

NEW for Spring 2022: WWW.MSIsoccer.org > "PLAY WITH



MSI" > "YOUTH GAME LEADERS PROGRAM"

1st

Grade Youth Game Leader Checklist

PREPARATION

- Hydrate throughout the morning before arriving at game site
- Arrive at game 15 minutes early
- Wear gold MSI Game Leader shirt
- Wear soccer shorts and nice-looking socks/sneakers
- Bring a watch! Yes, you can use your cell phone's stopwatch, if necessary
- Bring adequate water, snacks for energy

PRE-GAME and START of GAME

- Upon arrival at the 1st grade games site, find the check-in table and Site Manager know that you have arrived. They will confirm your field assignment, your game times, and answer any questions that you may have. Also, remember that the Site Manager is a resource for you if you have any questions or difficulties during your games.
- 2nd grade games sites do not have Site Managers, and you should proceed directly to introducing yourself to the 2 coaches, per below
- Introduce yourself to the 2 coaches ("My name is _____, and I will be your Game Leader, today"); look them in the eye when you introduce yourself, and firmly shake their hands!
- Let them know which game field you will be managing, and ask them to identify a parent to manage the adjacent field (each team should provide a game leader for 2 of the 4 quarters)
- Ask each coach to provide a game ball for one of the fields
- Remind coaches that you will be playing 4 quarters of 10 minutes each, with a short break between each; ask them to help keeping the breaks short, so that the game can be kept on schedule
- If you are going to use your cell phone's stopwatch to keep time, make a point of telling both coaches that you will be doing that, and that you are NOT checking email or texts or anything like that!
- Call teams onto the field within just a few minutes of the scheduled kickoff time; have 4 players from each team, with each team in their own half of the field to start
- make sure the parent game leader is ready to begin on their side, and then roll the ball gently into play and call out "PLAY" (and start your clock)

MANAGING the GAME

- Your primary role is to help the kids have fun, and to maintain a safe environment; you should provide plenty of verbal encouragement, high-fives, and clapping for good plays (or attempted good plays, or just plays where a player needs some encouragement!)
- You will "facilitate" the game, by moving steadily up, down, and across the field with the run of play; you want to be close enough to see the play clearly, and so that the kids can hear your voice clearly if you are talking to them

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- When the ball goes out of bounds on the sidelines, you re-start with a kick-in for the proper team; opposing players should move back a safe distance (at least 5 yards); if a player "dribbles-in", that is OK; players for the attacking team should be encouraged to spread out
- When the ball goes out of bounds across the end lines, you re-start with a corner kick if the ball was last touched by a defender; if last touched by an attacker, the re-start is a kick-in or dribble-in by the defending team from anywhere on the end line
- If one team is having trouble getting out of their own end, whenever that weaker team gets a kick-in from their own end line, ask the stronger team to retreat to their own half of the field until the ball is first touched in play by the weaker team
- If one team is really dominating, whenever the weaker team gets a kick-in from their own end line, ask the stronger team players to retreat deep into their own half of the field, and they are not allowed to touch the ball until it crosses the midfield line
- FOULS – you will not have a whistle, and you are not a referee; it is important to remember that kids at this age are in the early stages of learning to control their bodies, so often times will collide unintentionally; if there are extremely bad collisions, or tripping/kicking/hitting, you should stop the game, encourage the offending player to "be more careful", and then re-start by rolling the ball to the player who was fouled (after moving everybody else back at least 5 yards)
- No slide tackling is allowed at all; offside is not being called
- Substitutions are made "on the fly" by each coach; you do not need to get involved for that purpose

VERBAL ENCOURAGEMENTS

- Remember that your primary measurements of success will be "did the kids have fun?" and "did the kids stay safe?". Towards those ends, use your words and body language to encourage a fun environment; identify the shy player, and roll the ball to them, let them take kick-in's, praise them for small accomplishments with high-fives, and "way to go"!
- If you look like you are having lots of fun, you probably will be, and they probably will be!

END of QUARTERS/GAME

- At the end of each 10-minute quarter, simply wave your hands over your head and call out "QUARTER", and tell the kids to go have a quick water break. Give the kids a 1-minute break and then call them back onto the field, with the goal of having the 2nd quarter starting just 2 minutes after the 1st quarter ended. The break at halftime should be a maximum of 5 minutes.
- Try to have small drinks of water at each break between quarters. That is better than waiting a until the end of the game, and then drinking a lot all at once.
- At the end of the game, you will call out "GAME". Then, encourage the kids to line up and shake hands. Some will form celebration tunnels and similar fun things, which are fine alternatives to the standard handshake line, or in combination with that.
- **NOTE DURING COVID CONCERNS: There should be no handshakes or fist bumps in the lineup. Instead, encourage kids to clap their hands as they parade by the opposing team's players.**
- After the handshakes are done, get a quick drink of water, and either begin looking for the coaches of the next game, or relax if you are done with your assignments for the day!

THX!