

We are very excited to once again be running an outdoor soccer league with our partners at Crossroads Bible Church this spring. This will be an introductory level league for elementary aged students at IPS 105 and other schools in the neighborhoods near Post Road and 42<sup>nd</sup> Street. Practices will begin April 13, with games each Saturday (except Memorial Day weekend) from April 27 through June 8.

Soccer at Renewal Sports Ministry is played with three to five players on the field for each team, playing on a “small-sided” field with no goalies. It is much different than traditional soccer. It is fast-paced, with very few stoppages of play and “open substitution,” so kids are getting plenty of time on the field and lots of “touches” on the ball. There is little or no “team strategy.” Kids will learn some basic skills like dribbling and passing, but there are no positions, set plays, etc. Think of it as soccer the way it would be played on the playground at recess, but organized and supervised by adults.

We are looking at potentially 96 players playing on 16 teams. That means there are opportunities for EVERYONE to participate in ministry through this league. Here is a rundown of those opportunities, with a brief description of each:

- **Coaches** – Coaches are in charge of teams of approximately 6-8 elementary aged players. They teach *basic* soccer skills (which we can easily teach you) and lead weekly devotions at practice (which we provide). The time commitment is one night per week, on a night you select, for approximately 1 ½ hours, and approximately one hour on Saturday mornings. **NO** soccer skills are required. The biggest asset of a coach is the willingness to make sure kids are having fun and being a good role model to kids who are sorely lacking in positive role models. We’ll provide you with everything you need – practice plan ideas, devotionals, etc. We also need people willing to co-coach with others, based on anticipated schedule conflicts. Assistant coaches and co-coaches are also needed and highly valued
- **Referees** – Because small sided soccer is very basic, there are few rules. As a result, very little understanding of soccer is necessary. Most of the responsibility of the refs will involve deciding who gets the ball when it goes out of bounds and preventing overly aggressive play. Enthusiasm for the kids and a positive attitude on the field are key. Time commitment is approximately 6 Saturdays, for roughly 4 hours. It is **not** necessary to commit to every Saturday.
- **Practice Day Administrators**-- This person would be at Crossroads on one practice days (Mondays, Tuesdays, or Thursdays) to do whatever is needed to help things run smoothly. This could involve anything from helping a coach with practice to addressing discipline issues to simply building relationships with kids and families. Ideally, this position would be filled by three people each committed to a specific day each week of practice.
- **Game Day Assistants** – We will need a variety of people to help on game days. Possible tasks include helping with the concession stand, staffing the Bible Memory Verse table, or serving as scorekeeper/timekeeper for games. We also need people to just be relationship builders – to be around during the games to meet families, be a friendly face, and be on the look out for other ministry opportunities.
- **Other opportunities** -- We also need "behind the scenes" volunteers to help with things like field preparation, keeping the standings, purchasing food for the concession stand, and helping prepare devotionals for the coaches to use. Some of these tasks are one-time opportunities and none of them involve direct responsibility for the kids or even participation on game days.

Our sports ministry has had a tremendous impact on the kids in the neighborhood and has been one of the main ways we have developed relationships with the families we serve. Please prayerfully consider participating in this ministry. To volunteer or if you have any questions, contact Mike – [mwilkins@outlookchurch.org](mailto:mwilkins@outlookchurch.org).