



TOPSOCCER BUDDY MANUAL



WHAT IS A BUDDY?

- TOPSoccer Buddies are enablers. They are volunteers who participate with TOPSoccer players to enable player participation
- Buddies should be teenagers or adults
- Soccer experience is not necessary, the only requirement is a strong desire to enable TOPSoccer players to be successful and to have FUN!

THE ROLE OF A BUDDY

A buddy monitors and interacts with coaches and parents for the player's safety.

- Aware of player noises, likes/dislikes
- Aware of safety zones around the player (walkers, wheelchairs, crutches)
- Adjusts level of attention in order for the player to be successful
- Never be alone or out of sight with a player

Continuously monitors the player for:

- Fatigue
- Water Breaks
- Melt-downs

Assists/Creates/Dire/Guides in a FUN but learning environment

- Ball retrieval/control
- Balance
- Assists player to get into position to play
- Allows the player to do as much for themselves as possible
- A buddy does NOT score goals but creates opportunities for the player to score
- If the buddy is having fun, the player will too!

Role of Buddies and Coaches

- You are a team that works together for the sake of the player
- The Coach directs the exercises and games, the buddy participates with the players
- You are the eyes and ears for the coach, especially concerning safety

PLAYERS

- No two will be the same
- Some will need 1-on-1 assistance
- Some will have multiple disabilities
- Some may have little or no concern for team activities
- Some may have short attention span
- Some may tire easily
- Commitment to play may vary during the sessions
- Most will give you 100%
- Every player wants to have fun

SAFETY

- The most important part of your job is to create and maintain a safe environment
- If you see something that concerns you, tell someone (Coach or Parent)
- The players and parents are counting on you to look after a player who may not be able to look after themselves.
- It's no fun if someone becomes injured. Safety first, Fun is second

HOW PLAYERS LEARN

Observing: By watching the coach or other players perform the skill they are trying to learn.

Feeling: By touching the part of the body which will be involved while attempting to learn a skill.

Hearing: By listening to instructions that are repeated as necessary, particularly while performing the skill.

Visualizing: By seeing him/herself performing the skill.

Imitating: By attempting to perform the skill observed.

Practicing: By repeating the skill and correcting errors until the skill becomes learned.

MOTIVATING PLAYERS

- Use each player's name during the training
- Use plenty of encouraging words and phrases
- Have one-on-one talks with players
- Make feedback specific to performance – explain how to do the task correctly, not emphasizing what they did wrong
- De-emphasize winning and focus on participation and learning
- Celebrate often

WHAT PLAYERS WANT FROM BUDDIES

- Respect me
- Encourage me, don't discourage me
- Listen to me
- Try to understand why I am upset
- Don't take it personally if I am upset
- Sometimes giving me choices helps me feel I have some control
- Please don't talk down to me
- Challenge me
- Let me try to do things on my own
- Explain things in a way I can understand
- Accept less than perfect results but expect my best
- Understand that everyone is different and learns differently
- Don't assume
- Don't be bossy
- Explain the reason behind a rule or what you are asking of me, please don't demand
- Be flexible
- Be aware that circumstances can change my behavior
- Don't stereotype me
- Don't show favoritism
- Know my behavior may be telling you what I can't vocalize
- Understand all people have bad days
- Have fun with me and laugh with me, not at me