



# U7/U8 Soccer Parent Guide

## Supporting Learning, Confidence, & Love of the Game

**Welcome to U7/U8 soccer!** At this age, players are learning basic skills, teamwork, and how the game works — but fun is still the priority. Our goal is to help every player build confidence, try new things, and enjoy coming back each week.

## Your #1 Job

### Encourage and Let Them Play

Let the players make their own decisions and learn by doing.

## What Parents SHOULD Do

**Cheer for effort** “Great hustle!” “Nice try!” “I love how you kept going!”

**Support learning** Let mistakes happen — that’s how kids improve

Praise trying new skills, Focus on growth, not goals scored

**Create a positive sideline** Clap for both teams, Keep comments upbeat

Help make soccer feel safe and fun

**Help with responsibility** - Arrive on time and ready, Bring water, shin guards, and proper gear, Encourage kids to carry their own equipment,

Volunteer when needed (snacks, team help, field duty, concession)

**Model sportsmanship** Respect referees and coaches, Be kind to other families

Show calm, positive behavior (kids copy you!)

## What Parents Should AVOID

Sideline coaching or instructions

Avoid “pass!” “shoot!” “get it out!”, **Too many directions confuse players and slow learning**

Focusing on the score and winning, Development > winning, Praise effort over outcome

**Negative comments** About players, referees, or coaches

**Solving every problem** Let kids build independence and resilience

## Remember

### At U7/U8, you’ll still see:

Lots of bunching around the ball, Big emotions, Learning through trial and error

That’s exactly how development should look!

If they’re smiling, improving, and excited to come back — we’re succeeding.

## Thank you for helping create a positive soccer experience for every player!

This guide reflects U.S. Soccer’s Player Development Framework for the Play Phase (U5–U8), which prioritizes fun, learning, decision-making, and positive adult support over results and winning.