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Welcome to the Recreation section of our website! This contains many resources, including downloadable handbooks and various links for suggestions on how to start or enhance your program. Please take a moment to review the links below. If you have any suggestions to enhance Recreation Soccer at the State, District or Club level please do not hesitate to contact me.

Let's be partners in helping our players have the opportunity for teamwork and sportsmanship. Before clicking on the links please be mindful of the following:

Recreational soccer is a soccer program primarily devoted to the enjoyment and development of soccer players without the emphasis on travel or high-level competition.

The purpose of recreational soccer is to provide an opportunity for the participants to have fun, learn the sport and develop life skills including a lifelong love of the game.

Therefore:

- Access is open to all who desire to participate (*The Game for ALL Kids*).
- Emphasis is on active participation (minimum of half game playing time).
- Objective is for the players to enjoy the experience.
- Success and excellence are measured in players attracted and players retained.
- Recreational soccer is all about fun, recreation, love of the game, and winning is not a measure of success.

Some of the main characteristics of recreational *play* and recreational *players* are as follows:

- Almost every player and parent will start out in recreational soccer.
- Two-year age groups are typical of recreational teams so there is a wide range between the most skilled player and the least skilled player.

- Wider age gaps create greater differences in physical, mental and social development.
- Players new to the sport are constantly being introduced into the mix.
- Soccer, for the child who wants to play, is an outlet for energy and enthusiasm.
- For others it is an imposed activity, something selected for the child by the parent.
- Fit and unfit players play together.
- Participation stretches from always there to when it is convenient.
- Parents often sign up a player for the next season without the child being involved in the process.
- Recreational players generally do not develop strong feelings against the opposing team because they often have friends on the opposing team.
- The game is played for enjoyment and not necessarily future playing opportunities on college or elite teams, however, at the younger age groups are where elite players first begin to develop.
- Many young children start out in soccer. (It has been said that, "Soccer is the first sport that American children play.") Soccer is a game, especially at the very young level, where all skill-levels of children can participate and have fun.
- Many young children try out many sports at a young age and may jump from one activity to another during the year or even during the same season.

Some of the main characteristics of recreational coaches are as follows:

- Virtually every recreational coach will be an unpaid parent volunteer.
- Many recreational coaches are coaching their own children. Many times these children are "would-be stars" in the eyes of their parents. Equal treatment may not happen as a result.
- Most of the youngest age-group coaches are first-time coaches with little or no soccer experience and no coaching experience.

Please know that the Connecticut Junior Soccer Association Board Members and Committee Chairs would be happy to help you start, share or enhance your program to the best of our abilities-feel free to reach out to us!