



## **A Letter from the President**

*Sam Liebelt, President, St Helens Youth Football League*

Dear Parents, Community Members and Friends of St Helens Youth Football,

Hello. My name is Sam Liebelt. I was recently elected as President of the St Helens Youth Football League, along with a number of highly-talented and motivated board members. I wanted to take a minute to let you all know what's going on with the league and what our plans are for the coming year.

### **About SHYFL**

St Helens Youth Football League (SHYFL) is a 100%, all-volunteer organization focused on providing a safe, fun and rewarding football experience for children in our community. We are a member of the Tualatin Valley Football League (TVYFL) that provides a number of great youth programs that we participate in.

### **Importance of Youth Football**

This past year has to be the craziest year on record. In addition to all the tragedy many have experience, our way of life has been impacted greatly as well. This is particularly true of our children. I've seen this in my own kids as they are isolated from friends and activities and become withdrawn and melancholy. Even before the pandemic, football has been an excellent source of comradery and an outlet for pent up energy and frustrations. I have seen kids come out of their shell, make friends, get exercise and feel great about themselves. This is why we do this.

### **Common Questions about Youth Football**

1. The Safety Question
  - a. The first question I get from most parents is about safety. While injuries can happen in any sport, football does have quite a bit of contact. But football today is not the football of yesterday. Gone are the days where coaches encourage heads-first or low tackles. All TVYFL coaches go through extensive training on Heads Up safe tackling techniques. Additionally, we have modified the programs to remove dangerous plays and shrinking the field and number of players for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Finally, we purchase top-notch equipment with helmets that are regularly inspected and recertified to provide kids with the best protection. You can be sure that your kids are in great hands and their safety is our top priority.



## 2. Cost Question

- a. After the safety question, the second most common question I receive is about costs. And the answer is the answer above: Equipment. We make sure our kids have the best equipment and this requires an investment. A new helmet costs in excess of \$200 and requires another \$60 every 2 years to maintain and recertify. Additionally, there are referee fees, insurance, field fees and other expenses that make football a bit more expensive than some other sports. But if you added the costs of baseball glove, bats and helmets that you purchase in addition to registration, you will realize that football costs about as much as baseball.

## 3. Age Question

- a. Another question I get asked is what is a good age to start football? The answer is just about any age. We have programs tailor-fit to each age group and start in Kindergarten. Each program gradually introducing more elements of the sport as they get older.

## 4. Can Girls Participate?

- a. Absolutely! We've had a number of girls participate in our program and have lots of fun. We encourage girls to come out and give it a try. And for those that prefer a different experience, we also have a great Cheer program.

## **Registration!**

Registration is now open for the following programs:

- K-2<sup>nd</sup> Flag Football – A fun and simple introduction to the game of football
- 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Rookie Tackle – A simplified introduction to tackle football, 7-on-7 on a smaller field with simple plays to get all of the kids involved
- 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Tackle - This gets us to the 11-on-11 full-sized field play we are used to
- 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Cheer – A high-quality and fun experience learning how to cheer

Registration costs are \$60 for Flag Football. All other programs are \$275 if registered by June 30<sup>th</sup> (\$350 starting July 1<sup>st</sup>). Payment plans are available for all players and scholarships are available for those who qualify. We want everyone to be able to come out and play.

## **7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Football**

We are partnering with St Helens Middle School to transfer 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade football over to them this fall. We are in the process of working out all of the details, including donating helmets, pads and pants to the school. We hope to have registration open for 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade in late June/early July.

## **How We are Managing Costs and Keeping Fees Down**

Keeping our fees as low as possible is a high priority for SHYFL. We are trying our best to cut out every cost that doesn't compromise safety or reduce the experience for the kids. As such, we made the decision



to only increase flag football by \$10, and not to increase any of our other fees, even though they are not quite enough to cover our expenses. Additionally, we have made the following decisions:

- Not adding player names to jerseys
- Reusing jerseys from year-to-year (parents still have an option to purchase them if they desire)
- Increasing fundraising activities, including a raffle where players help sell tickets

Our hope is that these and other cost-saving measures will help us keep fees flat not only for this year, but for years to come.

### **Fundraising & Volunteering**

And speaking of fundraising opportunities. We are looking for your help. We need volunteers to help run fundraising activities. We also have sponsorship opportunities for businesses and individuals who may not have time, but would like to help. Please keep tabs on Facebook for opportunities that come up. As of the writing of this letter, we have the following activities planned:

- Can Drive and Spretzel Sale - May 15th & 16th – 10am-2pm at the Ace Parking Lot
  - Please bring your bottles and cans to the drive this weekend and buy a Spretzel on your way home (they are delicious)
- Mod Pizza Foodshare – Sunday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> All Day
  - 20% of proceeds go to support the program – be sure to mention St Helens Youth Football so that your order counts
- Other activities coming soon!

Also, if you would like to be even more involved, we are still looking for some Flag Football coordinators, a Volunteer Coordinator and coaches for all ages. If you would like to volunteer for any of the above, or help in any way, please give me a call at 503-515-4241 or reach out to us on Facebook. Also, please visit our website at [shyfl.org](http://shyfl.org) for a calendar and additional information.

Thank you for taking a moment to read through this. I hope I answer some of your questions. If not, please give me a call. I'm looking forward to a fun and exciting season!

See you on the field!

*Sam Liebelt*

-Sam Liebelt, President, SHYFL