t-shirt color of their team.
- The location (Oak Hill) and the time of their games. Game times are listed at www.kindergartensoccer.org.
- Equipment that families should bring: Explain that you will bring the team t-shirts. All children must have a **size 3 soccer ball** (with their name written on it), **shin guards**, and a **water bottle**. If the family ordered soccer balls or shin guards during the registration process, explain that you will have those at the first game. Players can wear sneakers or cleats.
- Please also remind parents that this is not a drop-off activity. Each child must have an adult present during each session.
- Inform parents that our website, www.kindergartensoccer.org, is the best place to go for information such as field assignments and cancellations. Please let them know that we only use Blue Sombrero for registration, so they won't be able to obtain any game information by logging into their Blue Sombrero account.
- Parking: There is on street parking on Wheeler Rd, in a nearby parking lot, and all the side streets. Please pay attention to any street signs.

Snacks: Create a rotation schedule so that one family brings a small, healthy snack for the team each week. Find out if any children have food allergies, and make sure to notify all families of any food allergies. Snack is served after the game. Remind families who is in charge of snack for the game in your weekly email.

Opening Day: Please come at least 15 minutes early.

Have nametags ready for each child and for all the coaches. We have included blank nametags and a sharpie for the first game in your team bag and will have extras for the second game in the equipment area.

The teams with the 8:30am start are responsible for setting up the fields. If the field is not yet set up, stop by the equipment area to take a goals bag and 6-8 cones and set up the field according to the field maps. The field maps are available on our website and at the equipment area at Oak Hill. The field size is about 15 big steps wide by about 25 big steps long. If there are any questions or problems when setting up the fields, you should be able to find one of the program coordinators or a parent volunteer by the equipment trees.

Schedule: **Practice** (25 minutes): Gathering and warming up, jogging in place and some stretches. Then drills like those in the coaches' tips document that you can find on our website.

Water break (5 minutes).

Scrimmage (30 minutes): Two 15-minute halves, with breaks as necessary. End the game with cheers, handshakes, snack and clean up.

The Game: The "games" are played 4 against 4, with no goalies. There are no set positions, and substitutions can take place at any time. One coach from either team should keep time, call the end of the half, and call the end of the game. Take breaks as necessary.

To start the game, line up four children from each team in the center. Have the kids point to the goal they are heading for. Flip a coin to see which team is the kicking team. Assign one child from the kicking team to start the play, and then alternate when the next opportunity comes up. Follow the same procedure after a goal and to begin the second half.

There is no score or "team record" keeping.

Play every player equally. Keep kids engaged as much as possible.

There is no heading. There are no rules such as “off sides”; avoid calling a ball out. There are no “throw-ins” or “goalie kicks,” so when the ball goes out have an adult retrieve it and roll it back into play. Do what you can to keep the ball in play and keep the game moving. Have parents line up along the sidelines to help keep the ball on the field. Only stop play when absolutely necessary.

Avoid “coaching” while the children are playing. Praise them and encourage them (run along with them) but avoid instruction – don’t focus on skills. Avoid calling out specific names; many kids are startled to hear their names yelled out, even if you are yelling to encourage them.

Encourage good sportsmanship and team spirit. For many children, this program is their first opportunity to participate in a team sport, so please make every effort to make the children comfortable and excited about participating.

Keep it simple, keep it active, and keep it FUN. If the kids run in the right direction and stay on the field, the day has been a success!

Sportsmanship: Good sportsmanship is vitally important in our league. Teaching our players to be good sports is a lesson we hope they will carry with them throughout their athletic careers.

We suggest gathering your team before and after the drills to emphasize that it's important to play hard, but it's just as important to be a good sport and to be respectful of teammates and the opposing team. If you're having trouble keeping any of the children on your team under control, it's absolutely fine to enlist that child’s parent(s) to help. Please also tell the team parents that you, the coaches, won’t always notice everything that’s happening because you are busy on the field. Parents should take responsibility to let you know if they see any unsportsmanlike behavior. We’d like everyone, parents and coaches, to feel responsible for calling attention to unsportsmanlike behavior.

Adult Behavior: Please notify the coordinators if you feel that another parent or coach is acting inconsistently with the Kindergarten Soccer program’s non-competitive philosophy, in such a manner that is upsetting to a child or that violates any of the program’s safety rules (e.g., adult supervision of children required, shin guards required). The coordinators will address any situation that arises. Your cooperation will help us ensure a successful season.

Cleanup: Coaches are responsible for cleaning up the fields. Pre-K coaches, please collapse your goals and bring them along with the cones to the equipment area. Check around for left clothing and trash.

Safety/First Aid: If any child is injured or requires first aid, please notify the child's parent or caregiver. The parent or caregiver should make all decisions regarding medical care and should administer first aid. First aid supplies are available at the equipment area. If any first aid supplies are used, please describe (briefly) the incident in the log in the first aid kit.

For safety reasons, no jewelry, including pierced earrings, should be worn during soccer. Children wearing a cast may not participate in soccer.

Date/Time: Saturday mornings April 8 through June 17. There will be **no games** April 15, 22 or May 27. There is no rain date. Please go to www.kindergartensoccer.org for game times.

Cancellations: If games need to be cancelled because of rain or poor field conditions, the coordinators will email all families participating in the program by 8:00 a.m. the day of the game. We will also post a message on our website. Please remind your team families to check our website on game days for cancellations.

Coverage: All teams should have at least two coaches each week, and coaches should compare schedules to ensure that this happens. If it looks like you will not have two coaches, please find a substitute from among the parents of your players.

Last Day: Medals or trophies will be given to all of the children on the last day. If it rains on the last day, all teams will meet at a location TBD.

THANK YOU! – THANK YOU! - THANK YOU! – THANK YOU! – THANK YOU!
This program could not happen without the volunteer coaches!