HYDRATE YOUR KIDS and yourselves before any 3v3 LIVE event.

Before prolonged physical activity, the child should be well hydrated. During the activity, periodic drinking should be enforced even if the child does not feel thirsty and each 20 minutes the child or adolescent should consume:

- 5 ounces of fluid for a player weighing 90 lbs or less
- 9 ounces of fluid for a player weighing more than 90 lbs. Supporting research states:

To ensure that the child is not dehydrated before the start of the practice session or game, the child should drink 12-16 ounces of fluid approximately 30 minutes before getting to the field.

Once the activity is over, players should drink water or a sports drink every 20 minutes for an hour

* Recent research shows that adolescent males typically lose 1-1.5 liters per hour when performing intense soccer practices/games in the heat, while younger males and females will lose from 0.6 to 1 liter per hour.

3) Teach the youth soccer player to monitor his/her own hydration status with the following tip: If their urine (as it flows, not when diluted in the bowl) is a pale yellow like lemonade then they are likely pretty well hydrated. If their urine is dark yellow like apple juice then they are likely dehydrated. This is an easy and accurate way to assess hydration status and it gets the kids involved on a personal level.

4) Kids need to drink enough of the right fluids to replenish fluid losses during activity.

Flavored beverages that contain sodium (sports drinks) are preferable because the child may drink more of them.

Research shows that lightly sweetened and flavored non-carbonated beverages, like sports drinks, are preferred during exercise and are consumed in greater volumes than water, diluted fruit juice or carbonated beverages.

Research shows that fluids containing sodium chloride (sports drinks) increase voluntary drinking by 90%, compared to drinking plain water.

5) In addition to replacing fluid, children also need to replace the electrolytes, such as sodium, lost through sweat. Electrolyte replacement is important to stimulate an adequate thirst mechanism, help the body hold on to fluid, help prevent muscle cramps17 and to maintain sodium levels in the blood.

6) Fluids children should avoid immediately before and during activity include fruit juices, carbonated beverages, caffeinated beverages and energy drinks.

Fruit juices have a high sugar content, which can slow fluid absorption and cause upset stomach, may also lack sodium. Carbonated beverages, such as soft drinks, can reduce voluntary drinking due to stomach fullness and throat burn when gulping and lack sodium. Energy drinks should be avoided because many contain caffeine and have high carbohydrate concentrations, which slows the emptying of fluids from the stomach.

7) Be sure that each child has his/her own beverage container and that they have the opportunity to keep it cool during the practice. An individual container will allow them to monitor fluid consumption more accurately, can be filled with beverage of personal preference, will help avoid the spread of germs and viruses and the cool fluid will be replenished at a better rate than a container that sits out in the sun.

Additionally, it is important to note that dehydration also hinders exercise performance. So to maintain the same level of intensity while dehydrated the athlete will have to work even harder to keep up with everyone else.