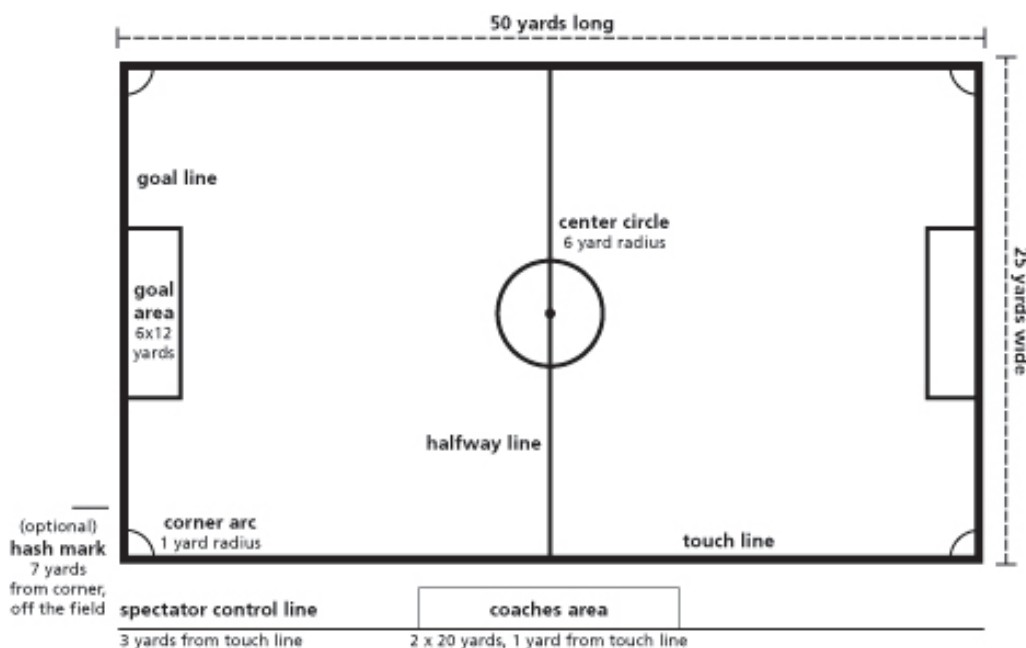


# Appendix A: Under-8 Program Guidelines

## Field

- **Dimensions:** 50 yards long, 25 yards wide.
- **Markings:** Distinctive lines recommended.
  - Halfway line the width of the field, marked equidistant between the goal lines.
  - Center circle with a six-yard radius in the center of the field.
  - Corner arcs with a one-yard radius at each corner of the field.
  - Goal area in front of each goal measuring 6 x 12 yards.
- **Goals:** Maximum six feet high and six yards wide.



**Ball**

- Size 3

**Players**

- **Number:** Five per team on field; no goalkeepers. Seven maximum on roster.
- **Substitutions:** Between periods, at halftime and for injuries.
- **Playing time:** Minimum of two periods per game and no player should play four periods until everyone has played three.
- **Teams:** Separate girls and boys teams should be promoted at all levels of play.

**Players' Equipment**

- **Footwear:** Soccer shoes, tennis shoes or similar type athletic shoes are recommended. The type and condition of cleated shoes must be inspected for safety before use.
- **Shinguards:** MANDATORY for both practices and games, and must be covered entirely by socks.

**Duration of Game**

- Four 10-minute periods
- Halftime break of five minutes

**Official**

AYSO-certified U-8 officials or higher are required for U-8 games. The U-8 official should briefly explain any infringements to the player(s) and encourage proper play and sporting behavior. As with all games, every effort should be made to keep the game moving and free from stoppages for doubtful infractions. Let them play and enjoy.

**Assistant Referees/Club Linesmen**

If available, qualified assistant referees who have completed Assistant Referee Certification may be used to assist the referee.

This is an opportunity for new assistant referees to begin getting experience.

If qualified assistant referees are not available, club linesmen (untrained volunteers who may be affiliated with one of the teams/clubs) may be recruited from the spectators, to assist the referee with calling the ball in and out of play only. This is an opportunity for parents to get involved.

# Appendix B: Knowledge of the U-8 game

## **The Start of Play**

To start the first and second halves and following each goal in all age group games, play is started or restarted with a kick-off in the center of the field. A coin toss is used to determine which team kicks off to start the game and the other team kicks off to start the second half. Following a goal, the team scored upon kicks off.

## **The Kick-off**

The kick-off is taken from the center of the field with each team in their own half and the team not kicking off at least six yards from the ball. Do not insist the opponent always be six yards from the ball, as this is just a guide to give the kicker room to kick the ball without it immediately hitting an opponent. Remember, let them play and do not interfere for technicalities.

## **Ball In and Out of Play**

The ball is out of play in all age group games when it completely crosses the touch line (side line) or goal line (end line), either on the ground or in the air.

## **Method of Scoring**

A goal, in all age group games, is awarded when the ball completely crosses the goal line into the goal.

## **Fouls**

The opposing team must be at least six yards from the ball when free kicks are taken in U-8 games. Since there are no goalkeepers in U-8, there are no fouls to or by goalkeepers. The following, if deliberately done, are the fouls most likely to occur in U-8 games: kicking, tripping, pushing, holding, handling the ball and dangerous play (the most frequent call in U-8 games). Officials must remember that there is no need to stop play for technical violations

that do not interrupt the flow of the game. It's a player's game and not a game of how many infractions can be identified, so keep the fun going and let them play.

**Misconduct**

Misconduct should be rare in U-8 games. There is no need for the public cautioning and sending off of young players (leave your red and yellow cards home). Officials should work cooperatively with the coach when a U-8 player may need a "time out."

**Free Kicks**

All free kicks in U-8 games are direct free kicks. Opponents must be at least six yards from the ball or on the goal line between the goal posts during free kicks. Free kicks awarded the attacking team inside the defending team's goal area are to be taken from the nearest point on the goal area line parallel to the goal line.

**Offside**

The concept of offside is too complicated for U-8 players and should not be a consideration for officials in U-8 games.

**Throw-in**

A second throw-in should be allowed in U-8 games if the first attempt was improperly done. If the second attempt is still improper, let it go. Proper technique can be reinforced later by the coach. Keep the game moving and minimize interruptions.

**Goal Kick**

A goal kick is awarded to the opposing team, in U-8 and older, when the attacking team is last to touch the ball before it crosses the goal line but not scoring a goal. The goal kick may be taken from any point inside the goal area. The opposing team must be at least six yards from the ball when the goal kick is taken in U-8 games.

**Corner Kick**

A corner kick is awarded to the opposing team, in U-8 and older, when the defending team is last to touch the ball before it crosses the goal line but not scoring a goal. The opposing team must be at least six yards from the ball when the corner kick is taken in U-8 games.

**Hand Ball**

A hand ball infraction occurs when a player handles the ball deliberately. The “hand” includes the entire arm up to the top of the shoulder. Instinctive, self-protective reactions are not penalized at this young age. Accidental contact (ball striking hand or arm with no intent by the player) is not an offense and should not be penalized.

# Appendix C: Pledges

## **AYSO Coach Pledge:**

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In my words and action, I pledge to:

1. Enthusiastically support and practice the AYSO Philosophies of: Everyone Plays, Open Registration, Balanced Teams, Positive Coaching, Good Sportsmanship and Player Development.
2. Stay informed about sound principles of coaching and child development.
3. Respect the game and know the Laws.
4. Emphasize to my players that they must abide by the Laws of the Game at all times.
5. Develop a true respect for the judgment of all referees.
6. Develop a team respect for the ability of our opponents.
7. Ensure a safe environment for my players.
8. Never yell at or ridicule a player.
9. Always set a good example.
10. Remember that soccer is a game and all games should be fun.

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## **AYSO Player Pledge:**

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In my words and action, I pledge to:

1. Play for the sake of playing a game, not just to please a parent or coach.
2. Always give my best effort and work as hard for my teammates as I do for myself.
3. Treat all players as I would like to be treated.
4. Be a team player and not show off or hog the ball.
5. Be a good sport and acknowledge good plays whether they are made by my team or my opponents.
6. Abide by the Laws of the Game.
7. Cooperate with my coaches, teammates, opponents and the referee.
8. Never argue with or complain about referee calls or decisions.
9. Control my temper when I feel I have been wronged.
10. Remember that the object of the game is to win, but the goal is to enjoy myself.

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## **AYSO Parent Pledge:**

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In my words and action, I pledge to:

1. Attend and participate in team parent meetings.
2. Be on time or early when dropping off or picking up my child for a practice or game.

3. Ensure my child is supported and encouraged by family or loved ones at games.
4. Encourage my child to have fun and keep sport in its proper perspective.
5. Define winning for my child as doing his/her very best.
6. Endeavor to learn the Laws (rules) of soccer and support the efforts of referees.
7. Honor the game and show respect for all involved including coaches, players, opponents, spectators and referees.
8. Applaud and encourage players from both teams and not yell out instructions.
9. Not make negative comments about the game, coaches, referees or players in my child's presence.
10. Encourage others to refrain from negative or abusive sideline behavior.

# Appendix D: VIP

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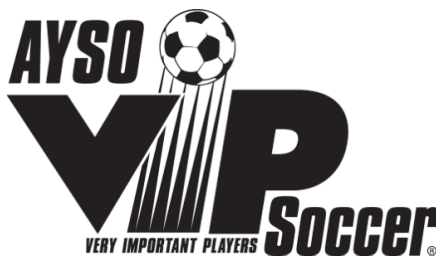
## **Integrating the “VIP” Player into Your Region**

A VIP (Very Important Player) is a player who’s physical and/or mental challenges make it difficult to successfully participate on a mainstream soccer team.

What is successful participation? It should be defined by the player’s enjoyment and the safety of all team members.

The player who has only a physical disability is likely to have many of the expectations and capabilities of a non-disabled player and should be coached accordingly. Every effort should be made to integrate these players into mainstream teams, as much as safety allows.

VIP is an AYSO program designed to provide a quality soccer experience for VIP players. VIP teams offer many players with disabilities the least-restrictive and safest environment in which to learn and enjoy the game of soccer. Contact your Regional Commissioner, Regional Coach Administrator, Regional VIP Administrator or the National Support & Training Center to obtain AYSO’s special VIP training materials and information on how to begin a VIP program.



# Glossary of Terms

**Concentration:** Compressing or restricting the space the attacking team has by “shepherding” them into a confined area makes it easier to defend and regain possession of the ball.

**Corner Kick:** A corner kick is awarded the opposing team when the defending team is last to touch the ball before it crosses the goal line without scoring a goal. The opposing team must be at least six yards from the ball when the corner kick is taken in U-8 games.

**Delay:** Slowing down the attack by closing the gap and denying space to allow the defense to get organized.

**Depth:** Supporting teammates by creating safe options for the player with the ball (attacking), or supporting the player(s) challenging the ball in case they are beaten (defending).

**Dribbling:** The skill of using the feet to advance the ball on the ground when opponents are near.

**Goal Kick:** A goal kick is awarded to the opposing team, in U-8 and older, when the attacking team is last to touch the ball before it crosses the goal line but not scoring a goal. The goal kick may be taken from any point inside the goal area. The opposing team must be at least six yards from the ball when the goal kick is taken in U-8 games.

**In and out of play:** The ball is out of play when the entire ball has completely crossed the goal line or touch line whether on the ground or in the air.

**Inside of the Foot – Push Pass:** This technique is used to advance the ball or to maintain possession by passing to a teammate.

**Inside of the Foot – Ball Control:** This technique is used to control the ball using the inside of the foot in order to maintain possession and prepare for the next move.

**Instep kick:** This skill is used for long passes and strong shots on goal using the instep of the foot.

**Kick-off:** A kick-off is a way of starting and restarting play—at the start of the match, after a goal has been scored, at the start of the second half of the match, and at the start of each period.

**Penetration:** Advancement, moving the ball and/or players past an opponent in order to get into position to shoot and/or score, and is achieved by shooting, dribbling, and passing.

**Principles of Play:** There are five attacking and five defending Principles of Play utilized in soccer. At the U-6 level, however, we will focus on only three attacking principles (penetration, width and depth) and three defending principles (delay, concentration and depth).

**Throw-in:** The throw-in is used to restart the game after the entire ball has crossed the sideline, whether on the ground or in the air.

**Warm-up:** Keep it short, but do it. Young players must get used to warming up and stretching their muscles.

**Width:** Attacking on a broad front (players spread out) stretches the defense and creates space for players to advance.

