

What is a TOPSoccer Buddy?

- **TOPSoccer Buddies are enablers. They are volunteers who participate with TOPSoccer players to enable player participation**
- **Buddies can be the same age, younger or older, a teenager or an adult**
- **Buddies can be a soccer player, someone who works with special needs children, or someone who has no soccer experience, but has a strong desire to enable TOPSoccer players to be successful and to have FUN**

The Role of the TOPSoccer Buddy

- **Monitors and interacts with coaches and/or parents for safety**
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ **Players noises, likes/dislikes**
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ **Aware of safety zones around the player**
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ **Whatever level that means for the player to be successful**
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ **Mirror play**
- **Assists/Creates/Directs/Guides in a FUN but learning environment**
- **Continuously monitors the player**
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ **Fatigue**
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ **Water breaks**
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ **Melt-downs**

Buddy Guidelines

- **The purpose of the Buddy is to assist the TOPSoccer Players, not participate as players themselves!**
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ Does not score
- **Can stop a ball from going out of bounds**
- **Can shield around their player**
- **Can guide their player to the ball**
- **Can position the ball for the player**

The Buddies' Role for Players with Physical Needs

- **Create safe playing situations by creating safety zones around the player**
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ Walkers, wheelchairs, crutches
- **Create opportunities for play**
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ Ball retrieval/control
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ Keep the ball close to the player
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ Balance
- **Assist player to get into position to play**

The Buddies' Role for Players with Cognitive Needs

- Provide instruction directly during play
- Model desired skill
- Help to define the space and “strategies”
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ “We are the blue team.”
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ “We are going in this direction.”

The Buddies' Role for Players with Behavioral/Sensory Needs or Attention Issues

- **Provide 1:1 assistance to model desired behaviors**
- **Assist player to focus on the activity**
- **Use a quiet “time out” as needed without being negative**
- **Mirror Play or create space around the player**
- **Provide stability in a chaotic environment**
- **Guide & direct, often not touching the player directly, but being close proximity**

The Buddies' Role for Hard of Hearing/Deaf Players

- **Safety awareness**
- **Demonstrate the activity**
- **Ensure the player understands instructions**
- **Use touch/sign language/pictures to guide and direct**
- **Direct the ball to the player for contact and touch.**