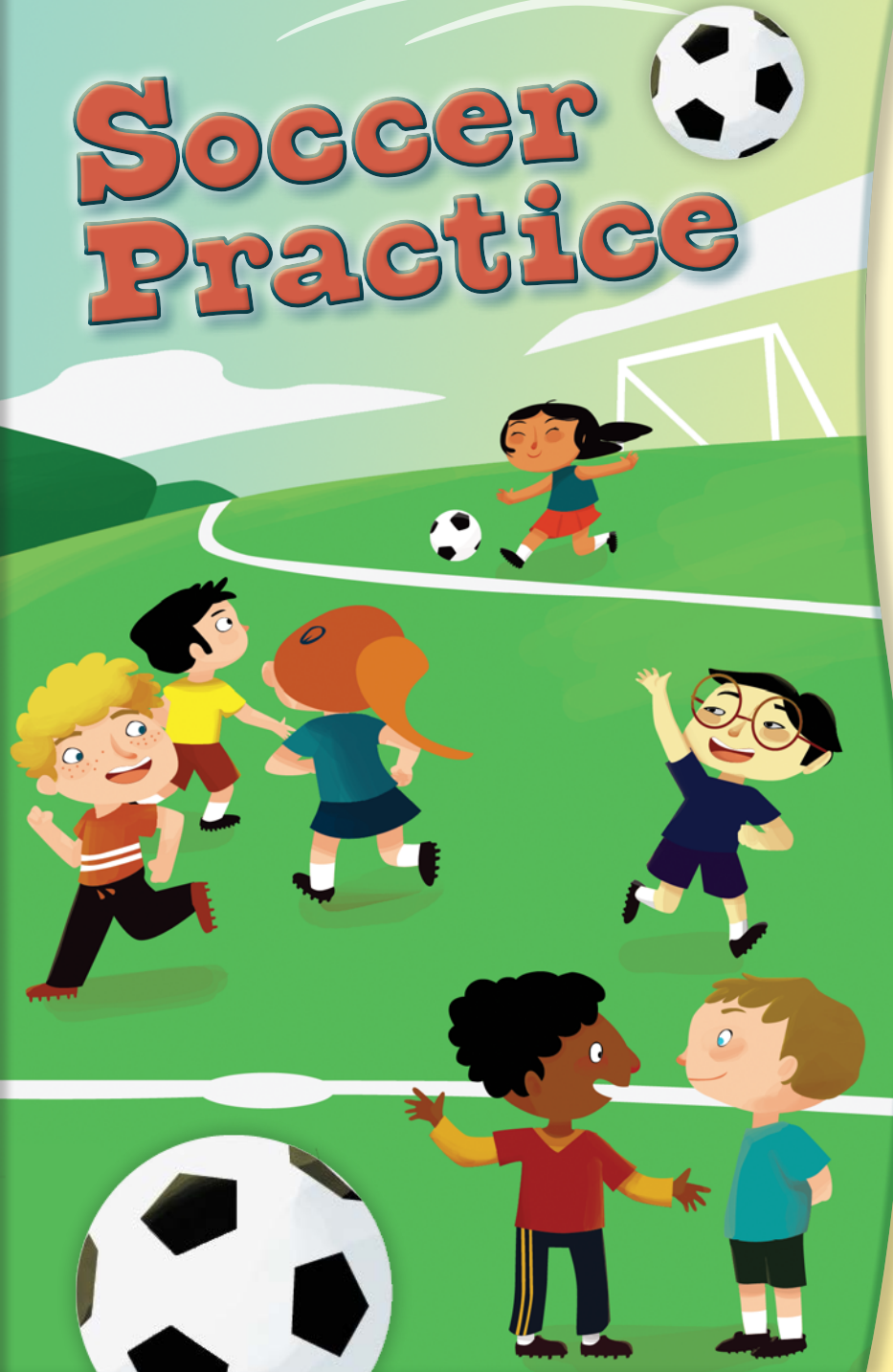


# Soccer Practice



**I**t's okay if you join the team. We've only been playing for a few weeks. I'll explain the rules," Cole said to his friend Vince.

Vince had just moved into the neighborhood. He and Cole had become friends right away. The boys were at Cole's soccer practice. His team had a game coming up on Saturday.

"Hey, everyone," began Cole. "Vince is going to start playing with us. He's only played a few times. So help him out when he needs it, okay?"

The rest of the team nodded. A few of the kids welcomed Vince to the team. As practice went on, everyone did their best to remind Vince about the rules — everyone except Ben, that is.

Anytime Vince made a mistake, Ben was the first to let him know. In the beginning, Ben kept his comments to Vince quiet. But as practice went on, they got louder and louder.

None of the other kids said anything to Ben. They just looked at him and shook their heads. But they could tell that Vince was not feeling confident. Tim and Miguel already knew how mean Ben could be. They wanted to say something to him, but they were afraid. The last time they'd stood up to Ben, it hadn't gone well.

When the coach called a break, the kids came off the field. Cole could tell something was wrong with Vince. Tim and Miguel found Cole,

and the three of them talked for a few minutes. Before practice started up again, the three boys stood together in front of Ben.

“Remember that you didn't know everything when you started playing,” Cole said to Ben. “No one picked on you. Don't pick on anyone else. Or don't play.”

“Sorry, Vince,” said Ben. “It won't happen again.” And it never did.



**DID YOU KNOW?**

In many parts of the world, soccer is called **football** or **futbol**.