

## **TOPSOCCER Buddies Needed**

**Soccer program for youth with special needs starts its Spring Season April 19**

### **Sign Up To Be A Buddy**

If you are a youth soccer player, love soccer, want to give something back to the game, and want to help someone with special needs, TOPSoccer has a place for you. Buddies provide support, guidance, and a play partner to the TOPSoccer player. Buddies do not have to be a travel or school player – all a prospective buddy needs is compassion for others and love of the game. (If you are interested in being a buddy, please e-mail Buddy Recruiting Coordinator Holly Angel at [myslreq@mysl.com](mailto:myslreq@mysl.com) and include your name, age, school, and the team you play on.) Here is some more information on the program.

### **About Richmond TOPSoccer**

Local soccer clubs are again joining with St. Joseph's Villa and now Midlothian Youth Soccer League to host the Spring season of TOPSoccer, a program geared specifically to introducing soccer to children with special needs. TOPSoccer is an outreach effort under the auspices of United States Youth Soccer (USYS) and the Virginia Youth Soccer Association (VYSA).

The program began in this area in Spring of 2006, marking the first time TOPSoccer was offered in the Richmond area and making it the 19<sup>th</sup> such program to be introduced in Virginia. It is the only program in the country run as a cooperative effort by ALL of the soccer clubs in the area. The following clubs participate: Ashland Youth Soccer League, Chesterfield United Soccer Club, FC Richmond Soccer Club, Midlothian Youth Soccer League, Richmond Kickers Youth Soccer Club, and Richmond Strikers Soccer Club.

TOPSoccer teams up youth soccer players with Richmond area special needs children. Designed to enrich the lives of children with special needs through the game of soccer, TOPSoccer is open to any boy or girl, ages 4-19, who has a mental or physical disability.

The youth soccer players – called “buddies” help the TOPSoccer athletes learn the game of soccer, or just enjoy moments of physical activity, through a variety of soccer-themed activities and games, appropriate to the age and ability of players.

Each player is matched with a local youth player “buddy” or buddies who assist volunteer coaches and the TOPSoccer athletes-participants in the learning process. St. Joseph's Villa and other volunteers provide special needs expertise. Parents are a part of the program and are required to remain on site throughout the sessions.

### **Spring Season Session Dates**

**Sundays – April 19, 2009 – May 17, 2009 – 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.  
Buddies should arrive between 3:30 and 3:45.**

**All sessions will be at St. Joseph's Villa, 8000 Brook Rd, Richmond, VA 23227 or Midlothian Youth Soccer Park at Hensley, 13581 W. Hensley Road, Midlothian, VA 23112.**

When you register to be a buddy, please indicate which location you would like to volunteer at: St. Joseph's Villa **OR** Midlothian Youth Soccer League.

**Directions to St. Joseph's Villa:**

Take Exit 83-B off I-95 to Parham Rd (to Brook Road). Proceed to second traffic light, Brook Road. Turn left onto Brook Rd. Turn right at first traffic light into the St. Joseph's Villa campus. Circle to the right of the church and proceed to the right rear of the complex adjacent to Parham Road. Signs will direct you to the athletic fields. After parking, proceed to the fields, where registration will be held. Follow the yellow signs.

**Directions to Midlothian Youth Soccer Park at Hensley:**

Take Hull Street Road West (route 360) to N. Spring Run Road. There is a traffic light at Merchant's Tire on your left and a Wawa on your right. Turn left at the light onto N. Spring Run Road. Take N. Spring Run Road 2 miles to Spring Run Elementary School on your right. This is a 4-way stop intersection. Turn Right onto Springford Parkway. Travel 1.4 miles on Springford Parkway. Turn Left onto W. Hensley Road after passing Brandy Oaks. Travel 0.1 miles to the first Hensley Soccer Complex entrance on the left for fields 4-9.

**Questions**

If you have questions, please contact Holly Angel [myslreg@mysl.com](mailto:myslreg@mysl.com) or Associate Director Paul Mack [Paul J Mack@aon.com](mailto:Paul_J_Mack@aon.com)