

Coaching at Annapolis Soccer Club!

Coaching youth soccer is more than teaching a sport — it's helping youth grow, developing community, and creating lasting memories. At Annapolis Soccer Club (ASC), we believe that **the more fun you have coaching and playing with the kids, the more fun they will have** and the more they will want to learn and compete.

1. Philosophy & Objectives

- **Objective:** Have fun, learn skills, and keep the children coming back.
- Enthusiasm is the only prerequisite — many coaches are new to coaching or soccer, yet find it extremely rewarding.
- Emphasis on encouragement, patience, and giving kids chances to succeed (especially for shy players).
- Coaching should be positive, collegial, and supportive, not overly competitive at early ages

2. What Coaching Looks Like at ASC

Clinic / Young Ages (U4–U7)

- Coaches and both teams' staff are on the field to guide play (no "from the sideline" dominance)
- No goalkeepers in U4–U7; small-sided play to maximize touches per child
- No scores or standings are kept; focus is on development and enjoyment
- Equipment (goals, cones, pinnies) is provided; coaches are encouraged to label balls and integrate fun drills

County / Competitive Levels

- County teams practice 1–2 times per week, play ~9–10 games per season
- Coaches receive equipment (balls, cones, pinnies, goal options)
- More structured matches, but coaching remains guided by the same positive, inclusive principles

Winter Futsal Program

- A 10-week, game-only league (1 × 50-minute game per week) — a lower-pressure way to coach and manage a team
- Good stepping stone for coaches to gain experience without full season commitment

3. Support for Coaches

- ASC pays for coaches to take formal coaching courses, and also offers local coach training sessions to meet individual needs.
- Age-group training meetings occur (mid-March, August) to distribute equipment and review objectives.
- A “Coaches Corner” resource collection (age-specific and task-specific ideas) is shared to reduce the burden of planning.
- ASC encourages parent involvement and leadership development — each team gets two coach T-shirts to pass forward.

4. What Coaches Gain: The Rewards

- Almost all coaches — both new and experienced — comment on how **rewarding** the experience is.
- You get to be part of children’s growth, joy, confidence building, and love of sport.
- Community connection: interacting with players, parents, and neighborhoods, many of whom become long-term participants.
- Opportunity for skill development in leadership, communication, patience, creativity, and sports knowledge.
- You help set a positive example — coaching styles ripple outward, influencing team culture for years.

5. Practical Tips for a Positive Coaching Season

- Prioritize **fun and engagement** over rigid structure — kids respond more when they enjoy what they do.
- Use small-sided games and drills that maintain high ball touches per player.
- Rotate positions and encourage players to try different roles (attack, defense) for broader development.
- Communicate positively, focus feedback on effort and improvement, not just results.
- Involve parents in drills and activities, when appropriate, to build support and inclusiveness.
- Use available resources (Coaches Corner, peer coaches) — you’re not alone.
- Be patient: some players may take time to open up; encouragement helps.

6. Getting Started & Next Steps

- Attend the age-group coaches meeting to receive equipment and orientation.
- Complete required background checks before the season begins.
- Reach out to the Director of Coaching or veteran coaches for mentoring and planning.
- Use the Coaches Corner and shared training plans to reduce your prep burden.