

# Agassiz Soccer Association

As president of the Agassiz Soccer Association (ASA), Chuck Mrena is passionate about the importance of giving young people the opportunity to play soccer, to train them to play it well, and to ensure that it's a positive and safe experience for all involved.

Formed in 2007, the ASA's mandate is to give kids all over Winnipeg and surrounding areas a chance to train and play together. Mrena, a geographer, who is also a coach, training manager, and referee says that the ASA is unique because of its focus.

"We're taking the politics out of the game, that's what was ruining it. A lot of kids were leaving their existing programs because there was so much focus on winning. There was a lack of officiating, and a lack of respect for the game. Police would get involved because of fights. Two thirds of the games would not have officials, so the parents would do it, but



they had no background or were biased," Mrena explains.

The ASA prides itself on encouraging participation from everyone; ethnic groups, kids from all neighborhoods, church groups, all playing together.

"With Agassiz, officials are there all the time and parents and kids enjoy the game. We keep poor behavior in check. It's easier for us to have a philosophy that we're going to do this properly."

With two full-time trainers and three assistant trainers, boys who have come up through the ranks, ASA operates with the Canadian Soccer Association guidelines.

"I really believe in a holistic perspective to develop kids in soccer, it's – 'You're gonna learn the rules of the game', it's – 'you're gonna learn sportsmanship', it's – 'you're gonna become a better player'. These things develop good individuals and they take these attributes into other areas of life."

Training programs are offered for both girls and boys between 5 and 15 and are held in various parts of the city. Costs can run as little as \$90 for a weekly program of eight weeks and cover insurance, instruction and facilities. The ASA also has its own league.

"Our kids stand out, they have great sportsmanship, they understand the rules, they work hard. They stick with us because it's so much fun, they're given a chance to be better players, we're competitive but there's little pressure. They're taught how to be respectful," Mrena says with pride.

For more information, visit:  
<http://asa.leaguerepublic.com>.

## REGISTRATION:

In person at Church of Christ, 170 St. Mary's Rd. from 6-8:30 pm  
Thurs. September 16th, Thurs. September 23rd  
& Friday, October 1st

