



Region 568
Area D
Section 6

Skokie AYSO Parent/Player Handbook 2009-2010 Season

2009-2010 Schedule:

September 13 - November 1, 2009

April 18 - June 6, 2010

(Note: U5 is a six-week season)

What is AYSO Soccer?

AYSO is a nationwide non-profit organization that develops and delivers quality youth soccer programs in a fun, family environment based on AYSO's Five Philosophies:

Everyone Plays! Our program's goal is for kids to play soccer—so we mandate that every player on every team must play at least half of every game.

Balanced Teams! Each year we form new teams as evenly balanced as possible—because it is fair and more fun when teams of equal ability play.

Open Registration! Our program is open to all children between 4 and 18 years of age who want to register and play soccer. Interest and enthusiasm are the only criteria for playing.

Positive Coaching! Encouragement of player effort provides for greater enjoyment by the players and ultimately leads to better-skilled and better-motivated players.

Good Sportsmanship! We strive to create a positive environment based on mutual respect rather than a win-at-all-costs attitude, and our program is designed to instill good sportsmanship in every facet of AYSO.

Currently, more than 650,000 youths participate nationwide. Skokie's first AYSO soccer game was in the Spring of 1987 and now nearly 1,000 children participate in Skokie's AYSO program.

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Who Can Play?

Skokie AYSO Region 568 is open to all boys and girls who live or attend school in Skokie or neighboring communities:

Division	Age.....	Eligible Birthdates
U-19.....	16-17-18.....	9-1-90 thru 8/31/93
U-16.....	14-15.....	9-1-93 thru 8/31/95
U-14.....	12-13.....	9/1/95 thru 8/31/97
U-12.....	10-11.....	9/1/97 thru 8/31/99
U-10.....	8-9.....	9/1/99 thru 8/31/01
U-8.....	6-7.....	9/1/01 thru 8/31/03
U-6.....	5.....	9/1/03 thru 8/31/04
U-5*.....	4.....	9/1/04 thru 7/31/05

**Note U5 is a special program*

Only a parent or legal guardian can register his or her child. Proof of birth date is required for new players. All players must be registered and fees paid before participating in practices or games.



Where Do We Play?

Games and practices are played in parks and schoolyards all across Skokie. (Division U19 and Division U14 teams also travel to neighboring communities to play other AYSO teams.)



When Do We Play and Practice?

Games are played on Sundays. We play when it's hot or cold, rain or shine—but not if there's lightning. Games will **NOT** be played in hazardous conditions, especially if lightning or thunder occurs. Before games begin each Sunday, the AYSO Commissioner, Safety Director or Field Manager are the only ones authorized to cancel games. He or she will evaluate playing conditions (such as muddy fields and possible stormy weather) to determine if players' safety is put at risk by playing. If you think that your game may be canceled, check the AYSO number (847.676.AYSO) or call your team parent or coach. Once a game has started, the referee determines whether or not it should be canceled.

Practices can be scheduled by your coach any day, Monday through Saturday. *Note to High School Students: To avoid conflict with the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) soccer program, Skokie AYSO schedules high school girls' division games in the Fall and high school boys' division games in the Spring.*



Everyone volunteers!

Skokie AYSO is an “*all volunteer*” soccer program—there is no paid staff. This program is for the benefit of our children, run by adults who volunteer their time and energy. All parents are requested to volunteer, either as a coach, referee, team parent, or administrative helper. Visit www.skokieayso.org and click on “contact us.”



Fees and Uniforms

The fee for the 2006-2007 season (including games in both the fall and spring) is \$80. All players must be registered and fees paid before participating in the program (practice or game). If a check is returned (“bounced”), the player will not play until the fees are paid. (An additional fee will also be assessed.)

Refunds must be requested in writing and sent to:

Skokie AYSO
Registrar
P.O. Box 827
Skokie, Illinois 60076

*Note: Request for refunds must be postmarked by August 1st. There are **NO** partial refunds for those playing only in the Fall or Spring portions of the 2006-2007 Season.*

Skokie AYSO Region 568 has a scholarship program for players in need. Please contact the Regional Commissioner for more information. Discussions will be strictly confidential.

Skokie AYSO provides a uniform to each player to be worn at games. The uniform consists of a numbered jersey, shorts, and tube socks. The uniform is for the player to keep. Players must provide their own shin guards, shoes and practice ball.

After the final registration date for a season, children can be placed on the Waiting list at www.skokieayso.org. Openings on teams will be filled by the applicants who signed up the earliest and who are on the Waiting List for each division.



Parents’ Responsibilities

At the beginning of each season, your child’s coach and the team parent will hold a parents’ meeting. It is important that a parent and guardian attend. Parents also are responsible to help set up the field before the day’s first game, including the soccer goals and nets, corner flags, etc. Your team parent schedules parents for these assignments. If you are assigned, please be at the field ½-hour before the start of the game to set up the fields. After a day’s last game, parents will also be assigned to remove and store equipment and to pick up litter from the fields.



Rules and Regulations

When you register your child in AYSO soccer, you agree to abide by the rules and regulations of AYSO Regional Board 568. These rules include following the instructions of referees and AYSO Field Supervisors (who can be identified at games by a brightly colored supervisor cap). Field Supervisors monitor the behavior of players, officials, and spectators.

Referees can issue “green cards” to parents and spectators for unacceptable behavior or actions. If a person is “carded,” he or she must immediately change his or her behavior or leave Skokie Park District or school district soccer facilities in order for the game to continue.



Teams

New teams are formed for each Fall/Spring season.

Here are the optimum number of players on each team according to division:

Division	U19	U16	U14	U12	U10	U8	U6
# of players/team	15	15	15	12	9	7	5

AYSO requires that all teams be balanced to make games as fun as possible. Teams are formed based on coaches' evaluation of returning players and by a computer program provided by the AYSO national organization. Of course, in Divisions U8 and U6, where children have played very few AYSO games, team balancing is more difficult.

All teams organized are final - there will be **NO SWITCHING** of players between teams.



U5 Program

The objective of this program is to provide the young players and their parents with a "pressure free" introduction to the beautiful and simple game of soccer. At this age players should be exposed to soccer by playing simple, fun activities and games that require little to no practice, and a minimal time commitment.

This program allows players to discover the game for themselves, while parents are given a soccer foundation on which to build and grow into future AYSO coaches, referees, and administrators. The format will be jamboree one with one. In AYSO soccer, a jamboree means that teams are formed on a weekly basis depending on how many players attend a given session. One with one refers to the concept that each player will have a parent (or other adult) working with them on the field. A Master Coach will lead all the activities in the U5 program.



Everyone Plays!

Each player will play at least one half of every game he or she attends (unless disciplinary action is in effect).

No player is allowed to play more than one quarter of a game more than any other player. (For example: No player may play all four quarters unless all the other players on the team play at least three quarters.)

By the end of the session, every child should have played about the same number of quarters. (For example: No player may play two or three quarters each game while others play three or four quarters each game.)

Players are requested to meet ½-hour before the start of each game. This allows enough time for players to stretch and warm-up and for the coach to complete his or her line-up card. If players do not arrive early enough, they may have to sit out the first part of the game.

Should any questions arise during game days, look for a "field supervisor." The field supervisor can be recognized by the brightly colored "Supervisor" cap he or she will be wearing.

Game Day!

Be sure to follow these rules when participating in an AYSO game:

- Make sure you wear your uniform jersey, uniform shorts, uniform socks, shin guards, and regulation soccer shoes or gym shoes. Note—the jersey must be tucked into the shorts, shin guards must be worn under the socks, and the socks must be pulled up. A sweatshirt, turtleneck shirt, or long pants may be worn under the uniform in cold or wet weather (long pants must be tucked into issued socks). Additional clothing may not be worn over the uniform while participating in a game.
- Don't wear jewelry of any kind (cloth or metal), wrist-watches, earrings, barrettes, bracelets, hats, caps, etc. (goalies can wear knit hats), shoes with metal cleats or baseball cleats, or any other object that can cause injury to yourself or another player.
- Take care of our fields and parks. If you see anyone abusing this privilege, please bring it to the attention of a coach, referee, or AYSO official.
- Don't eat candy or chew gum during the game.
- Wear a jacket, sweatshirt, or other warm clothing during cold weather when not participating in the game.
- Don't criticize the other team or your teammates.
- Tie back long hair. Cloth head bands are permitted.
- It's recommended—but not required—that boys wear athletic protectors.
- Spectators must remain behind the orange spectator lines. Spectators are not allowed behind the goal lines.

Practices!

It is important that YOU come to practice. When you sign up to play AYSO soccer, you have agreed to attend practices regularly and help the coach build a team for the enjoyment of everyone. Practice is fun—it's where you'll learn the skills, strategies, and teamwork necessary to play the game. Team practices will be held once or twice a week (on weekdays and/or Saturdays). They will take place at parks and schools in Skokie. Coaches will provide practice cones and other necessary equipment.

*NOTE: Players must wear shin guards to practice or they will **NOT** practice.* Also, just as at games, players shouldn't wear wrist-watches, earrings, barrettes, metal bracelets, or any other object that can cause injury to yourself or another player.

Also, don't rely on the coach to baby-sit. (Making arrangements for pick-up and returning home are not the coach's responsibility.)

Each player must have a soccer ball to use for home and practice. There are three sizes of soccer ball. Check the table below for the size of ball used in your division:



Division Ball Size Number

U8 – U5	3
U12 –U10	4
U19 –U14.....	5



Referees

Referees, like all AYSO officials, are volunteers, not professionals. In soccer, the referee is the law. His or her decisions are final. Some of our referees are new to soccer. However, each is volunteering to do a difficult job and has, at a minimum, taken a course and passed a referee's exam in order to perform that job to the best of his or her ability.

It doesn't help anyone—especially our children—to criticize, shout disagreement, or make derogatory remarks during a game. Any such action is contrary to the spirit of the game and an infringement of AYSO laws. Referees can caution players by using a yellow card, if necessary. The referee can eject players by using a red card (a second caution is automatically a red card—if you receive two yellow cards you automatically receive a red card) and even terminate the game. Abusive words, disrespect, or deliberate fouls can lead to yellow and red cards being used. A player who receives a red card in a game may be required to sit out the following game.

► *Soccer Fact—The Advantage Rule: The referee can choose not to call a foul during a game if, in the referee's sole judgment, it is advantageous to the fouled player or team to continue play without stoppage.*



Parking

AYSO does not want to lose the use of our Skokie parks and fields. Please be courteous and do not park illegally.



Injuries

Soccer has a very low injury rate and is generally considered a safe sport. However, children participating in any athletic activity may suffer injury. Therefore, AYSO has an accident reimbursement program that covers each registered player for injury incurred during practices and games. This policy is an "excess coverage" program. It affords coverage (to its limit) for any medical bills not paid by other existing medical insurance carried individually by the family or through an employer's group policy (subject to certain deductibles and exclusions).

At registration, you will receive a pamphlet describing the program.



Board Meetings

All AYSO Region 568 parents and legal guardians are invited to attend Board meetings on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Oakton Center (or other designated location).

Skokie AYSO Region 568 may be contacted:

- www.skokieayso.org
- 847.676.AYSO
- Skokie AYSO Region 568
P.O. Box 827
Skokie, IL. 60076



Safe Haven

AYSO Safe Haven is designed to address the growing need for child and volunteer protection. The four elements of the program are creation of policies, screening of volunteers, training of volunteers, and promotion of education and awareness.

Because of the commitment of our members to the implementation of the Safe Haven Program, AYSO is the first national organization to comply with the federal child and volunteer protection acts.

Region 568 has implemented the Safe Haven program as follows:

- Regional policies regarding child and volunteer protection are in place
- A Child and Volunteer Protection Advocate is on the Board
- Volunteers complete an application process
- Criminal background checks are required of all our coach and referee volunteers
- All coaches referees, and team parents are certified
- Training, certification, and continuing education is provided for all volunteers
- Certified Instructors teach all classes

AYSO and Region 568 have taken the lead in creating a Safe Haven where no child or volunteer will be at risk.



Sportsmanship and Fair Play

Soccer teaches respect for ... oneself ... teammates ... opposing players ... referees ... and the “Laws of the Game.” Hostility, degradation, vicious behavior, brutality, arguments, offensive and obscene language are all foreign to the game of soccer wherever it is played and will not be tolerated in Skokie.

The following are examples of the many ways attitudes of decency are demonstrated during the game and by customary rites before and after the game:

- Just prior to the start of the game, the referee calls the team captains to the center of the field for the coin toss to choose ends and determine which team will kick off. The captains shake hands and wish each other “Good Luck.”
- During the game, fallen players are always helped up by the nearest players, whether teammate or opponent. When a foul is committed, the two players involved should immediately shake hands to cure any momentary anger or ill will. If the fouled player or the player’s team still has the advantage after the incident, the referee will not stop play, in which event a smile and a wave are good substitutes for a handshake.
- No player is ever blamed for a mistake, least of all the goalkeeper.
- All players share in the glory of a scored goal.
- It is not considered partisan for the referee to say “well played” or “good kick” to individual players. Such positive comments usually even out between the two sides before the end of the game.
- At the closing whistle, the two teams each form a line and then proceed to shake the hands of each of the opposing players. Team captains and coaches always thank the referees for their contribution to the game.

These universal expressions of esteem are well worth fostering in our program.



Telephone Numbers

If you need AYSO information, use this telephone guide:

Who/What/When/Where/Why:	Call:
Check if practice has been canceled	Your team parent or coach
When or where to register	www.skokieayso.org
The name or telephone number of your coach	(847) 676-AYSO
A player has an accident during a game or practice	(847) 676-AYSO
Volunteer to coach, referee, team parent, or help in another capacity	(847) 676-AYSO
Check if a game has been canceled	(847) 676-AYSO
Check the time of your game	Your team parent, coach, or a teammate
Check if it's your turn for refreshments or equipment	Your team parent, coach, or a teammate



Please remember: Skokie AYSO represents a cooperative effort among AYSO Region 568, the Skokie Park District, and YOU — the parents who volunteer their time and energy and the children who play soccer the AYSO way. It's important that every parent volunteer, either as coach, referee, or team parent, or help out in another way. You don't need to know anything about soccer to volunteer; AYSO's free training programs are considered some of the best worldwide!