

JOE KNOWS AYSO

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AYSO frequently receives questions regarding rules, regulations, policies, interpretation of FIFA Law and AYSO modifications. In my position as National Referee Administrator, I am often asked to respond. The following are some of the interesting questions I recently received:

Question –

Joe, I have seen players all go down on one knee when the referee stops play for an injury. Is this something the players are supposed to do?

Answer –

There is no requirement that players must do this. A coach may direct the players to rest while the injured person is being attended to however, this is not something the referees should tell players. Coaches may prefer that players do not “take a knee” if they feel players muscles might tighten and would prefer they stay loose by moving around. It is a coach’s decision.

Question –

Joe, a team we were playing all left the field when the referee called for substitutions. Our coach has taught us to stay on the field during substitutions unless we are being replaced by another player. Which is the correct way?

Answer –

No one is supposed to leave the field during substitutions except the players being substituted. This should only take a few seconds and play should continue quickly. Your coach has taught you correctly. AYSO soccer is not played in four quarters but rather in two halves with a quick stoppage midway into each half to allow for substitutions. Substitution time is not intended as a mini-halftime but rather an opportunity for the quick exchange of a few players to ensure everyone plays at least half of the game. On unusually hot days, the referee may allow a little extra time for players to take a quick drink near the touchline but they still should not leave the field.

Question –

Joe, is there a rule against carding young players in AYSO because I haven’t seen anyone on the young teams carded and have seen quite a few cards given in the older players games?

Answer –

There is an unofficial rule that referees try to remember that we learned from a very famous referee and friend of AYSO named Ken Aston. Mr. Aston taught many referees around the world and he often said, “Don’t Card Kids”. There are a variety of ways the referee can deal with a young player who may need reminding to be careful or to play fairly, without standing over a young child holding a card in the air indicating the young player has misbehaved. There is no rule that prohibits carding young players but referees try hard to avoid doing it.