



Who We Are:

Sportsmanship and self-esteem prepare children for the challenges of growing up. The Berea Youth Soccer Club develops confidence and strength in our children through the competition and physical activity of team sports. One of our missions is to develop and operate a supervised soccer program and to instill in the youth of the Berea Community the ideals of good sportsmanship, fair play, and honesty for the betterment of their physical and social well being. The Berea Youth Soccer Club is registered as a not-for-profit organization.

Please visit our website at: www.bereayouthsoccerclub.org for me information about us.

Munchkin sessions are held on Saturday mornings at
Parknoll Elementary School,
499 Nobottom Road
Berea, OH 44017.

Uniform t-shirts are ordered with the registration, and will be distributed on the first Saturday of the season. Cost of the t-shirts is \$5, but a new shirt need not be purchased if the old one is still useable. Munchkins are divided into two age groups, 3-4 year olds and 5-6 year olds (7 year old children will be allowed to participate with the 5-6 year olds if they are not on a Recreation or Travel Team). We are undertaking this effort as a way to improve soccer skills for all players and to enable the children to have more fun.

So we will have two sessions scheduled on Saturday mornings. A summary of how the sessions will look for the two different age groups is below:

3-4 year olds - 9:00am-10:00am: The 3-4 year old session runs from 9:00am -10:00am. For the 3-4 year old children each session will consist of 30-40 minutes of fun soccer oriented games where the kids will learn different foot-skills and 20-30 minutes of actually playing in a game format. The game portion of the format is designed to be small-sided (4 v 4 or 5 v 5). The instruction part of the session will consist of a number of soccer-based games in order to demonstrate different skills. This format will encourage that each player is fully participating. Everyone will be playing the whole time; no one will be sitting on the bench waiting their turn. The small-sided games will give the players a chance to work on the skills they learned.

5-6 year olds - 10:15am-11:15am: The 5-6 year old session runs from 10:15am -11:15am. For the 5-6 year old children each session will consist of 15 minutes of fun soccer oriented games where the kids will focus on specific foot-skills and 45 minutes of actually playing in a game format. Like with the 3-4 year olds, the instruction part of the session will consist of a number of soccer-based games in order to demonstrate different foot-skills. If we receive enough registrations with this age group (and have *enough coaches*), we try to divide the kids into semi-permanent teams and assign a volunteer coach to each team. We can re-balance the teams throughout the season to create teams that are as even as possible if the need should arise. The teams are going to remain small (6-8 players per team, again depending on registration numbers). For Example, if 32 children register for this age group, we can divide the kids into 4 teams (8 players on each team). We can then play each team twice the first 6 weeks of the season and the last week of the season we can play a round robin tournament and pick a mythical Munchkin 5-6 year old Champion. Again, this format will encourage that each player is fully participating. Everyone will be playing the whole time, no one will be sitting on the bench or standing around waiting their turn (we can adjust the teams on a weekly basis if needed to make sure the teams are balanced and we do not have any kids sitting out). We want soccer to be a fun and exciting experience for children at this age and sitting/standing around does not equal a fun or exciting experience.



Volunteer Coaches Needed:

We need coaches!!!! In order for our program to continue to grow and flourish we need volunteers to help coach during these Saturday Sessions. You do not need any soccer experience or coaching experience whatsoever in order to help out as a coach. We will give you a lesson plan for each week with the fun skills games and the session format all planned out for you. You will have a group of 6-8 kids to work with. By keeping the ratio of players to coaches small this allows for individual attention and instruction on each field. It is difficult to accomplish anything when one coach is trying to work with 16-20 players. Help and guidance will be available. Please indicate on your child's registration form if you would be willing to help coach!! If you would like to discuss coaching in more detail and what is entailed please e-mail me at: adickson@bereayouthsoccerclub.org If enough parents are interested in coaching I will organize a formal coaching course that every Munchkin Coach can attend before the season starts.

Registration:

Please visit the website at: www.bereayouthsoccerclub.org for information about registration. There is a registration form in PDF Format on the website that can be downloaded, printed out, and mailed in to register your child. Please visit the website for other updates or news. As always, hard copies of the registration forms are available at the Berea Recreation Center.

Soccer Gear:

All participants in Munchkin Soccer must wear shin guards. We also recommend investing in soccer cleats for your child. There is a lot of rain (and sometimes snow) this time of year in the Cleveland, Ohio area, leaving the fields wet and slippery. Proper cleats prevent a child from slipping and sliding all over the place when the conditions are not the greatest. There is a Soccer Store in North Olmsted that carries a wide variety of soccer cleats, shin guards, socks, shorts, etc, etc and they will make sure your child is fitted properly for shoes (for instance, if your child has wide feet, there is a specific brand of shoe, Diadora, that runs wider than the Adidas or Nike Shoes, and they will make sure your child is properly fitted). The Front Line is located at 28621 Lorain Road, North Olmsted Ohio, 44070 and their phone number is 440-777-6083. Dick's Sporting Goods also carries a wide variety of soccer shoes and gear. Please make sure your child has a Size 3 or 4 soccer ball that they can bring to each Saturday session. I recommend a Size 3 soccer ball for the 3-4 year olds and a Size 4 soccer ball for the 5-6 year olds. We do have some soccer balls but not enough for every participant.

Weather:

Soccer is a sport played in all weather conditions, hot, cold, rain, snow, etc. Sessions are usually only cancelled if there are thunderstorms (yes, that means that sessions will still be held if it is just raining) or if the temperature falls below 30 degrees. You will have to use your judgment as to whether or not you want to send your child to participate if there is inclement weather.

Summary:

Again, The Munchkin Academy format is something that the Berea Youth Soccer Club has been successfully implementing for many years and the modifications we are making are a result of the feedback we have received from parents and coaches. We feel the Academy format has distinct advantages for children this age, namely:



1. ***Kids love it!*** The foundation for this format comes from the top European Clubs and it is being introduced by the top soccer organizations in the United States. We believe we are ahead of the curve in implementing this program in Berea and the testimony from Clubs who are already using this program is that the children have a great time playing in this format and leave the field exhausted.
2. ***More touches on the ball.*** The most important thing for children at this age is to develop their foot-skills. This program will dramatically increase the amount of time they are moving and touching the ball.
3. ***All the children are learning the same thing.*** Coaches will be instructed beforehand what it is that should be accomplished with each drill and what the players should learn.
4. ***It develops coaches.*** This format will enable the league to identify and train coaches for future development of players.

There is always resistance to this type of program because many people were looking forward to having their child play on a team against other teams. But we are asking you to keep an open mind and consider the following:

1. ***What is being given up?*** Presently we do not keep score or have assigned teams for this age group nor do we have standings. So this really has little impact.
2. ***What do we have to gain?*** When you consider what happens in the games, usually one or two players control it, and the rest will rarely touch the ball, when they are on the field. In the Munchkin Academy format, everyone is playing and touching the ball the whole time, resulting in better skilled players.
3. ***Isn't this just a version of Tot Soccer?*** This is different. For one thing, the parents will not be on the field with their children. The second thing is that this will be much more game-oriented. There will be very little standing/ sitting/ waiting by the kids going on (due mainly to this age group's short attention span) but plenty of opportunities to play a variety of soccer-oriented games.

In short, what we envision is a program in which children can have fun and learn the game at their own pace. We have to consider what is in the best interest of the child, and based on what our Board and top soccer professionals have learned, we believe that this is the best way to proceed. It will develop better players and improve individual foot skills, but more importantly, it will develop in them a love of the game that will extend into their adulthood.

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