

TOPSOCCER

NJ YOUTH SOCCER



TOPSOCCER
NEW JERSEY
YOUTH SOCCER



What is TOPSoccer?

- An official US Youth Soccer program enriching the lives of young athletes with varying disabilities through the game of soccer
- Emphasizes development, training, and meaningful participation rather than competition
- Fosters physical, mental, and emotional growth and development through the sport of soccer at all levels of age and competition
- Enables young athletes with disabilities to develop physical fitness, technical skills, courage and self esteem

Gives everyone a chance to play soccer, while providing the experience of working together as a team, achieving individual goals, and, most of all, **HAVING FUN!**



Benefits and lessons learned in launching a TOPSoccer program

Benefits

- Fun! All players get to enjoy soccer
- Exercise and skill development
- Builds confidence through accomplishment
- Socialization for players, buddies, parents, and coaches
- Buddies and coaches give back to community
- Educate others and build awareness, kindness, and compassion for people with disabilities

Lessons learned

- The players will build skills and develop at different rates – plan activities to be adaptable to varying capability levels
- The players LOVE scrimmages - adjust game play to adapt to different capabilities
- Use ice breaker activities to foster engagement from the players and the buddies
- Promote the program to increase player pool
- Recruiting buddies is not difficult and we tend to have more than enough buddies (often more buddies than players)
- Formally train buddies and coaches to ensure quality of experience
- Provide players with uniforms so that they are part of the club
- Professional trainers are not required -- but are very beneficial
- Team outings and virtual activities are a great opportunity to extend program impact
- Seek opportunities to collaborate and partner with others in the community, including other TOPSoccer programs, schools, etc.



First steps for starting TOPSoccer at your club

1. Build a team of core volunteers from your club community
2. Structure logistics that include location/field space, a schedule of sessions throughout the year (such as spring and fall seasons), equipment and uniforms needed
3. Spread the word through social media and word of mouth within the club and greater community to gather players and additional volunteers (buddies and coaches)
4. Request a free TOPSoccer Buddy and Coach Course to train the staff (buddies and coaches)
5. Guide adult staff and players (parents) through the coach / adult player registration process, and include all youth players and buddies upon the Program ID Form
6. Get started by planning and executing each TOPSoccer session... and fine tune along the way!



THANK YOU!



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