



Region 1535
Parent Player Handbook
2017-2018





Welcome to

Atoka AYSO REGION 1535 (AREA D)

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We are so excited to have you join our AYSO family. Please read through this parent/player manual as it will tell you how the program works and make you aware of policies and parent responsibilities that will help make this a fun experience for you and your child. It is our goal to provide a fun, fair, and safe environment for you, the players, and volunteers. With your help we can have a spectacular season. Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

Brighton AYSO Soccer Region 1535 follows all National AYSO Guidelines, Policies, Rules, and Regulations. These are available for review at www.avso.org. Anything not covered by this handbook will be covered by our National Office. All referees follow FIFA Laws of the Game and we are glad to make these available to any parent, coach, or player in our region. All directors, referees, and coaches have been trained and certified by AYSO instructors in their area of expertise as well as Safe Haven, and Concussion Awareness. They are non-paid volunteers who work diligently to provide an exceptional program for all children. Please make sure to offer a thank you.

AYSO's certification programs are accredited by the National Association of Sports and Physical Education (NASPE), providing universal recognition and validity from colleges, universities, high school athletic associations, and national governing bodies of sport, youth sports organizations, and others.



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AMERICAN YOUTH SOCCER ORGANIZATION

Vision Statement

The American Youth Soccer Organization's vision is to provide world class soccer programs that enrich children's lives.

Mission Statement

The American Youth Soccer Organization's mission is to develop and deliver quality youth soccer programs, which promote a fun, family environment based on the AYSO philosophies:

Everyone Plays
Balanced Teams
Open Registration
Positive Coaching
Good Sportsmanship
Player Development

The **core values** guiding AYSO are:

Fun for all
Education for all
Ethics for all
Accessible for all

The mission is accomplished by providing these essential services:
Coaching and referee programs including quality delivery systems
Quality administrative and operating systems with the support network
Strong financial position
Special network for volunteers, supported by a national staff
Program research and development

Character Counts

AYSO is a coalition member of the Josephson Institute of Ethics and is committed to supporting the Character Counts program.

Its Six Pillars of Character are:

Trustworthiness
Respect
Responsibility
Fairness
Caring
Citizenship

Child Protection

AYSO is committed to providing a "child safe" program, where children can develop in a safe, fair, and fun environment.



INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROGRAM

REGIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The goal of AYSO Region 1535 and the AYSO organization is to encourage the growth of soccer and promote positive child development. Although everyone engaged in sporting competition should have a desire to win, this desire should not be pursued to the exclusion of good sportsmanship, fair play, and participation. AYSO is a parent-based, volunteer organization providing a soccer program for all children regardless of experience or skill level. Registration of your child in our program implies responsibility to the team and adherence to the six principles of AYSO: **Everyone Plays, Balanced Teams, Positive Coaching, Open Registration, Good Sportsmanship, and Player Development.**

EVERYONE PLAYS

Each player is guaranteed to play at least half of every game, regardless of his or her level of skill or aptitude, **if the child:** ARRIVES ON TIME AT THE PLAYING FIELD FOR SCHEDULED GAMES PREPARED TO PLAY IN THE PROPER AND COMPLETE UNIFORM, SHOES, SHIN GUARDS, ETC., AND IS NOT IMPAIRED DUE TO ILLNESS OR INJURY; prior to or during the game. This is to account for new concussion and sudden cardiac death requirements that could prevent a player from playing at least 2 quarters of the game.

Once regular registration is closed, additional players may be added on a space available basis ONLY. (Registration is considered “closed” when teams are formed and uniforms are ordered.) Team sizes are determined by the Registrar based on AYSO National Guidelines with the three quarter rule being a goal. (ie: every player will have an opportunity to play $\frac{3}{4}$ of each game.

ELIGIBILITY

All boys and girls, between the ages of 4 and 18, based on their age as of July 31 shall be eligible to register for the program, subject to field availability and volunteer support and such rules as may be issued by the Regional Board.

REGISTRATION FEES AND REFUNDS

Atoka Parks & Recreation shall establish the registration fee for each player participant annually. A full refund will be made according to the discretion of the Atoka Parks & Recreation Director and Program Coordinator.



INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROGRAM

(Continued)

ADDING MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL PLAYERS

Middle/High School players that have finished their season – as verified by the school can be added to a team IF space is available (see Everyone Plays). TSSAA/TMSAA rules and regulations will be STRICTLY adhered to when adding players to teams – to include the "50% rule". (A team may not be composed of more than 50% of middle/high school players.) Balanced teams will ALWAYS apply per AYSO Philosophies. A \$40 field usage fee will be imposed to all middle/school players being added. There will be no minimum number of games guaranteed. No uniform will be ordered. A participation trophy/medal shall be awarded.

LENGTH OF SEASON AND CANCELLATION OF GAMES

The regular season will consist of 8 games. Inclement weather or poor field conditions may necessitate the cancellation of games. Any such cancellation will be made at the discretion of the Regional Commissioner. Participants are required to be at the field for their scheduled game. Due to short time frames, only one game can be rescheduled per season, unless weather or other scheduled school events prevent the possibility of a make-up game.

TEAM ASSIGNMENTS

Atoka Parks & Recreation with the advisement of the Regional Board shall make team assignments. Every attempt shall be made to balance the skill level of teams within each division. Retention of players on any team shall be limited to the head coach's child(ren). Except for the foregoing, there shall be no automatic retention of players from the previous season. Once teams are formed, no transfer of any player from one team to another may be made without the approval of Atoka Parks & Recreation, The Regional Board, the coaches of both teams involved, and the parent or guardian of the player.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND PLAYERS

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Every player participant shall be entitled to play at least half and preferably 3 quarters of every game. All players are asked to arrive 15 minutes prior to the start of each game as listed on the official game schedule. Parents must be aware, that late arrival for a game is disruptive to the team and must be avoided. While a player arriving during the first quarter will play the above numbered quarters, any player arriving during the second or third quarter may result in the player participating in only one quarter.



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND PLAYERS

(Continued)

PRACTICE

Practice will not exceed 2 hours, twice a week, for Divisions U19, U16, U14, U12, and U10. For Divisions U8 and U6, practice will not exceed 1 hour, twice a week. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardian to ensure their child attends practice. Valuable skills are taught at each practice; therefore players should attend every practice. If a player must miss practice, the coach or the team parent should be notified as soon as possible.

PRACTICE LOCATION AND ATTENDANCE

As all of the coaches in AYSO are volunteers, practice times are scheduled at the coach's convenience during the week (Monday through Saturday) and coordinated with the Region for field availability. Practice Fields are located at Brighton Elementary School. Each player must arrange to arrive on time and be picked up on time. Uniforms are not to be worn at practice. Shorts are better suited for the game of soccer than long pants. In cold weather, sweatpants are recommended as jeans can restrict motion. **Shin guards are required at all times completely covered by athletic socks.** Cleats are best suited for most fields and should be worn. It is recommended that each player bring an appropriately sized ball and water to practices.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

THE REGION AND THE CHILDREN NEED YOUR PARTICIPATION. Attend practices and games. PARENTAL SUPPORT IS CRUCIAL. Learn about the rules of the game by obtaining materials from your local library, ASYO.org or a board member. Above all, show tolerance toward players' skill level. When attending games, cheer for all players on both teams as well as your own child. **Every parent is requested to volunteer in some area of the program and there are various jobs available.** Before your team's meeting, read the section on volunteering in this handbook and don't be afraid to step up.

EQUIPMENT

UNIFORMS: A uniform consisting of shirt and socks is provided for your child's use at the beginning of the season and is yours to keep when the season ends. You are responsible for taking care of the uniform. Uniforms are **not** to be worn at practice, only for scheduled games. Players should wear black shorts and they should be as long as the player's index finger when held to the side of their leg. Players may not wear rings, watches, chains, necklaces, earrings, hard pony tail holders, barrettes or any other body adornment as these items may cause injury during play. Medical alert tags may be worn, but must be completely covered at all times by medical tape or some other soft material.



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND PLAYERS

(Continued)

CASTS ARE NOT ALLOWED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES: This includes, but is not limited to, casts, removable casts, splints, or any other device. These items pose a risk to the injured player and his/her teammates. Ace bandages, knee braces may be worn as long as they do not contain any metal or hard plastic parts.

CLEATS: Although not required, it is strongly suggested that players wear soccer cleats—the low-sided “football” style with rubber or plastic molded cleats (no metal). Cleats should fit comfortably with athletic socks.

SHIN GUARDS: It is only common sense to protect vulnerable shins. Shin guards protect the player. A National Rule makes shin guards **mandatory**. They may be purchased at any local sporting goods store and stores such as Wal-Mart, K-Mart, and Target. New lightweight shin guards provide freedom of movement without being heavy and cumbersome. **A PLAYER MUST WEAR SHIN GUARDS AT ALL PRACTICES AND GAMES COVERED BY ATHLETIC SOCKS. If the player’s legs become irritated by the shin guards, the player can wear a separate pair of socks under the shin guards or wrap the player’s legs with ace bandage for coverage.**

BALL: Each player is encouraged to practice with a ball and it is recommended that an “official” soccer ball be obtained. For Divisions U6 and U8: Size “3”; Divisions U10 and U12: Size “4”; Divisions U14, U16, and U18: Size “5”. A player needs to practice with a ball to develop skill and coordination. Any time spent with the ball makes for a better player and active parent participation at home is greatly encouraged. It is strongly recommended that the player’s name is put on the ball for identification. Children aged 10 and under are NOT encouraged to head the ball in practice or during the games.

WATER: Each player should bring water for himself/herself to each practice and game. Proper hydration begins the day before any physical activity. Drinking plenty of water 24 hours prior to activity allows the cells to hydrate for sustained physical activity. If a player starts a game dehydrated, their performance and health can be affected. Players are encouraged to continue to hydrate for several hours after a game with a good balance of water and/or sports drinks. Caffeine/energy drinks should be avoided.

COACHES

As a parent, you can help your child’s coach by introducing yourself and thanking them for their interest in coaching a team. Support the coach’s request that your child be on time for practices and games. If you do not stay for the entire practice session, pick up your child promptly at the end of practice. **U6/U8 parents should plan to stay at the field during practice.** Be positive with your comments and remember that a coach has a reason for his selection of player positions.



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND PLAYERS

(Continued)

Don't criticize the coach because you think your child should play a different position. **Remember that coaches volunteer their time and energy to instruct and help your child, and they need your cooperation and support.**

In order to facilitate team discipline at the coaching level, coaches will have the authority during either practices or games to issue formal card warnings to players on their own teams. The cycle for the card warning is from the day of practice to the next game. Following a game, yellow and red card issues reset. After a verbal warning for unacceptable behavior or the display of an unsportsman-like attitude, a coach may issue a yellow card warning. A yellow card warning will result in a player playing no more than half the next game, even if the penalty means the affected team will play one person short for half the game. If a player persists in unacceptable behavior, the coach may issue a red card. A red card will result in the player being unable to play at all in the next game. Note: The coaches will not have yellow or red cards, but will address the player regarding the card he/she has received.

If you need to have someone other than a legal guardian of a player drop off or pick up ask your coach for a release authorization. AYSO has a strict policy of only releasing players to the appropriate guardians.

REFEREES

AYSO referees are entitled to the highest respect from coaches, players, and spectators. The referee's mistakes--and there will be mistakes--shall be accepted without complaint. Many of the referees have no children playing in our Region and all of them gladly give their time to help us. AYSO certified referees have freely given their time to train and certify under AYSO training protocols. Their decisions on a game are FINAL! If there is a rule question, the proper way to address your concern is to first speak with the referee, after the game, second speak with the referee administrator or assistant referee administrator listed at the beginning of this handbook, and finally contact the regional commissioner, who will not reverse a referee decision, but may use the situation to strengthen our training protocols

Please show our referees the respect they deserve—they are Officials of the game and volunteers. Express your appreciation for their commitment to our soccer program. The Region is always in need of referees. If you are interested, contact the Regional Referee Administrator.



SIDELINE ETIQUETTE

AYSO soccer encourages positive self-esteem, discipline, personal responsibility, teamwork, acceptance of and learning from disappointment and success, as well as, perseverance. It is an enjoyable game to watch as well as it is to play. We believe that quality soccer can and should be developed, and that it can and should be fun. Therefore, the emphasis of our program is not on who wins but how the players and teams develop, and most importantly, did they have fun in doing so? We want all participants to reach their full, age-appropriate potential and to enjoy themselves in the process. As spectators, we must realize that the players are trying their very best and deserve our very best in the way of support and encouragement. Negative comments have no place on the field or on the sidelines. We need to recognize that the effort of each player is 100% and encourage each player to maintain that effort. It is also important to recognize all good play being demonstrated--regardless of which team the player is on.

Allow the coach to be the sole source of coaching during the match. They will communicate tactical or technical adjustments to the players. As a coach, be sure that your coaching during the match is limited to positive, instructional or encouraging comments. Giving play-by-play instructions to all players thwarts their ability to put into effect the lessons you have stressed in practices and denies them the opportunity to think on their feet.

The area off the field that the coaches occupy is called the "technical area" and is on your own team's side, no closer than one yard from the touchline, and up to ten yards from either side of the halfway line. The "technical area" is limited to the head coach and one assistant coach for that team. Not only are these to be the only persons occupying the "technical area," they are the only persons who may coach (give tactical or technical information) during the course of the match.

An important aspect of the AYSO program is Sportsmanship. Our children need to experience:

1. The fun of hard fought but fair competition,
2. Winning graciously,
3. Losing graciously,
4. Improving one's abilities through practice,
5. Learning the social skills involved in being a member of a team, and
6. Acknowledging good play by teammates as well as opponents.

One of the ways in which our children can learn and continue to have these experiences is by our demonstration of good sideline behavior. Our children learn by watching and imitating our conduct. Keep a positive outlook and demonstrate it by supporting the coaches, players, and referees--in spite of any mistakes they may make during the course of a match.



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. Atoka AYSO Region 1535 is committed to the protection of all its children from all forms of abuse and neglect while participating in the program and it promotes the awareness and prevention of child abuse in the community at large.
2. Atoka AYSO Region 1535 shall have a Child Protection Advocate, who shall be responsible for overseeing the child protection program in accordance with AYSO guidelines. He or she shall be a member of the regional board and will act as the main resource on child protection issues and shall be the region's liaison with the Coordinator of Child Protection Advocacy at the AYSO Education Department.
3. Atoka AYSO Region 1535 requires all volunteers to complete, date, and sign the appropriate volunteer application form and its authorization to AYSO to perform applicant screening. All volunteers shall be screened at a level appropriate to the level of risk.
4. Atoka AYSO Region 1535 shall have the right to revoke the participation of any individual who lies or knowingly misrepresents information on the application form, or who violates the principles of these child protection policies. AYSO shall have the right to revoke both the registration and certification of any volunteer who falsifies information, is found guilty of child abuse, or fails to fill in and return the volunteer application form.
5. The complaint, grievance, and appeal process shall be as described in the regional guidelines, with the addition of appeal to AYSO if it is the screening agency. The names and identities of the claimant and the defendant shall be protected at all times during the proceedings. The claimant need not be present to give evidence at any ensuing hearing, thus avoiding victimizing the child a second time.
6. A volunteer accused of abuse will be asked to resign voluntarily. If the volunteer refuses, the board will move to suspend the volunteer until the matter has been resolved. Regardless of civil or criminal guilt for the alleged child abuse, the continued presence of the volunteer in the program will damage the reputation of the region, even during the investigation and pretrial phase.
7. A volunteer accused of child abuse but subsequently cleared may apply for reinstatement in the region. However, reinstatement is not a right, and reinstated volunteers are not guaranteed to return to their former positions.



VIP PROGRAM

The VIP Program carries the AYSO philosophy of “Everyone Plays” to a new height, including all children. The mission of the AYSO VIP Program is to provide a quality soccer experience for children whose physical or mental challenges make it difficult to successfully participate on regular AYSO teams. In the American Youth Soccer Organization, these kids are Very Important Players (VIP). AYSO recognizes that all children need to feel a sense of belonging and acceptance, and offers that acceptance through its VIP soccer program. The VIP Division offers an opportunity for players and parents alike to participate in a supportive environment, to be a part of a team, to learn about the game of soccer, to make new friends, and most of all, to have FUN!

Wherever you live, there are potential VIP players in our schools and our community. With your help, these kids can have the benefits of sports participation in our VIP soccer program. If, as you read about the AYSO VIP Program, think of someone who might meet the criteria of a VIP player, please share this information with them. If you or they have any questions about this very exciting and rewarding part of our program, please call the Regional Commissioner at 901-596-5974.

AYSO KIDS ZONE PLEDGE®

The Kids Zone Pledge- parents and spectators are asked to sign the pledge and agree to the following guidelines:

- Kids are No. 1.
- Fun, not winning is everything.
- Fans only cheer, and only coaches coach.
- No yelling in anger.
- Respect the volunteer referees.
- No swearing or abusive behavior.
- No alcohol, tobacco or drugs.
- No weapons.
- Leave no trash behind.
- Set a proper example of sportsmanship.

When it comes down to it, Kids Zone is about supporting every child on the field- even those on the opposing team. It means supporting the players whether they win or lose. It means honoring the game- not the outcome of the game. Remember, respect starts with you!!



Kids Zone is an educational program that has three major elements:

1. **The Badge.** This is a pin-on badge bearing the program's logo. This badge will be worn by program supporters at games. It also will serve as a reminder of the importance of positive sideline behavior.
2. **The Sign.** A large sideline, which lists positive behavior standards, will be posted at the entrance of participating fields. Parents and spectators who will abide by these standards are welcome, all others are not.
3. **The Pledge.** We will request AYSO parents to sign a pledge that holds them to the Kids Zone standards.

VOLUNTEERING

AYSO is a national non-profit organization, established in 1964, to teach the game of soccer and develop positive character traits in children through their participation in a quality sports program. Our local region administers this program strictly through the efforts of volunteers. Volunteers are themselves a kind of team, supporting the children as they learn and play soccer. In order to provide the quality program our kids deserve, YOU should to be a part of this process! The following is a list of opportunities for you to consider. All volunteers will receive instructions and training for selected jobs. Remember, no previous experience is necessary; all that's needed is willingness. If you're willing, then let's do this!

Coach

Coaching soccer is one of the most rewarding opportunities AYSO has to offer. First time coaches must attend an online coach's clinic, and there are opportunities to continue self-paced training. No experience needed. We will train you.

Assistant Coach

Assistant coaches assist the team coach during practices. Absolutely no experience in coaching of any kind is necessary to fill this spot. It's a great opportunity to learn the game and work closely with the players. Again, we provide the training.



VOLUNTEERING

(Continued)

Referee

Again, because we train our volunteers, even those new to the game can perform with confidence. Referee volunteers must attend a Referee Training class to obtain the required certification. During training, you will learn the rules of soccer and how to conduct a match. Your Referee shirt is supplied by the Region. Contact the Regional Referee Administrator if you are interested. As a referee, you will enjoy participating in the match, interacting with the players.

Assistant Referee

Assistant Referees assist match referees in conducting a match. They frequently call the ball in and out of play as well as judge offside. Attendance of a referee training class is required but no previous experience is necessary. This is a great way for a busy parent or guardian to become involved, fulfillment of these duties requires a minimal commitment and it's a great way to help out. Referee shirts are provided by the Region.

Club Lineperson

A club lineperson is frequently on "standby" in the event the referee staff is spread too thin. After brief instruction from a referee, a club lineperson is given a flag to signal to the referee when a ball crosses the touchline, or is "out of bounds." No certification is needed to fill in for this position and no prior experience is necessary.

Team Parent

A team parent is essentially a coach's administrative assistant. Duties vary from coach to coach depending on what administrative and organization duties he or she has time and aptitude for; however, the position of team parent is vital nevertheless. A team parent is the primary means of communication between parents and coach. Team parents oversee the smooth running of ancillary functions involving refreshments on game day, team parties, newsletter articles, and passing information efficiently from coach to parents. A Team Parent is, in a lot of ways, like a coach for the parents. Enthusiasm is contagious and a good team parent can make all the difference in the experience of the parents of players with both soccer and AYSO. No experience is necessary. Speak to either your child's coach or the coaching administrator if you are interested. Coaches very much appreciate a dedicated team parent.

Assistant Team Parent

An assistant team parent is just what it sounds like; someone who helps the team parent fulfill her or his duties. Speak to your child's coach or the coach administrator if you can help in this way.

Game Day Refreshments

Generally, each player is assigned a specific match to which they must bring refreshments for their team. This function is coordinated by the team parent or may be assigned to the assistant team parent.



OTHER POSITIONS ARE AVAILABLE. YOUR PARTICIPATION IS APPRECIATED.

TRAINING

1. All coaches, referees, and other volunteers who work directly with children, and the child protection advocate shall be trained before working with children. Head coaches must be certified; assistant coaches and club linesman should be certified.
2. Only official AYSO materials and courses (or those approved by AYSO) may be used to train and certify these key volunteers.
3. Properly-signed rosters of attendees will be sent to AYSO Education to validate each attendee's training, and certification, and to ensure that the coaches and referees are registered with AYSO.
4. Courses and clinics shall be taught by AYSO certified and registered teachers and instructors, or be under the supervision of AYSO trained instructors. Only official AYSO programs, procedures, and policies will be taught.
5. Other volunteers will be trained before they do their jobs, including child protection training as appropriate. Whenever possible, "on-the-job training" will be avoided.
6. Volunteers shall be subject to ongoing evaluation, and additional training may be required to maintain good standing within the region and the organization.
7. All volunteers are required by Tennessee Law to be concussion awareness trained and sudden cardiac arrest aware. The Regional Commissioner and all coaches must update this training annually



NOTES: