

Funding from Dekalb County will directly benefit 100 children, with 50 participants each at the East Lake and Kensington Station Soccer locations. These children, primarily from underserved neighborhoods, will gain access to free soccer programming and social-emotional learning (SEL) activities during the spring season, which runs from mid-February to mid-May. This support will provide these youth with the opportunity to build not only soccer skills but also critical life skills that foster resilience, confidence, and community connection.

Who the Funding Will Serve

This funding will serve children aged 8 to 14 from diverse, underserved communities near the East Lake and Kensington MARTA stations. Many of these children face barriers to sports participation, including financial constraints, lack of safe recreational spaces, and limited access to structured mentorship. By removing these barriers, the program ensures that all participants, regardless of socioeconomic background, have the opportunity to engage in a safe, supportive environment.

What Services Will Be Provided

Participants will receive twice weekly soccer training sessions led by experienced, trauma-informed coaches who emphasize both athletic and social-emotional development. Sessions will integrate SEL lessons, teaching teamwork, self-regulation, and goal-setting through interactive soccer activities. Children will also experience Saturday game days. All equipment, including uniforms and gear, will be provided at no cost, ensuring every child can participate fully.

When Services Will Be Provided

The program will run during the spring season, from mid-February to mid-May, with weekly practices and games. This schedule provides consistent engagement over three months, offering children a positive, structured outlet after school and on weekends.

Why Services Are Needed

Many children in these neighborhoods lack access to safe spaces and affordable programs that promote physical and emotional well-being. Without these opportunities, youth are at increased risk of isolation, anxiety, and exposure to negative influences. The Station Soccer program addresses these challenges by providing a free, accessible platform for physical activity, mentorship, and skill-building.

How Services Will Benefit Participants

By participating in the Station Soccer program, children will experience improved physical fitness, develop key social-emotional competencies, and gain trusted mentors in their coaches. They will build confidence and resilience through teamwork, learn to set and achieve goals, and form positive relationships with peers. The program also fosters a sense of belonging and community, reducing risks of social isolation and encouraging healthy behaviors.

Dekalb County's funding will play a critical role in providing these transformative opportunities to 100 children, helping them grow both on and off the soccer field. This investment will not

only benefit individual participants but also contribute to the long-term health and vibrancy of their communities.

Cost Calculation

100 children x \$33/child/month x 3 months = \$10,000