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| Who we areSYAA Soccer is a volunteer run, non-profit, player focused organization that provides a fun, safe, and structured learning environment for developing soccer players aged 3 to 18. SYAA Soccer develops players who respect themselves, their teammates, their opponents, the officials, and the game. SYAA Soccer provides opportunities at the Recreational, Advance, & Select/Travel soccer levels.Contact Us432 Kings Fork RdSuffolk, VA 23434Phone: 757-651-7367Email: syaasuffolkfc@gmail.comWeb: [www.suffolkyouthsoccerleague.org](http://www.suffolkyouthsoccerleague.org)Mailing address: P.O. Box 3081, Suffolk, VA 23439 |
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|  | Suffolk Youth Athletic Association432 Kings Fork RdSuffolk, VA 23434 |

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| *Things parents should know*U4-U6 Recreation League“they should be having so much fun that when they go home, the soccer ball becomes one of their favorite toys” |
| Suffolk Youth Athletic Association |

*Encourage Creativity**and Ball Skills Before Tactics!* |

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| Table of ContentsAbout U6 Soccer 1Basic Ideas 1Game Application 1General Thoughts 1Getting Started 2What coaches & parents should consider 2Duration of practice; ratio of ball to child 2Helpful Tips 3Before the Game 3During the Game 3After the Game 3Things to remember 4Things to avoid 4Things to check out 4Final Thoughts 5 |  |  | Final Thoughts*“****Up until about third grade, almost all kids play in recreational leagues, where teams are made up of members of the same community or youth soccer organization and play each other****. After that age, most clubs are divided into recreational and so-called ‘travel’ teams.* *“If you and your child like the competitive side of the sport and entertain visions of soccer stardom, travel may be for you. If they make the team and play, they'll get all the competition they need to improve their skills. And you'll get to spend lots of time and money traveling around to games.**“But if what they really need is playing time, a recreational league may be a better choice.**“Rec soccer leagues and intramural leagues focus on individual skill development, no matter the skill level of the player. Most of these leagues encourage coaches to give kids equal playing time and the opportunity to play different positions, which is critically important, because we don't know at that age who's going to blossom into the perfect striker.**“If your kid plays recreational soccer, parents and coaches should treat it as such. Understand going in that your little superstars will be sitting the bench just as often as the kid who has never played the game before. In rec leagues, that's how it should be. Remember, it's supposed to be fun. Thus, the name.”* |
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| Things to remember

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| Patience, good humor, and a willingness to see the world through a child’s eyes are key. Also, the ability to speak their language and accept that the children’s play will not look at all like soccer. |

Things to avoid

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| Don't continually shout instructions - they often reach the players too late (the action has moved to a new situation), and may be distracting.Don't send one of your assistants or a parent to instruct from the opposite touchline or behind the goal line to "cover the field." The instructions coming from opposite sides of the field often differ, and it is irritating and disrespectful to the other team if they are located there. |

Things to check out:

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| 1. <http://mikematheny.com/sites/default/files/docs/MathenyManifesto.pdf>
2. [www.parenting.com/article/a-parents-guide-to-soccer](http://www.parenting.com/article/a-parents-guide-to-soccer)
3. <http://www.vysa.com/coaches/430249.html>
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 |  |  | About U6 Soccer

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| Soccer at U4-U6 ages should just be a fun activity for kids that happens to include a soccer ball. There should be groups of players rather than teams. Fees should be nominal. Attendance should be optional. **Creating a joyful environment is mandatory**. |
| Five- and six-year olds should be involved in fun activities that encourage the children to explore their physical abilities, while also including a ball with which to play. They are too young to be involved in a strictly organized soccer program. SYAA encourages activity-based games that emphasize exploration and experimentation with the rolling, spinning, and bouncing qualities of the ball. **The soccer ball should be considered a toy.** There should be no activities where players wait in lines to perform a pre-determined movement or required action.Five- and six- year olds, although still young, are beginning to gain more control over their bodies. At the same time, it is still new to them and they will require a lot of time and energy figuring out what their bodies can do, and how to use this developing coordination. **They enjoy playing on their terms, and as a by-product of their play, they will gain some limited comfort with the ball.** Even as they are steadily developing physical and mental abilities, they are still very young and should be treated with care, patience and plenty of encouragement. **It can be helpful to include parents in the practice/play time so they can take ideas home with them to their backyards or parks.** If children must be involved in these organized practice times, **they should be having so much fun that when they go home, the soccer ball becomes one of their favorite toys.**  |

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| The U6 GameMe and My BallSYAA strives to fuel the fascination for the ball, the desire to master it, and the thrill of scoring goals to provide the launching pad into a lifetime of soccer participation.The objective is to learn all elementary movement skills by building overall motor skills.Game Application

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| **Game Form:** 3 v 3 to increase time on the ball**GK Status:** No goalkeepers to minimize risk of injury**Field Size:** 30 yards x 20 yards**Ball Size:** 3When ball goes out of bounds, the game is restarted with a throw-in. Coaches can be on the field with the U4-U5 players. Coaches stay on the sidelines beginning at U6. |

Duration of practice; ratio of ball to child

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| 30 to 45 minutes is the best option for these ages. Most of the practice should be spent in ratios of one ball per child or one ball per two children. |

 |  |  | Helpful Tips**The influence of soccer parents in developing a child’s game cannot be understated**. *The enthusiastic and encouraging parent who plays soccer with their child, supports them in the youth leagues and offers advice off the field can only aid their development.*Before the Game* Tell your children you are proud of them regardless of how well they play.
* Tell them to play hard and have fun and remind them that “nervous is normal.”
* Commit to Honoring the Game no matter what others do.

During the Game* Let the coaches coach. Avoid instructing your child (or other players).
* Fill your child’s (and teammates’) Emotional Tanks.
* Cheer good plays and good efforts by both teams.

The coach’s long term goal is to prepare the player to successfully recognize and solve the challenges of the game on his or her own.After the Game* Thank the officials for doing a difficult job.
* Thank the coaches for their effort.
* Remind your child that you are proud of him or her – especially if the game didn’t go well!
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