**Rules of the Game for Youth JR (U12)**

**Rule 1:** Teams will play on a 9v9 field. Ball size: 4

**Rule 2:** Games will consist of two 35 minute halves with a 5 minute break.

**Rule 3:** Standard team size will be 9 players per side, one of these 9 will be the goalkeeper.

**Rule 4:** When playing with fewer players per side, teams **must** match number of players.

• If a team is short players, coaches are encouraged to share players to ensure a game can be played.

**Rule 5:** Players must wear shin guards (covered by socks), and soccer cleats. No jewelry of any kind (earrings, necklaces, bracelets, etc) allowed.

**Rule 6:** Players will have fair playing time in all positions. Unlimited substitutions will be allowed during any stoppage of the game.

**Rule 7: KICK OFF**

* The kick off does not need to go forward. It is encouraged that the player passes the ball back to their player in the midfield. This is to allow more time to control the ball without immediate pressure.

**Rule 7: OFFSIDE**

Offside rules apply.
**Rule 8: Free Kicks/Goal Kicks** • ALL free kicks are indirect

**Rule 9: THROW INS & CORNER KICKS**

Throw ins and corner kicks are allowed. Foul throw rule will be enforced.

**Rule 10: Pass Backs**

The pass back rule will be enforced. The goalie cannot pick up the ball if one of his/her players kicks it directly to them.

**Rule 11: Referees** Calls and decisions made by referees must be respected. Unless continuing to play is deemed unsafe, the only appropriate time to discuss calls with a referee is either at half-time or after the game, with both coaches present.

**Rule 12:** All players and coaches should exchange handshakes at end of game

**The Retreat Line – Third of the field line**

“To allow our young players to learn and gain confidence in how to play the ball out from the back and build an attack, as opposed to the goalkeeper kicking it aimlessly up the field, the concept of the retreat line has been introduced in mini soccer. To see young goalkeepers aimlessly boot the ball up the field in the “hope” that one of his or her teammates gets the ball is not effective in producing skilled, confident players who love to play. What would happen is as follows: **when the goalkeeper has the ball at a goal kick or after making a save the opposing team members would “retreat” to the third of the field line. Once all the opposing players have retreated to the line the goalkeeper can successfully throw or pass the ball to one of his/her teammates. Once the teammate has received the ball the opposing players can then start to apply pressure to the player with the ball.** This gives the player on the ball the time and space required to have a look, receive the ball and choose to dribble or pass to a teammate without being marked or under immediate pressure.”.