

Dear CCYS Families,

The one thing we know for sure is whatever programs CCYS is able to offer this fall they will be super fun, help our children improve their individual soccer skills and include protocols that will minimize risk of exposure to COVID-19. After a great deal of thoughtful planning we are very happy to announce our plan for CCYS Fall 2020 programs and let you know that [Registration](#) for the [CCYS Fall 2020 Intra-team program](#) is open as of Thursday, August 6 (today). The CCYS Board of Directors has made the decision to offer an intra-team program instead of traditional in-town and travel programs for the Fall 2020 season and will not register any of our CCYS teams in competitive leagues this fall. This email is long and detailed but intended to share the thought process and current drivers behind the decisions we have made about the CCYS Fall Programs. We respectfully request that you read through this entire email - even if you may be already be informed about some of these considerations.

As you may be aware, on Monday, July 6, 2020 the State of Massachusetts released the Phase III, Step One Guidelines for Youth Sports activities. Phase III was announced as having two potential steps: the timing/length of Step One/announcing Step Two was said to be data v. date driven. The duration of Phase III, Step One was estimated to last a minimum of three weeks - at least through the end of July. Sports and recreational activities were divided into three risk categories: low, moderate and high risk. **The first version of the Phase III, Step One Guidelines categorized soccer as high risk.** Under the Phase III, Step One Guidelines types of play are further broken down into four levels: **Level 1** permits individual or socially distance d group activities (no contact work-outs, aerobic conditioning, individual skill work, and drills); **Level 2** permits competitive practices (intra-team/group games, contact drills and scrimmages); **Level 3** permits competitions (inter-team games, meets, matches, races, etc.); and **Level 4** permits tournaments (outdoor only).

After the initial Phase III, Step One Guidelines were announced, Mass. Youth Soccer Association (MYSA) held a webinar for youth soccer leaders where they further drilled down into the Phase III, Step One Guidelines and allowed people to ask questions. As you can imagine there were lots of questions and many different opinions. There was a recommendation that people should write to/contact their state reps and encourage them to change the risk category of soccer. CCYS did not support this recommendation but clearly other programs did make some noise.

On Friday, July 24 it was announced that a July 24, 2020 Amendment to the Phase III, Step One Guidelines changed the risk rating of soccer (and only soccer) from high risk to moderate risk permitting levels 1, 2 & 3 of play. Last week, the BAYS League Scenario Planning Task Force (CCYS is an active member of this group) held a Zoom meeting to discuss the change in risk level and what towns (at least those affiliated with the BAYS Task Force members) were considering: registration, return to play timelines, safety protocols, modification of rules, decisions connected to back to school plans, etc. As expected, not everyone on the BAYS Task Force is on the same page - which also proved to be the case in the survey that the BAYS Task Force put together and sent out to the 53+/- programs that play in the BAYS League.

Also of relevance is the announcement on July 21 that the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) which governs high school athletic programs announced that they have pushed back the start date for fall high school athletics until September 14 pending direction from the state. The start of schools will also be pushed back until after Labor Day and can (at the discretion of schools) start as late of September 16 - although Concord and Carlisle schools are likely to start between September 8 and 10.

We want to acknowledge that while we are looking for safe ways to have our children engage in soccer, we are also acutely aware that there is a great deal of painstaking planning happening in an effort to get our children back to school. Included in the in-person back to school models is the importance of keeping children in groups, groups that they would stay with throughout the day/term at school. Not only must CCYS' plans for 2020-21 adhere to current Commonwealth of Massachusetts and Local COVID-19 Guidelines, but we firmly believe that is very important that our plans are aligned with the specific protocols being put together in both Concord and Carlisle to try and bring our children and teachers safely back to school.

Despite the July 24, 2020 Amendment to the Phase III, Step One Guidelines, changing the risk level of soccer to moderate and allowing for inter-team competition (competition against teams from other towns), CCYS is not comfortable with offering any fall programs that allow for our CCYS teams to compete in any league competition. BAYS League, for example, is made up of 53 +/- youth soccer programs, and under a normal fall schedule, each CCYS team would be placed in a division/section and typically play twice against five different teams during the season. Each CCYS team assigned to a division/section would potentially play against a different grouping of five teams during the ten week season. Such a schedule, even if the season was shortened, creates a great deal of potential exposure and does not align with local back to school plans. Not all towns have the same back to school plans, COVID-19 plans and adherence to protocols, and contact tracing would be a challenge. Although MYSA requires each youth soccer program to have a COVID-19 plan and a COVID-19 Safety Officer, in many towns there

are no town officials reviewing and enforcing the COVID-19 plans and no required training for those designated as COVID-19 Safety Officers. Then there are the ongoing issues with COVID-19 testing - if there is a suspected case of COVID-19 on one of our teams, or a team that a CCYS team has competed against. If there is a suspected case of COVID-19, we (CCYS) may only find out about the positive case if either the player or coach is tested for COVID-19, and the test confirms the player or coach is positive. Testing accuracy depends on the type of test (self-swab, drive through, professionally administered, brand of test) and timing of the test. Then there is the possibility of delayed test results (which is often a problem and in some cases it is taking up to two weeks to get results). We may or may not hear about the suspected positive case from the family of the player or coach. However, if a player or coach tests positive, the results are reported to the Board of Health in the town where the player or coach resides. Once this information is reported to the Board of Health in the town where the player or coach resides (which could take up to two weeks or more by the time the individual is tested and results are reported) it would then be turned over to the MA COVID-19 Contact Tracing Team. If a player/coach tests positive they would be told by the Board of Health to isolate for 10 days and be 24 hours fever free. If another player or coach is alerted by a contact tracer that they have been potentially exposed to a person with a positive case of COVID-19 for 15+ minutes at less than six feet (not sure how exactly you determine this during a soccer game) than that player/coach would need to quarantine and shouldn't be tested until five days after they were potentially exposed. We share this information so you know just how complicated this could be and can envision how others at home and school could also potentially be exposed in this process.

Our highest priority is the health and safety of all players, referees, coaches, staff and their families as well as our teachers and school administrators/staff, our children's classmates and their families. Honestly we are very concerned about how our actions can minimize v. increase the risk of anyone in our entire community and beyond being exposed to and sickened with COVID-19. We are far more confident in CCYS' ability to update its own detailed COVID-19 plan, appoint and train COVID-19 officers, develop, disseminate and enforce our protocols and create accurate records for contact tracing within our own programs. Based on the countless calls we have participated in over the past few months, we are far less confident in other towns plans and protocols.

For the reasons stated above, CCYS will offer only two programs this Fall:

1. [CCYS Intra-town Program](#)

2. Liverpool FC International Academy Program (this is a try-out program for grades 3-8. Contact [Mark Thomas](#) for more information regarding this program)

Each program will offer two potential stages, the timing of which will depend on stable v. increased number of COVID-19 cases, risk tolerance in Concord and Carlisle and any changes made by local and state officials. All stages of play will be conducted in accordance with the CCYS COVID-19 Plan and protocols will be enforced.

For the CCYS Intra-team Program, Pre-K – Grade 8 players will be assigned to teams with two volunteer coaches. For Pre-K - Grade 5 we plan to make every effort to form teams based on where players attend school (this will depend on registration numbers but at a minimum we will work to minimize mixing of schools). For middle school aged players, we will also try to keep players with their own school/town. Again, this will depend on registration numbers. Transition from Stage One to Stage Two of play will be considered once school has been back in session for a minimum of two - three weeks and will only happen if there has been no spike in COVID-19 cases after schools in Concord and Carlisle have started.

Two Stages of Play for Fall 2020:

Stage One: skills clinics (run by professional coaches) that focus on age appropriate, individual skill development. These will be physically distanced clinics with no scrimmaging.

Stage Two: intra-team soccer which will include skills clinics and scrimmages with other CCYS teams in the same general age group.

Further details about [Registration](#) and fall schedules for both the CCYS Intra-team Program and LFC International Academy Program will be sent in separate emails, posted on our CCYS website and Facebook page.

We acknowledge that while CCYS and Liverpool FC IA have made choices about the types of programs it will offer this fall, we know there are many other club programs that register players from many different towns that are moving

ahead with league play this fall and a number of other activities currently available to our children this fall. For the fall season, we respectfully request that players who are registered for another club sport program do not register and play for a CCYS team. We remain committed to providing our players with opportunities to develop their individual soccer skills in an environment that builds character while working to minimize the risk of exposure of our CCYS players, referees, coaches, staff, their families and our greater community to COVID-19. We will not be able to monitor every family's choices for activities but hope that you will join us in thinking about choices for fall activities in terms of helping to get our children back to school and minimizing potential risk of spreading COVID-19 within our community.

It is worth noting that both the CCYS and Liverpool FC IA programs are financially stable and thanks to the generosity of many families that donated their Spring 2020 refunds to the CCYS scholarship fund, we are in a position to provide financial assistance to those families that may be experiencing financial hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic. All requests for financial assistance are held in strict confidence.

We know how important it is to our CCYS families to provide their children with activities - and continuing to improve their individual soccer skills and playing soccer with their friends. We are really excited to be able to get our CCYS players back on the soccer field in a way that minimizes risk to our players, coaches, referees, staff, school classmates and their families. Thank you for your continued support and understanding during this challenging time.

Best regards,

Lauree

Lauree Cameron Eckler
President, CCYS