

Cal North TOPSoccer Program

TOPSoccer, The Outreach Program for Soccer, is US Youth Soccer's community-based recreational program for athletes with intellectual, emotional, or physical disabilities. A safe, supportive, inclusive environment gives athletes of all abilities the chance to play, build confidence, and belong.

WHY START A PROGRAM?

- Makes soccer available to every athlete in your community
- Creates meaningful volunteer opportunities for players, families, teens, and adults
- Opens the door to grants, sponsors, and community partnerships
- Demonstrates your club's commitment to inclusion and community leadership

HOW TO LAUNCH

1. Identify the need: Get formal backing from Cal North, learn which athletes and families need support, and confirm your club can meet those needs.
2. Build a planning team: Cover coaching, budgeting, marketing, registration, risk management, equipment, and fields. Allow four to six months of lead time.
3. Recruit players and volunteers: Connect with schools, regional centers, therapy providers, parent networks, adaptive sports programs, local clubs, and high schools seeking service hours.
4. Prepare the program: Secure an accessible field, register participants, complete required background checks and training, collect family information, and plan outreach.

WHAT MAKES TOPSOCCER WORK?

- 1:1 Buddy system: Each athlete is paired with a trained Buddy who helps them stay safe, engaged, and having fun.
- Ability-based grouping: Players are grouped by ability, not age, so activities can be adapted to each athlete.
- Certified coaching: Coaches learn how to modify activities and communicate clearly with diverse needs.
- Consistent structure: Short instructions, visual cues, frequent water breaks, predictable routines, and patient encouragement support success.
- Safety first: Keep medical releases and emergency contacts on-site, know relevant health conditions, and require a parent or guardian at practices and games.

STARTUP SNAPSHOT

Keep the program affordable. Typical early costs include approximately \$8.50 per-player insurance, \$10–\$12 per shirt, about \$10 per hour for field space, and roughly \$2,000 for starter equipment. Suggested registration is \$25–\$50, including a shirt. USYS TOPSoccer grants can provide up to \$1,500 for new programs and may help fund equipment and marketing.

READY TO GET STARTED?

Any league or club in Cal North can start a TOPSoccer program. Contact Teresa Talbot at ttalbot@calnorth.org or visit calnorth.org/topsoccer.