



RECREATIONAL SOCCER
YOUTH MODULE COACHING MANUAL



“EDUCATING COACHES FOR PLAYERS TO
ENJOY THEIR EXPERIENCE”



Coach,

On behalf of the players you will be coaching and teaching, I would like to thank you for taking the time to attend this coaching course. I realize that as a coach and teacher, you are the catalyst and a role model who can make a difference in the lives of our children.

All coaches who teach this course are certified USSF coaches and have attended the National Youth License course that is given by US Youth Soccer and part of US Soccer. These Youth-oriented individuals will utilize the most up to date educational age appropriate activities in transferring their extensive practical coaching and playing experiences to you. Not only do these individuals understand the game but also the spirit of the game.

Our objectives of the course are:

- To give a better understanding of youth players
- To give you a teaching and coaching framework
- To provide you with an opportunity to reflect upon what you already know about teaching and coaching
- To provide you with the techniques to help you develop your players to their maximum potential

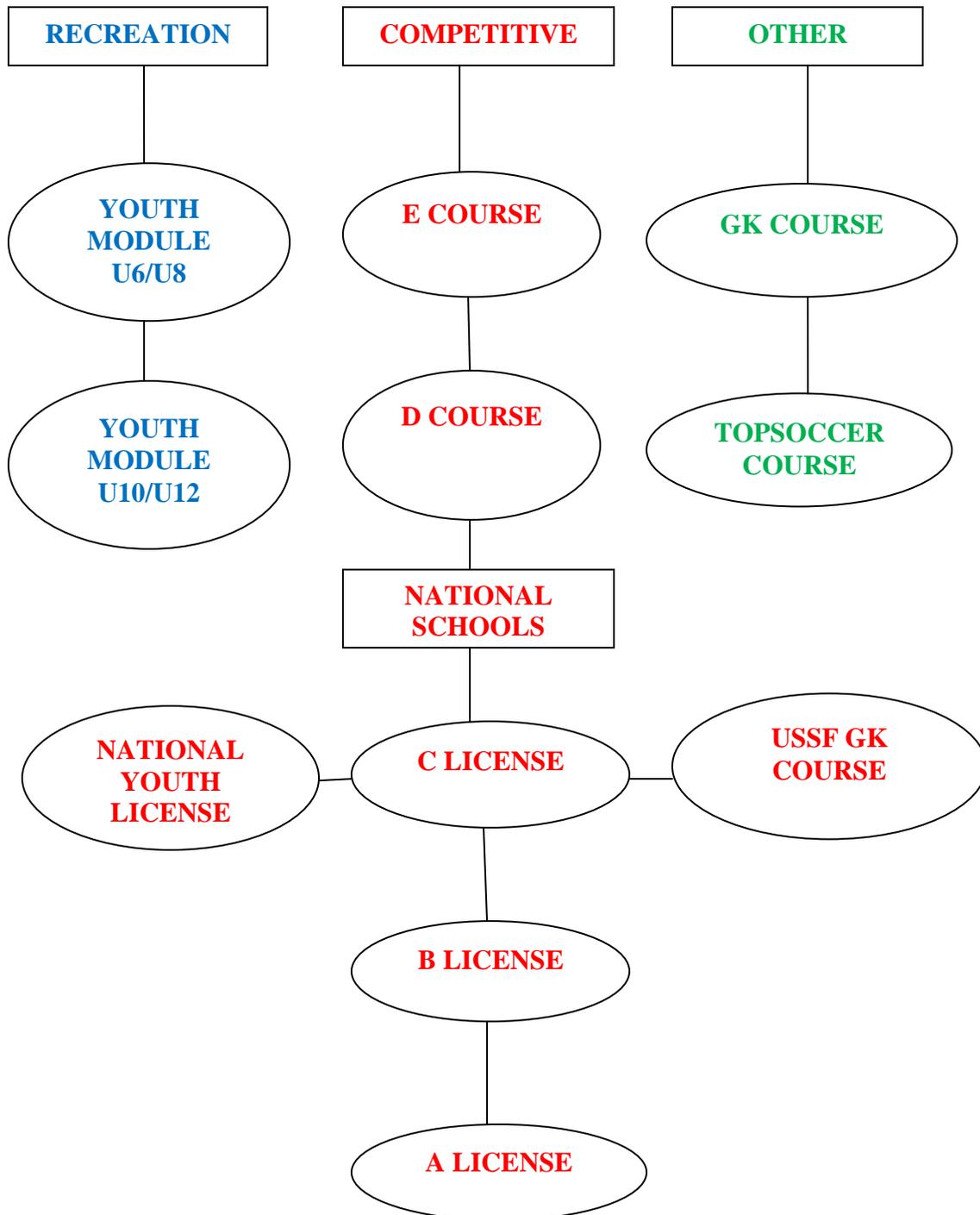
We combine classroom discussions with field participation to maximize your understanding of the material. We encourage you to ask questions at any time during the course. I highly recommend you take notes for future reference because of the vast amount of new information that will be presented. You are invited to take part in the practical field sessions as this will give you a better understanding of the activities and the method.

We admire your commitment to our children and your desires to self improve for the benefit of the players and their experience. It is people like you who make a positive difference in our children's lives.

Teaching through Enthusiasm,

Rick Flores
Director of Coaching

ILLINOIS YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION
(State Coaching Education Flow Chart)





YOUTH COACHING MANUAL



Youth Module

Table of Contents

-  State Education Flow Chart and Certification Breakdown
-  What is Recreational Soccer?
-  Characteristics of U6 Children
-  Characteristics of U8 Children
-  Characteristics of U10 Children
-  Characteristics of U12 Children
-  Implications for Coaching Soccer
-  The Three areas of a Practice Session
-  Team Administration
-  Team Organization
-  Care and Prevention
-  Risk Management
-  Guided Discovery
-  Modified Rules Recommendation Ages U6/U8/U10/U12
-  Age Appropriate Activities

What is Recreational Soccer?

Recreational soccer is a soccer program primarily devoted to the enjoyment and development of soccer players without the emphasis on travel or high-level competition. The purpose of recreational soccer is to provide an opportunity for the participants to have fun, learn the sport and develop life skills including a lifelong love of the game.

Therefore:

- Access is open to all who desire to participate (*The Game for ALL Kids*).
- Emphasis is on active participation (minimum of half game playing time).
- Objective is for the players to enjoy the experience.
- Success and excellence are measured in players attracted and players retained.
- Recreational soccer is all about fun, recreation, love of the game, and winning is not a measure of success.

Some of the main characteristics of recreational *play* and recreational *players* are as follows:

- Almost every player and parent will start out in recreational soccer.
- Two-year age groups are typical of recreational teams so there is a wide range between the most skilled player and the least skilled player.
- Wider age gaps create greater differences in physical, mental and social development.
- Players new to the sport are constantly being introduced into the mix.
- Soccer, for the child who wants to play, is an outlet for energy and enthusiasm.
- For others it is an imposed activity, something selected for the child by the parent.
- Fit and unfit players play together.
- Participation stretches from always there to when it is convenient.
- Parents often sign up a player for the next season without the child being involved in the process.
- Recreational players generally do not develop strong feelings against the opposing team because they often have friends on the opposing team.
- The game is played for enjoyment and not necessarily future playing opportunities on college or elite teams, however, at the younger age groups are where elite players first begin to develop.
- Many young children start out in soccer. (It has been said that, "Soccer is the first sport that American children play.") Soccer is a game, especially at the very young level, where all skill-levels of children can participate and have fun.
- Many young children try out many sports at a young age and may jump from one activity to another during the year or even during the same season.

Some of the main characteristics of recreational *coaches* are as follows:

- Virtually every recreational coach will be an unpaid parent volunteer.
- Many recreational coaches are coaching their own children. Many times these children are "would-be stars" in the eyes of their parents. Equal treatment may not happen as a result.
- About half of youth sport coaches will drop out of coaching within the first year.
- Most of the youngest age-group coaches are first-time coaches with little or no soccer experience and no coaching experience.

CHARACTERISTICS OF U6 CHILDREN

Psychomotor Development

(Of or relating to movement or muscular activity associated with mental processes)

- Movement education approach
- Difference between boys and girls is minimal
- Weight range approx 30-50 lbs.
- Height Range approx 35-45” for boys and 37-45” for girls.
- Progress in motor development starts with the head and moves downward to the feet and from the center of the body outward.
- Body segments grow at different rates.
- Easy fatigue, rapid recovery, heart rate around 90 bpm for boys and girls.
- Emphasis on fundamental movement skills.
- Locomotor – walking, running, leaping, jumping, and hopping.
- Nonlocomotor – bending, stretching, twisting, pulling, pushing, and reaching.
- Increased use of body parts.
- Need to explore qualities of rolling and bouncing ball.

Cognitive Development

(The process of acquiring intelligence and increasingly advanced thought and problem solving ability from infancy to adulthood)

- Preoperational stage of cognitive development
- Play consists of a high degree of imagination and pretend activities
- Beginning to use symbols to represent objects in environment.
- Tend to only one task at a time in problem solving situations.
- Process small bits of information at a time, long sequential instructions are not processed.
- Simple rules only.
- Limited understanding of time, space relations, and boundaries.

Psychosocial Development

(Of or pertaining to the interaction between social and psychological factors.)

- Beginning to develop self-concept, body awareness, and self-image through movement.
- Egocentric – see the world only from their perspective, demonstrated through parallel play. They all want the ball – their ball!
- Need generous praise and the opportunity to play without pressure.
- Influential person in their life is most likely their mother or significant parent.
- May verbalize team, but does not understand group or collective play.

* Characteristics were taken from the US Youth Soccer National Youth License.

CHARACTERISTICS OF U8 CHILDREN

Psychomotor Development

(Of or relating to movement or muscular activity associated with mental processes)

- Skeletal system is still growing; growth plates are near joints, thus injuries to those areas merit special consideration
- Cardiovascular system is less efficient than an adult's, a child's heart rate peaks sooner and takes longer to recover to full resting rate.
- Temperature regulation system is less efficient than adults
- Children elevate their core body temperature more quickly with activity and take longer to cool down than adults.
- There is perceivable improvement in pace and coordination from U6 to U8 however the immaturity of a U8 physical ability is obvious.

Cognitive Development

(The process of acquiring intelligence and increasingly advanced thought and problem solving ability from infancy to adulthood)

- Concrete operational state of cognitive development.
- Limited ability to attend to more than one task at a time; the simple task of controlling the ball demands most of the attention capacity, thereby leaving little or no capacity for making additional decisions.
- Concept of time and space relationship is just beginning to develop and will be limited by capacity to attend to multiple tasks.
- Limited experience with personal evaluations; effort synonymous with performance, "if I try hard, then I performed well" regardless of actual performance.
- Beginning to categorize information; some relationships that "do" exist

Psychosocial Development

(Of or pertaining to the interaction between social and psychological factors.)

- Self-concept and body image are beginning to develop; very fragile.
- Great need for approval from adults such as parents, teachers and coaches. They like to show individual skills.
- Easily bruised psychologically by both peers and adults; negative comments will carry great weight.
- Like to play soccer because it is "fun"; intrinsically motivated.
- Their universe is expanding from home to the neighborhood.
- True playmates emerge with the inclination toward partner activities.
- Team identity is limited; "I play on coach Bob's team" or "I play on the Tigers"
- There is a desire for social acceptance; they want everyone to like them
- The influential person is most likely their father or significant parent.

* Characteristics were taken from the US Youth Soccer National Youth License.

CHARACTERISTICS OF U10 CHILDREN

Psychomotor Development

- Gross and small motor skills become more defined
- Boys and girls begin to develop separately
- Ability to stay on task is lengthened
- Greater diversity in playing ability and physical maturity, physically mature individuals demonstrate stronger motor skills
- More prone than adults to heat injury
- Accelerated heat loss, increases risk of hypothermia

Cognitive Development

- Some children begin moving from concrete operational to formal operational stage
- Lengthened attention span, ability to sequence thought and actions
- Pace factor becoming developed (starting to think ahead)
- More inclined towards wanting to play rather than being told to play
- Demonstrate increased self-responsibility (i.e. bring ball, water, tuck in jersey, pull up socks)
- Starting to recognize fundamental tactical concepts, such as changing directions of ball, but not always sure why
- Repetitive technique very important, but it must be dynamic and not static

Psychosocial Development

- Beginning to develop self-concept, body awareness, and self-image through movement.
- Egocentric – see the world only from their perspective, demonstrated through parallel play. They all want the ball – their ball!
- Need generous praise and the opportunity to play without pressure.
- Influential person in their life is most likely their mother or significant parent.
- May verbalize team, but does not understand group or collective play.

* Characteristics were taken from the US Youth Soccer National Youth License.

CHARACTERISTICS OF U12 CHILDREN

Psychomotor Development

- The average age for the beginning of pubescence in girls is 10 years with a range of 7-14, for boys is age 12 with a range of 9-16
- Strength building activities require overloading the muscles to a greater extent than endurance activities
- Flexibility training is key to prevention of injury
- Overuse injuries, burnout and high attrition rates associated with high-intensity children's program that fail to stress
- Development and learning enjoyment
- Begin to develop abilities to sustain complex coordinated skill sequences

Cognitive Development

- Formal operational stage of cognitive development
- Changes in thought process are the result in an increased ability to acquire and apply knowledge
- Begins to think in abstract terms and can address hypothetical situations
- A systematic approach to problem solving appears at this stage, the game of soccer must present the ability to think
- Creativity and solve problems while moving

Psychosocial Development

- More TV, less structured play
- Beginning to spend more time with friends and less with parents
- Popularity influences self-esteem
- Whether a child enters puberty early or late has important psychological implications
- Learning an appropriate sex role
- Children are susceptible to conform to peer pressure
- Most children seek peers that are most like them in age, race, sex and socio-economic status, opportunity to introduce the value of cultural diversity

* Characteristics were taken from the US Youth Soccer National Youth License.

IMPLICATIONS FOR COACHING SOCCER

Time of Training Sessions and Number per work week

- ✓ (U6) 45 Minutes 1 day per week with one game on weekend
- ✓ (U8) 1 Hour 1 to 2 days per week with one game on weekend
- ✓ (U10) 1 Hour 15 to 1 Hour 30 min 1 - 2 days per week and one game

*Note that these are organized training and games; players must be encouraged to do much more on their own with a ball.

Activities in a Training Session

- ✓ U6 Many of short duration, mostly individual type games.
- ✓ U8 Many of short duration using groups of two.
- ✓ U10 Fewer activities, longer periods.

*Types of activities must emphasize individual Technical Development

Nature of Training Session

- ✓ Upbeat
- ✓ Encouraging
- ✓ Stimulating
- ✓ Many short water breaks
- ✓ Very little explanation
- ✓ Short demonstration
- ✓ Lots of player participation
- ✓ Every player has a ball

Some Suggested Absolutes

- ✓ Try to have fun
- ✓ Training sessions, though fun in nature, must have a defined objective
- ✓ Player mistakes are an expected circumstance of our game
- ✓ None of these are appropriate: criticism, threats, blame, yelling, humiliating, ridiculing, and/or showing biases
- ✓ Above all leave the “winning at all cost” notion in the trash

An Approach to the game for a U6 through U8 players

- ✓ Coaches are role models
- ✓ A Coach is one of the four most important influences in a child’s life
- ✓ Players are affected by a coach’s behavior on the sidelines
- ✓ Children play soccer because they want to kick the ball
- ✓ Short verbal blips followed by a chance to move around and touch the ball will get great results
- ✓ Try to let the players have fun and you’ll keep your sanity

Some Recommended Solutions

- ✓ A key to being a successful youth soccer coach (does not mean winning) is to draw upon your life experiences
- ✓ If you grew up playing sports of any kind, you possess some knowledge of good and bad coaching technique
- ✓ Don't place yourself above the boys and girls
- ✓ Be organized, but not rigid, that could lead to boredom

Things a coach should know

Don't

- ✓ Become frustrated
- ✓ Yell or intimidate
- ✓ Be afraid to adjust your training activities if the children aren't enjoying them

Do

- ✓ Keep players active with the ball
- ✓ Vary the activities based on the attention span
- ✓ Spread positive reinforcement to all players, not just the stars
- ✓ Enjoy yourself

General Human Nature Concepts

- ✓ Understand why children play
- ✓ Every child has different needs
- ✓ Needs range from attention to development and self confidence
- ✓ Don't forget love, discipline, the desire to improve, friendships, etc
- ✓ Try to determine each child's needs and then attempt to fill at least part of it
- ✓ Use what works for you and lose what didn't work

How do you become more educated?

- ✓ Try to have fun
- ✓ Training sessions, though fun in nature, must have a defined objective
- ✓ Player mistakes are an expected circumstance of our game
- ✓ None of these are appropriate: criticism, threats, blame, yelling, humiliating, ridiculing, and/or showing biases
- ✓ Above all leave the "winning at all cost" notion in the trash

Developing your Coaching Philosophy

- ✓ Winning VS. Losing
- ✓ Teaching skill even though you are likely to lose some games to teams that rely on play physically. The skilled players will be better in the long run.
- ✓ Total development vs. single position improvement
- ✓ Relationship with parents and spectators to players, referees and opponents
- ✓ Playing possession soccer vs. kick and run
- ✓ Development of all players on your team
- ✓ Educate your parents to understand they should not yell at players, not to applaud bad habits, not to yell at referees and opposing players and most of all to de-emphasize winning and losing

The Training Session

- ✓ Players should have a good time during the training sessions
- ✓ Players should spend the majority of their time in technical development
- ✓ Players should touch the ball as much as possible
- ✓ Some portion of each training session should emphasize shooting/finishing
- ✓ Some portion of each training session should deal with goalkeeping
- ✓ At this early age, all players should have the opportunity to practice goalkeeping

What should the training sessions consist of?

- ✓ Every session should begin with a warm-up
- ✓ The progression we should use is:
- ✓ Fundamental = low pressure
- ✓ Next we can add the following:
- ✓ The pressure of time (doing it faster)
- ✓ The pressure of space (doing it in smaller area)
- ✓ The pressure of an opponent with restrictions (replicate the game)
- ✓ Each training session should finish with two goals and no restrictions i.e. a scrimmage game

What is Player Development?

- Activities for the children's participation that focuses on the involvement with the ball to ensure fun and enjoyment
- Players exposed to playing every position
- One player one ball
- Activities designed to maximize the number of touches by each player at practice
- Rules and equipment modification according to the players age group
- Activities designed to promote thinking, not just doing drills
- Emphasize player development, de-emphasize winning and losing. The philosophy of "player development" needs to be conveyed to all players and parents

Role of the Coach

- Serve as a facilitator (set up conditions and environment for learning)
- Players need to have fun and receive positive feedback
- Coach must be enthusiastic
- Practices should be conducted in the spirit of enjoyment and learning
- Activities need to be geared toward achieving success
- A Positive Role Model
- Demonstrates respect for team members, opponents, referees, parents, spectators, and opposing coaches
- To have a responsibility to the game itself
- Understands who they are coaching
- Children are not defined by chronological age only; children mature and develop at their own pace
- Treat each child as an individual
- Not all children participate for the same reasons
- As a teacher (“The game is a great teacher”)

The Three main areas of a practice session

Step one a fundamental warm up

- Your age appropriate warm up should prepare the players both physically and mentally for the training session
- The warm up must incorporate a technical or tactical element and both static and ballistic stretching

Step two individual activities

- As appropriate for the age, although this may be addressed during the warm up period or within the small group activities. The need for this portion of practice will depend upon the ability of the players

Step three individual activities

- This area includes small-sided games that will lead into larger group games
- Small group activities or games will provide a majority of your coaching sessions
- Large group/team activities (This does not mean 11v11 games) will be situations that require you playing 6v6 or 6v7 (numbers up or down etc)

The Coaching/Teaching progression

Fundamental

- Zero pressure of an opponent with movement

Match Related

- Add pressure of limited time, space, and opponents

Match Condition

- The Game (scrimmage) with two goals and no restrictions

The Player

Four Stages of Development learning

Sensory Motor – 0 to 2 years (learn by sight, touch, and sound)

Pre-operational – 2-7 years (learn by talking, TV, signs, main influences mother, and start their formal schooling and use symbols to represent objects)

Concrete Operational – 8-11 years (adjusting to rules and structure)

Formal Operational – 11 years (thinking and decision mode, can think ahead)

Team Administration

How to evaluate yourself as a good coach

- ✓ A good coach is someone who knows that winning is wonderful but not get caught up in this aspect
- ✓ A good coach is someone who gets to practice on time and sets up and stays after to be sure every player has a safe ride home
- ✓ A good coach is someone who makes sure that everyone gets to play
- ✓ A good coach is someone who can help a child learn and allow players to make mistakes
- ✓ A good coach is someone who helps a child to develop ability and confidence that sometimes did not exist before
- ✓ A good coach is someone the player will remember long after the last game has ended and the season is over and them wanting to play another season

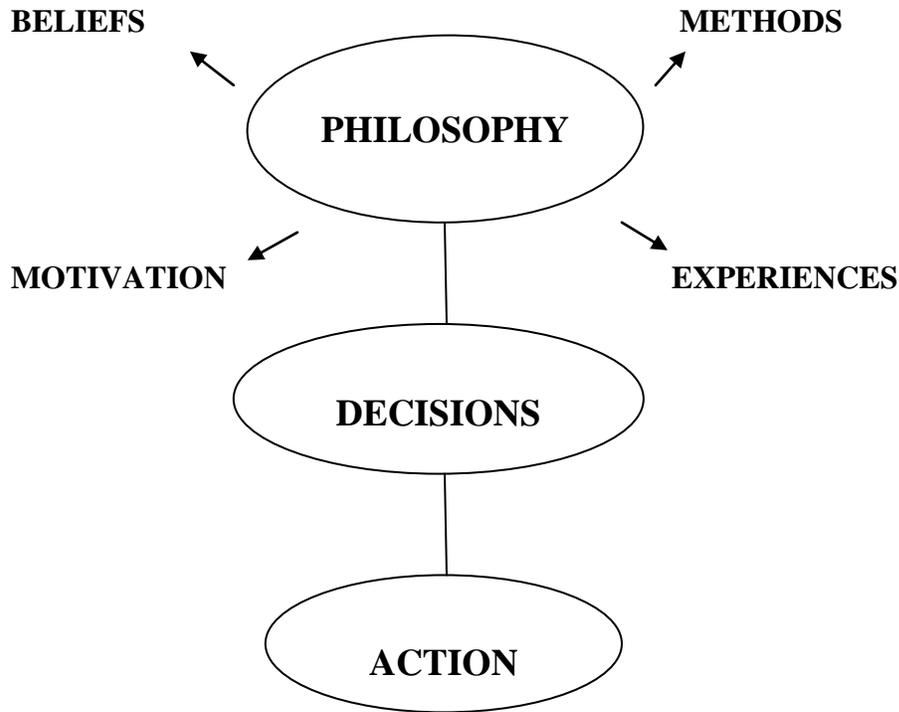
Principles of Coaching Youth Soccer

1. Developmentally Appropriate
2. Clear – Concise – Correct
3. Information (Brevity – Clarity – Relevance)
4. Simple to Complex
5. Safe and Appropriate Training Area
6. Decision Making
7. Implications of the Game
8. Elements of the Game

Principles of Coaching Youth Soccer

- Patience
- Sense of Humor
- Generosity
- Common Sense
- Mature Outlook and Disposition
- Professional approach to training and game preparation
- Leadership and Self-Confidence
- Determination
- Humility

Developing your Coaching Philosophy



- ✓ Any coaching action you take is preceded by a certain decision
- ✓ Any decision you make is based upon your philosophy
- ✓ A person's philosophy encompasses your personal beliefs, motivation, experiences, and methods
- ✓ Coaching is a profession and an ongoing process
- ✓ This is the beginning of that process which will carry through coaching career

Team Organization

Pre-Season Parent Orientation Meeting

All coaches are highly encouraged to establish effective lines of communication with team parents and hold an orientation meeting at the start of the season. This is the most important meeting a coach will have. See below recommendations:

Purpose of Parent Meeting

- Will help parents to understand the objectives and goals of the program
- Enables parents to become more acquainted with you as the coach
- Inform parents about the nature (and inherent risks) of the sport
- Inform parents of your expectations of them and their child
- Enable you to address any concerns of the parents
- Established clear lines of communication between, you, parents and players
- Allows you to obtain prenatal support (Assistant coaches, team parent, etc)

Things to Consider when Organizing a Parent Meeting

- Hold it early in the season, preferably before the first practice
- Having the players present is optional
- Prepare handouts you would like to distribute
- Team rosters with names and address and telephone numbers of parents and players. Schedule for practice session, games, club/league rules, team goals and rules.
- Have a summary or outline of the meeting and be prepared and organized to conduct the meeting effectively

Important Points to cover in your Meeting

- ✓ Coach and Assistant Coach introduction
- ✓ Background information on why you are coaching and your experience
- ✓ Your coaching philosophy
- ✓ Discuss the methods you will use to teach skills
- ✓ State the importance you assign to having fun and developing skills
- ✓ State the importance that you assign personally on winning and losing
- ✓ Discuss any team rules and guidelines disciplinary procedures
- ✓ Discuss your philosophy on player rotation and time as well as how you plan to use your substitutions
- ✓ Practice/training schedule (how many times per week and how long)
- ✓ Game Schedule (How many and when is the first game)
- ✓ Minimum playing time (what rules apply to the league/club)
- ✓ Discuss the league/club fees and added costs
- ✓ Equipment that players need for games and training (Ball, shin guards, socks, shorts with no pockets, water etc)

Discuss the Coach's Responsibilities

Demonstrate Leadership and good Sportsmanship

- Have organized practices and teach soccer fundamentals appropriate to the age level you are coaching
- Treat each child fairly and as an individual
- Provide a safe training environment (e.g. arrive at practice on time and remain after your practice until every child is picked up by an authorized adult, ensure the area you use for training is safe before practice starts, make sure all players have the right equipment for training)
- Make sure you have filled out coaches form and cleared for Risk Management and have attended a Youth Module Coaching Course

Discuss Players Responsibilities

- Attend practice/games regularly and arrive on time
- Bring all the proper equipment for practice and games
- Inform the coach in advance if they are going to miss practice or game
- Challenge yourself at each practice so that you can improve as a player
- Work towards good sportsmanship and teamwork
- Respect referees and the game
- Be supportive of your teammates at all times

Discuss Parents Responsibilities

- Transport your child to and from practices or games on time
- Be supportive of all the players (let the coach give criticism of performance)
- Help your child understand that he/she is contributing to a team effort
- Focus on mastering the skills of the game and not on the winning
- Avoid material rewards for your child
- Attend games and cheer for the team
- Refrain from criticizing the opponents, be positive with all the players
- Be respectful to referees and not question every call
- Refrain from coaching your child during or after the games (try to understand and respect the difference between the role of the coach and the parent)

Ten Things Kids Say That They Do Not Want Their Parents to Do:

1. Don't yell out instructions
2. Don't put down officials
3. Don't yell at me in public
4. Don't yell at the coach
5. Don't put down my teammates
6. Don't lose your cool
7. Don't put down the other team
8. Don't lecture me about mistakes after the game
9. Don't forget how to laugh and have fun
10. Don't forget that it is just a game

Coaches Preparation Information and Guidance

Coaches Training Check List

- ✓ Are the activities you choose fun?
- ✓ Are all the players involved?
- ✓ Is creativity and decision making used?
- ✓ Is the space appropriate?
- ✓ Is the coaches “feedback” appropriate?
- ✓ Are there implications for the game?

Coaches must consider carefully the organization and needs for games

Pre Game

- ✓ Prepare lineup and substitution schedule
- ✓ Remember over the course of the season, all players should have an opportunity to play different positions
- ✓ Can the coach ensure every child gets to start a game at least once
- ✓ Have equipment ready to go
- ✓ Have players arrive 30-45 minutes before kickoff to allow for warm up and would depend on age
- ✓ Appropriate warm up should replicate the game i.e. passing, dribbling, or shooting

Half Time

- ✓ Prior to half-time consider main points from the game you want to talk about
- ✓ Consider what players you will talk to privately
- ✓ Allow players time for break and to hydrate
- ✓ Keep the half time talk to the point and limit the number of coaching points
- ✓ Speak privately to any player(s) who need additional information

Post Game

- ✓ After game your number one concern is the welfare of your players
- ✓ Appropriate time for cool down
- ✓ Check for injuries
- ✓ Post game meeting with team should be brief
- ✓ The game result will affect post game talk
- ✓ A coach must determine the appropriateness of the post-game talk and the amount of comments made
- ✓ Remember that after the game ends you must start preparing for your next game
- ✓ The post game talk should not be a post mortem
- ✓ Give final instructions to players on next training session or next game time

Three parts of a calendar season

Preseason

- How long is the preseason?
- What rules are applicable, i.e. school?
- How many players will you have during the preseason?
- How many practice games will you schedule?
- What are your expectations?

Season

- Develop calendar to show game days, travel days, days off, tournament days, etc.
- Calendar is guide to scheduling to must remain flexible to change and team needs
- The need to schedule individual training during the season
- Must consider the need for regeneration during the season as well as “peaking” at the appropriate time

Postseason

- Individual meetings with players
- Review of season
- Time off for players for staff
- Off-season conditioning program to maintain fitness level

Principles of Conduct

Safety

- ✓ My first responsibility is the health and safety of all participants
- ✓ It is recommended that coaches before certified in the basic first aid and are aware of the club, league and state requirements in this area
- ✓ Be prepared to handle first aid situations as well as medical emergencies at all practices and games, both home and away
- ✓ Have and know how to use a properly supplied first aid kit/ice
- ✓ 911 emergency procedures/telephone location
- ✓ Location of nearest emergency medical facilities
- ✓ Always carry emergency medical release forms and team safely and information cards
- ✓ Follow up on all injuries with parents/guardians
- ✓ Know and understand the laws of the game
- ✓ Inspect players equipment and field conditions for safely reason
- ✓ Utilize proper teaching and instructing of players regarding safe techniques and methods of play
- ✓ Implement appropriate training programs to make sure players are fit for practice and competition
- ✓ Supervise and control your players so as to avoid injury situations

Care and Prevention

Emergency Action Plan

- Have to know how to use the following
 - First Aid Kit
 - Ice and plastic bags for emergency use
 - Team Safety and information cards
 - Be first aid and CPR certified
- Proper use of equipment
 - Proper fitting shoes, proper type of shoe for surface
- Upkeep and monitoring of playing surfaces
- Avoid scheduling training during the hottest periods of the day and when there is intense humidity
- Ample water supply and breaks to give players rest
- Full rehabilitation of an injury prior to return to play, determined by physician
- Recommend a physical exam by a physician prior to participation

Care

Rule of thumb when handling an injured player

- Avoid panic, stay calm and reassure the player
- Do the primary survey: A, B, Cs (Airway, Breathing, and Circulation)
- If necessary have someone call 911
- Check to see how injury occurred
- Apply RICE as necessary (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation)
- Always err on the side of caution
- Record the incident and note all actions you took and how the injury occurred

***Follow up with a phone call to check on the player's condition**

Common injuries and recommendations

Nose Bleeds

- Place the player in a sitting position with the head forward
- Apply pressure to just below the bridge of the nose
- Use ice when necessary
- If you suspect a head or neck injury do not try to control bleeding and stabilize and call 911

Bruises/Concussions

- A crushing injury to a muscle or tendon caused by an outside force which causes hemorrhaging to surrounding tissues
- Apply ice

Sprains

- A frequent injury in soccer with the knee and ankle most often involved
- A sprain is the stretching or tearing of the ligament beyond its normal limits
- Treatment is RICE

Strains

- A partial tear to the muscle or tendon commonly called a “pull”
- Treatment is RICE

Heat Cramps

- Brief severe cramps in the muscles of the leg or abdomen that may occur during or after vigorous exercise in extreme heat
- Lack of drinking fluids is a common cause
- Treatment is get into a cool area, rest, and fluids

Heat Exhaustion

- The players body is having trouble keeping itself cool
- This condition can come on very suddenly and the players temperature is raised and may feel dizzy
- The player is still sweating and skin feels clammy
- Treatment is call 911, get into a cool area, loosen clothing, rest, and fluids

Heat Stroke

- The most severe form of heat illness
- Life threatening emergency and requires immediate medical attention.
- Body temperature is high; skin is hot, red and dry.
- Sweating mechanism is blocked and pulse is rapid and strong.
- Player may lose consciousness.
- Treatment is call 911 immediately, get into a cool area, cool the players’ body by spraying or dousing with water, loosen clothing and can the player to help cool.

Fractures

- If a body part does not have a normal appearance or function then suspect is a fracture.
- Treatment is to not move the player, keep warm and make comfortable and call 911 immediately.

Dislocations

- The joint will have a marked deformity with intense pain.
- Treatment is if a player can walk immobilize the joint and immediately transport to hospital.
- If the player is unable to walk then call 911.

Concussion

- Usually due to a clash of heads.
- Possible dizziness, headache, disorientation, ringing in the ears and vomiting.
- Treatment is to remove from activity and seek medical care.

Resuming Activity Following an Injury

The player must not be able to return to play in practice and game conditions until the following criteria have been met:

- It is recommended that if player has had medical attention, he/she must have written permission from MD to return to activity.
- The player should be able to run straight without pain, run and turn in a figure eight without a sign of limp.
- Should be able to support weight with the injured part.
- If the injury is an ankle or knee, player should be able to do a toe raise on the injured side without being supported.
- The player should have practiced with the team prior to the competition.
- There should be no pain or swelling or disability following activity.

PRACTICE SESSION PLAN

(1) Warm up

10 – 20
MINUTES

- Movements that get the blood pumping
- Include the ball
- Stretching
- Preparing for demands of the game
- Group/equipment organization to move into next activity

(2) 1st Activity (s)

15 – 25
MINUTES

- 1ball per player/partners
- Technical skill development
- Challenge and success

(3) 2nd Activity (s)

15 – 25
MINUTES

- Game related activities
- Direction
- Large Group

(4) Final Activity

10 – 20
MINUTES

- The Game!
- Freedom
- Opportunities to score goals

Risk Management

Risk Management and Coaching Liability

Acceptance of a coaching position = Acceptance to duty to players

Concept of “In Loco Parentis” when the players are minors

Responsibilities owed to the players include:

- Provide proper instruction for the activity
- Provide proper equipment for the activity
- To provide proper supervision for practice and games
- To take proper precautions to guard against post-injury aggravation

Ethics

- An interpretation of what is right and wrong good or bad

Morals

- The Player
- The Coach
- A Parent
- An Administrator

It is Mandatory that every competitive and recreational coach in Utah Youth Soccer Association compete kid safe Risk Management.

GUIDED DISCOVERY

Asking Meaningful Questions

“Asking the right questions takes as much skill as giving the right answers”

- Robert Half

Empowering coaches want their athletes to be capable of solving the problems that the game/competition presents. Therefore, the athletes must have the opportunity to practice problem solving (decision making). This must be accomplished in the training and game environment. Toward this end, coaches must be skilled in the art of **“asking meaningful questions”**.

- Lynn Kidman

Coaches tend to ask low-order questions because it is easier; but coaches should strive to ask high-order questions to provide the athletes with opportunities for self-evaluation.

Examples of Low Order Questions:

What part of the foot do you use to make a short pass?

Where should you aim when shooting on goal?

Examples of High Order Questions:

How can we get the ball down the field quickly?

Why should we play high-pressure defense?

Why and How? Questions enhance the athlete’s ability to make decisions, one of the central goals of empowerment. It is important for coaches to allow athletes to think about questions and help and encourage them to answer. If athletes are having difficulty with the answer, a coach can redirect or rephrase a high-order question so they can think carefully about what has been asked.

It is very important that coaches and teachers do their best to help players of all ages to think and make decisions at an age appropriate level. The best way to do this is through a guided discovery approach. The coach guides (facilitates) the players through effective age appropriate questioning to discovery. In other words, the coach helps and allows the player to reach the right conclusion, through meaningful questioning and demonstration.

Examples of guiding questioning...

In a 3v3 situation, what's the best way to get the ball to your teammates?

What happens when you pass the ball behind your teammate?

Now, if you want to make sure that your teammate goes forward, where do you want the pass to go?

Why didn't that pass work? So how should we do it this time?

How can we get the ball to the other side of the field?

Why is it important for you to lift your head up when you have the ball?

Examples of Positive responses.....

Great...so how could we do it faster?

I like that answer...what other skill can we use to get the ball to our teammates?

Now you're getting the idea...where could you position yourself so that you could see both the player you are defending as well as the ball?



References:

Kidman, Lynn (2001). *Developing Decision Makers...An Empowerment approach to Coaching*

U6 Modified Rules

US Youth Soccer Official Under 6 Playing Recommendations

US Youth Soccer recommended modifications to the FIFA Laws of the Game. FIFA Laws of the Game can be found at www.ussoccer.com/referees.

Law 1 – The Field of Play:

Dimensions: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.

Length: minimum 20 yards maximum 30 yards

Width: minimum 15 yards maximum 25 yards

Field Markings: Distinctive lines not more than (5) inches wide. The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of four (4) yards is marked around it.

The Goal Area: None.

The Penalty Area: None.

Flag posts: None.

The Corner Arc: Conform to FIFA.

Goals: Goals must be placed on the center of each goal line. They consist of two upright posts equidistant from the corners and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar. The recommended distance between the posts is eighteen (18) feet and the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is six (6) feet. Goals may be smaller in dimension.

Safety: Goals must be anchored securely to the ground. Portable goals may only be used if they satisfy this requirement.

Law 2 – The Ball: Size three (3).

Law 3 – The Number of Players: A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than three players. There are NO goalkeepers.

Substitutions: At any stoppage and unlimited.

Playing time: Each player SHALL play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time. Teams and games may be coed.

Law 4 – The Players Equipment: Conform to FIFA. Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams.

Law 5 – The Referee: An OFFICIAL (Game Manager or Coordinator or Parent or Coach or Grade 9 referee) may be used. All infringements shall be briefly explained to the offending player.

Law 6 – The Assistant Referees: None.

Law 7 – The Duration of the Match: The match shall be divided into four (4) equal, eight (8) minute quarters. There shall be two (2) minute break between quarters one and two and another two (2) minute break between quarters three and four. There shall be a halftime interval of five (5) minutes.

Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play: Conform to FIFA, with the exception of the opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Law 9 – The Ball In and Out of Play: Conform to FIFA.

Law 10 – The Method of Scoring: Conform to FIFA.

Law 11 – Offside: None.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct: Conform to FIFA with the exception that all fouls shall result in a direct free kick. The referee/coach/parent must explain ALL infringements to the offending player. No cards shown for misconduct.

Law 13 – Free Kicks: Conform to FIFA with the exceptions that all free kicks are direct and opponents are at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick: None.

Law 15 – The Kick-In: A kick-in is considered as a direct free kick with the opponents four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Law 16 – The Goal Kick: The goal kick should be taken within 2-3 yards of the goal line anywhere across the width of the field of play at the nearest point from where the ball was retrieved. Opposing players must be four (4) yards away from the ball until it is in play. It is suggested that if necessary that opponents are in their own half of the field until the ball is in play.

Law 17 – The Corner Kick: Conform to FIFA with the exception that opponents remain at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.

U8 Modified Rules

US Youth Soccer Official Under 8 Playing Recommendations

US Youth Soccer recommended modifications to the FIFA Laws of the Game. FIFA Laws of the Game can be found at www.ussoccer.com/referees.

Law 1 – The Field of Play

Dimensions: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.

Length: minimum 25 yards maximum 35 yards

Width: minimum 20 yards maximum 30 yards

Field Markings: Distinctive lines not more than (5) inches wide. The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of four (4) yards is marked around it.

The Goal Area: A goal area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line three (3) yards from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of three (3) yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the goal area.

The Penalty Area: none.

Flag posts: none.

The Corner Arc: Conform to FIFA.

Goals: Goals must be placed on the center of each goal line. They consist of two upright posts equidistant from the corners and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar. The recommended distance between the posts is eighteen (18) feet and the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is six (6) feet. Goals may be smaller in dimension.

Safety: Goals must be anchored securely to the ground. Portable goals may only be used if they satisfy this requirement.

Law 2 – The Ball: Size three (3).

Law 3 – The Number of Players: A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than four players. There are NO goalkeepers.

Substitutions: At any stoppage of play and unlimited.

Playing time: Each player SHALL play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time. Teams and matches may be coed.

Law 4 – The Players' Equipment: Conform to FIFA. Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams.

Law 5 – The Referee: An OFFICIAL (Game Manager or Coordinator or Parent or Coach or Grade 9 referee) may be used. All infringements shall be briefly explained to the offending player.

Law 6 – The Assistant Referees: None.

Law 7 – The Duration of the Match: The match shall be divided into four (4) equal, twelve (12) minute quarters. There shall be a two (2) minute break between quarters one and two and another two (2) minute break between quarters three and four. There shall be a half-time interval of five (5) minutes.

Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play: Conform to FIFA, with the exception of the opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Law 9 – The Ball In and Out of Play: Conform to FIFA.

Law 10 – The Method of Scoring: Conform to FIFA.

Law 11 – Offside: None.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct: Conform to FIFA with the exception that all fouls shall result in a direct free kick. The referee/coach/parent must explain ALL infringements to the offending player. No cards shown for misconduct.

Law 13 – Free Kicks: Conform to FIFA with the exceptions that all kicks are direct and all opponents are at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick: None.

Law 15 – The Kick-In: A kick-in is considered as a direct free kick with the opponents four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Law 16 – The Goal Kick: The goal kick should be taken anywhere within the goal area. Opposing players must be outside the goal area AND at least four (4) yards away from the ball until it is in play. It is suggested that if necessary that opponents are in their own half of the field until the ball is in play.

Law 17 – The Corner Kick: Conform to FIFA with the exception that opponents remain at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.

U10 Modified Rules

US Youth Soccer Official Under 10 Playing Recommendations

US Youth Soccer recommended modifications to the FIFA Laws of the Game. FIFA Laws of the Game can be found at www.ussoccer.com/referees.

Law 1 – The Field of Play

Dimensions: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.

Length: minimum 45 yards maximum 60 yards

Width: minimum 35 yards maximum 45 yards

Field Markings: Distinctive lines not more than five (5) inches wide. The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of eight (8) yards is marked around it.

The Goal Area: A goal area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line five (5) yards from the inside each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of five (5) yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the goal area.

The Penalty Area: A penalty area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, ten (10) yards from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of ten (10) yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the penalty area. Within each penalty area a penalty mark is made eight (8) yards from the midpoint between the goalposts and equidistant to them. An arc of a circle with a radius of eight (8) yards from each penalty mark is drawn outside the penalty area.

Flag posts: Conform to FIFA.

The Corner Arc: Conform to FIFA.

Goals: Goals must be placed on the center of each goal line. They consist of two upright posts equidistant from the corner flag posts and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar. The maximum distance between the posts is eighteen (18) feet and the maximum distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is six (6) feet.

Safety: Goals must be anchored securely to the ground. Portable goals may only be used if they satisfy this requirement.

Law 2 – The Ball: Size four (4).

Law 3 – The Number of Players: A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than six players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. A match may not start if either team consists of fewer than five players.

Substitutions: At any stoppage and unlimited.

Playing time: Each player SHALL play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time. Teams and matches may be coed.

Law 4 – The Players' Equipment: Conform to FIFA. Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams.

Law 5 – The Referee: Registered referee, especially Grade 9 or parent/coach or assistant coach. All rule infringements shall be briefly explained to the offending player.

Law 6 – The Assistant Referees: Not required. May use club linesmen if desired.

Law 7 – The Duration of the Match: Conform to FIFA with the exception of the match being divided into two (2) equal halves of twenty-five (25) minutes each. There shall be a half-time interval of five (5) minutes.

Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play: Conform to FIFA with the exception of the opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least eight (8) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Law 9 – The Ball In and Out of Play: Conform to FIFA.

Law 10 – The Method of Scoring: Conform to FIFA.

Law 11 – Offside: None.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct: Conform to FIFA with the exception that an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team at the center spot on the halfway line if a goalkeeper punts or drop-kicks the ball in the air from his/her penalty area into the opponents penalty area.

Law 13 – Free Kicks: Conform to FIFA with the exception that all opponents are at least eight (8) yards from the ball.

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick: Conform to FIFA with the exception that the penalty mark is made eight (8) yards from the midpoint between the goalposts and equidistant to them.

Law 15 – The Throw-In: Conform to FIFA.

Law 16 – The Goal Kick: Conform to FIFA.

Law 17 – The Corner Kick: Conform to FIFA with the exception that opponents remain at least eight (8) yards from the ball until it is in play.

U12 Modified Rules

US Youth Soccer Official Under 12 Playing Recommendations

US Youth Soccer recommended modifications to the FIFA Laws of the Game. FIFA Laws of the Game can be found at www.ussoccer.com/referees.

Law 1 – The Field of Play

Dimensions: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.

Length: minimum 70 yards maximum 80 yards

Width: minimum 45 yards maximum 55 yards

Field Markings: Distinctive lines not more than (5) inches wide. The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of eight (8) yards is marked around it.

The Goal area: Conform to FIFA.

The Penalty Area: A penalty area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, fourteen (14) yards from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of fourteen (14) yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the penalty area. Within each penalty area a penalty mark is made ten (10) yards from the midpoint between the goalposts and equidistant to them. An arc of a circle with a radius of eight (8) yards from each penalty mark is drawn outside the penalty area.

Flag posts: Conform to FIFA.

The Corner Arc: Conform to FIFA.

Goals: Conform to FIFA with exception that the maximum distance between the posts is eighteen (18) feet and the maximum distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is six (6) feet.

Safety: Goals must be anchored securely to the ground. Portable goals may only be used if they satisfy this requirement.

Law 2 – The Ball: Size four (4).

Law 3 – The Number of Players: A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than eight players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. A match may not start if either team consists of fewer than seven players.

Substitutions: At any stoppage and unlimited.

Law 4 – The Players Equipment: Conform to FIFA. Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams.

Law 5 – The Referee: Registered referee.

Law 6 – The Assistant Referees: Use U.S.S.F. registered referees or club linesmen/women.

Law 7 – The Duration of the Match: Conform to FIFA with the exception of the match being divided into two (2) halves of thirty (30) minutes each. There shall be a half-time interval of five (5) minutes.

Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play: Conform to FIFA with the exception that opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least eight (8) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Law 9 – The Ball In and Out of Play: Conform to FIFA.

Law 10 – The Method of Scoring: Conform to FIFA.

Law 11 – Offside: Conform to FIFA.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct: Conform to FIFA with the exception that an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team at the center spot on the halfway line if a goalkeeper punts or drop-kicks the ball in the air from his/her penalty area into the opponents penalty area.

Law 13 – Free Kicks: Conform to FIFA with the exception that opponents are at least eight (8) yards from the ball.

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick: Conform to FIFA with the exceptions that the penalty mark is at ten yards and that players other than the kicker and defending goalkeeper are at least eight (8) yards from the penalty mark.

Law 15 – The Throw-In: Conform to FIFA.

Law 16 – The Goal Kick: Conform to FIFA.

Law 17 – The Corner Kick: Conform to FIFA with the exception that opponents remain at least eight (8) yards away from the ball until it is in play.

COACH AND REFEREE CERTIFICATION CHARTS

RECOMMENDED COACHING CERTIFICATION

Setting minimum coaching standards while being cognizant of risk management issues.

“Y” License: National Instructional Staff, State Directors of Coaching, State Instructional Staff, Club Directors of Coaching, Professional club coaches/trainers and Recreational Directors.

“A” License: professional, college, National Teams/Staff, Regional Coaches, State Directors of Coaching, ODP state Head Coaches, Club Head Coaches and Directors of Coaching.

“B” License: State Instructional Staff, ODP Coaches, Club age group head coaches, all premier level coaches for the U16 and older age groups

“C” License: all premier level coaching 13 and Older

“D” License: Coaching Competitive 13 and Older

“E” Certificate: Coaching Competitive 9-12 Year Olds

U10/U12 Youth Module Certificate: for all U10 and U12 team coaches

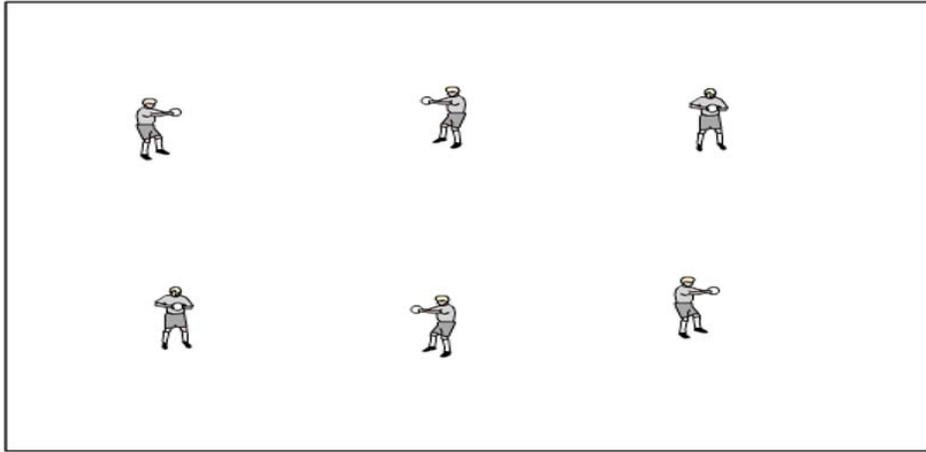
U6/U8 Youth Module Certificate: for all U6 and U8 team coaches

Level 1 Goalkeeper Certificate: all coaches working with U10 to U19 teams.

Level 2 Goalkeeper Certificate: all coaches working with U13 to U19 teams.

U-6 PRACTICE IDEA: "Warm up activities"

1 Ballnastics



Organization: Ballnastics exercises should be performed individually with or without a ball. *Ballnastics examples:*

Movement Education: *Running forwards and backwards, hopping, bouncing, skipping, crab crawling or bear crawling through and around the balls.*

Ball Movements: Figure eight around legs, round the waist, throw and catch, thigh and catch.

Toe taps on the ball: On top or side to side (play a game to see how many you can do in 10 seconds). Roll the ball around with the balls of your feet, jump back and forth over the ball.

U-6 PRACTICE IDEA: "Tick Tock"

Teaches: Fast feet & ball control using inside-of-feet

Set-up: Every player has a ball & starts with the ball between his feet, with knees bent

The Game: On "Go" each player taps the ball between his or her feet. Each tap is "one" and 1st to reach 20 wins (1st to 40 if U-12).

Tip: Keep knees bent & tap ball with the front of the foot (this gives better control than the back of the foot).

U-6 PRACTICE IDEA: "Hit the Coach"

Teaches: Dribbling, kicking & teaches the Coach how to be funny

Comment: A simple, fun game for U-6

Set-up: Each player has a ball

The Game:

- Players stand shoulder-to-shoulder facing Coach who is about 5 steps away
- On "Go", the Coach runs slowly away while players dribble to chase him & try to hit him with the ball by shooting at him
- Players get 1 point each time they hit him
- Recruit parents to help & split into 2 games or even 3, so it is less crowded
- Stay in a small area & have fun with this game
- Play for about 5 minutes

Variation:

- Before starting, tell the players that if they hit you 5 times (total) you will make the sound of their favorite animal, like a dog or a cow, etc. When you are hit 5 times, stop & let them choose a sound. Then start all over.
- Try to stop about every 60 seconds. You can adjust by changing the number of required hits to 3 or 4

U-6 PRACTICE IDEA: "Tick Tock"

Teaches: Fast feet & ball control using inside-of-feet

Set-up: Every player has a ball & starts with the ball between his feet, with knees bent

The Game:

- On "Go" each player taps the ball between his feet. Each tap is "one"
- 1st to reach 20 wins (1st to 40 if U-12).

Tip:

- Keep knees bent & tap ball with the front of the foot (this gives better control than the back of the foot).

U-6 PRACTICE IDEA: "Keep Your Yard Clean"

Here is a game that involves kicking and is a good example of parallel play in that it involves all players on the team at one time, but, they are all acting as individuals during the game. This allows for individual differences in skill. The game is simple, fun, and easy to adapt to account for team size and experience.

The Game: Create a 'neutral area' between the two teams where no player is allowed into. This area can be as small as one yard and as big as 10 yards wide. The width is determined by how far the players can kick the ball. Each player starts with a ball at his / her feet. On command, each team tries to keep their side of the game free of balls by kicking their ball over to the other teams side. After an appropriate amount of time (when the balls become too scattered, or, the players are losing focus), call the game and count which side has the most balls on their side. Distribute the balls evenly for another try if the players are still interested.

After players have found some success with this basic game, try these variations:

- Players can only use their left foot.
- Throw the ball back.
- Punt the ball back.
- Dribble the ball around a cone that has been set up in the middle of their "yard", then, kick the ball back.

U-6 PRACTICE IDEA: "Red Light...Green Light"

Here is a game that should be familiar to most U-6's. Again, the game is fun, simple to set up, and has direct application to the game. The skill that it is targeting is dribbling.

The Game: Each player has a ball, except the one player that is designated as the "light". Lines from start to finish should be approximately 20 - 30 yds. Players start from the line opposite the "light". The "light" then turns away from the group shouting out "GREEN LIGHT". At this signal, the players start to dribble towards the "light".

When the "light" turns back around, calling out "RED LIGHT", players must freeze their bodies and their ball.

If the "light" catches players or a ball still moving, that player must take 5 steps back.

The first player to cross the line where the "light" is standing is the winner and becomes the new "light".

You can start the game without using balls for younger players, then have them roll the ball with their hands, then use their feet.

U-8 PRACTICE IDEA: "GET EM"

Here is a game which involves both passing and dribbling that is fun and engages players quickly. Also, although primarily an individual exercise that allows for differences in ability level, if the players are ready, it can quickly become a cooperative game where players work together to solve a challenge.

The Game: Each player will need a ball. Player 'A' is "It" and is the only player to start with a ball. All the other players are around the outside of the grided space.

Player 'A' dribbles and tries to hit the other players below the waist with the ball. When hit, that player gets a ball and joins player 'A'.

The game is over when all of the players have been caught.

The last player caught starts with the ball for the next game.

If you think the task will be too difficult for the one player to get another at the start of the game, start with 2 players being "It".

Encourage quick movements and sudden changes of direction to catch players off guard.

Encourage deceptive passing of the ball: look one-way and pass the other; use the outside of the foot.

Players not caught should run, jump, and use zig-zag movements.

U-10 TRAINING IDEA 'TEAM KNOCK OUT'

Here is a game to use in the 'Small Group Activity' phase of the practice. It is an engaging game that is fun to play and challenges players in almost all aspects of the game.

The Game:

- Divide the squad up into two teams.
- To start, each player on the team that is inside the field will need a ball. Those on the outside of the field do not need a ball.
- When ready, players on the outside run into the grid, attempt to steal any ball they can and put it through any one of the goals that are marked by the cones.
- Players with the ball attempt to keep the ball away from the defenders by dribbling or passing to a teammate that has lost their ball.
- If an attacking player loses a ball, they immediately try to 'steal' it back.
- The game stops when all of the balls have been kicked through the goals. Then the two teams switch roles.
- Keep track of how long it takes each team to steal all of the balls.
- If a ball is kicked out of bounds it goes over to the other team for a throw-in.

This game is good for teaching dribbling skills as players find themselves in situations where they have to dribble to keep possession as well as dribble to beat an opponent.

Also, they find themselves in situations where they may have to pass to a teammate as well as find themselves playing defense.

Because there are so many balls, and so many goals, it is just a crazy enough game to be appreciated and enjoyed by a typical nine- year-old.

U-10 TRAINING IDEA "END ZONE GAME"



Here is a 4 v.4 game that is free flowing and gives players a lot of problems to solve. It is a good game to use towards the end of the session as it is very close to the 'real' thing. One particularly good thing about this game is that since teams end up attacking in two, different directions, it forces players to play in different positions. They are at the back of the team when their team attacks one end-zone, while they will find themselves at the top of the team when they attack in the other direction. This is great for their development.

The Game:

- Set up the field as shown with a seven yard 'End-Zone' at each end.
- Score a goal by getting the ball from one 'End-Zone' to the other by passing or dribbling.
- Once a goal is scored, immediately attack going in the other direction. Do not give the ball to the other team. The 'End-Zones' are free, only the attacking team can enter these areas.

This game also encourages players to "SPREAD OUT" and work together, which, players are starting to be able to do at this age. At first, players will be tempted to just kick the ball up the field instead of passing. With patience, and demonstration of what is possible, this game could have a dramatic impact on their ability to play attractive, skillful soccer.

U-12 TRAINING IDEA 'NUMBERS PASSING'

Here is a good warm-up that will get players prepared for a session on passing and receiving skills. It is an example of how players can be challenged in an environment that is dynamic and can demand specific, targeted technique that has direct implications to the demands placed upon players during the real game. Since there is no pressure from an opponent, it is appropriate to use this activity during the warm-up.

The Game:

- Assign each player a number.
- Players pass the ball to the player with the # one higher than their own # (eg: 5 passes to 6, 11 to 1.)
- All balls travel through the entire team.
- After they pass a ball, they must run to a different spot on the field.
- Players are first allowed unlimited touches, then only two touches, then one touch if they are able.
- Ask the players not to let the ball stop, or to let their pass hit other players or balls.

Try these variations:

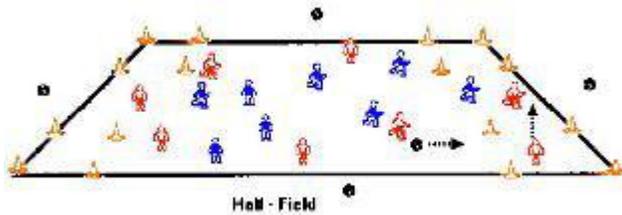
- Left foot only.
- Outside of foot only.
- No talking allowed.

Ask the players to:

- Make eye contact with the person they are passing to.
- Perform good passing technique.
- Keep their body and vision open to the field of play.
- Keep the person they are passing to in their line of sight.
- Be active. Look like a soccer player.

U-12 TRAINING IDEA 'CORNER GOAL GAME'

Here is a game that can be used in the middle phases of the training session. This game involves passing and receiving skills and is also a good activity for showing players the benefits of 'spreading out'. It is a dynamic game with a lot of running. It provides a lot of 'puzzles' for players to figure out and demands that they cooperate.



The Game:

- Set up the field as shown on approximately half-field, depending on how many players are on your team. (16 players shown. It is OK if one team has an extra player. If there is an odd # of players on the team, that gives the players a different puzzle to solve.)
- 10 yd. 'squares' are set up in each corner.
- Goals are scored when the ball is passed into the square and then out to a teammate.
- Each team can attack any one of the four goals.
- Whoever has the ball is on offense until they loose possession, or if they kick it out of bounds.
- Score can be kept.
- Play with two balls at once to make the game exciting. (This will actually make the game two, separate smaller games going on at the same time.)

Ask the players to keep spread out and to try to attack the goal that is 'open'. Keep possession, make the other team earn the ball. See if the players can recognize where pressure is coming from.

TIPS FOR GOOD PRACTICES

1. Kids love playing games & keeping score. **In practice, try to use games & not drills.**
2. Everyone should stay active & participate. Avoid lines.
3. Maximize "touches" on the ball. At least 100 touches per practice for each player.
4. Teach proper technique and emphasize games that practice technique or simulate play or playing situations.
5. Run games by keeping time (e.g., so they last 1, 3, or 5 minutes) or by keeping score (e.g., first to 3, 12, etc.).
6. Praise hustle, improvement and a good attitude. Measure each player's performance by his or her personal improvement and effort, and not by comparing them to someone else. Try to motivate in a positive way that builds self-esteem.
7. A good game must be easy & quick to set up and should be simple to explain and manage. If you are spending too much time on set up or instruction, simplify it.
8. If it's not fun, it's not a good game.
9. You must have at least one ball per player.
10. Avoid general scrimmaging for more than 10 minutes per hour. In general scrimmages players don't get enough touches on the ball, the weaker players tend to get the fewest touches and bad habits can be reinforced because players tend to do the same things they have always done. If you scrimmage, do so without a goalkeeper.
11. Adopt this philosophy: **Keep it simple, keep them active, keep it fun & at least 100 touches per player per practice".**