

• TeamSnap •



SOCCER E-BOOK

Building a successful soccer organization:
Insights from players, coaches and managers



To play soccer all you need is a ball. Although one of the easiest games to play all over the world, running a successful soccer organization is far from simple. In order to understand how to run a club or league, when to start, and the best practices for managing a soccer organization, it's important to get a sense of the overall youth soccer landscape.



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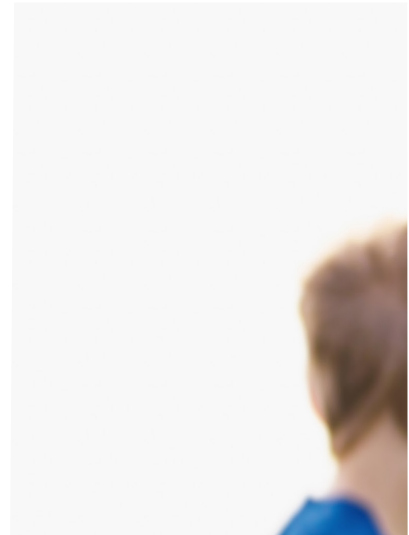
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1 

Where is Soccer Now?

According to a study conducted by The Aspen Institute and Project Play, in 2020 soccer participation suffered drastically during the pandemic. Soccer is usually one of the most popular sports for youth athletes between 6-12-years-old, but during the pandemic soccer only had 73,000 more participants than tennis and 226,000 more than golf. In total, soccer had 348 billion participants in 2020 and 373 billion kids in 2019, a -6.7% change. To give even more context, in 2019 soccer had 967,000 more kids than tennis and 916,000 more than golf.



TEAMS NAP



Even with overall numbers dropping, many organizations still found ways to stay connected despite the changing landscape, new protocols, and health and safety concerns. TeamSnap users turned to the app to keep up communication via the messaging tool and continued to schedule events even if they were Zoom practices, video sessions, and more. Organizations that invested in communication, and rapport saw more success and even more so, are still competing and growing despite the pandemic.

2 

Successful Soccer Organization Case Studies

Depending on who you ask, success could be defined in many different ways. At TeamSnap, we see success when organizations can free themselves of registration struggles, communicational nightmares, and multiple management softwares. Success to us is seeing soccer organizations focus on the playing part; developing players and having fun.





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Catonsville Youth Soccer

Catonsville Youth Soccer is just one of the many sports offered by the Catonsville Rec & Parks Council, with soccer accounting for 1,400 of their 5,000+ participants. These participants range from four to 17 years old, across 16 different sports and activities, including traditional sports such as soccer, baseball, and lacrosse to non-traditional organized activities like square dancing and frisbee—all with the goal of engaging the community.

“We want to keep the community active in a forward way,” says Natalie Powell, who does computer system validation by trade, but also serves as the President of the Catonsville Rec & Parks Council. “The whole purpose is to keep the kids involved and active. We want to give them something to do, so when they go to school, they know somebody; when they go out in the neighborhood, they know somebody. Overall, just to bring everybody together.”

With registration just a few days away, Natalie

knew she didn't have much time to waste. "We were under contract with another solution, and they could not configure the registration the way that we wanted. And they weren't meeting timelines. So I needed something really quick, really fast," says Natalie. It was crucial that she find a solution that gave her full control to quickly get registration across the finish line. She couldn't risk having to go back and forth with a provider just to set up, configure and give approval on the registration form.





“

I was able to purchase the league, configure my registration—very intuitive—and go live in a matter of an hour and a half. It was awesome!”

Natalie knew that many of their individual teams were already using the TeamSnap app for rostering and scheduling, which made the transition that much smoother once she decided to move forward.

“All those rosters, teams and schedules fell into the league, which is really great for me, because then I can schedule something globally,” says Natalie. Even the teams saw a huge financial benefit with Catonsville Youth Soccer investing in the all-in-one solution.

SVILLE

It works out better for the teams because the organization is picking up the cost; it's actually less expensive per team per season."

Using TeamSnap for registration has given Catonsville Youth Soccer the level of control that they desired and allows them to provide registrants the option to manage everything they need via one form.

Catonsville Rec & Parks Council has now extended the registration solution to their full array of sports and activities, and they are taking advantage of TeamSnap's invoicing solution to collect varying dues on a team-by-team basis. It gives Natalie the ability to drill down and send invoices to a whole team, to an individual player or even exclude a player on scholarship.



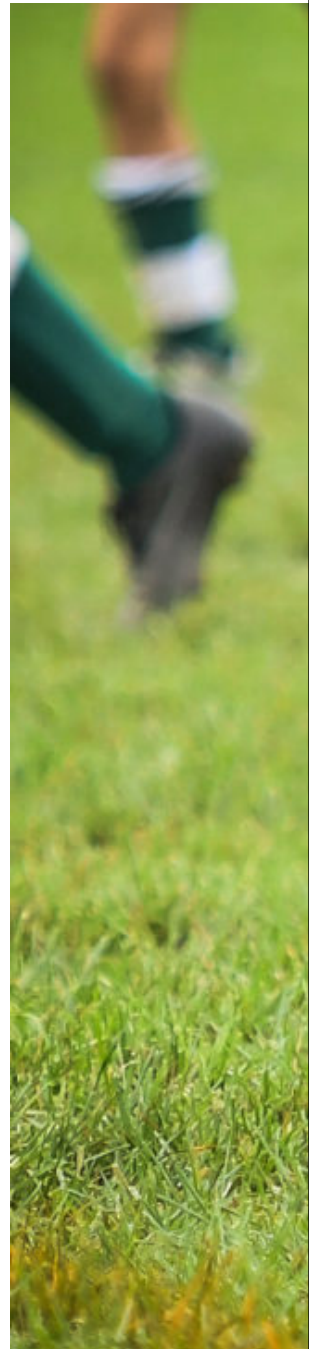
IT'S ACTUALLY LESS EXPENSIVE
PER TEAM PER SEASON.



-Natalie

"Catonsville Youth Soccer"

On Using Teamsnap
Registration



Catonsville Soccer *Continued..*



I guess the best way to explain it to people is: who trained you to use Facebook? Nobody. You just figured it out. Similarly, I didn't need training to use TeamSnap, I just figured it out because it is that intuitive."



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Lake Hills Soccer Club

With almost 1,000 players, ages 5-18, across 65 recreational and 25 club select teams, Lake Hills Soccer is a big club with bigger goals, relying on myriad volunteers to create a great experience for the kids.

"We're passionate about providing opportunities for all the kids in our community to learn and love the sport of soccer," says Amy Hunt, one of only two employees and a longtime registrar and administrator. "Some kids continue as rec players, some move onto our select program, and others advance to a premier program. We're very focused on the needs of each individual player."

"We wanted something that was growing and improving and responsive to customer feedback, and I got

that vibe from TeamSnap right away," says Hunt. "We wanted something attractive that would put a good face forward for our organization." They also wanted an app that families and coaches would actually use. and I got that vibe from TeamSnap right away," says Hunt. "We wanted something attractive that would put a good face forward for our organization." They also wanted an app that families and coaches would actually use.





Bigger Goals Met Through Strong Marketing

They built a newer, mobile-friendly website with TeamSnap's Website Builder, putting a professional face on the organization. "The WordPress platform is easy to use and has some cool features and tools," says Hunt. "I'm not trained in any way, it was just easy to learn by doing, and it's been easy to use and update."

Despite the short deadline, the transition to TeamSnap went incredibly smoothly.

"It was such a relief to get everyone, all my teams, all my players transitioned over — so easy. And the coaches were so excited about it, that made me feel good that we had made the right decision."

"It makes it a lot easier for me to interact with the coaches about who is actually on their team. Before, I was sending a spreadsheet to every rec coach. They had access to see their roster in Korrio, but most of them wouldn't use that. So I was sending them spreadsheets, and when a new player joined, I was sending another spreadsheet. Now, they actually use TeamSnap."



When we were researching platforms, we saw companies claiming to have an app and communication tools, but I talked to other clubs who admitted that their coaches don't use them and don't like them. It's not a huge selling point if your app isn't going to be used by anyone.



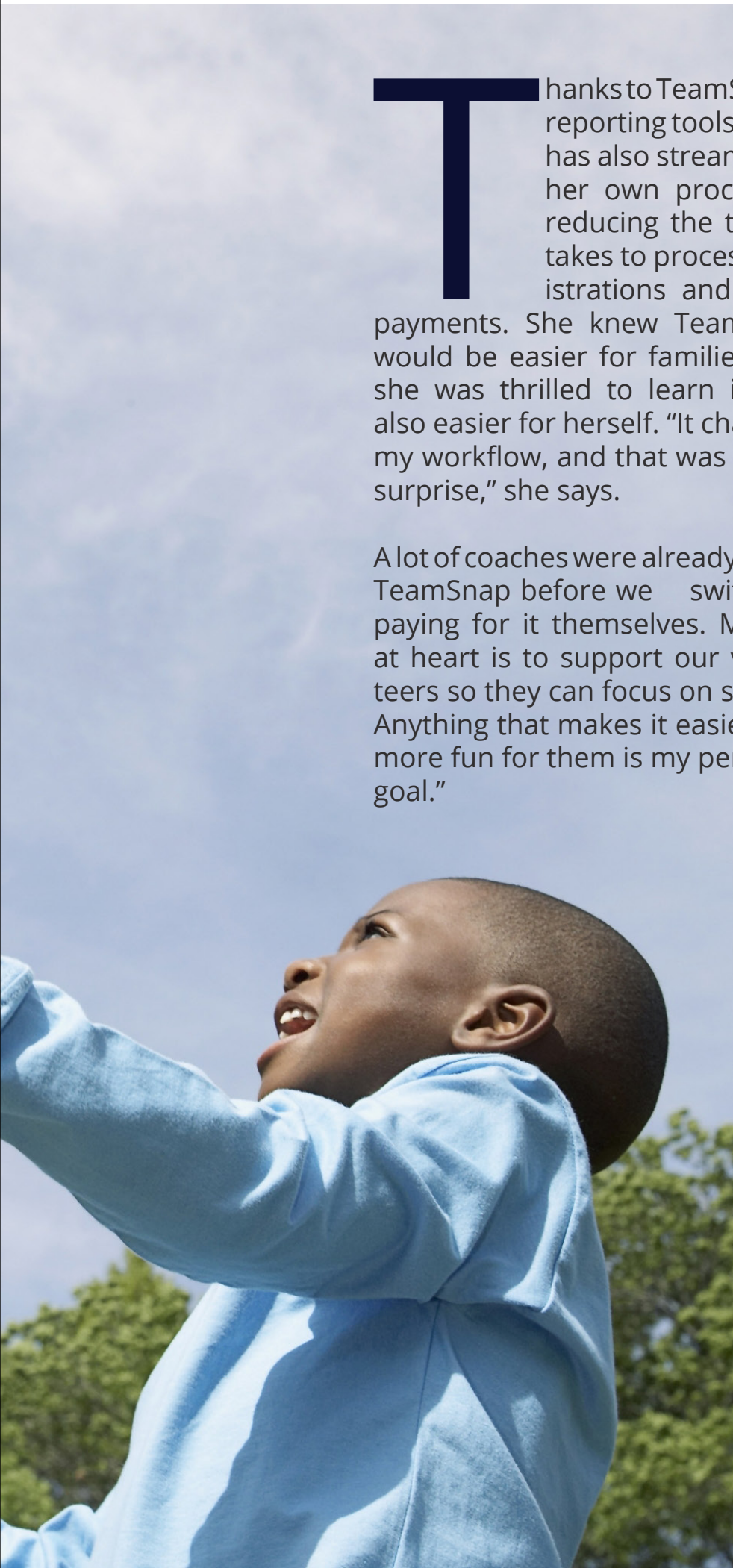
Lake Hills Soccer

Continued.....

Parents and families are also loving TeamSnap. With kids from all over the world, including many families who are not native English speakers, having a platform that is powerful without being complicated has made a world of difference.

"TeamSnap is attractive, easy to use, and simpler for parents whose first language isn't English," says Hunt. "The registration forms are just so bright and wide open, and really easy for people who struggled on other platforms."





Thanks to TeamSnap's reporting tools, Hunt has also streamlined her own processes, reducing the time it takes to process registrations and track payments. She knew TeamSnap would be easier for families, but she was thrilled to learn it was also easier for herself. "It changed my workflow, and that was a nice surprise," she says.

A lot of coaches were already using TeamSnap before we switched, paying for it themselves. My job at heart is to support our volunteers so they can focus on soccer. Anything that makes it easier and more fun for them is my personal goal."





TEAMS NAP

The Steel City, otherwise known as Pittsburgh, is full of hardworking sports enthusiasts who show up strong and wave their terrible towels. They love their sports, but even though almost 40,000 kids play soccer in Pennsylvania West it does not (yet) have a reputation as being a soccer hotbed.

Tom Ovenden founded Pittsburgh Hotspurs Soccer

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Hotspurs Soccer Club



Club in 2015 when he was bitten by the entrepreneurial bug. After moving to the United States from England, he had the opportunity to work with a few different companies in the sports space but was ready to take on a venture of his own and build his own soccer club. In just a few short years, he and his team of coaches and staff have grown the organization to 50 teams and around 700 players ranging from 7 to 18—all to meet Tom's and his wife Chrissy's vision of growing soccer in Western Pennsylvania.

TEAMS NAP



Financial stability and tracking equals a successful organization.



“Our goal is to create an all-encompassing program that supports everything from foundational grass-roots to adults, and have a level for every player,” says Tom. “We have ambitions to think outside of the box and grow the club to be more than your standard soccer program, into a place where families can feel a part of something and have a facility to create a really strong soccer platform.”

In the early days, Tom worked with a web developer to build a way to collect payments via their website, while still collecting registration forms and documents manually. Naturally, they were having an extremely difficult time matching up what people had paid and what they still owed. As Chrissy puts it, “it was very challenging!”

There was no direct connection, leaving them with tens of thousands of dollars uncollected. This is when Chrissy decided to tackle the problem directly.

Knowing that they needed a system to streamline everything, Tom and Chrissy’s first instinct was to go with TeamSnap. “It was just natural,” says Tom. “We had a lot of teams using the TeamSnap app so we figured we might as well give them the first shot.”



Other companies wanted a shot. “Other solutions were all over me. I told them if I moved over all of my parents would think I’m crazy because everyone loves TeamSnap so much. There’s just no point.”

It was important for them to find the right tool to help run their business and not let external factors impact their decision.

“I can’t really have someone like a governing body dictate which software platform we should use,” says Tom. Thankfully, Hotspurs Soccer went with their gut.

TeamSnap instantly helped with matching and ensuring payment collection. “Using TeamSnap has completely streamlined everything, especially with collecting payments,” says Chrissy. “Last year, there was probably less than \$1,000 outstanding, so going from almost \$50,000 left on the table to something very minimal is really great!”

Chrissy, who manages all things payments and financials for the club, was able to organize the numbers to provide better visibility. “It’s really helped us forecast our cash flow, being able to put in the exact dates that the installments will come through, and knowing the amount of money coming in each month. This is a huge benefit.”



HOT SPURS



Hotspur Soccer Club's relationship with TeamSnap continues to grow, and a big part of that is credited to customer support. "We were blown away by the customer service and how quickly you get a reply if there ever was an issue, as well as how regularly there were product updates," says Chrissy. Tom added that their account manager, Marika, is "almost like a member of our family."

Asking parents to print out and sign documents can almost triple the amount of time that it takes for them to register and put in their credit card information, so Tom worked with their account manager to figure out a better way to handle this during registration. "Next year, we will just set up a waiver and have them put in their initials as that is legally binding. We'll take paper completely out of the picture." The support and ongoing communication allow the club to improve its processes each and every year.

And as the club opens up new locations, and introduces adult programs, TeamSnap will be at the center of it all. "I put a lot of our success on TeamSnap, really. It helped us keep everything in one place," says Tom. When working for other companies, it always frustrated him that there were so many spreadsheets and tools needed to run the company. "I felt like centralizing a lot of the club's output was really important so that there's one place that you can drive the engine forward from."

For Hotspurs Soccer Club, that engine is TeamSnap.

S O C C E R

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Next Level Soccer Academy

New Levels Reached Through TeamSnap



With more than 500 players spread across 27 teams, the Next Level Soccer Academy (NLSA) is a program on the rise. In fact, Next Level is an apt name for this Pennington, New Jersey-based club. They are taking the area by storm and quickly rising into a regional and national power.

Behind all that success lies a tremendously dedicated group of employees and volunteers as well as players and parents committed to bringing their best—and a little assistance from TeamSnap. All come together to deliver on the club's goal of providing the best possible youth soccer experience.





Next Level Soccer Academy Needed an Upgrade

When Rob Marino, co-founder and administrative director, started NLSA 15 years ago, he had two clear goals: Delivering the best possible youth soccer experience and ensuring every player understood that he or she mattered. In order to deliver on that goal, it was clear he needed some help.

“Back then, we were using a different technology product. But it just didn’t have the functionality we needed,” notes Marino. “In vetting new options, all of them required us to change how we were currently operating. And that was a non-starter for me.”

Marino and his team were impressed that the technology allowed them to keep operating with all their current systems—while also delivering new functionality that would help them grow.

“We were impressed by the ability to set permissions and grant different access rights based on role.” says Mariano.

TEAMS NAP



In a growing club, it's vital that everyone has access to all the information they need, while still keeping more sensitive information protected and secure.



"Not everyone needs access to all the finances," Marino notes. "With TeamSnap, we can set permissions so coaches can see their rosters and send messages, but not access other club data."

It's a snap to pull up a player's profile and instantly know which teams he has been on, and make sure he gets the right message. "It has made it so easy for admins and coaches to track their programs and keep everything straight across the years," Marino notes.

In the competitive world of club sports, it's important to attract and retain top talent. And that's another area TeamSnap has paid off for NLSA.

"Parents and players have a lot of options for club soccer in this area," says Marino. "TeamSnap is another recruiting tool we can use to show how we offer a premium experience on and off the pitch."

As a respected member of the East Coast Soccer community, Marino is often asked by other clubs for advice. When they ask about technology options, his answer is clear, "Just go with TeamSnap. It's worked wonders for our club and will for you, too."



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Soccer coaches, whether at the recreational level, travel level or even college and beyond, are all responsible for player development and fostering a love for the game.

Hear From





Coaches

TeamSnap has compiled several tips to share with organizers to use as a reference point, inspiration, or a foundational pillar for their very own coaching staff.

TIP 1

Immerse yourself as
a coach in the sport

One of the best ways to learn what players need from a coach is to fully immerse yourself in the sport. Be open to soaking in all parts of soccer, from the specific skills and rules, to the player development and needs, the local teams and fandom. Don't be afraid to get to know the other coaches, volunteers and parents within the soccer program you're working at. You can take in so much by hearing from those who have been there before you. Immersing yourself into the culture of the team or club you are working at includes getting to know the parents.

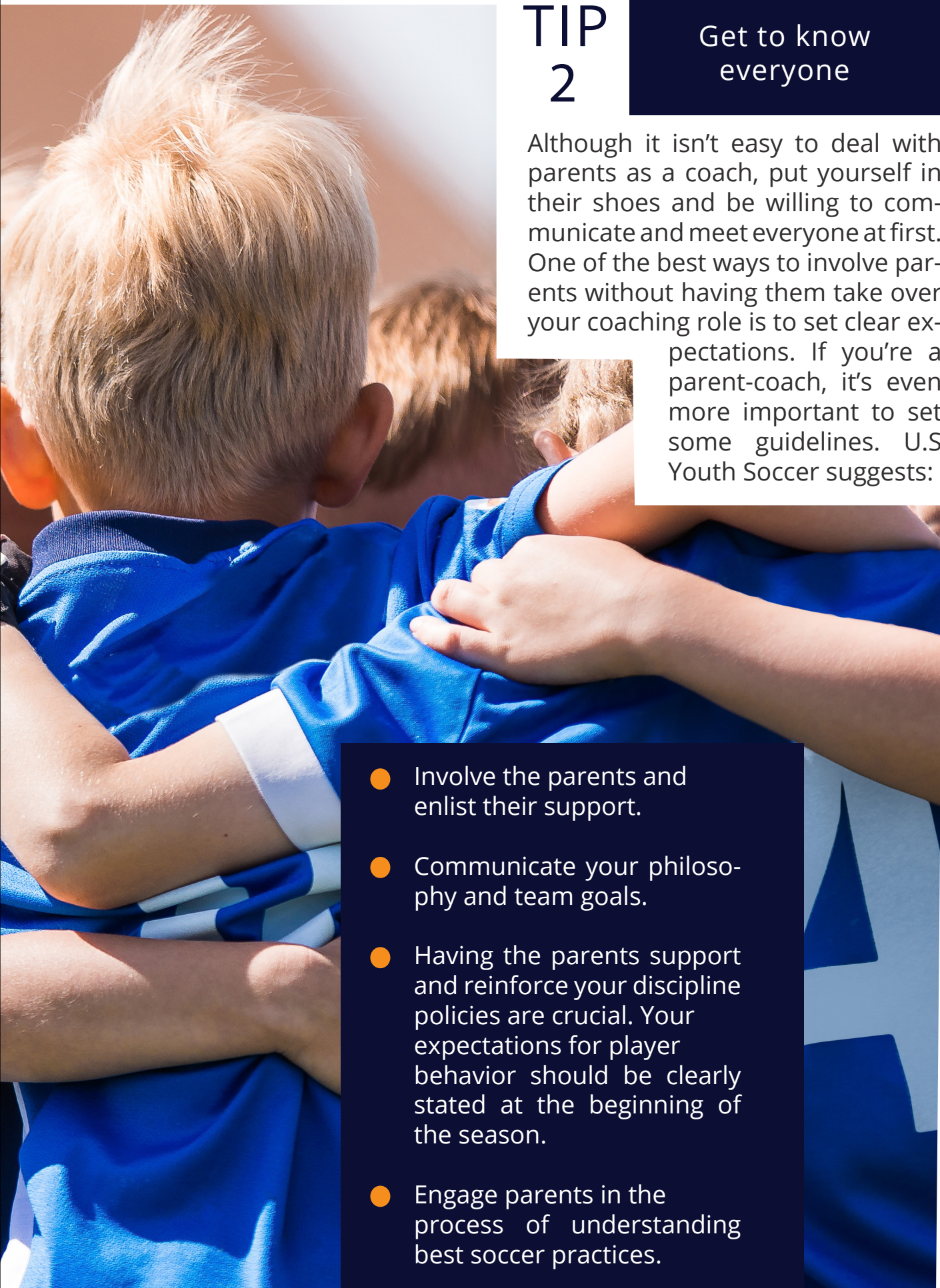


TIP 2

Get to know everyone

Although it isn't easy to deal with parents as a coach, put yourself in their shoes and be willing to communicate and meet everyone at first. One of the best ways to involve parents without having them take over your coaching role is to set clear expectations. If you're a parent-coach, it's even more important to set some guidelines. U.S. Youth Soccer suggests:

- Involve the parents and enlist their support.
- Communicate your philosophy and team goals.
- Having the parents support and reinforce your discipline policies are crucial. Your expectations for player behavior should be clearly stated at the beginning of the season.
- Engage parents in the process of understanding best soccer practices.





TIP 3

Develop a communication style that works for you



Every coach has a unique way of communicating with players. Learn what kind of communication style works for you and even more importantly gets through to the players. A lot of properly communicating has to do with the type of players you are coaching from characteristics like age, gender, and socioeconomic status. It's okay to not have the communication style down on the first day. Players are receptive to coaches that try and are confident in their teachings and feedback. Test the waters, try different tones, animation levels and trust your gut. Most players aren't afraid to offer feedback, so also look out for signs that they aren't understanding or properly hearing you. Often-times their game speaks for itself too. As a coach, you know you've successfully painted the picture when the players perform.



TIP 4

Develop a plan

Prepare. Prepare. Prepare. Prepare. Coaches at the highest level still map out sessions. To get any coaching license, developing practice plans is a huge piece. As a first-time coach, keep a notebook. Draw your sessions out and reflect after practices. This will allow you to see what's working and what isn't. Also, when you are first starting out as a coach, having something to refer to during the practice is a nice reference point. Preparation at any level shows care and players respond well to structure and organization. One way to develop a practice plan is to think about the session in parts. Perhaps you follow a play-practice-play method or you jump right into skills like juggling, foundations and toe-touches. Find what works for you and the kids you're coaching, but write things out and set goals for each session.



TIP 5

Become an exceptional listener



O

ne of the biggest parts of becoming a strong communicator is listening. As a soccer coach, listening is crucial to the game. Listening can be broken down into determining player needs and team needs. As a coach it is your job to develop the players, but also strive for the greater good of the team. Be open to hearing what the players are saying to one another, not just you. Be receptive to feedback from parents and peers. It's okay to not respond right away, but listen to everything. Another part of being a good listener helps you ensure the safety of your players. Managing the performance environment is key, so listen to cues from the environment around you from sounds of weather in the distance, a hard tackle on the other side of the pitch, or whisperings between players.



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Soccer Organizations to Thrive Off of U.S. Soccer Momentum

Soccer is one of the most groundbreaking sports in North America. As your organization continues to grow and develop new tools to best support your players, coaches, and staff, use the progression of the U.S. Women's National Teams as a mark for how much the sport has evolved. On May 18, 2022, the U.S. Soccer Federation, Women's and Men's National Team Unions agreed to historic collective bargaining agreements. U.S. Soccer, USWNT and USMNT players will receive equal pay with identical economic terms. U.S. Soccer is the first federation to equalize FIFA World Cup prize money.

Sports organizations of all sizes rely on TeamSnap for Clubs & Leagues to manage their club, programs, and teams in a solution that administrators, coaches, managers, and parents will all love to use.

We combine the top-rated team management app with registration, payments, communication, scheduling, and reporting to bring you a true all-in-one club solution.

