

Introduction

Dear Coach Administrator,

Congratulations on assuming a position that can make a significant contribution to the quality of your local AYSO region, area and section. The duties and responsibilities described in this manual require a variety of talents and skills as well as time to make it all happen.

As a coach administrator, your challenge is to ensure that each player is provided the opportunity to play the game in a skillful, safe and sportsmanlike manner. Instruction to the players is provided by the coaches you recruit, train, and support. You set the standard by introducing coaches to the AYSO program and philosophy, while providing them with the knowledge and skill necessary to develop their players.

-John Ouellette, AYSO National Coach

Using This Manual

This manual is intended as a guide for AYSO coach administrators. It can be read from front to back, or can be used as a reference for information that you may need depending on your position and experience.

If you are a brand new coach administrator, we recommend that you review all of the following material, particularly the job description for your position.

If you simply need information, please allow the Table of Contents on the following page to point you in the right direction.

If you need information that you do not find in this manual, please feel free to contact the Programs Department of the AYSO National Support and Training Center (NSTC) at (800) USA-AYSO, or call the AYSO National Coach at (888) 826-AYSO.

History of AYSO

The American Youth Soccer Organization was founded in Torrance, California, in September 1964, by five men dedicated to youth soccer and to the development of caring and concerned American citizens. Ted McLean, Steve Erdos, Bill Hughes, Ralph Acosta, and AYSO's first president, Hans F. Stierle became the first executives of an organization whose unique Everyone Plays and Balanced Teams philosophy has generated a youth soccer program which has literally swept the country.

In 1964, AYSO's family included just nine teams. Today that number has grown to over 1,500 Regional Programs and 60,000 + teams. The division into geographic regions has resulted in a grass-roots program of local leadership. AYSO soccer is a family affair with 620,000 players, ages 4 through 19. An average of one parent per family actively participates in AYSO, acting as coach, referee, team parent, administrator, or sponsor. AYSO currently has over 200,000 volunteers.

Through AYSO, youngsters of varied backgrounds and athletic abilities are given the opportunity to participate in soccer. AYSO is the largest independent youth soccer organization in the country, and it takes pride in providing quality programs for its players and volunteers.

During the first playing season, AYSO soccer was limited to nine- to twelve-year- olds. In 1965 the age limit was increased to 13. In 1974, the AYSO program spread to Hawaii soon followed by Kansas, Michigan, Oregon and Utah. Then in 1975, New York, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Idaho and Florida established AYSO regions. And in the late 1970's, AYSO expanded its horizon to include states in the Southeast, such as South Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama and Virginia. Elsewhere in the country, states including Illinois, Nevada, Nebraska and New Mexico were also joining. In the 1980's AYSO sprouted in Iowa, Montana, Ohio, Wisconsin, Kentucky, and Louisiana. Since 1990, AYSO has established programs in 48 states and Washington, D.C., plus an active program in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The AYSO program of today is different in many respects. Although still concerned with expansion, we continue to develop programs to train our adult volunteers. By emphasizing the importance of training all volunteers, AYSO ensures the Quality as well as the Quantity of our programs. With the help of noted experts, AYSO is working to improve the education of our volunteers in the fields of child development, human behavior and sports psychology.

AYSO works because our volunteers work. And they work because they believe in the AYSO philosophy, mission, and values. Our phenomenal growth underlies AYSO's commitment to a healthy, competitive atmosphere for youth soccer players and concern for the development of caring responsible individuals.

AYSO Philosophy

This section provides an introduction to AYSO's vision, mission and the philosophies on which the program is based.

Vision Statement:

To provide world-class youth soccer programs that enriches children's lives.

Mission Statement:

To develop and deliver quality youth soccer programs which promote a fun, family environment based on the AYSO Philosophies:

Everyone Plays

Our program's goal is for kids to play soccer—so we mandate that every player on every team must play at least half of every game.

Balanced Teams

Each year we form new teams as evenly balanced as possible—because it is fair and more fun when teams of equal ability play.

Open Registration

Our program is open to all children between 4 and 18 years of age who want to register and play soccer. Interest and enthusiasm are the only criteria for playing.

Positive Coaching

Encouragement of player effort provides for greater enjoyment by the players and ultimately leads to better-skilled and better-motivated players.

Good Sportsmanship

We strive to create a positive environment based on mutual respect rather than a win at all costs attitude, and our program is designed to instill good sportsmanship in every facet of AYSO.

AYSO Coaching Structure

You have support!

The AYSO Coaching program is established on the national level based on research and development conducted by the AYSO National Coach, an appointed Coaching Technical Committee, the Programs Department, and professional and volunteer task forces. These groups take into consideration the current and future needs of the organization, its coaches, its players, and the game.

Accountability for implementing the training portion of the AYSO National Coaching Program flows through the coach line of accountability. In order to maintain the integrity of coach training, the coach administrator is accountable to the coaches who expect all the benefits of AYSO training, including having their certifications recorded in the National Support and Training Center database by verifying the qualifications of instructors for courses they conduct and by promptly returning roster forms to the NSTC.

The responsibility for implementation of the program extends through the levels of coach administrators:

Section Coach Administrator

Area Coach Administrator

Regional Coach Administrator

There are currently 14 section coach administrators. Each section coach administrator oversees and supports several area coach administrators.

The area coach administrators support their section coach administrator in section- and area-level clinics (e.g., Intermediate and Advanced Coaching courses) and other training activities, and are the primary resource to the regional coach administrators under their jurisdiction in conducting regional training (e.g., U-6, U-8, U-10, and U-12 courses)

If you have a problem, your area and section staffs, along with the resources of the AYSO National Support and Training Center, are there to help.

Materials available

- Listing of registered volunteers and certified coaches
- AYSO National Rules and Regulations
- Section Rules and Regulations (does not apply to some sections)

- Safe Haven for Coaches reference manuals
- U-5 Master Coach Handbook
- U-6, U-8, U-10 and U-12 Coach Manuals, teaching plans and tests
- Intermediate Coach Manual, teaching plans and tests
- Advanced Coach Manual, teaching plans and tests
- Laws of the Game – updated annually
- Numerous books and DVD's available from the AYSO Store

Regional Coach Administrator Position Description Summary

Title:

Regional Coach Administrator

Responsibility:

The regional coach administrator is responsible for the administration of the region's coaching program by providing leadership to their coaches. He or she is directly involved with recruiting, training, retaining and coordinating the region's coaches. ***Their primary function is to provide training for coaches within their region.***

Recommended Qualifications and Skills:

- U-12 Coaching Course graduate.
- Strong administrative/organizational abilities.

Orientation, Training, Certification and Continued Education Provided:

To prepare a volunteer for the position of Regional Coach Administrator, AYSO will offer the following educational opportunities. It is the duty of the volunteer to attend these sessions:

- Orientation by the Regional Commissioner
- AYSO Safe Haven for Coaches Course
- Introductory Management Training
- Coach workshops at the annual Section Conference (i.e., Coach Administrator Training)
- Appointed by: Regional Commissioner with input from the Area Coach Administrator.

Specific Duties and Responsibilities:

- Offer at least one of each of the following coaching courses prior to the season:
 - Safe Haven for Coaches
 - U-6 Coach
 - U-8 Coach
 - U-10 Coach
 - U-12 Coach
- Provide additional in-season training opportunities (specialized clinics, pizza night, etc.).
- Coordinate a pre-season coaches meeting where issues of sportsmanship, safety, new laws, and specific regional issues are presented.
- Assist the Area Coach Administrator in organizing an Intermediate Coach Course as needed for coaches with one to three years of experience.

- Attend the Section Conference and other area/section meetings as required throughout the year.
- Maintain regional library of coach training material.
- Coordinate a post-season meeting of coaches to recognize contributions and gather input for the following year (i.e., list of coaches who will be returning, names of potential new coaches).
- Assist Regional Commissioner in handling any coach related problems.
- Work with other region administrators (RC, registrar, division coordinators) to ensure there are enough coaches to support the size of the region.
- Assist region in providing volunteer registration forms on all coaches/assistant coaches to the AYSO National Support and Training Center.
- Request a printout of registered coaches from the AYSO NSTC for reference.
- Participate in player ratings and extended team formation as needed.
- Support the section coach administrator in organizing an Advanced Coach Course as needed for coaches with four of five years of experience, and publicize the course.
- Contribute coaching articles to your regional newsletter when possible.

Supervision Protocols:

While performing as the Regional Coach Administrator, the volunteer is:

- Subject to the bylaws, rules, regulations, policies, procedures and guidelines of AYSO.
- Under the overall authority of and directly supervised by the Regional Commissioner and supervised indirectly by the Area Coach Administrator.
- To maintain the recommended supervision ratio of 1:8 or less; that is, one adult for every eight or fewer children and two adults (at least one of the same gender of the group) present at all times. For the protection of both the children and the volunteer, no volunteer should permit himself or herself to be alone with any child or group of children (except his or her own) during AYSO-sponsored activities.

Budget:

To be determined by the regional commissioner, regional coach administrator, and regional board. Budget should cover all necessary expenses to fulfill the above duties.

Reports to:

Regional Commissioner, with a direct line of accountability to the Area Coach Administrator.

Supervises:

- Regional coaching staff—instructors and trainers
- Certified coaches within region

Resources:

- Area Coach Administrators
- Area Coach Trainers
- Section Coach Administrators
- Section Coach Trainers

- National Coaching Commission
- NSTC Staff:
 - AYSO National Coach
 - Programs Department staff
 - Management Information Services

Overview of the Regional Coach Administrator Responsibilities

The regional coach administrator's job is one of training and administration. With proper planning and organization, the most effective balance of those two functions can be achieved, ensuring the highest quality of coaching in the region.

Planning

A sample planning schedule will follow this section for you to refer to. It is important that your coaching calendar is approved by the regional commissioner (RC) and that it ties into the overall regional calendar (i.e., registration, team formation, referee training, season start/ close, area/section meetings). This sign-off by your RC will also help ensure that your goals and objectives (with the supporting activities and budget) are in line with those of the region.

The role of the RCA in a small region can be a one-person job, but would be a lonely task. We recommend you recruit at least one assistant to help you. In larger regions, a staff is absolutely necessary. This can be established by older/younger divisions, boys/girls, location of playing/practice fields, etc. And once you have assistants, use them. Give them specific tasks to perform – it makes everyone feel they are contributing, yet doesn't tax anyone too much. It is also a good way to train the next RCA.

Recruiting

Before you can move ahead to train coaches (your primary function), you must begin by recruiting coaches. You will probably want to help in this process, but try to avoid taking on the entire job yourself. Most regions have division coordinators who have the sometimes difficult job of recruiting parents to coach. If your region does not, then give the job to one or two assistants. In any case, be involved in this process so you will get to know your new volunteers; how many coaches you have, and how many you still need. This will tell you when you can begin training and what the training needs are.

The following recruitment sequence has worked well in many regions:

- **Contact all coaches at the end of the season** to determine their interest in coaching next year. If you are coming in before the next season, get a list of coaches from the previous year and use it to make phone calls when you find you need more coaches.
- Follow the same procedure for assistant coaches – many will be ready and willing to move up to take their own teams this year.
- Make sure your pre-registration publicity (advertising, billboards, handouts, etc.) indicate the need or opportunity for coaching in the region, with a specific telephone number to call to volunteer.
- **Have a coaching table at your open registration** and make sure all parents fill out the volunteer forms. This is your best opportunity to recruit new coaches, answer questions, give clinic information, etc. Having an advertisement of scheduled clinics is very effective.
- Use your coaches list and volunteer forms to send out a flier to all potential coaches. (Include those who have already signed up – they will need reminding – and they might recruit a friend. Important: Follow up with a phone call.)

Regardless of who is responsible for recruiting coaches in your region, you can help by providing all the information on the philosophy, support and training AYSO offers. Remember, most people turn down new opportunities (such

as coaching) because they are afraid or don't know enough about the program. They want and need to be asked, often several times. Have "fence sitters" attend an organization gathering to meet other coaches. Let your current coaches "sell" AYSO to these newcomers. At least sign them up as assistants – they may develop into next year's coaching candidates.

Training and Certification

Training coaches how to coach is, for AYSO, a primary task because coaches affect the experience of the players more than any other program in AYSO through their direct involvement with the children. Besides the obvious benefits of learning more, coaches who are credited with participation in a recognized training program are more thoroughly protected as volunteers while performing their duties.

AYSO coach training provides knowledge needed by all coaches of all sports – team management, safety, expectations for players, parent communication, and delegation – and knowledge of the skills, techniques, and tactics specific to soccer. AYSO has developed its coach program to segment the transmission of knowledge on two planes: the age of the players to be coached and the experience of the coach. Our sport-specific training (by age and skill appropriate to the players) is delivered through the following courses: U-6, U-8, U-10, U-12, Intermediate, Advanced, and National Coaching Courses.

The task – specific training (by coach experience) is delivered through the Safe Haven Coach Course.

The AYSO National Board of Directors has mandated that all AYSO coaches must be trained and certified. In AYSO, certification means a completion of the two-part training as listed above: sport-specific and task specific. Satisfaction of the coaching task-specific training is done through taking the Safe Haven Coach Course. The sport-specific training portion can be met by taking the U-6, U-8, U-10, or U-12 Coaching Course. [Coaches who have taken any of these courses have already achieved this objective.]

For each course where a component toward certification is offered, care must be taken that nationally certified instructors using only nationally developed curriculum are used. The Programs Department at the NSTC can help administrators identify certified and qualified instructors.

Coach administrators are advised to recruit a coach instructor or trainer as part of the local coach administrator team to help with the planning and implementation of the local coach-training program.

Retention

Once you have invested the time described to recruit and train your coaches, it would be a shame for them to quit after the first year, requiring you to do the same thing all over again the following year.

What keeps coaches? Constant care!

They have to be having fun and must feel appreciated for all the efforts they are expanding. They must keep growing in their soccer knowledge. The in-session training sessions/ pizza party accomplishes this. Make it worth their while to attend. Have door prizes, quizzes, contests -- keep them involved!

Retaining coaches from year to year is a lot easier if you've done a good job on training. The more coaches you retain, the less time you'll spend recruiting and the more time you can spend training. It is a positive process which builds on its own success.

As pointed out earlier, training doesn't end with putting on a clinic for your new coaches. Line up your returning coaches early. Keep in touch with them during the off-session. Make sure they are involved in team balancing. The more they feel a part of the process, the more they will be committed and the longer they will stay.

During the season have at least two or three meetings. Make one of them a pizza night. Bring in a speaker; have door prizes (T-shirts, jackets, balls); present awards recognizing years of service, good sportsmanship, and contribution to the region. Involve assistant coaches in the process—these are your future coaches.

Provide feedback to your coaches. If you hear about problems a coach is having, communicate both the positive and negative with the goal of making that coach a better role model for AYSO. Some regions have contracts, which

all coaches must sign before the season, that specify the code of conduct required. Others have evaluation forms which can be filled out by parents, referees or region administrators to identify both negative and positive actions.

The bottom-line is to make your coaches feel important and appreciated. This comes from constant care and recognition for their efforts.

Administration

It is true that “the job’s not done until the paperwork is in.” Make sure your coaches get registered with the National Support and Training Center. That happens via the volunteer registration form. Don’t let a coach step on the field with the team before you have this completed and it’s processed. This ensures that they will be covered by the Soccer Accident Insurance and that they will receive all the mailings of IN-PLAY and PLAYSOCGER. Also, **make sure that when your coaches attend the AYSO coaching courses that the rosters are either processed locally or submitted to the National Support and Training Center (Programs Department) by the course instructor.** This is of utmost importance as it will ensure that volunteers that are putting in their personal time will receive the credit and recognition that they deserve. A record of course graduates must be completed to know who is eligible for an upgrade. Also, it is becoming increasingly important that accurate records be kept regarding coach certifications as more cities and school district are requiring all coaches using their facilities to be certified.

Administration involves constructing and managing a coaching budget. This is done when the region’s budget is put together. Make sure you include funds for pizza nights, awards, clinics, books or tapes for your region’s library. Provide feedback to your RC regularly on the status of your budget.

Be an active member of your regional board. Represent your coaches on all issues within the region. There are few decisions which won’t have an impact on your coaching program. Make sure you attend any area or section meetings so that you can bring back the latest information to help make your region’s coaching program the best it can be.

SAMPLE REGIONAL COACH ADMINISTRATOR PLANNING SCHEDULE

TIME	TASK
9 months before the season begins	Recruit your regional coaching staff and train regional teachers.
5 months before the season begins	Plan clinic dates and locations.
4-5 months before the season begins	Coordinate with regional board – local news releases.
3-5 months before the season begins	Registration. Recruit at registration sites and from parent volunteer forms. Telephone follow-ups.
3-4 months before the season begins	Section instructor courses, qualify regional coaches.
2-3 months before the season begins	All coaches recruited. Team assignments.
2 months before the season begins	Hold U-6, U-8, U-10, and U-12 Coach Courses. Pre-season organization meetings.
Season begins	Season starts, player development.

During season	Mid-season coaches review.
End of season	Start over! Review season. Give out thank you letters or awards. Make written reports to R.C. Begin recruiting for next season.

Area Coach Administrator Position Description Summary

Title:

Area Coach Administrator

Responsibility:

To oversee the administration of the area's coaching program, and the training and development of coaches in the area. The area coach administrator ensures that each regional coach administrator is a qualified trainer, or has a staff that can act as regional coach instructors, and also ensures the development of coaches within each region. Where regions are deficient in qualified trainers, the area coach administrator provides assistance from the area coaching staff to conduct training at the regional level. The position of area coach administrator should be looked upon as one of direct support of the regional coaching programs.

Recommended Qualifications and Skills:

- Intermediate Coaching course graduate.
- Strong administrative/organizational abilities.
- Should have prior experience as a regional coach administrator in order to fully understand the needs generated at the regional level.

Orientation, Training, Certification and Continued Education Provided:

To prepare a volunteer for the position of Area Coach Administrator, AYSO will offer the following educational opportunities. It is the duty of the volunteer to attend these sessions:

- Orientation by the Area Director
- AYSO Safe Haven for Coaches Course
- Introductory Management Training
- Management Training
- Coach workshops at the annual Section Conference (i.e., Coach Administrator Training)
- Area staff training offered at the Section Conferences

Appointed by:

By the area director, who will then solicit input from the section coach administrator and regional coach administrators.

Specific Duties and Responsibilities:

- Offer at least one of each of the following courses prior to the season:
 - Intermediate Coaching Course
 - Appoint an Area Coach Trainer.
- Become familiar with the National AYSO player and coach development programs and assist in their implementation. For example, become familiar with the U-6, U-8, U-10, U-12, Intermediate and Advanced Coach Courses.

- Plan, staff and assist in implementing the area level clinic calendar and its related activities, e.g., coaching certification clinics, goalkeeping clinics and summer camps.
- Become familiar with the AYSO organizational structure, policies, and National Rules and Regulations.
- Be a resource and advisor to the area director on coaching matters.
- Verify qualified, certified coaching instructors and maintain a list of all certified coaches and instructors within the area.
- Help Regional Commissioners recruit Regional Coach Administrators.
- Become familiar with the coaching programs within each of the regions in the area, via frequent communications.
- Assist in planning and implementing area play-offs, if applicable.
- Serve on discipline and/or protest committees for the area or on inter-regional activities, if requested by the Area Director.
- Assist the Area Director in developing a library of films, tapes, manuals and books, etc.
- Attend the Section Conference and other area/section meetings as required throughout the year.
- Meet with the Area Director as requested and assist in the area budget preparation. Input should include the following items: travel to meetings, phone calls, program implementation, as well as other AYSO approved expenses.
- Train and develop qualified candidates for replacement.
- Appoint an assistant area coach administrator.

Supervision Protocols:

While performing as the Area Coach Administrator, the volunteer is:

- Subject to the bylaws, rules, regulations, policies, procedures and guidelines of AYSO.
- Under the overall authority of and directly supervised by the Area Director, and supervised indirectly by the Section Coach Administrator.
- To maintain the recommended supervision ratio of 1:8 or less; that is, one adult for every eight or fewer children and two adults (at least one being of the same gender of the group) present at all times. For the protection of both the children and the volunteer, no volunteer should permit himself or herself to be alone with any child or group of children (except his or her own) during AYSO-sponsored activities.

Budget:

To be determined by the Area Director, Area Coach Administrator and Area Board. Budget should cover all necessary expenses to fulfill the above duties.

Reports to:

Area Director, with a direct line of accountability to the Section Coach Administrator.

Supervises:

- Area coaching staff—instructors and trainers
- Regional coach administrators, instructors and trainers

Resources:

- Regional coach administrators and certified coaches within the area.
- Area Director
- Section Coach Administrator, Section Coach Trainer.
- Materials available from AYSO Supply Center and AYSO Store
- NSTC Staff:

- o AYSO National Coach
- o Programs Department staff
- o Management Information Services

SAMPLE AREA COACH ADMINISTRATOR PLANNING SCHEDULE

TIME	TASK
End of the season	Thank you letters to area staff. Verify returning area staff members.
Annually	Recruit your area coaching staff.
Before the season	Plan clinic dates and locations.
As requested by A.D.	Coordinate with area board – local news releases.
Annually	Verify region registration sites and dates for area calendar.
Before the season	Verify U-6, U-8, U-10, U-12 and Intermediate coach course dates.
Annually as appropriate	Designate area staff assignments.
Before the season	Hold Intermediate Coach Course. Pre-season organization meetings.
Season begins	Support Regional coaching development.
During season	Continue support of Regional coaching programs.
End of season	Review support rendered to regions.

Section Coach Administrator Position Description Summary

Title:

Section Coach Administrator

Responsibility:

To oversee training and the administration of the section's coaching program. The section coach administrator ensures that each area coach administrator is a qualified trainer or has a qualified staff to ensure the development of coaches within the area. Where deficiencies in qualified trainers exist, the coaching staff at the area and section level should assist in training at the regional level. The position of section coach administrator should be looked upon as one of administration, ensuring that the national programs are available to their areas and regions.

Recommended Qualifications and Skills:

- Advanced Coaching Course graduate
- Strong administrative/organizational skills
- Should have prior experience as a Regional and Area Coach Administrator

Orientation, Training, Certification and Continued Education Provided:

To prepare a volunteer for the position of Section Coach Administrator, AYSO will offer the following educational opportunities. It is the duty of the volunteer to attend these sessions:

- Orientation by the Section Director
- AYSO Safe Haven for Coaches Course
- Introductory Management Training
- Management Training

Appointed by:

Section Director

Specific Duties and Responsibilities:

- Maintain accurate rosters of trained area and regional coach administrators.
- Arrange training clinics for coaches in the areas and regions via the section conference or special coaching programs within the section.
- Aid area and regional coach administrators in developing their own training program based on the National Coaching Program.
- Provide training assistance at the area and regional levels where needed.
- Provide the section director with goals and objectives for coaching programs annually.
- Disseminate information as appropriate to all area and regional coach administrators to allow coaches to participate in the National Coaching Program.
- Advise National Coaching Commission on possible appointees to the National Coaching Staff.
- Train candidates for his/her replacement.
- Create an annual section coaching budget for funding training and coaching materials.

Supervision Protocols:

While performing as the Section Coach Administrator, the volunteer is:

- Subject to the bylaws, rules, regulations, policies, procedures and guidelines of AYSO.
- Under the overall authority of and directly supervised by the Section Director, AYSO National Coach and the National Coaching Commission Chairperson.

- To maintain the recommended supervision ratio of 1:8 or less; that is, one adult for every eight or fewer children and two adults (at least one being of the same gender of the group) present at all times. For the protection of both the children and the volunteer, no volunteer should permit himself or herself to be alone with any child or group of children (except his or her own) during AYSO-sponsored activities.

Budget:

Funds can be made available through budgetary input to your Section Director.

Reports to:

Section Director, with a direct line of accountability to the National Coaching Commission Chairperson.

Supervises:

- Section coaching staff—instructors and trainers
- Area and regional coach administrators, instructors and trainers

Resources:

- Section Director
- Materials available from AYSO Supply Center and AYSO Store
- National Coaching Commission Chairperson
- NSTC Staff:
 - AYSO National Coach
 - Programs Department staff
 - Management Information Services

SAMPLE SECTION COACH ADMINISTRATOR PLANNING SCHEDULE

TIMING	TASK
10-11 months before season	Identify next year's goals and objectives. Survey existing area staff and identify support for the next year. Create a section coaching budget.
9 months before season	Provide an annual review of the previous year's coaching program to the section director and the AYSO National Coach. Plan for the section conference.
8 months before the season	Send mailings to area staff on section conference and upcoming training.
4-7 months before the season	Train regional coach administrators at section conference. Plan with area coach administrators for Intermediate and Advanced Coach

	Courses. Advertise the courses offered in your section. Conduct a Coach Instructor Course to ensure qualified staff for certification courses.
3 months before the season	Conduct Intermediate and Advanced Courses.
1 month before the season	Player courses: specialized clinics, player skill session, etc.
During the season	Fulfill section duties as related to play-offs, tournaments, etc. if applicable.
2-4 months after the season begins	Prepare statistical analysis of previous year.

Overview of AYSO Coaching Courses

The purpose of this section is to familiarize the new coach administrator with the coach training and certification courses offered by AYSO. Lesson Plans and materials for all of these courses are available from the AYSO NSTC. This process will be explained further in the Step by Step -- Holding an AYSO Course section later in this manual.

Annual Coach Meeting -- Regional

This is a great opportunity to set the tone for the entire season. ***All coaches need to attend.***

Topics to be covered are:

- Sportsmanship
- AYSO philosophy
- Soccer Accident Insurance (SAI) procedures
- Specific regional rules and guidelines

You might bring in an outside speaker for a small presentation. The RC will want to welcome the coaches. The regional referee administrator may want to talk about the referee program. Make sure you allow for an informal question and answer period --- everyone is likely to have something to share that will be interested to others. Some regions pass out uniforms and/or game schedules at this meeting as an incentive to get all the coaches to attend.

**The lesson plan for the Annual Coaches Meeting appears later in this manual.*

Note: A smaller orientation meeting for new coaches is also recommended to address the first year problems and logistics unique to them.

Safe Haven Certification

The goal of this course is to prepare coaches, assistant coaches, and parent volunteers to work with children and teach them the skills and values that are associated with the effective and appropriate coaching of athletes. Board reaffirmed the requirement that "All coaches and referees be certified." In AYSO this means Safe Haven coach or referee certification plus appropriate coach or referee specific training. *There is more information on Safe Haven later in this manual.*

U-6, U-8, U-10 Coaching Courses

This trio of courses has been developed for regions running U-6, U-8, and/or U-10 programs. (To qualify as a U-6, U-8 or U-10 program, designated age groups are playing short-sided games under the AYSO's guidelines). New coaches will benefit from the thorough presentation of the basic soccer skills as presented in this series. Manuals, certificates, patches and pins are available for each.

No prerequisites for these courses, nor are they prerequisites for taking any other AYSO coaching course.

U-12 Coach Course

This five-hour course is for new coaches. In addition to the philosophy and theory topics, the majority of time is spent on the field showing the new coaches how to teach basic skills, conduct a practice session and prepare for games.

*No prerequisites. **This course is a prerequisite for attending the Intermediate Coach Course.***

Intermediate Coach Course

This 15 hour course is designed for coaches who have one to three years of coaching experience.

The course takes a weekend to put on and is a bit more of an undertaking. While many regions can support their own Intermediate course, most combine efforts with other regions to conduct an area – wide clinic.

**This course must be coordinated by or approved by and coordinated with the area coach administrator.*

Prerequisite: U-12 Coaching Course. The Intermediate Course is a prerequisite for attending the Advanced Coach Course.

Advanced Coach Course

This 18 hour course is designed for coaches with three to five years of coaching experience. It builds upon the individual skills taught in the U-12 Coaching Course and the group play taught in the Intermediate Coaching Course. It focuses on the coaching techniques of observation and evaluation, tactical decision making, and dealing with the more experienced player. It covers how to utilize small group play to create match pressure situations in order to work on advanced topics such as combination passing, functional training and set plays.

This clinic will be conducted by the section coach administrator, his or her staff, or a national coaching instructor. You play a very important role by identifying coaches within your region/area who should attend and by publicizing the clinic well in advance to insure maximum participation.

Prerequisite: Intermediate Coaching Course. This course is a prerequisite for attending the National Coach Course.

National Coach Course

This training course provides training in advanced levels of play to include Player Evaluations, Laws of the Game, Tactical Development, Adding Numbers, Match Analysis, Anatomy/Physiology and a better understanding of what constitutes economical training.

Prerequisite: Advanced Coaching Course

Coach Instructor Training

Introduction to Instruction – this training is designed to teach potential instructors their role as instructors and general aspects of presenting AYSO courses using AYSO directed teaching plans.

Prerequisite: There are no prerequisites for the Introduction to Instruction course.

Coach Instructor – this training is designed to teach instructor candidates how to conduct introductory coach training courses at the U-6, U-8, U-10 and U-12 levels using AYSO directed teaching plans.

Prerequisite: Introduction to Instruction and must have completed the U-12 Coach Course

Advanced Coach Instructor – this training is designed to prepare coach instructors to teach the Intermediate and Advanced Coach courses using AYSO directed teaching plans, and to meet the educational requirements for becoming a Coach Instructor

Prerequisite: Must be a Coach Instructor and also completed the Advanced Coach Course.

The requirements for instructing and authorizing the courses above can be found in the AYSO Training and Certification Matrix located on www.aysohelp.org

Holding AYSO Coaching Clinics

This section discusses the who, what, when, where and why of holding a coaching course.

Checklist for conducting any type of clinic:

- Establish a Need
 - A. Purpose – to train and qualify coaches for the benefit of youth teams within a region.
 - B. Determine the number of people needing or wanting the course.
 - C. Determine suitable dates and accommodate participants' schedules.
 - D. Determine level of clinic needed.
 - E. Sponsorship
 1. Can be obtained through the region or area, or through an independent outside source.
 2. Reduce cost for attendees; encourage more participation.
 3. A minimal individual fee charged to participants encourages participation in the course.
- Clinic organization
 - A. Administration: Delegation of Responsibilities
 1. Publicity director
 2. Registrar
 3. Equipment manager
 4. Facilities coordinator
 5. Locate additional qualified, certified instructors on an "as needed" basis
 - B. Participants bring:

1. Lunch (brown bag, etc., or may be provided by region)
 2. Paper and pencil
 3. Ball (personally identified)
 4. Suitable clothing (soccer shoes, track suit)
 5. Water, suntan lotion, towel, etc.
- C. Materials
1. Field aid – nets, cones, stakes, grids
 2. Films and slides
 3. Books – i.e., age specific AYSO training manuals
 4. Handouts – Coach Development Program, Short-sided Games Guidelines, Soccer Accident Insurance Brochure, evaluation forms, first-aid, etc.
 5. First aid kit and a medical person if possible (paramedic, nurse, or doctor)
 6. Sun screen
 7. Extras – course T- shirts, liquid refreshments, snacks, additional balls, etc.
- D. Equipment
1. Projector
 2. Extension Cord
 3. Flip Chart
 4. Easel
 5. Markers
 6. Screen
- E. Budget
1. Facilities
 2. Staff
 3. Literature
 4. Accommodations for visiting instructors
 5. Guest speakers
 6. Advertising
 7. Equipment
 8. Regions may charge a nominal fee for clinics. A fee has been found to be an excellent reminder of the date. Clinics must be self-funded.
- F. Publicity
1. Publicize in advance using posters, brochures, e-mail, web-sites and communication among regional and/or area and/or sectional personnel.
 2. Emphasize that the clinic's goal is to teach how to coach, not to become soccer players.
 3. Participation in heavy exercise is voluntary but encouraged and dependent upon the physical condition of participants.
- G. Site acquisition
1. Utilize a central location if possible.
 2. Acquire necessary permits.

3. Consider inclement weather (field location adjacent to an available gym is always useful)
 4. Orientation (seating capacity)
 5. Location of refreshment facilities
- Clinic implementation
 - A) Eight to ten participants per staff member (ideal)
 - B) Players to demonstrate and assist
 - C) Experts for lecture and panel
 1. Qualified coach instructors certified at the appropriate level
 2. Local doctor or sports psychologist
 3. Assistance from neighboring regions
 4. Referee for Laws of the Game and panel discussions
 5. Evaluation and review (important)
 - a. Pass out and collect evaluation forms at the conclusion of the course. Ask for constructive criticism to improve future clinics and ideas of special interest within the region.
 - b. Congratulate those individuals completing the course. Remind them to promote the AYSO philosophy and encourage that it be promoted and upheld to the fullest extent.
 - c. Review the evaluation forms. These forms enable participants to express an independent, impartial point of view. The staff needs to be included in the review.
 - d. Submit roster of graduates to the AYSO National Support and Training Center—Programs Department, if the course was held for certification. Course instructor needs to process or submit within the 60 day time frame, as prescribed by the National Board of Directors.

Now that you know how to implement a clinic, the next section will explain how to register the course with the NSTC and ensure that the volunteers that attend the training receive credit for the course.

*As the coach administrator, it is your responsibility to make sure your instructors know and understand the proper procedures for registering courses and making sure that the attendees receive credit.

****The following page should be photocopied and given to any instructors conducting courses within your region/area/section.**

Step by Step Holding an AYSO Course

Step 1:

Obtain a Course Request Form which is available on the AYSO website @ www.soccer.org under AYSO Resources/Forms & Documents or by calling the AYSO Supply Center @ (888) 243-2976.

Step 2:

Fill out the Course Request Form. You will need to have the following information:

- Section, Area, & Region
- Course Name
- Name of the Certified Instructor
- Course Date
- Estimated Number of Participants
- Materials Needed (manuals, certificates, patches, pins, etc.)
- Course Authorization (if necessary)
- Make sure to include contact information so we are able to contact you with any questions!

Step 3:

Mail or fax in the Course Request Form at least **30 DAYS** prior to the first date of the course to:

AYSO Supply Center

P.O. Box 5045 Hawthorne, CA 90251-5045

Supply Center—(888) 243-2976 FAX # (310) 643-0114

SupplyCenter@ayso.org

Step 4:

Conduct course and have all attendees fill out roster *legibly*. **Note: many volunteers end up not getting credit for courses taken simply due to illegible names on the roster sheets.**

Step 5:

If applicable, indicate test results on roster.

Step 6:

Make a copy of the roster for your records.

Step 7:

**Send in or fax roster to the
PROGRAMS DEPARTMENT
National Support & Training Center**

**12501 S. Isis Ave.
Hawthorne, CA 90250**

Fax (310) 643-5310

***If the roster is not submitted or processed, attendees
will not receive credit for the course!**

**If you do not hold the course, please write
cancelled on the roster and mail to the NSTC.*

If you have any questions regarding this process please contact:

**National Support & Training Center - AYSO
Programs Department
800-872-2976**

Thank you for your cooperation and thank you for taking the time to provide quality coaching courses to our AYSO volunteers

** For Our Volunteers' Protection, Every Course **Must** be Registered with AYSO!*

AYSO Safe Haven: Protection and Certification for Coaches

The AYSO Safe Haven Program is designed to address the growing need for a child and volunteer protection. Safe Haven is an educational program that includes three components: child protection, volunteer protection, and volunteer certification. Starting with coach certification and going through a rigorous accreditation with the National Association for Sports and Physical Education (NASPE), AYSO Education will be able to provide nationally recognized educational programs. Coupled with the AYSO recommended protection policies, this provides a broad shell of protection to all the members of the AYSO community. Three levels of safeguards will be in place.

- NASPE Standards Accreditation—Adherence to the National Association for Sports and Physical Education's national coaching standards and completion of its accreditation process will provide AYSO with recognition across the board of its coach certification programs.
- AYSO Volunteer Certification—The in-house certification program will provide every volunteer with the highest level of protection at the lowest possible cost. Every AYSO child must be treated with understanding, compassion, and respect.
- Child Protection Policies—These policies offer guidance and protocol.
 1. Child Volunteer Protection Advocate
 2. Volunteer Application and Screening.

3. Mandatory Training.
4. Regulated Supervisor, to protect both children and adults through simple policies.
5. Code of Cultural Conduct, defining how to work and act in the AYSO environment.

AYSO Safe Haven fosters an environment where players and volunteers can come to play and work together without fear, where fun is paramount and the welfare of the individual participant is a high priority.

In response to child protection laws and our own sense of duty, there are four elements in the Safe Haven Intervention Cycle for child protection:

1. Promote Education and Awareness
2. Create Policies
3. Screen Volunteers
4. Train volunteers

Additionally there are eight elements in the Safe Haven Prevention cycle for child protection. These proactive steps provide an environment conducive to positive, healthy child development.

1. Foster Meaningful Relationships
2. Make Kids Full Participants
3. Promote Ethical Behavior
4. Model and Teach Conflict Resolution
5. Encourage Kids to Speak Out
6. Cultivate Kids' Self-Images
7. Implant Excellence in Individual Achievement
8. Keep things FUN

The Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 provides a great deal of safety for the volunteer who has properly prepared for volunteer work. In order to receive full protection under the law, AYSO volunteers must:

- Be trained and certified
- Be performing duties as laid out in their job description.
- Act within the full scope of AYSO's Policies, Procedures and Guidelines.

The level of training will be relative to the level of risk associated with each job. To make this certification program effective for both the players and the volunteers, the training includes:

- AYSO certified instructors
- Child-Centered Curriculum
- Developmentally—Based Sports Activities
- Complete Instructional Plans
- Complete Learning Spectrum for children and adults
 1. Education, Testing, and Confirmation through the Instruction Program
 2. Experience through participation in a focused environment
 3. Observation by trained evaluators for performance enhancement
 4. Opportunity through guided participation.

With the Safe Haven Program, AYSO takes the lead in nonprofit child and volunteer protection.

AYSO intends to be the first to the future by creating the new standard in child and volunteer protection today. After all, ***“When we create an AYSO Safe Haven—Then no Child or Volunteer Will Be at Risk.”***

Annual Coach Update What Every Coach Should Know About AYSO

The AYSO National Coaching Commission recommends a 1 to 2 hour session be run annually before each season in order to explain the administrative side of the coach’s job to him/her. It should be run by the Regional Coach Administrator for all of the coaches within the region.

** The material below is a guide for this session and is designed to be presented as written. Throughout the guide, notes to the presenter (not intended to be read verbatim) will appear in italics (like this paragraph).*

OPENING STATEMENT:

As a coach in AYSO it is important that you understand the AYSO structure.

AYSO is a volunteer organization. The basic operating unit of the organization is a region.

The region is run by a Regional Commissioner and the local board which is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the local program.

A group of regions comprises an area, administrated by an Area Director, and his or her coaching, refereeing, and administrative volunteers.

Areas connected geographically comprise a section, which is administrated by a Section Director and his or her coaching, refereeing, and administrative volunteers. There are currently 14 sections.

The Regional Commissioner, Area Director, and Section Director are executive members who vote for the National President, Board of Directors, and any changes to the National By-Laws or Rules and Regulations.

Additionally, the National Coaching Commission and National Referee Commission are committed to the development and implementation of quality programs for the regions.

Representatives from the section staff are responsible for the development and implementation of the AYSO programs.

The only paid members of AYSO are the Executive Directors and a small staff at the National Support and Training Center. The National Support and Training Center staff provides the administrative and member services needed for all of AYSO.

TRANSITIONAL STATEMENT:

There are currently over 620,000 children playing AYSO soccer due largely in part to the 5 AYSO Philosophies which are:

- **Everyone Plays:** Every child plays at least half of every game (three quarters of every game if the number of players on the team roster permits).

- **Balanced Teams:** Teams are formed each year (**no carry-over from last year's team other than the coaches child**), and are assembled so that all teams have essentially the same chance to succeed. When games are one sided, players from neither team are satisfied, and little is gained by either team in skill or enjoyment
- **Open Registration:** AYSO does not restrict membership on the basis of talent, race, religion, nationality, or creed.
- **Positive Coaching:** Soccer is FUN for players, coaches, and parents. HELP MAKE IT SO!
- **Good Sportsmanship:** We want to create a positive environment based on mutual respect, rather than a win-at-all cost attitude. All programs must be designed to instill good sportsmanship in every facet of AYSO.

AYSO has always encouraged good sportsmanship in its programs and recommends that its individual regions promote sportsmanship and ETHICS at all times.

Sportsmanship generally refers to how we play the game. In AYSO we want our good citizenship to go beyond the game – we want the values we communicate on and around the field to be the values that will best serve our players off the field as well.

There's a saying in AYSO: "Youth Before Soccer." It refers to the fact that in the name "American Youth Soccer Organization," the word "youth" appears before the word "soccer."

Coaches play a vital role in encouraging good sportsmanship by the example they set. Practice may belong to the coach, but the game belongs to the players. We need to let our players play their game, not conform to an adult idea of what the game should be. Coaches should also take the opportunity to address parents at pre-season meeting, and should use that time to stress proper behavior.

Remember that everything we do around our players communicates a message, even if we are not aware of it. As coaches, we need to continually ask ourselves, "What's best for the kids?" and act accordingly.

TRANSITIONAL STATEMENT:

Coaches, referees, parents, players and other volunteers are members of the "AYSO Team." The team expects certain things from each member.

We expect a friendly attitude and cooperation from all team members in our program. As with a soccer team, different positions call for different responsibilities.

AYSO coaches are part of the team and have responsibilities to the program.

Here are some things we consider good behavior for coaches.

Coaches must:

- Support "everyone plays" and "positive coaching" in the AYSO philosophy.
- Be reasonable in your demands on young players (time, energy, enthusiasm, performance).
- Stress adherence to the Laws of the Game.
- Encourage your team to respect referees, opponents, and opposing coaches.
- Keep yourself informed about soccer and youth sports (get training).
- Set a good example.

- Enlist the support of your players' parents in promoting proper attitudes and values.
- Promote player safety.

TRANSITIONAL STATEMENT:

AYSO will give you as much help as you need. You only have to ask. If we don't know what you need, we cannot help you. A few basic tips on AYSO coaching information resources:

Your best source of information is your Regional Coach Administrator or Regional Coach Trainer.

Identify or introduce your Regional Coach Trainer. (If you have divisional coach administrators, introduce them as well, and distribute phone numbers. Also distribute information about, or discuss, any local library of books, tapes, etc., that the region has. Discuss or distribute information about procedures for using these materials. We want AYSO materials to be used by, not just recommended to the new coach.)

Much work has gone into the development of AYSO materials and those are the materials we want used by our coaches.

Books, tapes, and other materials are available for purchase through the AYSO Supply Center and the AYSO Store.

Distribute the list of materials that can be obtained through the region, and review the procedure for ordering or requesting materials.

Another excellent source of information is a coaching clinic. AYSO offers several clinics geared to different levels of coaching experience and ages of players.

Most regions will not host all levels of clinics every season, but the Safe Haven for Coaches, U-6, U-8, U-10 and U-12 Coaching Courses, in particular, will be offered at least once this year **(Give dates)**.

So if you're looking for coach training and information, attend the clinics offered to you. Realize that the clinics are designed to be attended in sequence.

The U-12 Coaching Course is a prerequisite to the Intermediate Coach Course, which is a prerequisite to the Advanced Course. For more information about the training available, talk to your Regional Coach Administrator.

Mention that you'll be handing out a calendar that includes the scheduled courses in your region and area.

One final source of information about soccer is the game itself. Watch games on TV. Soccer games are available for viewing on television at least once a week in most areas of the country. You can learn a lot about soccer by watching the world-class players in these games.

TRANSITIONAL STATEMENT:

There are National Rules and Regulations that govern the way AYSO is run. However, at times, these national rules and regulations may need to be supplemented at the regional level.

Present your regional rules and regulations, reviewing differences, and answering any questions. Watch your time here – new coaches may try to turn this section of the meeting into a short referee course. Refer them to the coach and referee courses and appropriate regional staff (Regional Coach Administrator or Regional Referee Administrator) for follow-up.

TRANSITIONAL STATEMENT:

As a new coach you are probably wondering, "How do I get started?"

Team Management is your key to success. Before the start of the season each coach should have a meeting with the parents and players of the team. At this meeting the coach should:

- Advise parents when and where practices will be held. If the practice schedule is flexible, include parents in the decision process (or players themselves, in older divisions).
- Provide parents/players with a team roster and game schedule (including any special events, e.g., picture day, and play-offs).
- Advise parents of what is expected of the parent, player, and what they can expect from the coach. (See Codes of Conduct, below.)
- Distribute uniforms, if available.
- Discuss equipment needs (ball, shin guards, rubber-soled cleats). Advise parents that shin guards are mandatory at both practice and games.
- Discuss local rules and regulations.
- Identify your team parent(s), who will be responsible for phoning the team as necessary, collecting fees, paperwork, etc.
- Identify an assistant coach, and enlist the assistance of other parents for practices.
- Go over the Parents Code of Conduct:
 - Don't force your children to play.
 - Let them play! (Children are involved in youth sports for their enjoyment, not yours.)
 - Teach your child to play by the rules.
 - Help your child work toward skill improvement and sportsmanship. (Your child will then be a winner in every game).
 - Don't ridicule or yell at your child. Support efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from youth sports.
 - Set a good example. Applaud good plays by both teams on the field.
 - Recognize the contribution of volunteer coaches, referees, and officials, and give them their due respect.

TRANSITIONAL STATEMENT:

You and your players will need some basic equipment. Consider these items:

Every player should have his or her own soccer ball.

You must have your players' **medical release forms**, and an accident report form or two (available from your Safety Director or Regional Commissioner).

Cones, first-aid kit, game or practice plan, water, ice, personal items (lip balm, sun screen), extra soccer balls are all useful to have.

Take this opportunity to discuss the organization, storage, etc., of regional equipment. If you have a Field Director, introduce and let him/her explain the Field Director's role. Also, give coaches an opportunity to ask questions about equipment. Discuss any special requirements your region has regarding equipment that coaches may need to bring to practices or games.

TRANSITIONAL STATEMENT:

Accidents are part of the game and they will happen. As a coach in AYSO you should know about AYSO Soccer Accident Insurance.

The purpose of Soccer Accident Insurance (SAI) is to assist participants who suffer financial loss due to medical costs of injuries that occur while playing AYSO soccer. It supplements regular major medical insurance policies (by paying a portion of the deductible and/or the co-insurance amount direct to the provider).

A separate brochure describes the SAI in detail. Copies may be obtained through your Regional Commissioner or Safety Director. Here are the main features of the plan as of the time of this writing. Please consult the SAI brochure or call the NSTC for additional details.

Hand out brochure and discuss it with your coaches.

Who is covered: All AYSO registered players, coaches, referees, and volunteers are covered for accidental bodily injury while participating in the following activities:

- Scheduled games, tournaments, team practice sessions or other sponsored activities, provided they are under the direct supervision of a team official.
- Group travel directly to or from such games, tournaments, practice sessions or sponsored activities, provided that players are traveling as a team and the vehicle is operated by a licensed adult driver.

How to file a claim: Obtain an AYSO "Soccer Accident Insurance" (SAI) Claim form from the coach, your regional safety director, or regional commissioner.

Complete the portion of the claim form marked "To be completed by claimant," and Statement of insurance.

"Eligibility verification": Secure signatures from two authorized representatives of AYSO.

It is the responsibility of the claimant to make a copy for his own records and to mail the claim within 90 days of the date of injury.

Send your claim form with all relevant documents to the address on the brochure.

Conclusion: Keep in mind there are time limitations for submitting claims. Refer your parents to the SAI brochure for details.

Cooperation in keeping medical reimbursement requests to a minimum will allow registration fees to remain as low as possible, giving every child an opportunity to play.

TRANSITIONAL STATEMENT:

In case you need some help, and you will, let me give you a few important phone numbers.

Here's a sample list of whose phone numbers you may want to distribute. Discuss the duties and responsibilities associated with each of the positions.

Regional Commissioner

Regional Coach Administrator

Regional Coach Trainer

Regional Referee Administrator

Safety Director

Registrar

Divisional Coach or Coordinator

Uniform Coordinator

Equipment/Field Coordinator

Game Scheduler

National Support & Training Center

TRANSITIONAL STATEMENT:

You may be wondering when all this fun is going to start. What I will be passing out is the calendar of events for our region.

The regional calendar: The region has established a calendar of events for the year and/or season. As a coach, you should be aware of the regional calendar and the various events that affect you and your team.

The calendar should include: coaches' meeting, course dates, uniform distribution, team parents' meeting, team selection, first day of practice, first game, photo day, fund-raising period, board meetings, and any other dates that are significant to your region.

You need to be aware of these dates (people will ask you about them). Plan to attend those that are appropriate for you, and see that the people helping you attend as well. It's important that you use the regional calendar – it's one of the key resources available to you as a coach.

Distribute the regional calendar.

The Coach's Calendar: As a coach you should establish your own calendar of events. In some cases you may just note applicable dates from the regional calendar, but others will be specific to your team. Use your calendar to help accomplish your goals/objectives (for example, after team selection, you might note that you will try to contact all your players by a certain date).

Some items that you might want to include are first team meeting (date and time), first team practice, date and time for team pictures, time and location for all your games, date and time of coach courses you will attend, tournaments, tryouts, etc.

You might distribute a blank or partially completed calendar, and have the coach's fill in some events. Depending on the format, it may be possible to combine this with the regional calendar. Discuss any other events they should schedule.

Bottom line: get yourself organized as quickly as possible. A calendar will go a long way to helping you reach that goal.

TRANSITIONAL STATEMENT:

In an ideal world, there would be no need for procedures to deal with the discipline of volunteers,

Unfortunately, problems do arise, and when they do it's important that proper attitudes as well as procedures are maintained.

The following guidelines have been developed to protect AYSO as an organization, as well as to preserve the rights of individual participants.

Suspension: If a player, parent, or volunteer is suspected of serious misconduct, it may be necessary to consider suspension of that individual's participation.

Individuals can be suspended by the Regional Commissioner or Regional Board if there is imminent danger to the program, or a crime has been committed.

A suspension may be called for, for example, in a case of suspected child abuse, suspected theft, violation of basic AYSO principles (such as "everyone plays" or "open registration"), attempting to move a program out of AYSO, or engaging in conduct which disrupts AYSO activities.

The suspended individual must be notified in writing letter, (telegram, fax) even if first notified by phone. The suspension takes effect when the individual receives the notification.

A letter must also be immediately sent to the Area Director and all parties involved, detailing the action taken, the grounds for that action, and requesting a removal procedure on or before the next meeting of the Regional Board.

Removal: Removal of a player, parent, or volunteer may be called for if there has been a violation of AYSO policies, principles, or philosophy, or in case of conduct disruptive to AYSO activities or programs.

Suspension is not required as a precondition to removal.

The Regional Commissioner or Regional Board can decline to consider a request for removal if there are no reasonable grounds to pursue the matter. If they choose, a show-cause order may be issued to the person, giving him/her at least ten days to explain why he/she should not be removed, and providing an opportunity for a hearing. Or, they may choose to simply hold a hearing, ask for written statements, etc. For more details, consult your Regional Commissioner or ask to read the "Due Process" section of his/her manual.

Conclusion: The important thing is to realize that there are established procedures for this kind of problem. In general, the minimum solution and the most local solution are best.

If a problem can be solved voluntarily (for example, a voluntary resignation rather than a removal or suspension) the outcome is likely to be better for everyone involved.

Wrap-up closing remarks.