

AYSO REGION 4 FAQ'S FOR COACHES

WHY SHOULD I COACH IN AYSO?

It's a chance to spend quality time with your child, and it's fun. It's a great break from work. It makes you feel good. It's a great way to give back to the community. The rewards come from helping kids have fun at games and practices while developing their individual skills and teamwork. There is also a great sense of accomplishment when you reach the end of a season, look back and see how far the team has come. It's great to have a connection to parents and kids in the community years later, seeing them around town and knowing you've helped them.

I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT SOCCER. CAN I STILL HELP COACH?

Yes! AYSO provides training and training materials. Being a coach involves skills you probably already have in addition to specific soccer knowledge. If you are uncertain, start out as an assistant coach. Your Region's Coach Administrator will be happy to try to match you up with somebody with a little more experience.

WHAT IS THE TIME COMMITMENT OF BEING A COACH? ASSISTANT COACH?

Coaches run 1-2 weekday practices and coach a game on Saturday or Sunday. Coaching in AYSO is all about teaching and encouraging kids, and having a lot of fun. Parents will help with the team's organization tasks.

HOW OLD TO I HAVE TO BE TO COACH?

You must be 18 years old or older to be an AYSO coach. Though AYSO appreciates and encourages young people to participate in all aspects of soccer including coaching, an individual under 18 years of age may not be listed as the head coach or assistant coach on the official roster due to liability issues. They can assist in training and even make decisions regarding the team as an auxiliary, but can't ever be left alone with players and can't be listed on the official roster.

HOW DO I BECOME A COACH?

You sign-up to coach at Registration when you register your kids to play. If you have a child that is already on a team that has a coach, just let the coach know that you are interested in coaching and would like to be the assistant coach. Most of our coaches will be delighted to utilize you. From there (and every year) you'd register to volunteer, take Safe Haven™ & CDC Concussion training online. You'd then take any age division-appropriate coach clinic (one time per age-division).

DOES AN AYSO COACH HAVE TO HAVE A CHILD ON THE TEAM?

No. Anyone over the age of 18 can volunteer to be a coach in AYSO. Yes, most coaches are the parents of a child on the team; however, AYSO welcomes and encourages anyone who wants to volunteer to come out and coach!

WHAT TRAINING IS PROVIDED FOR COACHES?

There are several parts to coach training. One is an online course that covers team management, safety, volunteer protection and AYSO's principles. This course is known as Safe Haven®. Training is also provided for Concussion Awareness—by state law, this training is required annually. There is also age-division specific training that covers soccer techniques, strategies and teaching techniques appropriate to the age group. These clinics are held online and on weekends depending on the age group; the in-person training is usually a half-day until you get to the Intermediate and higher levels. You must attend coach training to be covered by the Volunteer Protection Act.

WHAT IS SAFE HAVEN™? DO I NEED CONCUSSION TRAINING?

AYSO makes a commitment to provide a safe place for children to play and compete. The coach has a responsibility to help make the environment safe as well as fun. To ensure the safety of both children and volunteers, each volunteer is required to take a short in-person or online-training session called Safe Haven™. It focuses on safety and appropriate behavior with children as well as first aid and other on-field issues. All AYSO volunteers are given a background check. Safe Haven™ and CDC Concussion training are now required each year. They can be found on www.aysotraining.org.

WHAT ARE THE VARIOUS LEVELS OF COACH CERTIFICATION?

AYSO offers coach training for every age group. The various levels are as follows and each one has its own course: 6U, 8U (covers 7U), 10U, 12U, Intermediate (14U), Advanced (16U-19U) and National.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS AND TIME INVOLVED WITH THE VARIOUS COACH CERTIFICATIONS?

AYSO's 6U, 8U, and 10U courses are all considered "stand-alone" courses, meaning that you may take any one of them without having taken any prior courses. The 10U course then becomes the prerequisite for taking the 12U course, which is the prerequisite for taking the Intermediate course, which is the prerequisite for taking the Advanced course, which in turn is the prerequisite for taking the National course. The 6U and 8U course (7U takes the 8U course) are available online at www.aysotraining.org. Course times are as follows: 6U Coach – 40 min online. 8U Coach – 30 min online. 10U Coach ~ 3 hrs in-person. 12U Coach ~ 5 hrs in-person. Intermediate Coach ~ 15 hrs in-person. Advanced Coach ~ 18 hours. National Coach - 56+ hours.

NOTE: Coaches in Region 4 are also encouraged to take the Basic Referee Online Training to increase their game knowledge and understanding of the Laws of the Game at www.aysotraining.org (~90 min).

WHAT AND/OR WHERE IS MY CERTIFICATION?

Record of all coach training is stored in AYSO's online database. Every individual that has filled out a Volunteer Registration Form is entered into the database and records of all training are attached to the individual's file. Region 4 staff can help you look up your certification. Alternatively, you may call the AYSO Programs Department at (800) 872-2976 and someone will assist you. If your records do not reflect the training you have taken, please call the Coaching Coordinator (800) 872-2976, ext. 7974.

DO I HAVE TO COACH LITTLE KIDS BEFORE I CAN COACH THE OLDER KIDS?

There is no requirement to coach younger players before coaching older players. The only requirement is that you have the age-specific certification, meaning if for instance you are coaching 10U you've taken the 10U coaching certification course. In older age groups (10U and older) the preceding age groups are pre-requisites (10U for 12U, etc.).

DOES EACH PLAYER HAVE TO PLAY ¾ OF EVERY GAME, OR CAN IT BE AVERAGED ACROSS THE SEASON?

True to one of AYSO's founding philosophies, Everyone Plays™, *every player must play at least 75% of every game unless it is mathematically impossible*. Additionally, it is required that no player play four (4) quarters before all players have played three (3) quarters. The only exception to this rule would be a serious injury that truly prevents the player from participating or if the players arrive to the game after it has begun, in which case the following National Rules and Regulations apply: if the player arrives in the first quarter, the player must play three (3) of the remaining three (3) quarters ...if the player arrives during the second quarter, the player must play a minimum of two (2) quarters...if the player arrives in the third quarter, the player must play a minimum of one (1) quarter.

WHY DO WE PLAY “SMALL-SIDED” GAMES AND IS IT MANDATORY?

AYSO highly recommends that all children who are 12 years old and younger play small-sided soccer (less than 11 players per team) for the following reasons:

Young soccer players need special consideration:

They are children playing a child's game. They must be regarded as young children, not mini adults. They are essentially self-oriented and relate naturally to one or two others, not to large groups. Fun and activity factors must be a central part of a child-centered program.

Educators agree that early learning experiences are the most important and produce the most retention:

Most children cannot sustain prolonged activity. They function best in suitable starts and stops (rest periods). Concentration span is limited, so frequent changes of pace and activities are essential.

Children love to learn:

They learn a great deal more when the ratio of teacher (coach) to student (player) is reduced. With small numbers and the simple nature of soccer, the best teacher is the game itself. With fewer players on the field, each player gets more touches on the ball and has greater opportunity to change location in a fast-flowing, fluid game. Playing small-sided allows players to make simpler decisions and develop an earlier, better understanding of organization of play. Smaller fields mean more players are directly involved in play, creating increased levels of both concentration and interest. The reduced field size encourages more shots on goal by all players, therefore more goals scored.

Residual benefits:

Parents are introduced to the game in smaller, more understandable doses. Small-sided soccer is a great place to train new referees. The rest of the world is playing small-sided games to develop player skills and we are part of the soccer world.

THIS SOUNDS GREAT! WHERE DO I SIGN-UP?

All volunteers must apply every year. Apply online to volunteer by starting on the Coach page of our website www.aysoregion4.com. Returning, previously registered volunteers only need to e-sign their application. New volunteers should print two copies and bring with a photo ID to an AYSO Board Meeting (check Calendar) or an AYSO clinic to be signed off on by a CVPA-certified Volunteer.

REMINDER: COACH TRAINING, CLINICS AND MEETINGS (for head coaches and assistant coaches)

Mandatory Coach meeting is July 15th. The 6U and 8U courses are taken online at www.aysotraining.org but we may replace these with in-person classes. Older division coaches attend in-person coach clinics found on www.eayso.org: search for courses in Section “10”, Area “E” for those nearby. It is always fine to take clinics for levels above your current coaching level and important to do if you wish to coach All-Stars or EXTRA™. **For questions contact your Division Director or Regional Coach Administrator Bill Berliner (bberliner@aysoregion4.com).**