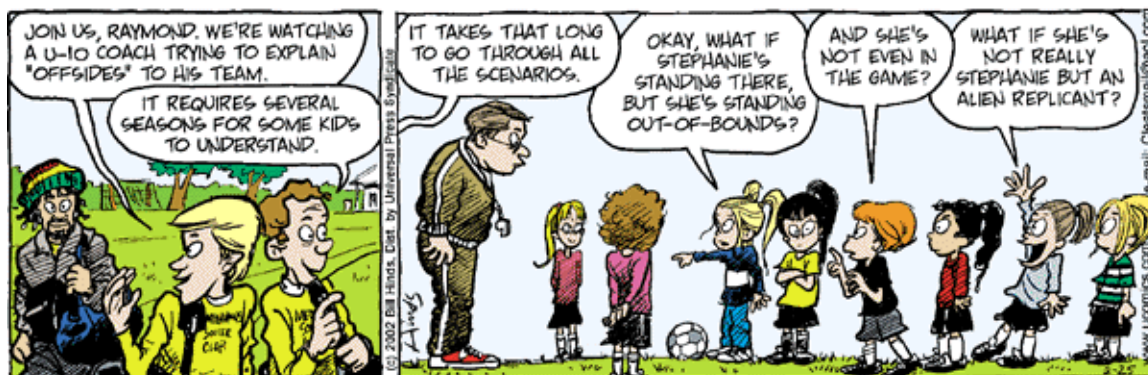


US Youth Soccer

The Modified Rules for the U10 age group were written with contributions from the 55 state association Technical Directors, the US Youth Soccer Referee Committee, the U.S. Soccer Referee Department and the US Youth Soccer Coaching Committee.[®] The decision was made to eliminate Law 11 for this age group for the following reasons:

- ✿ U10 players are just beginning to think abstractly and therefore develop the ability to conceptualize the offside law. The vast majority of U10 children – and their parents and coaches – do not have the experience to grasp the concept and its subtleties.
- ✿ In state associations with experience of U10 teams playing 6 vs. 6 without offside, the impact on the quality of the game has been extremely positive.
- ✿ In games where offside is enforced, three officials are preferred. Given the nationwide shortage of referees, the U10 division is not the place to assign valuable resources.
- ✿ The U10 game – without offside issues – provides the perfect environment to develop (and mentor) young and novice referees.
- ✿ The field size for the U10 age group (60 x 40 yards) provides enough attacking space to naturally develop ideas on width and depth, while still allowing defenders realistic opportunities to regain possession.
- ✿ U10 is not the age for coaches to train offside tactics. U10 is the age to dribble and pass and support around the ball. U10 is the age to cherry pick and develop instincts around the goal. U10 is the age to start developing spatial awareness though 360 degrees. U10 is the age where flow and active playing time are more important than competing in an adult version of soccer. U10 is still the game for kids. Children participate in sports for four reasons: **Action – Involvement – Excitement – Friendships.**
- ✿ Enforcing the offside law for U10 players also creates a developmental dilemma as the FIFA application at the half-way line has the potent to squeeze eleven players into a 30 x 40 yard half. With no room to play through the lines, the remaining option – to punt the ball forward – would relegate the game to a kick-fest.
- ✿ Youth soccer has become too structured in the United States. No U10 players would ever consider the offside law in a street-soccer culture.
- ✿ U.S. Soccer's Best Practices for Coaching Soccer in the United States delays the application of the offside law until U12.



[®] Contributors to this document were Mr. Vince Ganzberg, Indiana Youth Soccer Director of Coaching and Player Development; Dr. Tom Turner, Ohio Youth Soccer – North Director of Coaching and Mr. Tom Goodman, General Manager for the Colorado Fusion Soccer Club.