

# AYSO REGION 18'S YOUTH REFEREE PROGRAM

...an innovative opportunity for community service in Hermosa Beach & Manhattan Beach

## The Program

The Youth Referee program in Region 18 was launched in 1999 to answer the growing demand for referees in the U8 and U10 Divisions and to provide a leadership opportunity for young people in our community.

Here's how it works: Girls and boys ages 10-17 [PK1] take the required referee training courses which certify them to officiate U7 through U10 games. These Youth Referees meet the same certification requirements as adults do for these Divisions. There will be a Youth-only Referee Training class at the end of the summer so that new Youth Referees can be trained with their peers. A mentor accompanies Youth Referees to most games [PK2], especially their first few as the Referee - the person in charge of the game. There is an opportunity for additional training to cover games at the U12 and U14 Divisions. AYSO rules require a Youth Referee must be at least two years older than the Division they are working as a Referee.

The program has multiple benefits:

- It inspires younger players, giving them role models to look up to; and,
- Young people participating in the Youth Referee program get a chance to do community service and a unique opportunity for intellectual and emotional growth.

It also provides a secondary benefit:

- When Coaches cannot fulfill their team's responsibility to provide a Referee for the match prior to their own match, they can request one of the highly qualified Youth Referees through Region 18's Youth Referee Coordinator.

## The Responsibility of All Involved

Although we expect the best behavior from everyone toward all referees, it is strictly forbidden to criticize a youth referee, even if you are a referee. There is **ZERO TOLERANCE FOR NEGATIVE COMMENTS TO OR ABOUT YOUTH REFEREES** at any time before, during, or after games.

Anyone who does so will be asked to leave the field.

These Youth Referees are well-trained, and many are also experienced players; however, they are still youngsters without the life experience to handle negative remarks. Please give each your full support and help model good behavior for others to follow.

## And Finally

Thank you for your cooperation in this exciting program. Have a great season!

For more information, or any questions or comments you have, please contact:

**Bill Fournell** – AYSO Region 18's Youth Referee Coordinator at [youthrefadmin@ayso18.org](mailto:youthrefadmin@ayso18.org)

