

KYSA U8 SOCCER RULES

Updated: 04/03/22

Coaches:

- **U8 Coaches serve as referees for U8 games.** Work together with the coach of the other team to share refereeing and time-keeping duties throughout the game. **(In other words, one coach for each team should be on the field so that the two opposing coaches are on the field at the same time refereeing, working with the players and keeping time during all four quarters.)**
- **Work collaboratively as coaches to establish a clinic environment as the game progresses; your teams are playing “against” each other; at the same time, both coaches are there to help the players learn, and that includes working with and instructing players from both sides as needed (e.g., when they line up improperly for a kick or throw).**
- Before the game begins coaches will:
 - Have the children tap their shin guards with their knuckles
 - They must have shin guards to play
 - Check for soccer cleats
 - No front spike
 - Check for jewelry, earrings, chains, etc. Chains & bracelets must be removed; earrings should be removed too but can be taped or covered with bandaids if they cannot be removed. Medical bracelets may remain on as long as they are taped to the wrist.
- Work with the other coach to determine sides of the field and who kicks off first
- Start the game ON TIME

Rules for Game Play:

- Ball – size 3.
- Number of players – 4 V 4, no goalie, and **EVERYONE** plays a minimum of 2 quarters.
- Substitutions are permitted between quarters or upon an injury.
- Shin guards are required for safety reasons and need to be covered by a pair of socks.
- Duration of the game – **four 8-minute quarters with two minutes between quarters and five minutes for half time.**
- **Start of the Game / Kickoff:** Before the game decide who is kicking off. Kickoff is intended to ensure possession and should be kicked laterally or backwards. **Do not allow players to kick the ball forward on kickoffs in U8.**
- All players must be on their own half of the field with one team kicking off. **Since the U8 field and circle are relatively small, defending players should stand on the build out line (the red line between the goal box and the mid line) to allow the team kicking off to bring the ball into the offensive zone.** The idea is to **not** have defenders swarming the circle to thwart the kickoff but rather to allow the offensive team to bring the ball into the offensive zone.

- Offside – Offside is not used in U8 games.
- **Do not leave any players back on defense while you have possession of the ball. All four players should be on the offensive side of the midline while your team is on offense. Also, do not allow players to plant themselves in front of the goal as though they are a goalie; there are no goalies in U8.**
- Fouls, Misconduct – can and will occur even at this level. Any restart after foul should be an **indirect free kick** with opponents at least 5 yards away. **In this context, the indirect free kick should be a lateral pass to a teammate or a pass back to a teammate—not a forward kick down field.** All restarts after injury or other interruptions of play should follow the same format, with the indirect free kick being a lateral pass to a teammate or a pass back to a teammate, and not a kick down field.
- There are no penalty kicks in U8.
- Coaches refereeing the game should work together to address fouls and to ensure that players understand why fouls are called and how to avoid them. Soccer is a contact sport, and each action is dealt with at the time it occurs. Explain the foul in simple terms, restart, and let the game continue.
 - Kicks or trips (or attempts to kick or trip) an opponent
 - Slide tackles
 - Jumping at, charging, or striking (or attempting to strike) an opponent
 - Pushing, holding, tackling or trying to impede an opponent
 - Tackling an opponent to gain possession of the ball
 - Handling the ball deliberately
 - Playing in a dangerous or unsportsmanlike manner
- **Goal kick** – if the team attempting to score a goal kicks the ball over the goal line outside the goal posts, the opposing team puts the ball back into play with a goal kick. Goal kicks will be taken from the goal box.
- **Goal Kick and Build Out Line** – during goal kicks, the kick should be taken from the goal box. Prior to the goal kick, the defensive team should back up behind the build out line (the red line between the goal box and the mid line) to allow the offensive team to begin to play the ball out. After the goal kick has been made *and* another offensive player has received the ball on their side of the build out line, the defensive team can move across the build out line to defend. The idea here is to promote passing and possession as the offensive team builds the ball out. **Do not allow players to simply boot the ball downfield on goal kicks. They should pass the ball LATERALLY or BACKWARDSD to a teammate within the build out line. Once the pass is received, the defensive team can move in from the build out line to defend.** This rule is a modified version of the build out line rule that applies to U10.
- **Corner kick** – If the team defending against a goal being scored kicks the ball over the goal line outside the goal posts, the opposing team puts the ball back into play with a corner kick. Use an indirect free kick from the corner to a teammate or teammates in front of the goal or back from the corner, with the opponents being at least 5 yards away from the person taking the corner kick.
- **Throw-ins** – If a team kicks the ball across the touchline out of bounds, the opposing team gets a throw in at the approximate location where the ball crossed the touchline. If a player incorrectly performs a throw-in on the first throw, they should be instructed by the coaches/referees as to the proper manner of throwing the ball in, and be given a second or

chance to complete the throw-in. After the second incorrect attempt allow the opposing team to complete the throw in. (Be flexible here, work cooperatively with the opposing coach, and allow imperfect second throw ins as needed, with a focus on players developing the skill. Changes of possession after throw in errors should be a last resort to speed up play. The focus should be teaching the players how to throw in, not penalizing them for not doing it correctly.)

Additional Points about Sportsmanship and Game Play:

- Coaches are responsible for the sportsmanship of the team and are expected to talk to any players who are not displaying good sportsmanship. Parents and guardians are expected display good sportsmanship as well.
- The coaches are also expected to work together to referee and coordinate the game in a way that fosters a positive environment for the players on both teams.
- All players, coaches, and assistant coaches (apart from those who are on the field refereeing the game) should stay on one side of the field for the duration of the game. The designated side is opposite the parents/guardians (spectators). This will enable parents to see their children play and also allow the coaches who are refereeing to run freely with the children. (Players' and spectators' sides will be marked when the first week of games begin.)
- No parent or coach is permitted to stand on or near the goal line (with the exception of a coach who is refereeing and setting up a corner kick).
- Instruct your players to take a knee if a player is injured and is being tended to on the field.
- Use your whistle – children pay attention and will learn from it.
- Your job is to keep the playing environment FUN, SAFE, INSTRUCTIVE, and focused on the child.
- **Any issues or concerns or issues related to U8 should be communicated to the U8 & Down Commissioner & the President.**

GAMES ARE TO BE USED AS A TEACHING EXPERIENCE AND NO SCORES OR STANDINGS ARE TO BE KEPT.

To learn about standard rules of soccer as they apply to older age groups (e.g., U10, U12, U14), please see the NEFYSL Recreational League Rules and Regulations.