**Killen AYSO Guidelines**

We want to thank all those who signed up for Fall soccer with Killen AYSO. We want your participation to be a positive one for the whole family. AYSO and our Region 1096 in Killen have always striven to be "about the kids". While many sports say same thing, we do our best to live it and have policies in place to enforce it the best we can. While it has become an epidemic in youth sports across the US to accept official/coach abuse as part of the game and teaching kids to win at all costs. AYSO has always done things different and so has Killen AYSO, we want it to be about the kids and family. We want to change that mentality, as we do this, we will see player development improve drastically with no pressure. Everyone should be having a blast and concentrating on the kids and not the score. We want to focus on player development, while let the kids be competitive, not the adults. We would also like to thank all our coaches, refs, and others that volunteers, including the returning ones and especially the new ones. Soccer is unique in that it is designed as a players’ game and the involvement of non-players (coaches and referees) is intended to be limited. This can be a difficult concept for those accustomed to seeing active involvement by coaches and officials in other sports. Coaches participate in these other sports by directing the action of the players, debating rule decisions with officials or completely stopping the action by calling time-outs. Officials, in these other sports, participate by stopping the game for each rule violation and not continuing play until the infraction and violator have been identified, the punishment options explained to the opposing team and a final accounting of the entire incident announced or signaled to the spectators. Indeed, it is not uncommon in some sports for considerably more time to be devoted to dealing with these matters than is spent playing the actual game. The spirit of the game of soccer is something quite different. Here are our guidelines for this season.

**PARENTS/SPECTATORS**

1. Parents are to be seated on the opposite side of the field to the team...not on same side as players/coaches or on the goal ends. This disrupts the kids playing, the coaches, and for safety/insurance reasons. Parents need to be 3 feet away from touchline. No exceptions. This is no different than other sports. We moved field over so this should not be issue.

2. Remember all our coaches, referee, and board members are all volunteers. They do not get a dime out of what they do, they volunteer so your child can play. Let the coaches coach the game, no sideline coaching as this hurts the child’s development. Soccer players will only learn from their mistakes. Its ok to cheer, holler, and have fun, if it is all positive even when they make mistakes. (No yelling kick it, pass it, or sideline coaching). Think if you went to work and you had people on all sides yelling what to do, I do not think we would last too long with that kind of pressure. It can confuse the kids as the coach may have told them something totally different.

3. Let the referee ref the game, he is the ONLY one in control. A lot of calls are of the opinion of the ref and perception of field of play. OUR refs are trained and certified. Soccer was meant to be played with the less amount of stoppage as possible. The option of the ref to call advantage is used, there is no reason to penalize the team that did not commit foul. I have been on both sides, coach and ref, and I will tell you, that you think you see a lot more on sidelines than you do on the field, but that is not the case. A referee makes calls from an objective point of view, (ie, from a neutral point of view) we as spectators tend to make calls from a subjective point of view, (ie. from the point of the team, we are rooting for.) A lot of times the refs are trying to watch 22 players while you are only concentrating on the ball. There will be mistakes, but at the end of game it usually evens out. You will be rare to see a bad call change the outcome of a game. And whether you have been a player or coach, most do not understand what a foul is and what is not a foul, until you ref a game, I’ve been there.

4. If ref feels a spectator is acting negative that results in the kids being affected, the ref will get the coach of the team to talk to spectator, this is the best resolution to problems. It will be an Ask, Tell, Dismiss. Ref/Coach will ask negative spectator to stop negative behavior, if it continues Ref/Coach will tell spectator to stop negative behavior, and if it continues Ref/Coach will dismiss the spectator. Spectator will then thank ref/coach and leave field of play. This is the only way to keep it about kids and not adults.

5. If you feel so strongly about a situation, let us not address it during the game. The players will always follow adults, so good sportsmanship and positive actions are the only option. We have a feedback form (Attached below) you can fill out and email to the RC or place in the black mailbox on the shed. You can come to board meeting each month and express your concerns. You can email the RC with your concern. We have many ways to keep it about the kids on the field and keep the adult stuff off the field. All confidential. I will not guarantee that the results or outcome will be what you want, but we will look to see what we can do to always improve if need arises. 99% of the time these situations are just misunderstandings of the process. This is the only way for refs to improve, but also spectators to learn.

6. Remember, we have a sportsmanship program in place, and spectators’ actions affect the total score at end of year for the team.

8. We may have youth refs at times in younger games. There is a ZERO TOLERANCE for any negative actions, using words and/or gestures, toward any youth ref. You will be asked to leave immediately, and further actions could be imposed including suspension from attending games. No Exceptions!

7. Spectators, please use garbage cans to clean up your mess before you leave.

**COACHES**

1. ALWAYS follow the 6 AYSO Philosophies: “Everyone Plays” “Open Registration” “Balanced Teams” “Positive Coaches” “Good Sportsmanship” “Player Development”.

2. While AYSO requires all players to play half a game, we require all players to play 3 quarters before anybody plays 4. In 14U and above where there are free subs, all must play a half a game, but again, none should play a full game until everyone has played at least ¾ of the game.

3. Many hours are spent trying to create equal teams the best to our ability and the system we use, we want all teams to be able to compete with the others, that will improve all players soccer abilities. This is the reason you will be required to fill out ratings by last game. However, some teams may develop as a team much better than other teams. We highly encourage teams to NOT run up the score on weaker teams. If you get 4 goals ahead and the other team shows no sign of challenging, pull back your best players. Move them to defense or to goalie position, sub them out, or emphasize they must make so many passes before shot on goal. Emphasize passing rather than scoring or make them take all shots with the left foot. Do what you can to NOT to humiliate a team. Doing this will help the players develop a lot more and much better than just running up the score. We do not want to punish the team that is ahead, nor humiliate the team losing by not trying. As a coach we can implement the above ahead of time to reduce blow outs. As a coach you should be able to know ahead of time and introduce the steps above to prevent blowouts.

4. Some teams will be playing other teams from other areas and showing good sportsmanship is only way we can continue having teams to play. Even if the other team is not showing sportsmanship, Killen AYSO should be the leaders, not followers. Remember, change the culture one person at a time. If there are issues with other teams, please reach out to me so we can solve the issues behind the scenes. If team is non AYSO affiliated, same rules apply, we can solve differences behind the scenes. We must always follow AYSO rules!!! That is why it is the longest running soccer club in the nation.

5. The games are not always about winning. Do not let the heat of the moment make you forget about good sportsmanship and positive coaching.

6. If an issue comes up, please let me know and we will handle behind the scenes the best we can. No matter the situation we should never argue or show bad sportsmanship on the field. Remember, the kids always look up to coaches and parents and they tend to follow their actions.

7. If game is going on when you arrive, even if field is half empty, you need to stay off field in order to not interrupt the teams playing. There is plenty room to pass ball outside the fences. Your team should also not be on coach’s side, this causes much disruption and confusion to teams playing. Only coaches and/or board members and waiting refs are allowed on coach’s side during games.

8. Please do not allow kids to play inside the equipment shed, keep the door shut and if you must lock it during games.

9. After each game make sure your players sideline is cleaned up. We have been having lots of trash left after games and it is not fair to next team to have to clean up. On the small field there are garbage cans all around field and close by player benches. On the big field, you can get a garbage can and take to player side. There are garbage bags in the shed.

10. Coaches playing last game of day should also remove corner flags and place in shed, pick up any spare balls laying around, and any trash. They should also break down the tents and place back into the shed.

11. We may have youth refs at times in younger games. There is a ZERO TOLERANCE for any negative actions, in words or gestures, toward any youth ref. You will be removed as a coach immediately and will not be allowed to coach at Killen AYSO in the future without major conditions being met. No Exceptions! Help them, not hurt them!!!

12. Follow your coaching manuals, do the drills, do not scrimmage the whole practice time, you should be spending no more than 15 to 20 mins on scrimmage. The AYSO coaching program in the only ACCREDITED coaching training program in the nation. It works, it is what is best for the kid’s future long-term development.

13. Last, if you are not having fun as a coach, please reach out to me or the Coach Admin. To make Killen AYSO the best around for the kids, we need to address any issues before they become mountains. We need to know so we can improve as a Region. Please do not be shy, let us know!!

**Field Setup/Equipment**

1. Coaches of teams that are playing the first games of the day on either field need to come out early enough to set up the fields so all games can start on time. This should not be a referee job!! On the small field the benches and goals may have to be moved to convert the field to support the different age groups, the corner flags put up in each corner. This is a good job for a team parent to help with. On the big field, no goals should ever have to be moved, but corner flags need placed in each corner. I would encourage all players to bring some bottled water. Make sure there are pumped up game balls ready for your age group.

2. First aid kits can be found in each equipment shed, let me know if supplies are running low.

3. Leave the field in better condition than when you arrived!

**Games/Weather**

1. Game cancellations before game has started can only to be made by the Safety Director, or Regional Commissioner. Referees make the decision once the game has started. If you do not see a notice on the Facebook page, website, or call from one of the above, the games are being played. We will play in the rain unless one of the above deem it is unsafe to do so or chance of ruining game field due to field conditions.

2. If a game is ended before the half due to poor field conditions (rain/lightning), the game will be rescheduled and replayed in full.

3. If game is ended after a full half is played, the score at the time of cancellation will stand as the final score of game, there will be no replay.

4. A game will be delayed when thunder is heard close, if we see lightning no matter how far away, we will delay also. We ask everyone to go to their cars and wait 15 mins after last event of thunder or lightning, if it looks to be moving away, we will continue game.

5. The RC will reschedule all games if any are canceled. These maybe played during week of practice times.

**Gaming Guidelines 6U**

* 3v3 or 4v4 using #3 balls.
* Field can handle up to 4 games at one time so no player should have to sit very much.
* No referees required, coaches run games
* The first 30 mins will be practice. Teach them one new skill each week applicable to this age group, make it fun and then let them play!
* Again, no exceptions this year, do not cut short practice, do the 30-minute practice, then give them a rest and then run your 20-minute game as outlined below and in the coaches manual.
* No goal kicks or corner kicks.
* ALL restarts are pass ins/dribble ins.
* No throw ins
* Opponents must be 6 feet away from pass in.
* No goalkeeper or organized defense.
* Have 4–5-minute quarters, 1 minute substitution breaks, (should result in about 4 min. quarter, 1 minute sub break), 5-10 min half time, clock always running except half time (20 min game total excluding halftime)
* At half time, recommend to swap players around to different team play, even teams out much as possible.

**8U**

* 4v4 using #3 balls.
* Referees or coaches run games. If referee has not shown up by game time, coaches should share refereeing responsibilities. Please remember, we may use youth refs in 8U games. No arguing with decisions, helping the youth referee is encouraged at any stoppage or anytime the youth referee asks for direction.
* NO HEADING THE BALL-PRACTICE OR GAME-If player deliberately heads ball, an indirect free kick will be awarded to opposing team.
* Players can throw in, pass in, or dribble in this season. Recommend giving child 2 tries to throw in correctly, if after two tries have them pass in/dribble in. Opponents must be 10 feet away from restart.
* Goal kicks and corner kicks will be used this season. There is no goal box nor corner arch but should be placed in vicinity. Defenders must respect a 5-yard distance on direct kicks and corner kicks.
* No offside is called, but players should be discouraged from staying too far in offside positions.
* No goalkeepers, no organized defense.
* 4–10-minute quarters, with a 2 minute sub break. Sub break is taken WITH the clock running which should result in about a 7-to-8-minute quarters. 10-minute halftime.

**10U**

7V7 using #4 balls.

Referees must run the games if no certified referee game will have to be rescheduled.

All laws of the game apply including offside.

No red cards, yellow cards under the most serious conditions only.

Respect 8-yard distance on direct and corner kicks.

On foul throw-ins, players should be giving at least 2 tries to throw ball correctly before ball is giving to the other team.

25-minute halves, 2-to-3-minute quarter break with clock running, this should result in a 11 to 12 minute quarter. 10-minute half time.

NO HEADING THE BALL-PRACTICE OR GAME-If player deliberately heads ball, an indirect free kick will be awarded to opposing team.

Build out line, opposing team must move past it when goalkeeper has ball, ball is in play once goalkeeper releases ball. Goalkeeper can play ball inside or outside the build out line. This will be strictly enforced this season; it is a mandate by AYSO and US Soccer.

NO PUNTING, Drop Kick, or Volley from goalkeeper, must be thrown, rolled, or pass to teammate.

**12U**

9v9 using #4 balls.

Referees run the games.

All laws of the game apply.

No red cards. On foul throw-ins, player should get 1 extra chance to throw in correctly before giving to another team.

30-minute halves, with a 2-to-3-minute quarter break with the clock running. This should result in about 13-to-14-minute quarters. 10-minute half time.

NO HEADING THE BALL-PRACTICE OR GAME-If player deliberately heads ball, an indirect free kick will be awarded to opposing team.

Goalkeepers-Punting is allowed

**14U**

11v11 using #5 balls.

All laws of the game apply.

Red cards only in most flagrant situations.

35 min halves, free sub, 10 min. Half time.

**19U**

11v11 using #5 balls.

All laws of the game apply.

45 min halves, free sub, 10 min half time

**Misc. Game Rules**

1. Free Sub (U14 and Above) Players may enter and exit the game any number of times. Players wishing to enter must stand at the midfield line. Coach can get refs attention by yelling “sub” or “substitution”. You should only do this at your stoppage, sometimes ref will wave both teams players on for sub at stoppage. Players should call out name of player they are replacing. Free subs are allowed on any kick-off, goal kick, their own team’s throw-in, or any other time ref waves them on. The ref MUST signal the player on in any event for substitution.

2. Number of Players: A min. Of 7 players are required to start a game in 11 v 11 play. Teams shall play down a max of 1 player if opposing team does not have a full team but only if he can sit an extra out without affecting the everybody gets half a game. For instance, in an 8v8 game, if one team has only 7 players, the game will be played 7v7. If one team has 6 players, the game will be played 6v7. This is a “sporting” gesture in smaller divisions with smaller ratios of team size due to number of players. The issue of managing a match with uneven number of players is entirely about good sportsmanship. We will seek all other remedies that do not minimize playing time of players who came to play as per the schedule. We suggest players from the division below without forfeiture of the match.

8U teams will not be able to use 6U/5U players due to rules. Do not use the same player each week to create an advantage. At no time should a coach be pulling players up from younger division if he has enough to play. (Just to have subs) This also should not be routine for any single player or team and should never be used to seek advantage over the team that produced as expected. Forfeiting a match and borrowing players from another opponent or another team in your division may be the “sporting” response. We expect fundamental fairness and good sportsmanship in any remedy to a match with an uneven number of players in divisions with large ratios. The team that produced as expected and its members should not be without forfeiture of that match by its opponent.

3. If a player receives a red card, they will be suspended the next scheduled game. For all incidences of Red Cards, the Regional Commissioner and Referee Administrator need to be notified. Depending on situation, additional administrative penalties could result, or the suspension waived. This will not be the norm nor no guarantee it will be reduced.

4. We do not Red Card coaches just for fact of situation it puts the players in. The ref can call you to side and ask you to leave field if situation is such that it is deemed necessary. (They will not show you a red card) If asked to leave, you must leave without any other action. You will have opportunity to discuss if needed after the game or special meeting. Inappropriate conduct by coaches could result in revocation of volunteer status and will be reported as such by laws of Alabama if needed.

5. Coaches need not argue the call of the ref. If you feel strongly enough about a call, after the game you can calmly ask the ref or call the ref admin or RC to discuss and explain. Please do not do this on the field during playing time or with kids around. At no time will a call be overturned or outcome of game change due to what YOU feel is wrong call.

6. Remember, we want the kids to enjoy and grow in soccer play. Positive coaching and not coaching the ball as they are playing will help the players more than anything. Practices are for coaching; games are for the players to play and have fun from their hard work in practice. They will learn more from their mistakes than someone yelling every step of way what to do.

7. Coaches in 12U and below. You should play your players in all positions. They should not be playing the same position all the time. It is part of a process, and to make them an all-around player switching players around is only way to do so in these age groups. As they move up to older groups, they will get in the position they best play in. Sometimes that player who always plays defense is your diamond in the rough. Do not ever force a child to play the goalie position but each quarter keep encouraging and swap all your players around so they will develop to the best player possible. We all want to win, but we are not here for that very reason. We are here so all can play, player development, and kids having fun!!!! Have a safe and fun soccer season. If you have any questions, you can reach out to me.