

Frontenac Soccer Association seeks volunteers

By Kristyn Wallace
Reporter

EMC News – When Tracy Holland's youngest son was four years old, the Frontenac Soccer Association (FSA) was in such desperate need of volunteers that the future of the league was uncertain.

Holland, who had been helping out with the league for a while, was asked to become a coach.

"I thought oh my God, my little four-year-old, who's been kicking a ball around since he was two and a half, and wants so desperately to play, how am I not going to allow him the opportunity?" says Holland. "He wanted to play so badly."

That was 11 years ago. Back then, there were no teams in the FSA; volunteer coaches were randomly matched with a different group of players for each game.

"A lot of people weren't stepping forward because you didn't know what kids you were getting every week, and it was kind of overwhelming," says Holland.

The FSA has come a long way since then. The league, which serves Harrowsmith, Verona, Yarker, Sydenham, and other South Frontenac communities, is made up of nine divisions, from U5 (Under-5) to U18. But increased organization has led to expansion, and while a core group of dedicated

volunteers, including Holland, have stuck with it throughout the years, more volunteers are needed. This year, 800 children will play on 66 teams in the league. In order to have two coaches on each team, as well as convenors and a board of directors, about 150 volunteers are required. Without volunteers, Holland says, the league could not operate.

"The unfortunate thing is that we keep asking the same people and we're not getting new people," says Holland.

Many of those core volunteers will be leaving after this year when their children are too old to play. With that in mind, they're looking for a new crop of parents to take the reins and help ensure that the FSA is around for years to come.

Parents do not need to have soccer experience in order to be coaches. Rather, Holland says, it's about spending time with your children and being engaged in the community.

"It's grassroots soccer," she says. "It's about having fun. The focus is not competitive."

All coaches are invited to a coaching clinic in April to learn easy skills and drills that can be presented during practices.

For those interested in administrative positions, the league is also in need of convenors and board members. Time commitments vary depending on the position.

For Holland, being involved



in the FSA has been time well spent.

"I love to be engaged in the community, especially when youth are involved," she says. "For me, it's about giving kids opportunities."

For more information about the Frontenac Soccer Association, including information about volunteer opportunities, visit www.frontenacsoccer.com or call (613)530-4250.