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2022 MISSOULA Y SPRING SOCCER FAMILY HANDBOOK



Please read thoroughly: Important information

Dear Parents and Soccer Participants,

Welcome to the Missoula Y Youth Soccer League, a recreational soccer league where kids can have fun through athletics. Our goal is to build a community where everyone has opportunities for youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility through Y Sports. In Missoula Y Youth Soccer, your child will learn the fundamentals of soccer, as well as sportsmanship, teamwork, and the Y core values of Caring, Honest, Respect and Responsibility.

Missoula Y Soccer League is an incredible opportunity to help your child and others have an amazing soccer experience! Parents are asked to support **all** players and their families this season by offering encouragement, positive affirmation, and being present and engaged at games.

Thank you for making our community a stronger and healthier place to live and play!

Sincerely,

Katie Grutsch
Director of Youth Sports
kgrutsch@ymcamissoula.org

Dates to Remember

Practices

Practices are scheduled by your volunteer coach and held once a week in the evening starting the week of April 18. Your coach will contact you the week prior to April 18 with practice information.

Games

Games begin Sunday, April 24, and are held between 11:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Game Dates

April 24

May 1

May 8

May 15

No games May 22

May 29

June 5

Equipment Needed

- The Missoula Y provides each player with a soccer jersey that they get to keep once the season ends.
- Shin guards are required to play.
- Cleats are strongly encouraged, but not required.
- Appropriate clothing for weather conditions.
- A water bottle



PROGRAM INFORMATION

Volunteer Coaches

All Missoula Y sports coaches are volunteers. We could not be more appreciative of the role they play in our league, and we ask that you show the same appreciation! All Y coaches have completed concussion training and received background checks. If you're interested in volunteering, please contact the Youth Sports Department for more information.

Team Formation

Teams are formed by the Missoula Y, rather than coaches or school groups, and are determined by age, gender, requests, location, and the number of kids playing in that division. We will always do our best to accommodate your child's team request; however there are no guarantees. During late registration, we will accommodate your request if possible; however team placement will be dependent on the size and space available on the currently formed teams.

Switching teams once the teams are built will only be allowed if there is space available on the other team, and if it still leaves the original team with enough kids to fairly compete in the games. All switches require director approval.

Practice Information

Teams practice once per week in the evenings. Practice location and time are determined by your volunteer coach. Your coach will contact you prior to the first week of practice to provide information on practice location and time.

Game Location

Spring 2022 games will be held at Fort Missoula Regional Park located at 36th Street and South Avenue West.

PlayerSpace Software

The Y Youth Sports leagues uses a league software called PlayerSpace. You will receive an email with your username and login information to access your child's team page. On your child's team page you will be able to access coach information, game schedules, team/league announcements, and much more! PlayerSpace will be used to send out league announcements and schedule changes. You can also download the PlayerSpace app to have on your phone.

SOCCER LEAGUE INFORMATION

Game Schedules

Schedules will be issued to coaches on April 7. Copies will also be available at the Welcome Center, at ymcamissoula.org, and your team page on PlayerSpace. The Director of Youth Sports will notify coaches if changes are made to the schedule.

Communication

Please look to your volunteer coach for league announcements and communication. At the first practice coaches will hand out game schedules, practice schedules, picture forms, and other information related to Y Soccer. Please check the PlayerSpace app and your email throughout the season for important updates from the Youth Sports Department.

Referees

For Pre-K–Grade 3 teams, volunteer coaches will referee and monitor the games. For Grades 4–8 teams the Missoula Y will provide a center referee. Each team will need to provide a sideline referee, who can either be an assistant coach or a parent volunteer. It is expected that referees and volunteer coaches are treated with the utmost respect. The referee's job is to make the appropriate calls on the field, but most importantly referees are there to encourage the athletes and help them learn through the calls that are made.

Parents and Guardians

- Be respectful of calls, despite your opinion.
- Model appropriate interactions to your children.
- Speak with referees about issues or with comments at an appropriate time in the game and in an appropriate manner.
- Understand that referees will occasionally miss calls.
- Never lay blame upon a referee. Instead, focus on things to work on as a team to avoid getting into a situation where you feel the game rests upon a referee's call.
- Never openly criticize a referee. If you need to discuss a referee's effort, attitude, or work, please contact the Youth Sports Department.
- Practice the Y's core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility
- Keep **all** negative comments to yourself.
- Follow HEPA (Healthy Eating and Physical Activity) guidelines when preparing snacks. See FAQ on the last page for more information.

SOCCER LEAGUE INFORMATION (continued)

Weather Cancellations

Due to the nature of outdoor sports in Montana, we will often play rain or shine! If it is cold, windy, or raining, you should still plan on the Y holding games for the day. Occasionally, if the weather becomes unsafe or has the potential to damage the fields, games will be cancelled.

All cancellations are judgment calls made by Missoula Y staff and/or the Missoula Parks & Recreation Department for Field Rentals. Because weather conditions can change significantly in a short amount of time, the decision to cancel will typically not be made until game day.

In the event of a cancellation, the Y will contact your coach via email. We will also send announcements to families through the PlayerSpace app. If you are unsure if a game will be cancelled, you can call the Y at 406-721-9622.

Makeup games are not guaranteed.

Reasons for game and/or practice cancellation:

- State of Emergency where all roads are closed to public travel.
- Field conditions are unplayable.
- Weather creates an unsafe game environment.

Picture Day Information

The Missoula Y has contracted with the following company for this season's pictures. They will offer both team and individual pictures. Please contact the photography company with any picture-specific questions:

Mike Williams Photography
817 S. Higgins Ave. Missoula MT 59801
mikewphoto@yahoo.com | 406-549-4474

Portrait packets and envelopes, as well as picture day schedules, will be handed out with team schedules. Picture day will be May 1. The team picture schedule will be sent to coaches. Pictures will be delivered to coaches prior to the end of the season.

SOCCER LEAGUE INFORMATION (continued)

First Aid

It's sure to be an active time when combining youth with sports! Please be prepared that injuries occasionally occur. All Y staff will wear YMCA shirts and have first aid kits. First aid kits are available at the Y Soccer Tent. Please handle any medical situation with common sense and speed.

Blood-borne pathogens are serious concerns. Please wear gloves (available from Y staff) when handling incidents involving exposure to blood (a nosebleed, for example). Please avoid exposing others, and properly discard any blood-infected materials.

Incident Report Form

In case of an injury—major or minor—you will be asked to review and sign an incident report form. This form is a tool to track important information regarding a person's physical injuries. Please be as detailed as possible when describing the incident. Participant safety is the top priority, and we want to follow up with people as needed. Thank you for helping us keep our players safe and healthy!

Concussion Policy

We have partnered with the University of Montana's Athletic Training program to establish better ways to provide education regarding concussions in youth sports.

As part of our policy all volunteer coaches complete a training educating them on the signs and symptoms of a concussion. If at any time an athlete experiences a bump to the head and experiences **ANY** signs or symptoms of a concussion, they must sit out the remainder of the practice or game, and may not return to play until cleared by a medical professional.

Soccer Tent

Each week we will bring our soccer tent to the fields. The tent is the central hub for all things Y Soccer related. If you need to pick up your soccer jersey or check our lost and found, the tent is the place to go. We will have staff present at the tent to answer any questions and provide any of the following:

- First aid supplies
- Ice packs
- Jerseys
- Lost and found items
- Extra coaching supplies (whistles, ball pump, etc.)
- Extra balls and cones
- Game schedules
- Field maps



Cleat Exchange

The Y Soccer Program offers a cleat exchange for players who need a pair of cleats for the season. Players are welcome to trade in an old pair of cleats for a new size to use for the season. If you don't have a pair to exchange you are welcome to borrow a pair for the season. You can also donate old cleats for other players to use if your children have out grown theirs. We have a variety of sizes, but cleats are given out on a first come, first serve basis. If your child needs a pair of cleats, please contact the Y at 721-9622.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. At what point should I contact the Y if I haven't heard from my coach?

Please contact the Welcome Center if you have not heard from your child's coach by April 15. The Missoula Y Youth Sports Department makes every effort to secure volunteer coaches prior to the coaches meeting. Occasionally, though, coaches are secured after the group meeting has taken place.

2. Who do we contact if our team can't make a scheduled game?

Games are typically not rescheduled. Teams are asked to make their best effort to play all scheduled games. In the rare event that a game does need to be rescheduled, coaches need to contact the Youth Sports Department and opposing team coach at least a week in advance to coordinate a makeup game.

3. Why are games scheduled on Sundays?

The Missoula Y is one of many local organizations that rents fields through the Missoula Parks & Recreation Department. Due to limited field availability and the Y's program size, Sundays provide the most suitable option for game days.

4. What should my child bring to practice?

Coaches plan soccer drills and activities for each practice. To be prepared for practice, each player needs to bring a water bottle, soccer ball (if they have one), shin guards, and cleats (if you have them). Please note: there are limited restroom facilities available at some of the practice fields. Please be prepared for this.

5. How do I sign up to help/coach my child's team?

Please contact the Youth Sports Department if you are interested in coaching. All parents are asked to support the team in some manner. At your first practice, please ask your coach how you and your family can support the team this season.

6. What contact information should I provide to the Y?

Please provide a current email address and cell phone number. The Y uses email and the PlayerSpace app to contact families with important league updates and reminders.