



Creating a Better Environment

Recreation Coaching Manual

www.indianayouthsoccer.org

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Player Development Videos

Go to Indiana Youth Soccer at www.indianayouthsoccer.org and under the “Coaching” section there are player development videos with different games coaches can view.

Introduction



Is this you?????

Don't Worry-Be Happy!

The purpose of this manual is to provide volunteer recreation soccer coaches both new and experienced with as much information as possible to aid them when they are out on the field. This manual is for the U6-U12 ages. We hope that you enjoy this manual and that it is beneficial to both the player and coach.

Players

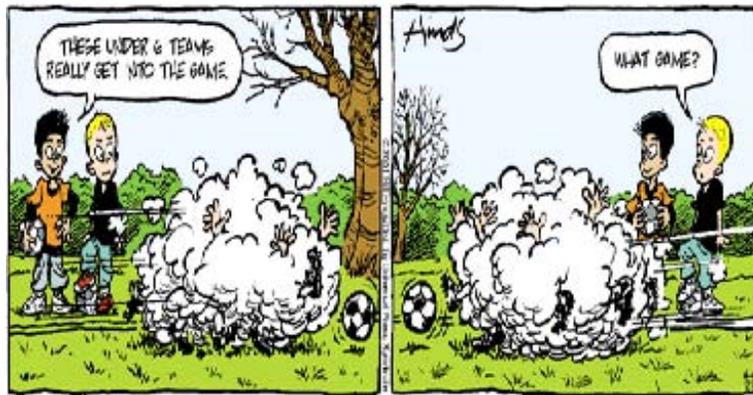
Age Characteristics of children

5/6 year olds

Psychomotor Development for U-6

- Movement education
- Differences between boys and girls are minimal
- Body segments grow at different rates
- “Energizer Bunny”
- Emphasis of fundamental movement skills (you are a glorified PE teacher)
 - Locomotor: walking, running, leaping, jumping , hopping.
 - Nonlocomotor: bending, stretching, twisting, pulling, pushing.
 - Basic Manipulative: throwing, catching, striking, kicking.
- Increased use of all body parts
- Need to explore rolling and bouncing ball
- Weight range approx. 30-50 lbs.
- Height range approx. 35”-37”.
- Motor development starts with the head and moves downward to the feet, and from the center of the body outward. Easy fatigue, rapid recovery. HR around 90 bpm

Cognitive Development for U-6

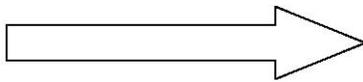


- Piaget-preoperational
- Play consists of imagination and pretend
- Use of symbols represent objects
- One task at a time!
- Small bits of info is needed
- Simple, Simple, Simple
- Limited understanding of time, space relations, and boundaries.
- 4v4 is really 1v7



Psychosocial Development for U-6

- Self concept, body awareness and self image through movement
- Egocentric-me, my ball, 1v7
- Need praise and to play without pressure
- Influential person is mom or parent
- May say TEAM, but really means: "Throw Everything At Me"
- Tactical Sign is "This Way" or "One Way"



General Characteristics of Children U6

- Short attention span
- Most individually oriented (me, my, mine)
- Constantly in motion
- Psychologically easily bruised
- Little or no concern for team activities
- Do believe in Santa Claus, but will not discuss with peers
- Physical & psychological development of boys & girls quite similar
- Physical coordination immature
- Eye hand and/or eye foot coordination most primitive at best
- Love to run, jump & roll
- Like to roll on the ground - (that's in good dress-up clothes, not in team uniform)
- Enjoy climbing
- Prefer large soft balls and nerf balls
- Catching skills not developed
- Can balance on good foot
- NO SENSE OF PACE - GO FLAT OUT!!!

7/8 year olds **Psychomotor Development of U8 Players**

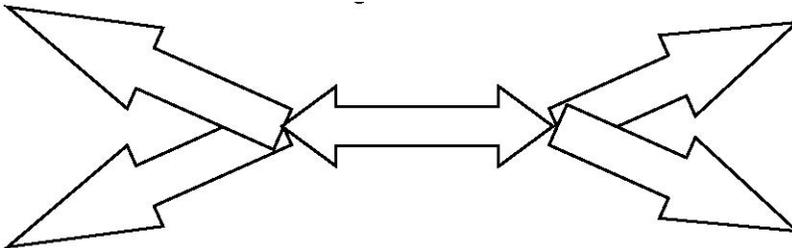
- Skeletal system is still growing: growth plates are near the joints, thus injuries to those areas merit special consideration.
- Cardiovascular system is less efficient-Endurance makes no sense-a child's heart rate peaks sooner and takes longer to recover.
- Visual acuity isn't developed quite (heading is not recommended)
- Take longer to cool down than adults. Ready to go in an off state
- Improvement in pace and coordination
- Immaturity of physical ability is obvious
- Still see a child in movement

Cognitive Development of U8 Players

- Concrete operational stage-"A Rule is a rule!" (School)
- Can do more than one task at time, but the simple task of controlling the ball demands most of the attention capacity, thereby leaving little or no capacity for "tactical" decision making.
- Time and space concept is starting to develop
- Limited experience with personal evaluation; effort is synonymous with performance, If I try hard, then I performed well regardless of winning or losing
- Beginnings of categorizing

Psychosocial Development of U8 Players

- Very Fragile self concept and body image
- Individuality
- Psychological factor of negative comments
- Soccer is FUN
- Their universe is expanded to the neighborhood
- Partner activities-I will share my ball with you
- Team identity is limited-"I play for the Wildcats"
- Wants everyone to like them (School) Great need for approval from adults such as parents, teachers, and coaches; like to show individual skills.
- Most influential person is father, but could go to mother "comfort zone"
- Tactical Sign is:



General Characteristics of Children U8

- Attention span a bit longer than U6, but still not at the "team at all costs" intensity.
- Inclined more toward group activities.
- Still in motion - twitching, jerking, scratching and blinking are all second nature physical movements.
- Still very sensitive (dislike personal failure in front of peers) - ridicule from the coach in front of the group is very destructive.
- Santa Claus is no longer a peer topic of discussion.

- Boys and girls still quite similar in physical and psychological development.
- Beginning to develop some physical confidence (most can ride a two-wheeler).
- Still into running, jumping, climbing and rolling.
- More into imitation of the big guys (sports heroes becoming important). Unfortunately few are soccer players.
- STILL LACK SENSE OF PACE - GO FLAT OUT . Will chase the ball until they drop.

9/10's

Psychomotor Development of U10 Players

- Overall and small motor skills becoming more refined
- Boy's and girl's beginning to develop separately
- Lengthened attention span. Sustain an activity if they are engaged.
- Diversity in playing ability
- More prone to heat injury than adults
- Accelerated heat loss, increased risk of hypothermia
- Children make rapid gains in learning and function at increasingly sophisticated levels in the performance movement skills

Cognitive Development of U10 Players

- Some begin moving from concrete to formal operational
- Intrinsically motivated to play
- Starting to think ahead
- More inclined to play rather than being told to play
- Demonstrates self responsibility
- Starting to understand fundamental tactical concepts
- Create games, not instruction on how to do things
- Repetitive technique very important, but it MUST BE DYNAMIC NOT STATIC!

Psychosocial Development of U10 Players

- May initiate play on their own.
- Continued positive reinforcement-Be specific w/ praise
- Brief, concise and purposeful explanations
- A little more serious
- Peer pressure beginning
- Prefer team identification
- Adults like a coach may influence
- Tactical Sign:

Characteristics of U10 Children

- Lengthened attention span.
- Team oriented.
- Still in motion, but not as busy . . . Will hold still long enough for a short explanation.
- Psychologically becoming more firm and confident.
- Boys and girls beginning to develop separately.
- Gross and small motor skills becoming much more refined.
- Prefer team type balls and equipment.

- PACE FACTOR BECOMING DEVELOPED - DO THINK AHEAD
- Some are becoming serious about their play.
- Enjoy the uniforms
- Are now more inclined toward wanting to play rather than being told to play.

11/12's

Psychomotor Development

- The average age for the beginning of pubescence in girls is 10 years with a range from 7-14; for boys, age 12 with a range from 9-16.
- Increases in the amount of exercise and the intensity does not necessarily increase aerobic fitness levels in children.
- Strength building activities require overloading the muscles to a greater extent than endurance activities.
- Flexibility training is key to the prevention of injury.
- Overuse injuries, burnout, and high attrition rates are associated with high-intensity children's programs that fail to stress skill development and learning enjoyment.
- Begin to develop abilities to sustain complex coordinated skill sequences.

Cognitive Development

- Formal operational stage of cognitive development (Piaget).
- Begins to think in abstract terms and can address hypothetical situations.
- Changes in thought processes is the result of an increased ability to acquire and apply knowledge.
- A systematic approach to problem solving appears at this stage; the game of soccer must present the ability to think creatively and solve problems while moving.

Psychosocial Development

- More TV, less unstructured play.
- Beginning to spend more time with friends and less time with parents.
- Popularity influences self-esteem.
- Whether a child enters puberty early or late has important psychosocial implications.
- Learning appropriate sex role.
- Most children seek peers that are most like them in age, race, sex, and socioeconomic status.
- Opportunity to introduce the value of cultural diversity.
- Developing a conscience, morality, and a scale of values.

Priorities

Ok, you are coaching them, now what do you teach them????? The cartoon is definitely the main priority for U6's!

Here are some priorities for you to consider.....

The Number one priority to teach is for the players to have FUN!!

U6's

- Being comfortable with the ball at their feet-Dribbling
- Everyone has a ball-Dribbling
- Fundamental movements like running, jumping, bending, skipping, reaching, throwing, catching.
- Need to explore a rolling and bouncing ball
- Games that teach dribbling and turning the ball with their feet
- Play small sided games of 3v3/4v4
- Teach shape, not positions. For 3v3, the shape is a triangle. For 4v4, the shape is a diamond. For the U6's, however, it will become more of a 1v7 match instead of a 3v3/4v4 match. Just getting them to start in either a triangle or a diamond at the beginning of the game, a kickoff, or a kick-in is a good starting point.
- Fun!

U8's (Partner Activities)

- Being comfortable with the ball at their feet-Dribbling
- Everyone has a ball-Dribbling
- Games that teach dribbling with the head up, turning, and keeping the ball away from an opponent. Changing Direction. When going right-use right foot. When going left-use left foot.
- Games that encourage them being creative with the ball-Dribbling
- Fundamental movements like running, jumping, bending, skipping, reaching, throwing, catching.
- Passing in two's. Passing should be done in motion, not static.
- Show the surfaces of the foot to pass the ball with. Inside of foot.
- Introduce striking the ball with the laces. They are still going to use their toes.
- Developing the mentality to shoot.
- Introduce receiving (not trapping) balls on the ground
- Play small sided games of 3v3/4v4
- Teach shape, not positions. For 3v3, the shape is a triangle. For 4v4, the shape is a diamond. Just getting them to start in either a triangle or a diamond at the beginning of the game, a kickoff, or a kick-in is a good starting point. **FUN!**

U-10-U12's

Activities in groups of 3-4 players for U10

Activities in groups of 5-6 players for U12

Dribbling

- Creativity with the ball needs to be stressed.
- How to run with the ball at the feet
- Dribbling to beat an opponent
- Dribbling to get away from pressure
- Dribbling to maintain possession
- We need to develop "front footed" dribblers. Players that are comfortable with the ball and taking on opponents face to face.

Passing

- Pass on the move with both inside and outside of the foot.
- Making the simple pass-thought behind every pass.
- Making eye contact with your teammate should also be stressed heavily with passing.

- Introduction to longer types of passes

Finishing/Striking The Ball

- Finishing off the dribble, while going at pace.
- Get the shot on “frame” or target.
- The ability to turn and finish
- Finishing from a pass
- Finishing a breakaway

Receiving

- Developing the first (controlling) touch.
- Teach them to open “out” when receiving a ball on the ground-To see their teammates (vision)
- Receiving balls out of the air.

Supporting

- Playing 3v1 games to teach how to support the player that has the ball
- Supporting after making a pass
- Supporting after a long ball has been played.

Heading

- Introduction to heading (U10's)
- Introduction to jumping and heading balls in a direction (U-12's)

Defending (Winning the Ball Back)

- The mentality to win the ball back
- Getting them to recover or pick up an opponent
- Teach the role of the first defender (Pressure) U-10's
- Teach the role of the second defender (Cover) U-11's
- Teach the role of the third defender (Balance) U-12's

Philosophy

FUN!!!! FUN!!!! FUN!!!!
“Teach Them Well And Let Them Lead The Way”

First ask yourself *Why Do You Coach?*

- Build your own resume (SERIOUSLY hope not)
- Experiences (you enjoyed your experiences playing the game)
- Most Qualified (you actually played a sport in Junior High)
- Enjoy Kids! (should be the number one reason)

Mission as a Youth Coach

- Say “Do This” instead of “Don’t Do This” (Catch Them Being Good)
- Focus on what has been accomplished, not what hasn’t.
- Be a “Positive” Role Model
- Keep them coming back! They should sign up again next season!
- Fans For Life

The Youth Soccer Coach

- Facilitator of Activities (You are not the “Sage on the Stage but the “Guide on the Side”)
- Uses Activities and Games that Teach! Doesn’t use or say the word “Drills”
- Understand that success is a byproduct of player development
- Teacher in Training-Not The Game. Soccer is a players game, not a coaches.
- Develop An Enthusiasm For The Game
- Enhance Development (Are your players better at the end of training? End of the season?)

Positive Coaching

- Create Your Own Philosophy (should reflect fun and development)
- “Winning isn’t Everything, nor is it the only thing”
- Failure is not the same thing as losing.
- Success is not equivalent to winning.
- Effort is a controllable variable-Outcome is not.
- “Catch Them Being Good” then when you do-----TELL THEM IMMEDIATELY!

Player Management

By David Carr, Ph.D.

The Difficult Player

- A coach's and player's personalities impact behaviors and is a two way street of communication.
- A tantrum can be a sign of poor adaptability of a coach or player.
- Not liking and or loving one another can create emotional misfit situations.
- Good enough coaching will not keep the difficult player in the game.
- Ineffective responses will create poor habits between the player and coach.
- There is no test for hyper activity due to the subjective descriptions of behavior.

DO's

Cheer for your child and the other children on the team giving specific praise, "nice shot" "great steal" "nice dribbling" after the act is complete, not during the activity when you will confuse the player.

Try to convey the importance of playing well verses the results. If you refer to the score, follow with two positive points about the child's play.

Ask probing questions like, "How did you get around that #7 with the black hair?"

DON'Ts

Do not yell directly at the children with instructions at any time.

Do not become part of any discussions with possible conflicts among referees, opponents, or other parents or children that might become a negative incident.

Do not complain about playing time and/or positions of players. Leave the coaching to the coaches.

Do not discuss the game in any manner, which may confuse the coach's intentions.

1996 Report Card on American Integrity

The Josephson Institute reported there is a hole in the moral ozone and it is still getting bigger!

There is a willingness of young people to lie, cheat and steal, which has, lead them to the credo: "What I want, I need. What I need I deserve. What I deserve, I have a right to have, and I will do anything to get it."

Unacceptably high numbers of young people consistently act dishonestly and are increasingly prone to violence.

Two-thirds of high school students admitted they had cheated on an exam in the previous year.

Seven out of ten high school respondents said they had lied to a parent more than once in the previous year.

Forty-two percent of high school males and thirty-one percent of the females said they had stolen something from a store within the previous 12 months.

Nearly one in three high school students confessed to stealing from a parent or relative in the previous 12 months.

This study was from 12,000 Americans over the age of 12.

The Coaches Response Tree - Problem behavior

1. Can I deal with it now?
2. Become the leader (stand back, get neutral, think and evaluate).
3. Frame the behavior (recognize the behavior, not the motives).
4. Is it temperament? (if so be sympathetic, establish eye contact, label the temperament).
5. Is it relevant? (if not, disengage).
6. Effective punishment (be stern, be brief, be direct, and be firm).

The Principles of a Reward System

Plan the reward rather than as an on the spot response.

Be neutral, think rather than responding emotionally to behaviors on and off the field.

Give rewards after the completion of the act, not before.

The reward must be for specific behaviors, not attitudes.

The reward itself should be specific, not a vague promise.

Bill of Rights for Young Athletes

The right to:

participate in sport

participate at a level commensurate with each child's maturity and ability

have qualified adult leadership

play as a child, not as an adult

to share in the leadership and decision making of their sport participation

participate in safe and healthy environments

proper preparation for participation in sport

have an equal opportunity to strive for success

be treated with dignity

to have FUN

RULES

Rules give character and uniqueness to a game.

Rules give comfort to participants.

Constitutive rules are the set of rules for a given game.

Fair competition = playing within the rules.

Rules define common ground.

Loyalty to rules is vital for existence.

Teaching players to cheat destroys the game.

The Hallmark of Good Teaching/Coaching is Good Planning!

Common areas of instruction are: direction (a map), evaluation (feed back), content and sequence (appropriate), method (determines the level of student motivation), constraints (resources).

Effective teaching/coaching behaviors include: task orientation (opening remarks), time to learn (complete coverage), variability (flexible, adaptable), enthusiasm (vigor), feedback (proper), structure (direction), questioning (appropriate), management (little interruption), direct instruction (assess, set goal, present), instructional time, pacing.

Ethics - a discipline dealing with what is interpreted to be good and bad or right and wrong. Additionally they are a set of moral principles or values conforming to accepted professional standards or conduct.

Morals - relates to the principles of right and wrong behavior or an acceptable standard

of right behavior. A measurement of action.

Values - relative worth, utility, or importance - degree of excellence.

Football's code of conduct

For the Good of the Game, always ...

1. ... play to win.
2. ... play fair.
3. ... observe the Laws of the Game.
4. ... respect opponents, team-mates, referees, officials and spectators.
5. ... accept defeat with dignity.
6. ... promote the interests of football.
7. ... reject corruption, drugs, racism, violence and other dangers to our sport.
8. ... help others to resist corrupting pressures.
9. ... denounce those who attempt to discredit our sport.
10. ... honour those who defend football's good reputation.

Sportsmanship

“Leader Is As Leader Does”

“Young players play with great deal of fairness and sportsmanship. Once they learn how important the game is to the adults, they’ll learn how to cheat.”

Dr. Ron Quinn

“They’re only kids. It’s only a game.”

Soccer can teach life long skills, building character, self esteem and awareness of others. It is vital as both a coach and a parent that good sportsmanship is exhibited throughout practices and games.

- **Young people learn by example (Leader is as leader does).**
- **Cheer for both teams and ask them if they had fun and tried their best.**
- **Have end of the game rituals such as the line handshakes, the world cup style applauding, shaking the referees hands and saying “thanks”.**



Team Management

Philosophy

- Ask why do you coach?
- Philosophy should be player driven, not coach driven. Therefore practices need to be geared towards their development, not winning.
- Taking Players Somewhere New
- Remember why they are here?
- Biggest compliment you will get is if they sign up again next season/year.
- FUN! FUN! FUN!

Parent-Coach Meeting

At the beginning of every season, you should take a moment to meet the parents of the children that you are coaching. In this meeting the following should be done:

- Explain your philosophy
- **Player Information**
 - Medical Information
 - Previous experience of children
 - Family situations, such as custody that may affect rides to and from practice.
- **Parent Information**
 - Emergency Phone Number
 - Rides-who is taking player to and from practice
 - Obtain Work Phone Numbers and Emails
 - Proper behavior on sideline (See The Youth Soccer Coach Poem by Berticelli)
- **Responsibilities of Players, Parents, and Coaches**
 - Players-proper gear be worn including shin guards, ball and water
 - Parents-Notify coach that they are taking child(ren) home
 - Coaches-Plan for training (Fail to Prepare-Prepare to Fail)
 - Coaches-Arrive early-End on time
 - Coaches-Provide proper training equipment (cones, vests, balls, air pump)
 - Coaches should all have a first aid kit
 - Coaches and Parents-Provide for a "Safe" Environment-Be Positive!

Then after addressing the parents an idea would be to distribute literature like the poem below written by the late Mike Berticelli.

The Youth Soccer Coach

By Mike Berticelli

You donate your time for the good of our youth,
But you scream and you yell and are often uncouth.

The ref is just twelve and still learning the game,
But you call him a jerk and say he's not sane.

The parents are screaming and follow your lead,
As you sprint up the sideline at uncontrollable speed.

You jump as you yell—"Pass, pass the ball!"
You turn red as you bellow—"Ref, make the darn call!"

"You're the left back, get in your position,
If you don't we might lose and ruin our tradition!"

Positions are needed so we look like a team,
'Cause they're miniature pros, or so it does seem.

The fullback is bored, he picks at his nose,
While the others run wild and kick with their toes.

You scream for a goal, no matter how it goes in,
The skill doesn't matter, just as long as we win!

The parents go crazy as the ball nears the goal,
Their advice and instructions will soon take their toll.

You see, "Junior" feels pressure, he's not having much
fun,
We tell him to pass, when to shoot, and to run.

He came here to play and to use his own mind,
'Cause soccer's the most creative game that you'll find.

Imagination is needed on the part of each child,
Solving problems on the field is what makes them go
wild.

A week of long practice, while just standing in line,
Waiting to shoot, just using one ball at a time.

This just doesn't cut it, and for some it is too late,
Make your practices fun, don't be the coach that they
hate.

They come to "play" soccer, not to work at the game,
Their excitement is something we don't want to tame.

Maradona had moves that are beyond comprehension,
No coach taught those moves while threatening
detention!

He learned from his friends, and tried copying others,
While playing in games, without coaches and mothers.

Soccer is different, not like baseball at all,
We don't need positions, just give them the ball.

They, first must learn skill, it's the meat of the game,
If they can't dribble or shoot, then who should we
blame?

Skill must be learned through repeated trials,
If motivation is present you will see them run miles.

"Fun games" are the answer to encourage repetition,
They laugh and they scream and enjoy competition.

Without the skill to dribble past an opponent at will,
Your players may win, but their growth will stand still.

I dream of the day when the parents just cheer,
And losing the game doesn't bring out a tear.

When practice is fun, not dull and so boring,
And playing the game means more than just scoring.

I know you mean well, and you donate your time,
But bury your ego, and try something sublime.

Call all the parents, and ask for their aid,
You're teaching their kids and not getting paid.

Your goal's to develop a youngster with skill,
Not a team that must win, or some fancy new drill!

You see players are not judged by their wins and their
losses,
Instead they are judged by their shots, heads, or
crosses!

Scholarships are given to players with great names,
Not to those who played on youth teams who never lost
games.

A pro player gets paid 'cause his skills are real fine,
Not because his team never lost when he was nine.

It's time to bring soccer to new heights in this nation,
The future's in players, not a coaching citation!

Let's start to say "dribble" and stop yelling "Pass!"
You'll then see players go to the head of the class.

I hope you're concerned, but not really offended,
It's the need for more skill that I have defended.

You're giving your all, from the good of your heart,
Why not make sure the kids get the right start?

This poem was written by Mike Berticelli. Former Notre
Dame soccer coach, NSCAA Director of Coaching,
mentor and good friend. As he now rests peacefully in
heaven, his vision and goals are shared by many who
believe that American youth soccer can go to a new
level.

**Indiana Youth Soccer Recreation Small-Sided Games Format
(Recommended Only)**

	U- 5/6	U-7/8	U9/10	11/12
Age Group Format	4 v4 or less	4 v4 or less	6v6 (Five plus a goalkeeper)	8v8 (Seven plus a goalkeeper)
Goalkeeper	No	Optional but if used changed each quarter	Yes	Yes
Goalkeeper Distribution	Not applicable.	Throwing, Rolling, and Punting.	Throwing, Rolling, and Punting	Throwing, Rolling, and Punting
Roster Size	5 if 3/3 6 if 4 v4	5 if 3v3 6 if 4v4	12 Maximum 6 Minimum	14 Maximum 8 Minimum
Game Duration	4 x 8 minutes	4x10 minutes	4 x 12 minutes	2 x 30 minutes
Substitutions	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
Ball Size	3	3	4	4
Goal Size	4ftx6ft-Maximum	4ftx6ft-Maximum	6ft x 18 ft- Maximum (6ft x 12 ft Recommended)	7ft x 21 ft Maximum (6ft x 18 ft recommended)
Recommended Field Size	35Lx25W- Maximum 25Lx20W Minimum Field sizes in yards	45Lx35W Maximum 35Lx25W Minimum <i>Field sizes in yards</i>	Recommended 45L x 35W Minimum 55L x 45 W Maximum	Recommended 75L x 55 W Minimum 80L x 60 W Maximum
Center Circle	3yd- radius not required	3 yard radius minimum 5 yd maximum (not required)	5 yard Radius	8 yard Radius
Corner Arc	2 feet not required	2 feet not required	3 Feet	3 Feet
Goal Box	Not required	Not required	4 yd L x 14 yd W	4 yd L x 14 yd W
Penalty Box-by yards	Not Required	Not Required	9 yd x 22 yd	14 x 34 yd

Penalty Mark	no	no	8 yards from center goal line	10 yards from center of goal line
Scores/Standings	No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No
Throw-In	Kick ins/Throw-ins	Kick ins/Throw-ins	Throw ins	Throw ins
Offside	No	No	No	Yes
Referee	No	Not required	1	1
Asst. Referees	No	Not Required	Optional (2) or club	Yes (2) or club

Why Small-Sided Games? by Tom Goodman

Former US Youth Soccer Director of Coaching Education

As the newly appointed US Youth Soccer Director of Coaching Education, veteran youth coach and father of three adult children, who used to be little soccer players, I have thought long and hard about the answer to the question, "Why Small-Sided Games?" Let me make sure that everyone understands the meaning of "Small-Sided Games". These are soccer games with fewer players competing on a smaller sized field. These are fun games that involve the players more because one ball is being shared by fewer players. All ages can play "Small Sided Games", but it has a definite developmental impact on our younger soccer players.

My recommendations for "number of players" at the various age groups are as follows:

- U6 3 against 3 no goal keepers
- U8 4 against 4 no goal keepers
- U10 6 against 6 with goal keepers
- U12 8 against 8 with goal keepers
- U13+ 11 against 11 with goal keepers

Here are some of the reasons why I believe we, as soccer coaches, administrators and parents must guarantee that our young soccer players play small-sided games:

- Because we want our young soccer players to touch the soccer ball more often and become more skillful with it! (Individual technical development)
- Because we want our young soccer players to make more, less-complicated decisions during the game! (Tactical development)
- Because we want our young soccer players to be more physically efficient in the field space they are playing in! (Reduced field size)
- Because we want our young soccer players to have more individual teaching time with the coach! Less players on the field and less players on the team will guarantee this! (Need to feel worthy...need to feel important)
- Because we want our young soccer players to have more, involved playing time in the game! (More opportunity to solve problems that only the game presents)
- Because we want our young soccer players to have more opportunity to play on both sides of the ball! (More exposure to attacking and defending situations)
- Because we want our young soccer players to have more opportunities to score goals! (Pure excitement)
- These are the reasons why we adults must foster "Small-Sided Games" in our youth soccer programs. The "Small-Sided" environment is a developmentally appropriate environment for our young soccer players.

It's a FUN environment that focuses on the young soccer player. It just makes sense...doesn't it?

Wait Until They're Ready David Carr, Ph.D.

Goalkeeping is not for 5- and 6- year olds and it could be harmful.

David Carr is coordinator of physical education and sport sciences at Ohio University. He is a co-author of the National Youth Soccer Coaching License program for U.S. Soccer and serves as a national staff coach. He is a former youth, high school, college and professional coach and is currently conducting research on developmentally appropriate practices for children in soccer and other youth sports.

I read with interest the article titled "Goalkeeping - Start Them Young" by Tony Waiters that appeared in the January/February 2000 issue of Soccer Journal. I have admired Coach Waiters as one of our prominent goalkeeper trainers. He is an excellent educator and clinician and I certainly respect his opinion but must challenge the notion that the earlier we start children as goalkeepers the better off they will be.

What has evolved over the past 10-15 years is a perspective that small-sided games for children are more appropriate for player development and the establishment of a soccer culture in the United States. Those of us, who are involved in working for the improvement of youth sports, and soccer in particular, have agreed that the small-sided game structure presents the best opportunity to learn skills, develop positive peer relationships and have fun in a relatively stress-free environment. Where Coach Waiters and I disagree is in how these small-sided games are structured and the role goalkeepers play in this structure.

In the mid to late 1980s and into the 1990s, a number of small-sided game formats were proposed and put in place across North America for young children. Among the formats were the United States Youth Soccer Association proposal of 3 v. 3 and 4 v. 4 formats and Waiters' development of Micro Soccer, for which he holds the trademark. The major difference is a philosophical one involving the use of goalkeepers.

As these small-sided games evolved, a number of coaching educators began to take a critical look at the existing youth soccer culture in the United States. Nearly everywhere one traveled, a different interpretation of what youth soccer should be was observed. It was a mess and although the picture is improving, it still has a long way to go. A critical look revealed the following: nearly 80 percent of all youth soccer coaches were novice adult volunteers with little or no soccer coaching knowledge. However, each enthusiastically agreed to coach children, who were, for the most part, involved in their first exposure to sport participation.

Often, the only vision of soccer these coaches had was of the adult version of the game they saw on television. The small-sided games version was not something they could identify with. Children as young as 4 were playing 11 v. 11 soccer on very large fields. As the participation numbers exploded throughout the 1990s, the need to educate these coaches became critical.

In 1995, I was asked to join a select group of soccer educators who were responding to a challenge posed by Timo Liekoski, then a U.S. National Team coach and director of coaching education for U.S. Soccer. The challenge was to develop a coaching education program to serve coaches of children age 12 and under. This program became the National Youth Coaching License and was included in the coaching education offerings by U.S. Soccer.

This educational program was also endorsed by the USYSA. The curriculum includes content that has grounded support in physical education, child development, educational learning styles, motor learning, psychology, sport psychology, sociology and other appropriate professional research that supports the concept of small-sided games play for young children. The challenge was to create a program to promote a philosophy that allowed for developmentally appropriate practice in a safe environment.

The ultimate goal was to unlock the game within every child.

As the philosophy and content for the National Youth License evolved, it became apparent that many current standards and beliefs would be challenged. Through our analysis of how children best learn sport skills, it became very apparent that changes in the structure of youth soccer were needed. Much has been written about readiness and maturity factors related to a child's initial development in youth sports.

Conventional wisdom often supports an "as soon as possible" perspective, which many youth sport experts see as flawed. Evidence suggests that the earlier children begin playing organized youth sports, the sooner they drop out. This is especially true if the program in which the children are engaged does not focus on psychomotor, cognitive and psychosocial development.

Psychomotor (physical) issues

Coach Waiters implies that the earlier children start to be goalkeepers, the better. There are a number of growth and development issues (psychomotor domain) that one must look at carefully before making such a claim. Many youth soccer programs have children organized by age with many beginning at age 5 or at a time when they begin school.

Some programs support starting at even earlier ages. Every child grows and develops at a different rate. Some 5-year-olds are eager and ready to engage in an adult organized sport program but most are not. Children at age 5 and 6 are growing from head to toe and from the core of the body outward. At this age, children are a bit top-heavy as their feet/legs and arms/hands are the last segments of the body to fully develop. Young children have great difficulty tracking moving objects, especially if they are in the air.

Most will duck or throw hands in front of the face if the ball comes toward the head. Children at this age are very reactionary in their movement behavior. Anticipating in advance where the ball might be played is a skill that has not yet developed. This ability does not really develop until age 8 or 9. Children at ages 5 and 6 want to run and kick the ball. They don't do well when told to stand in one place. If the action is at the other end of the field, a young goalkeeper will find some other activity to hold his or her attention.

Cognitive (learning) issues

According to Piaget, a noted Swiss psychologist who studied the growth and development of children, 5- and 6-year-olds are in a preoperational stage of development that approximately spans ages 2 to 7. This preoperational stage involves the initial stages of logical thinking but the patterns are immature. It is difficult for children to orient what they have learned into sequences or complex patterns of thought. They attempt to solve one concept at a time.

Children at this age are able to process only small amounts of information at a time, and long complex instructions tend not to be successfully processed. Time and space relationships are not fully developed or understood. The task of goalkeeping does not relate to the other aspects of playing soccer for young children.

Psycho-social issues

Children as young as 5 are beginning to develop a self-concept of who they are and how they fit into the world. It is a fragile stage. Movement experiences to date are minimal and involvement with other children in grouped activities is new to most.

Children at this age develop high levels of anxiety and arousal primarily due to the uncertainty of what is expected of them. Just running and kicking a soccer ball has profound self-image ramifications. The stress presented by being the goalkeeper raises these levels. If goalkeepers are utilized in small-sided games, self-image can take a hit when a goal is scored.

Even if scorekeeping and the emphasis on winning are minimized, fingers are pointed and blame is clearly placed on the goalkeeper. This factor, as much as anything else, may cause a child to discontinue playing soccer before he or she has really started. Having players stand in goal for a couple of minutes at ages 5 and 6 will not allow them to develop goalkeeping skills and will likely lead to increased levels of stress. Remember, at this age, children are very egocentric; they are into themselves - me, my, mine. They see the world from their perspective, not the perspective of adults. They need generous praise and the opportunity to enjoy play without pressure.

The analysis of most soccer experts is that small-sided games for young children are most beneficial for learning basic motor skills, learning basic rules and fundamental concepts of the game (most commonly going in the right direction). They also learn how to interact with their peers within a game involving a ball. What is not supported is the use of goalkeepers in this format. Children want to run, kick the ball and score goals. Every child should experience the triumph and success of scoring a goal.

Striking the ball at a small target accurately is a challenge for all children. Goalkeepers restrict the opportunities to score goals to a select few players. It is not easy or unrewarding as implied in Coach Waiters' article. Young children "stuck in goal" every three minutes will not develop goalkeeping skills. Young players are more likely to get hit with the ball than to actually "save it."

It is my belief (one that is supported by my colleagues) that it is important to wait until children are better able to physically, mentally and emotionally handle the demands of being a soccer goalkeeper. We promote a small-sided (4 v. 4) format through age 8 and then introduce goalkeeping in an 6 v. 6 format beginning at age 9. This still allows plenty of time for children to grow up and be the best goalkeepers they can be and most likely keep them engaged in playing soccer for many years to come. Copyright: National Soccer Coaches Association of America

Organizing a Training Session

***Training sessions should be the length of the game. U6's-30-45 minutes, U8's 45-60 minutes, U10's 60-75 minutes, U12's and up 75-90 minutes**

- Begin with the end in mind!
- Fail to prepare, prepare to fail!
- KISS Theory
- Have cones, vests, and balls already to go. Have flow to your training sessions.
- Have a specific focus for your training session-focus on that. Everything else is a bonus!
- Players need to be in motion during activities and games, don't use Drills!!!
- Activities need to relate to the game!
- Activities should be geared to their success as a player, not to develop a winning team!
- Activities should be geared for the players to make their own decisions
- Always end the training session with a game to two goals. Let them play!!
- Cool Down
- End with smiles 😊

Stages of a Training Session

Fundamental Stage (20-25%) NO LINES, LAPS, OR LECTURES!

- Warm-up
- Create a specific theme for session. Warm-up should reflect the focus of session.
- Preparation for physical activity-include stretching to develop flexibility
- Mental preparation (focus and enthusiasm)
- With younger players U6-U8 years of age, include body awareness activities
- No pressure of an opponent space or time

Activities Stage (not drills)

- Introduce pressure of an opponent, space, or time
 - Incrementally add pressure of an opponent based upon the players' level of success.
 - Go from Clarity to Reality or Simple to Complex
- Maze Game
 - Target/Direction Game
 - Only 2-3 activities needed

Game Stage (25-30%)

- This is the part where the players play the game!
- Play to two goals
- The smaller numbers-the clearer the teaching point
- No restrictions
- Observe first, then correct
- Stop to make point that reflects topic of training, but avoid talking. They don't come to hear the coach talk!
- Let them play-step off to the side and be a guide!

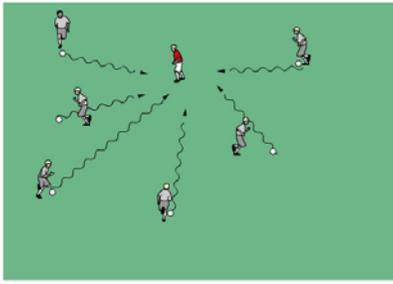
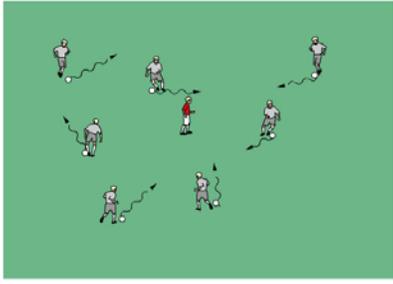
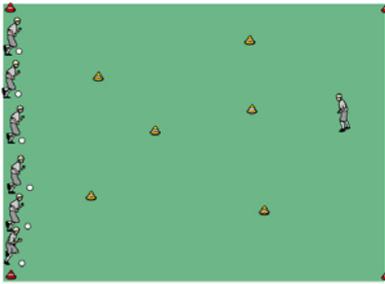
Cool Down (5%)

- Stretch and permit players to cool down
- Don't forget upper body
- Use time positively-do something fun!

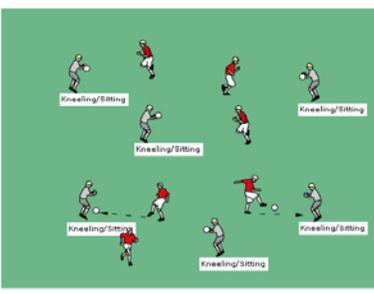
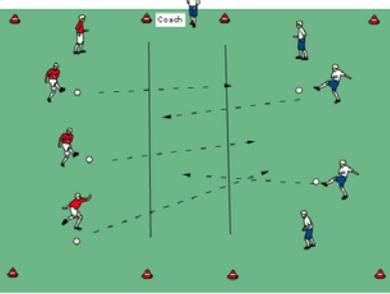
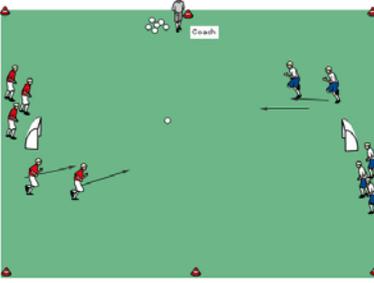
Blank Lesson Plan

Warm-up	Diagram of Activity	Coaching Points
1st Activity (Maze Game)	Diagram of Activity	Coaching Points
2nd Activity (Target Game)	Diagram of Activity	Coaching Points
Game 3v3 for U6 4v4 for U8 6v6 for U10 8v8 for U12	Diagram of Activity	

Sample U6 Lesson Plan-Dribbling “Heads Up”

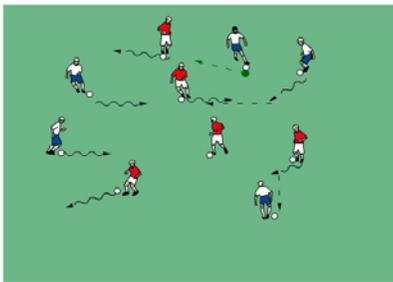
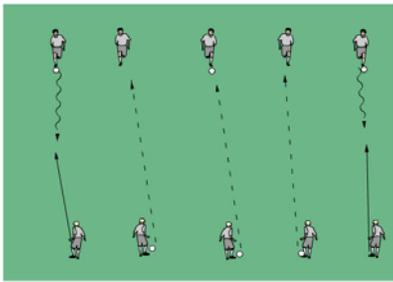
Activity Name	Description	Diagram	Purpose/Coaching Point
<p align="center">1</p> <p>Retrieval</p>	<p>Every player gives their ball to the coach and the coach tosses the ball out for each player to collect individually. Players bring the ball back by: 1) Picking up the ball and running back to the coach; 2) Picking up the ball and hopping back to the coach; 3) Picking up the ball and skipping back to the coach; 4) Running after the ball and dribbling the ball the ball back to the coach. The coach walks around while the players dribble the ball back to them.</p>		<p>Introduction to dribbling</p> <p>Coordination Balance Heads up!</p>
<p>“Red Light-Green Light”</p>	<p>All players are in a grid. When the coach says “Green”, the players all dribble their ball. When the coach says “Red”, the players all stop the ball with the bottom of their foot.</p> <p>Progress to the coach holding either a Green or Red cone, towel, t-shirt, etc up. The coach now doesn’t say anything, simply holds up a color and they players have to look up and react.</p>		<p>Coaching Points:</p> <p>Keep the ball close.</p> <p>Guided Discovery Questions:</p> <p>“What part of the foot can you use to stop the ball (inside, maybe outside)</p> <p>“When no one is trying to take the ball, what should your head be”? (UP!)</p>
<p>“Traffic”</p>	<p>All players gather on a line. The object is to dribble their ball from one line to the other line. The coach calls out either Green or Red light. Players dribble their ball and go when Green light is called and stop when Red Light is called.</p> <p>If a ball is not stopped, then the player can go back even with the last player, but not all of the way back.</p> <p>Progress to the coach holding either a Green or Red cone, towel, t-shirt, etc up. The coach now doesn’t say anything, simply holds up a color and they players have to look up and react.</p> <p>Another variation is to drop disc cones (potholes) that the players have to avoid so they don’t get a flat tire.</p>		<p>Guided Discovery Questions:</p> <p>“How far away should the ball be from you (enough so you can control it)</p> <p>“Why do you want to avoid the cones (a flat!! (stopped).</p>
<p>3v3 Game</p>	<p>Play 3v3 game with no goalkeepers</p>		<p>LET THEM PLAY! Tell them to be brave with the ball!</p>

U8 Sample Session (Striking The Ball)

Activity Name	Description	Diagram	Purpose/Coaching Point
<p>1</p> <p>Warm-up "Buddy Up"</p>	<p>Players are in pairs and each pair has one ball. One partner kneels/sits on the ground and rolls ball to their partner. The partner standing then passes ball back to the kneeling partner and then goes to a new person.</p> <p>a) Inside of foot b) Laces (just introduce) c) Go to kneeling partner who rolls ball between legs. Standing partner then chases, turns and passes ball back.</p>		<p>Introduction to mechanics of striking the ball</p> <p>Note: Don't get too caught up with them using their faces</p> <p>Can they get it back to the kneeling partner without making them move?</p>
<p>Junkyard Soccer</p>	<p>Divide team into two teams. Each team goes to a half. Use an odd number of balls, like 5. The objective of the game is to strike the ball into the other team's yard. Each team wants to have a clean yard when time is called by the coach. The team that has the fewest balls on their side when time is called gets a point. Play to a certain amount of points or for time. Variation: Require a pass to be made to a teammate before the ball can be struck back to the other half.</p>		<p>Introduce mechanics of striking the ball</p> <p>Strike the ball for a purpose.</p> <p>They should be trying to strike the ball where the other team can't get it back quickly.</p>
<p>"Shootout" No Goalkeepers</p>	<p>Two goals are placed on the ends. Two teams of 4-6. Each team is attacking a goal and defending a goal. Two teams each take a place behind the goals. The coach will yell out a number of players and a direction like "2 Right". Two players from each team run by the right side of the goal and then come in. The coach can call any number and direction. After the coach yells out a number and a direction, they roll in a ball for the players. Play for time or a certain amount of points.</p>		<p>Scoring goals Concept of parallel play</p>
<p>4v4 Game</p>	<p>Play 4v4 game with no goalkeepers</p>		<p>Let Them Play!</p>

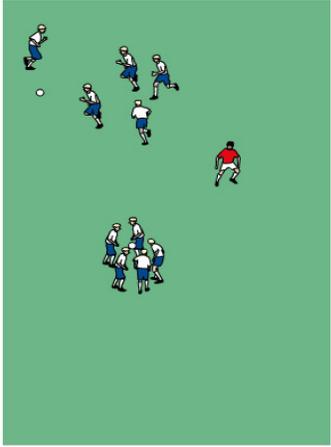
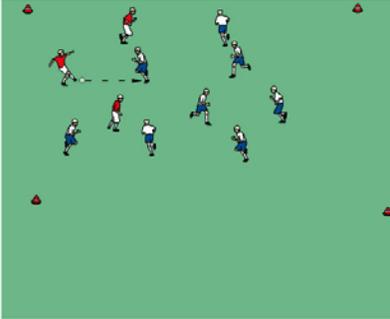
Age Group: U10

Topic: Improving Individual Possession

Activity Name	Description	Diagram	Purpose/Coaching Point
<p>1</p> <p>Warm-Up Grid Dribbling</p>	<p>All players have a ball inside a grid. Instruct the players to use different turns when near an opponent. Some of the turns:</p> <p>a) Cryff; b) Cut back; c) Step over; d) Roll over</p> <p>b) After showing them some of the turns, then instruct players that when they dribbled to an outside line to act like it's an opponent and to get away.</p>		<p>Dribbling w/Head up</p> <p>Sell the fakes</p>
<p>2</p> <p>Match Related 1v1</p>	<p>Players get into pairs and are about 10 yds apart. The pass the ball back and forth to each other using two touch. When the coach yelled "play" whoever had the ball tried to shield it from their opponent. Progress to groups of 3. One player passing the other two work as an attacker and a defender. The attacker works on receiving the ball and turning past the defender.</p>		<p>Positioning of body-</p> <p>Between defending player</p> <p>Make contact w/ defending</p>
<p>3</p> <p>Match Related 3v3-Countdown</p>	<p>Two teams of three. Each team has three goals to defend and three to attack. When a team scores a goal, the team scored upon has to "close" one of their three goals. Continue until one team has no more goals to "close".</p>		<p>Individual techniques w/b</p> <p>Individual decisions w/bal</p>
<p>4</p> <p>Match Condition 6v6</p>	<p>Space is very tight to keep players under constant pressure.</p>		

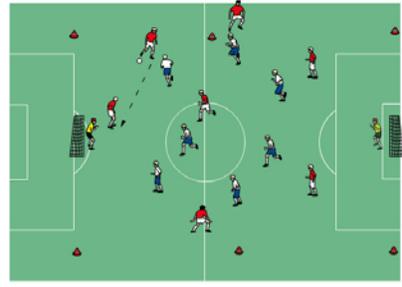
Age Group: U12

Topic: Teamwork-Shape

Activity Name	Description	Diagram	Purpose/
<p>1</p> <p>Warm-Up</p> <p>Ballmaster</p>	<p>Every group of 5/6 players gives their ball to the coach and the coach tosses the ball out for each group to collect individually. Players bring the ball back by: 1) Picking up the ball and running it back to the coach w/their hands; 2) w/feet and using 7 passes to get the ball back to the “Ballmaster”; 3) w/feet and using 17 touches to get it back to the “Ballmaster”; 4) Hurricanes and Ladders</p>		<p>Warm-up Teamwork Passing Shape</p>
<p>2</p> <p>Match Related</p> <p>“Bulldog”</p>	<p>Put the entire group inside a playing area. Two players start off as the “bulldogs” and wear pennies/bibs. Have pennies/bibs and balls around the area. The “bulldogs” try and work together to “hit” a player below the knees. When a player gets hit, they join the “bulldogs”. Progress along for time or until a group remains.</p>		<p>Passing Receiving Shape Thinking ahead!</p>
<p>3</p> <p>Match Related</p> <p>“Bags”</p>	<p>Even or odd numbered amount of players may be used. Players place two bags about 25-30 yards apart from each other. The object is to pass and hit the bag with the ball. Team can score at either of the two bags. When a bag is hit, restart the game by giving the ball to the other team.</p>		<p>Passing Receiving (can yo field?) Shape Thinking ahead!</p>
<p>4</p> <p>Match Related</p> <p>“Bank Game”</p>	<p>Even or odd numbered amount of players may be used. Play is to endzones. In each endzone there are 4-6 balls. When one team successfully advances their ball to the other team’s endzone they get a ball from their endzone and play continues.</p>		<p>Passing Receiving Shape Thinking ahead Penetration with p</p>
<p>5</p>			

Match Condition

8v8 Game (7 plus GK)



Techniques

- Involves all skills of the game
- Biomechanics of a skill
- Progress by teaching motions with/without ball then add movement and pressure
- Technique vs. Skill
 - Technique is taught
 - Skill is acquired

Techniques: (Don't worry about technique for U6's)

Dribbling-Coaching Points: Control of ball and body, Head up (awareness), Bent knees (balance), change of direction (use of proper foot), feints, change of pace, Body between ball and opponent (shielding), Sideways stance of body (shielding), Use of arms for balance and to make space, Bravery!

Passing- Coaching Points: Approach to ball, Ankle locked, toe point up, strike middle of ball (shorter passing), strike ball at angle for longer passing, strike bottom half of ball for longer passing, placement of non-kicking foot for short passing and long passing, head steady, eye contact.
Receiving-.

Receiving-Coaching Points: First touch and importance of cushioning ball, take a touch away from pressure, first touch sets up 2nd touch, get in line with the ball, select controlling surface early, open body up to see as much of field as possible, read the path of the ball, keep ball moving-don't stop ball.

Heading- Coaching Points: Use top of forehead (hairline) to contact ball, Neck should be firm on contacting the ball, Keep eyes open, Head is moved forward-not up and down, Follow thru, Arms and elbows up for protection and thrust. Attacking-Head top half of ball and low, Defending-Head high, far, and away! ***Heading is not recommended until U10!**

Crossing- Coaching points: Preparation of ball, placement of non-striking foot, Striking foot is slightly bent (like a wedge), hips and shoulders face target, Eyes on ball, Strike ball with laces, land on striking foot.

Finishing- Coaching Points: Toe down, ankle locked, head, chest, and knee over ball, head is steady, strike top half-center of ball, land on striking foot, placement of non-striking foot, hit the target.

Goalkeeping Age Objectives

Distributed by US Soccer-Peter Mellor National Teams Goalkeeping Coach and Coordinator

6-8 Year Olds

Technical: **Hand Eye coordination and balance games.**

Tactical: **Rotation of all players through the goals so that every player is exposed to Goalkeeping. Let the game be the teacher.**

Psychological: **FUN, FUN, FUN, games must be enjoyable.**

Fitness: **FUN movement games.**

8-10 Year Olds

Technical: Principles of Goalkeeping

Footwork Exercises

Getting Set (feet)

General Handling Techniques-**Thrown service-All Heights-Small Goal**

Distribution-Rolling and Throwing to a teammate, Control and Short Passing w/ both feet, Short volleying from the hands both feet, Striking a still ball.

Ball Familiarity (**size 4**)

Tactical: Rotation of players through the team. Everybody plays in each position

Psychological: FUN and enjoyable, Simple Progression of Techniques-"One Step at a Time".

Fitness: Teach Warm up-Cool Down and Stretching Exercises, from down to the ground and up to set position.

10-12 Year Olds

Technical: Principles of Goalkeeping

Footwork Exercises

Getting Set

General Handling Techniques

Basic Diving Techniques-General Breakdown of them

Dealing with Crosses-Thrown Services

Distribution-1st touch receiving, control and short passing w/ both feet, Under arm bowling, side and overarm

Throwing to targets, Volleying from the hands, Goal kicks

1v1 Basic Principles

"Quality Not Quantity"

Tactical: Explain the basic tactical role of the goalkeeper-Positional Play-Basic Angle play-Into line and down the line of

The flight of the ball ("Attacking the ball")

Psychological: Simple progression in techniques-Set Standards, Pay Attention to Detail-What Qualities Does a Goalkeeper Need?

Fitness: Warm Ups and Cool Downs

Introduction to the Importance of Stretching

Flexibility and Mobility Exercise (Footwork)

Check Height, Weight, and Vertical Jump 3 times per year (Jan/May/Sept-keep records)

Dribbling

Body Parts (U-6 and U-8)

All players have a ball inside a playing area. As a coach, you call out a body part, players must stop the ball with that body part. You can also play where players have to move the ball with a specific body part.



Red Light Green Light (U-6 and U-8)

There are a couple of different ways to play this game. One way is the method that most are familiar with when players all line up and one end and have to move from one end to the other end. There is a player in the middle who is the traffic light and yells Red light-Green light. When Green light is yelled, players all dribble their ball in an effort to get to the other end. When Red light is yelled, players must all stop the ball and keep it from rolling from their foot. If a player's ball rolls after Red light is yelled then have to go back where the last person is standing, not all of the way back. They could also do a fun little ticket, which is five touch ups on the ball. Whoever gets to the other side is the winner and becomes the traffic light for the next game.

Another way to play the game is for players to all dribble in an area and as a coach, you yell Red light-Green light. A coach could also hold up a red vest or a green vest without speaking and now the players have to look up in order to find the light.

“Everybody’s It” (U-6 to U-10)

All players have a ball inside a playing area. Players must keep their ball at their feet and try and tag as many people as they can in a specific amount of time. After time is up, ask players how many they tagged and challenge them by asking them to tag 2 more people for the next round. Another way it could be played is to divide the team into two and have one team try and tag the other team and count how many they have tagged. Each team collects the total and the other team gets to go.

Belly Button Tag (U-6)

This game is to introduce the U6 player how to protect the ball. All players have a ball inside a playing area. Players must keep their ball at their feet and try and not let the coach touch their belly button. As a coach, it is important that you just act like you are going to touch them so that they turn around and protect the ball.

TV Tag (U-6 to U-10)

This is a takeoff on the old game that used to be played as a kid. All players have a ball inside a playing area. Players must keep their ball at their feet and try and prevent from being tagged. Two players are it inside the playing area and try and tag a player before they can sit down on the ball and name a TV show, cartoon show, etc. The only rule that you give the players is that they can't say the same show more than twice. If a player gets tagged then they join the taggers.

Dribble Freeze Tag (U-6 to U-10)

All players have a ball and are inside playing area. Two-three players are it and are “Ice Monsters” The IM's try and tag as many people as they can. If a player gets tagged then they have to freeze, stand with a ball, hold the ball above their heads and spread their legs. To get unfrozen a “free” player must pass the ball underneath their legs, then they may put their ball down and become unfrozen.

Hospital Tag (U-8 and U-10)

All players have a ball and are inside a playing area. Everybody's it. Players dribble around and try and tag another player. Wherever a player gets tagged, they hold that part of the body. When a player gets tagged three times, they go into the hospital which is a space by the coach and have to take some medicine before getting healed. Medicine could be: 5 touchups, jumping jacks, something fun-nothing serious like push-ups or sit-ups. Play for time. Another way is to have two players that are the only ones that can tag and see how many people they can put into the hospital.

Dribble Math (U-6 to U-10)

All players have a ball and are inside a playing area. Players dribble around and when a coach calls out a number and players have to form groups of the size being called. The last group that forms, get to perform a fun light exercise like 5 touchups, German Jumping Jacks, etc. Coaches can also use real math problems and the players have to figure out the answer and then form groups.

Knockout (U-8 and up)

Every player has a ball and is inside a playing area. Players dribble around and when the coach gives the shout “Knockout”, players go and try and knock someone else's ball outside the playing area. If a player gets their ball knocked

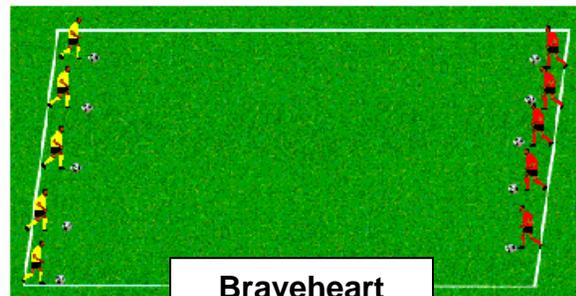
out of the square and it stops rolling, they perform a “fun” exercise and then go back in.

Bombers (U-8 and U-10)

All players have a ball at their feet and are inside a playing area, with the exception of a couple of players. Two-three players have a ball, but they hold it in their hands. They have to dribble their ball around basketball style while moving. They try and throw their ball and hit a ball that is being dribbled out of a circle or playing area. After a while, change the bombers until everyone has had a turn.

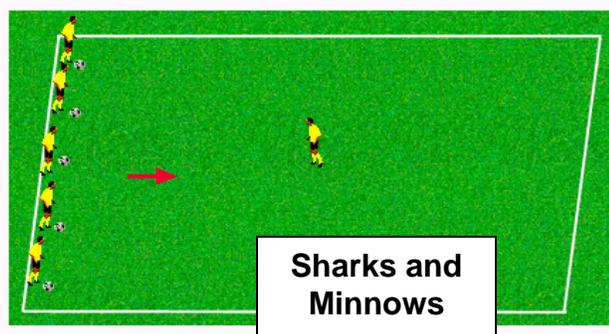
Braveheart (U-8 to U-10)

Divide into two teams. All players have a ball and start by dribbling outside of the square/rectangle. They must, however stay opposite from the other team when traveling with the ball on the outside of the square/rectangle. When coach yells “charge”, they each dribble towards each other and try to get to the other line and stop the ball on the line. The team that has 3 players on the line first gets a point. At first, you could have them walk with the ball, then progress to running with the ball.



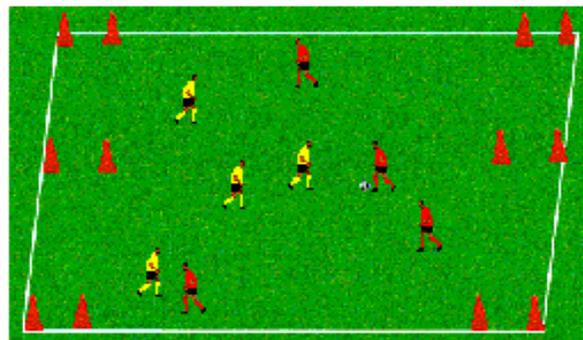
Sharks and Minnows (U-8 and U-10)

All players have a ball and line up on a line facing a direction. One or two players do not have a ball. One of those who do not have a ball yell “Sharks and minnows” and that is the cue for all the players with the ball to try and dribble their ball to the other end of the square without letting the sharks steal their ball. If a shark steals a ball then they become a minnow and the minnow that had their ball taken becomes a shark. There are many different variations to use: A) Sharks steal ball and go to a goal instead of just stealing the ball. B) Minnows must control the ball in a goal area to encourage good ball control instead of just kicking the ball over the end line if a Shark gets close. C) Minnows could all have a tail (vest) hanging out of their shorts and the sharks have to pull out a tail instead of stealing a ball.



Endzone Game (U8 to U-10)

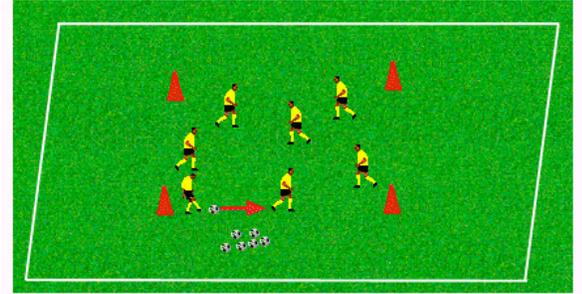
2v2 to 4v4 to an end zone. Two teams of 4. Each team attacks and end zone that is very skinny. Each team defends an end zone. When a team can dribble the ball into the opponent’s end zone, they go the other way. “Make it-Take it”. The ball must be controlled in the end zone or stopped. If the ball goes out, it is dribbled in and not thrown in or passed in as a variation.



Passing and Receiving

Pac Man (U6 to U-10)

All players get inside a very small square/circle without a ball except for 1-2 players who have a ball. A pile of balls is on the outside of the grid. They are to dribble their ball and when they get close enough, try and pass their ball and hit a player without a ball below the knees. Players that get hit by a ball grab a ball and then become it as well. Play until about half of the people have balls, half do not. Then start a new game. The reason for a small area is to keep the distance of passing minimal for safety reasons.

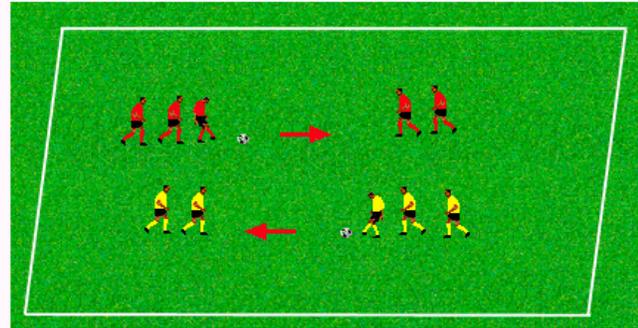


Defrost Tag

See “Dribble Freeze Tag”

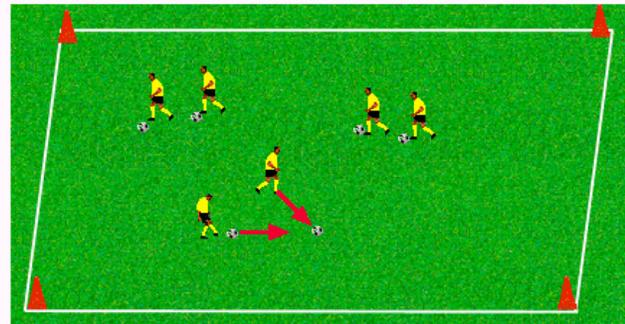
Dynamic Line (U-10 and up)

Players are in lines of 4-5 players. Or 3-4 players per team. Players face each other and one touch passes to each other. If the ball gets passed awkwardly, then the whole line has to move with the ball. Have a competition between two teams. See who can get 10 passes that are complete and straight. Focus on technique with passing and striking the middle of the ball.



Duck Hunt (U-8 and U-10)

Players get into pairs. Each player has a ball. One person is in front of the other like “follow the leader”. The person in front dribbles anywhere, but cannot lose his/her partner who is following right behind with a ball. When the coach says “pull”, the person in front passes their ball to the side and the person behind has to pass immediately and try and hit the ball that was just passed. If a ball is hit then a point is scored. Players switch roles after 3 times. Variation is to allow players in front to decide themselves when they pass a ball out instead of listening to the coaches’ yell.



Moving Target (U-8 to U-12)

The coach has a ball. Coach dribbles around an area then knocks ball forward, players try to pass and hit the ball to get a point.
b) Same as above except two players have a target ball.



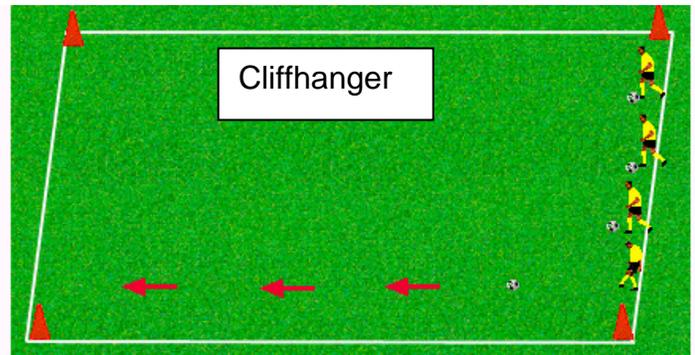
Moving Marbles (U10 and up)

All players have a ball and are inside a playing area. Each player tries to pass and hit another player's ball while they are moving. If a player passes and hits someone else's ball they get a point. **Variation:** Divide into two teams. One team is trying to hit the other team's ball. One team is designated as the passing team, the other is the dribbling team. After time, they switch roles. Play 3 rounds and see which team has the most total amount of hits.



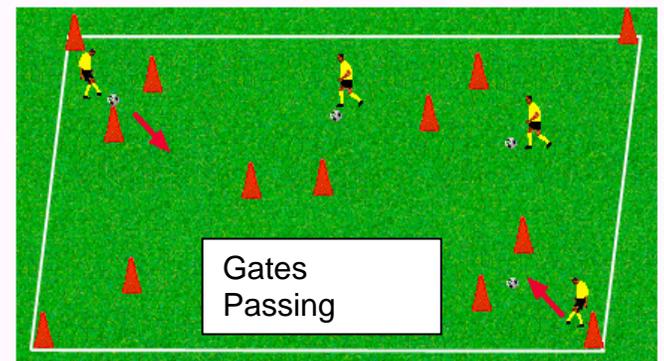
Cliffhanger (U6 to U-10)

Every player has a ball and lines up on the side of a square/rectangle. Each player will pass their ball and after they pass must run and catch up to their pass before the ball crosses the other line. The objective, however, is to pass the ball as close to the other line without it going over the line or cliff. Players could go one at a time or all at once.



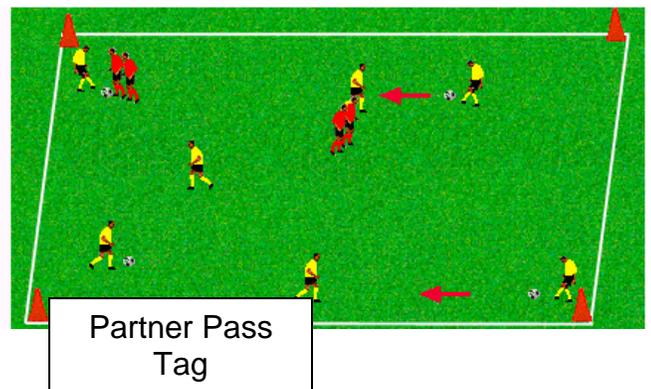
Gates Passing (U8 and up)

All players have a ball inside a playing area. Set up gates/small goals throughout the playing area. Players dribble and pass the ball through as many of the gates as time allows. Variations: a) Players work in pairs and must pass through a gate to their teammate who is on the other side. b) instead of using gates, use cones that can be knocked over and they get a point if they pass and hit a cone so that it knocks over.



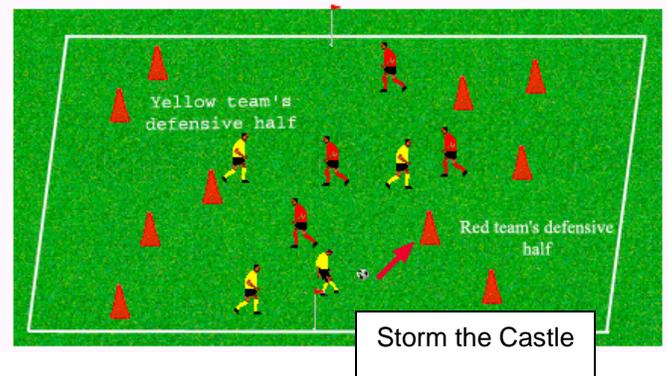
Partner Pass Tag (maybe U-8, primarily U-10 and up)

Players pair up and share a ball. Two pairs do not have a ball and hold a vest, bib, towel, etc between them. They are "it". They try and tag anybody that has a ball. Pairs that have a ball can only pass to each other. If someone that has a ball gets tagged then they along with their partner become "it" and the "it" players now take their ball and try to prevent from being tagged.



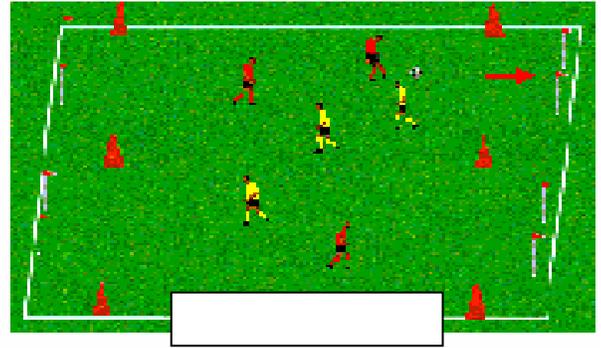
Storm the Castle (U8 and U10)

Make two teams. Each team gets a collection of standup cones and spreads them all over their **defensive half** of the field. It is played like a normal game. When a team knocks over a cone, whoever knocked over the cone picks it up and places the cone on their defensive half. When time is called, the team that has the most cones on their defensive half wins. If needed, play with two balls going at the same time.



Outside Goals (U10 and up)

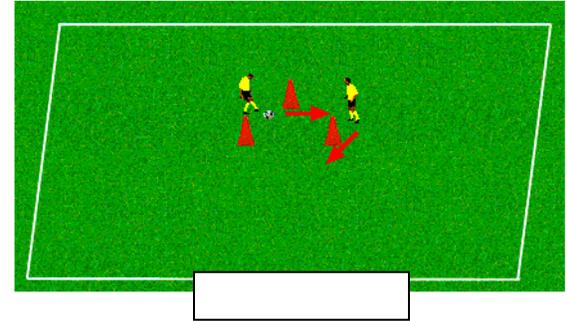
Divide into two teams. Both teams must stay inside the playing area. Each team has 2 goals to score on, but they are outside the playing field. A goal must be scored with a pass from inside the playing area.



Receiving Games

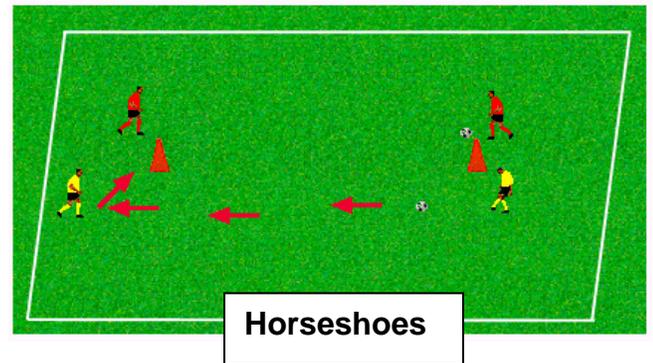
InterMilan (U8 and up)

Two players take 3 cones and spread them about a yard apart into a triangle shape. One player passes the ball through a pair of cones and the other player will then receive the ball and has one touch to take the ball around a cone and then back through for the other player to repeat. Every time they can do this successfully it is a point. Anytime they hit a cone or the pass isn't completed, it is not a point.



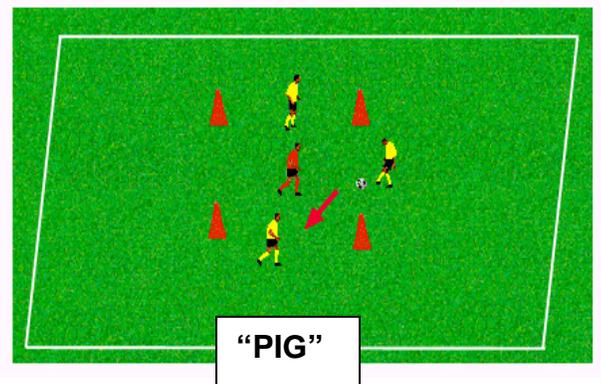
Horseshoes (U8 and U10)

Two players make a team. Two cones/balls are needed. The two cones are placed anywhere from 10-20 yards away depending on ability and whether or not balls will be passed on the ground or in the air. The pairs/teammates are opposite of each other. One teammate passes the ball to their other teammate who has to redirect the ball using only one touch to get the ball as close to the cone as possible, like horseshoes. After one team goes, the other then takes their turn. Whichever team has their ball closest to the cone gets a point. The sequence is simply repeated with the players now switching roles between receiver and passer. Play for a certain amount of points or for time. Balls can be required to be played in the air if players are able. Ball then must be received out of the air without touching the ground and in one touch.



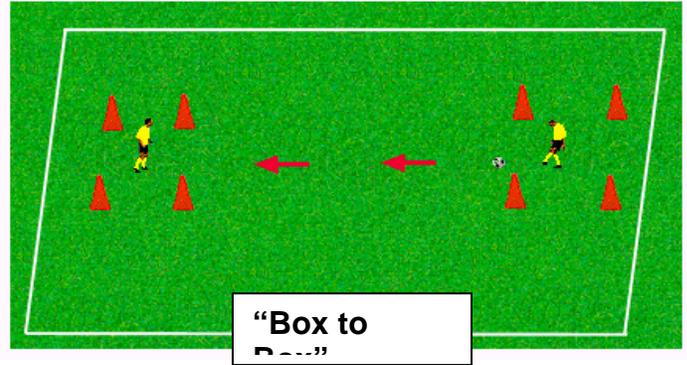
3v1 "PIG" (U8 and U10)

Four players to a square grid. 3 players are on the outside, 1 is in the middle. Player in middle is the defender and must stay inside the square. 3 players must stay on the outside of the square. Outside/receiving players have to take two touches every time they receive the ball. It is a keepaway game. Players on the outside and try and make as many passes without the player in the middle touching the ball or with them not making a mistake. Players on the outside count how many passes they can get against the player in the middle. After a set time, switch the players so that everyone has been in the middle. Whoever has the most passes against them gets a letter. Play like "PIG" in basketball.



Box to Box (U8 and U-10)

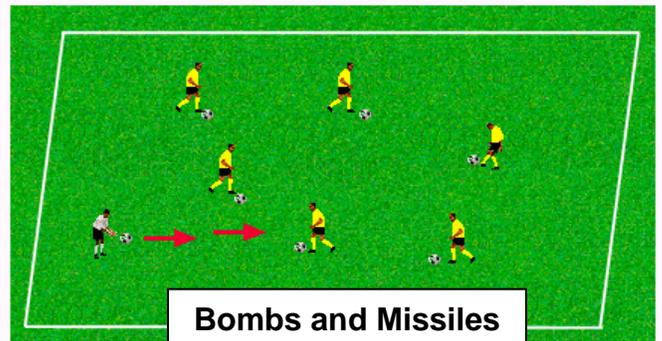
Two players each go inside a square of about 5 x 5. Each box is anywhere from 10-30 yards apart depending on ability and space. The game is played with one ball. Each player takes a turn passing a ball into the other players box. The receiving player has one touch to receive the ball and one to pass it back to the other box. A player receives a point when they receive a pass from the opposite box and it **stays inside** the box. A bonus point is scored when they can successfully pass the ball into the opposite box. A variation would be to have players pass the ball into the air to each other. Another variation is to require the player to take a touch outside the box to the side before they can pass.



“Box to
Box”

Bombs and Missiles (U6 to U-10)

Every player has a ball. The coach also has a ball, which will be the target. Players dribble around and when the coach says “Bombs away”; the players toss their ball in the air and then bring it down with a specific body part that is designated by the coach. While the balls are being tossed, the coach rolls a ball anywhere on the field. When the players successfully bring the ball down, they try and pass to hit the ball that the coach just rolled out and sink it! As the coach, make sure to walk around the field as the players are dribbling.

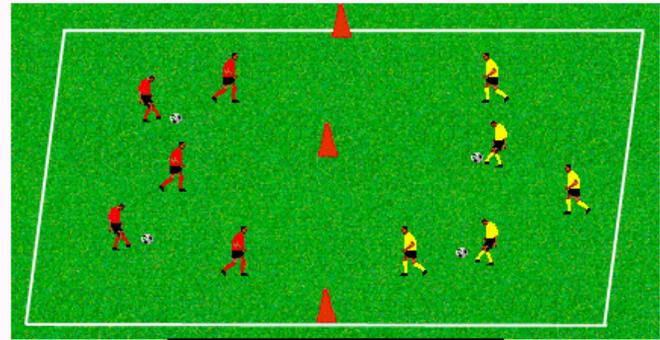


Bombs and Missiles

Shooting/Striking the Ball

Junkyard Soccer (U6 to U12)

Divide team into two teams. Each team goes to a half. Use an odd number of balls, like 5. The objective of the game is to strike the ball into the other team's yard. Each team wants to have a clean yard when time is called by the coach. The team that has the fewest balls on their side when time is called gets a point. Play to a certain amount of points or for time. Variation: Give each team a point every time they can strike the ball past the back line of the playing area. Another variation is to require a pass to be made to a teammate before the ball can be struck back to the other half.



Junkyard Soccer

Moving Goals (U6 to U12)

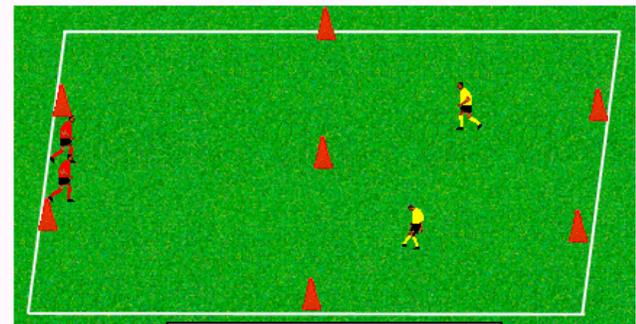
Two teams play a normal game except the coach and a helper or holding a rope, vest, large pole, etc between them. This represents a goal. The goal moves around and the two teams play around the goal and try and shoot the ball under the goal, which is constantly moving around the area. *For U6's each player has a ball and follows coaches around to try and score!*



Moving Goals

Partner Shooting (U6 to U10)

Two pairs play against another pair. Each pair is one half of an area. Goals are marked out. Each pair must stay on their defending half of the area. As a pair, they work together to try and shoot the ball past the other two players and between a goal or a line. At first, have one player roll a ball to their teammate who shoots. Then progress to passing to their teammate. The two players, who attempted a shot, run back and go into goal. Pairs should take turns. Play for a certain number of points or for time.



Partner Shooting

Triangle Goal (U8-U12)

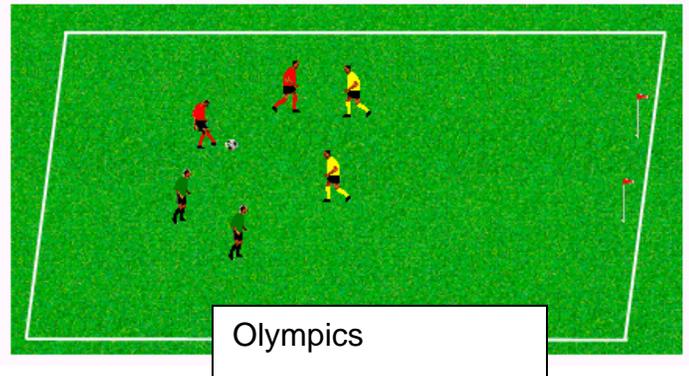
Two teams play around a triangular shaped goal. Play like a normal game. Each side of the triangle has a goalkeeper between two cones. Two teams play against each other and try and shoot the ball past one of the goalkeepers in between the triangle. Play for time and then rotate the goalkeepers.



Triangle Goal

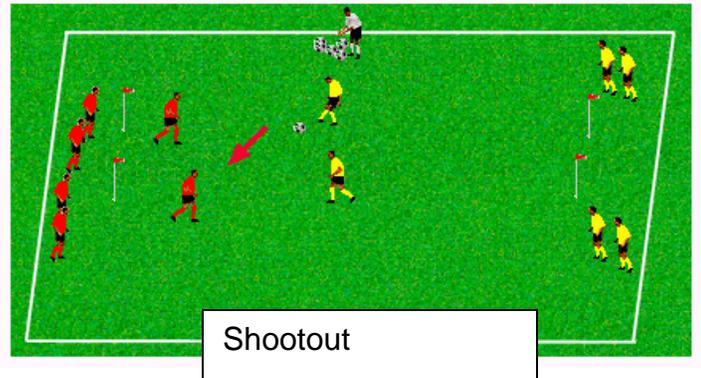
Olympics (U6-U10)

Three teams of 2-3 players. Game is played to one goal. As a coach, you have a pile of balls ready to go on the side. Each team of three picks a country name. When a team scores a goal, then run off the field and yell their country name. The first team to score gets "Gold". The remaining two teams play until one of the two teams scores a goal and then they run off. For being second, they get "Silver". The last team that was scored on gets "Bronze". Play more rounds and then tally up the medals to see who had most Gold medals. You could also give each medal a point value and at the end, tally the amount of points.



Shootout (U8-U12)

Two teams each take a place behind the goals. The coach will yell out a number of players and a direction like "2 Right". Two players from each team run by the right side of the goal and then come in. The coach can call any number and direction. After the coach yells out a number and a direction, they roll in a ball for the players. Play for time or a certain amount of points.



Heading

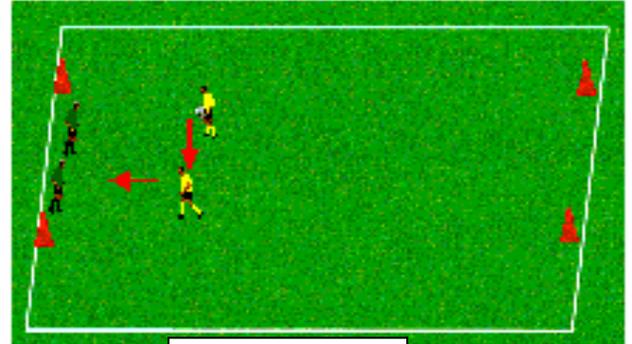
***Heading is not recommended until U10**

Head to Tag (U10 and up)

To warm-up for fun, play "Header Tag". All players are inside a grid. One-three players have a ball and are "it". "It" players run w/ball and try and hit a player with the ball, but they have to throw the ball off their head in order to hit a player. If a player gets hit, then they are "it".

2v2 Battles (U10 and up)

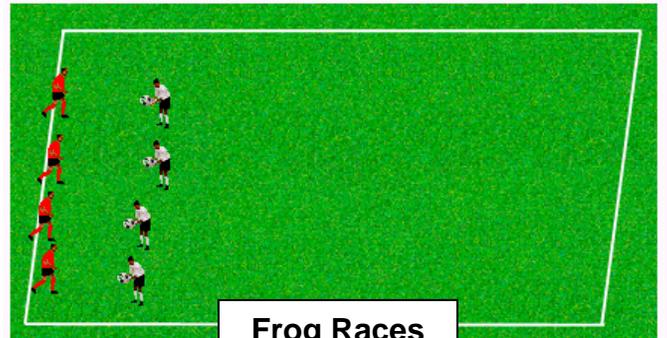
In this game, pairs work together to had the ball marked into the goal (cones). Each pair works together to advance the ball to the other team's goal by heading the ball back and forth or by tossing and heading. The pair who is not advancing the ball must go back to the coned goal and have to stay on the line until the attacking pair have attempted a goal with their head or the ball dropped. Once a ball drops the pair that was attacking must immediately run back to their goal and the pair that was defending can start from where the ball dropped and try and score. FUN GAME! Play for time or points.



2v2 Battles

Frog Races (U10 and up)

Players pair up and share one ball. Teammates face each other. One player has a ball in their hands, the other is facing them, but in a frog position. When the coach says, "Go" The person with the ball tosses to their teammate who has to head it back into their hands from a frog position. Go to a certain point in the area and then players switch roles.



Frog Races

Throw-Head-Catch (U8 and U10)

Players get into groups of 3. One ball is needed. They get into a triangular shape. One person tosses the ball to another person who then heads it to the third person to catch. Every time someone is successful, they get a point.

Small Sided Games

Get Outta Here! (U6 to U10)

This is a very fun shooting game. Divide the teams into two. Each team gets to the right and left of the coach outside the field. The Coach has all of the balls. Each team sends two players out at a time. Two small goals are on each end. Coach plays ball in. Whichever team scores stays. If the ball goes out of bounds, they are both out of there and two players from each team step on. If a team has too many players on the field when the coach plays in a new ball, then it is a penalty kick.

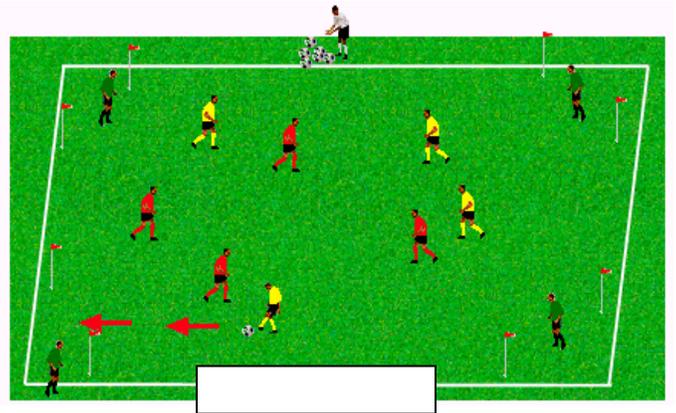


Boss of the Balls (U6 to U10)

Play is simply 4v4 to 5v5 to small goals. The coach is in the middle of the field and on the side. Coach is the “boss of the balls”. Anytime the ball goes out, the players simply leave it and the coach plays in another one. Coach continues this until all of the balls are gone. The coach then tells the players to retrieve them as fast as they can.

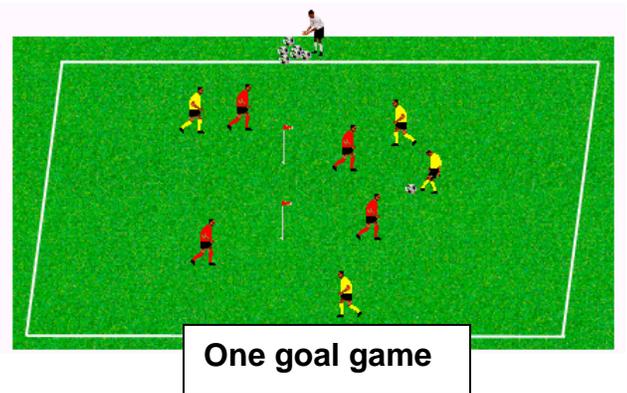
Gatekeeper (U8 and U10)

This next game is a great one that can be used with many age groups. It is good for developing vision, possession for a purpose and other technical implications. The coach makes 4 gates with cones approximately 3-5 yards wide. A player is placed inside or in between each gate. Three teams of 4 or two teams of 7-8 players. Inside the playing field, play 3v3 or 4v4. The coach plays a ball in and then points, does not yell to a gate. The person in the gate that the coach points to steps out of the gate. This is the target gate that both teams are trying to get to. They score when the ball passes through the gate. The player that was in the gate does not try to block the ball, simply step out! If the ball goes outside, the coach plays in another ball and then points to a new gate.



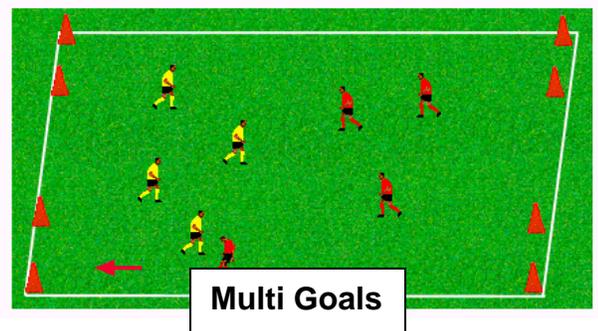
One Goal Game (U10 and up)

Place a goal in the middle of a playing area. Two teams play around one goal. Teams can score from any direction. Can play with or without goalkeepers. A variation would be to have one team score from one side and the other team score from the other.



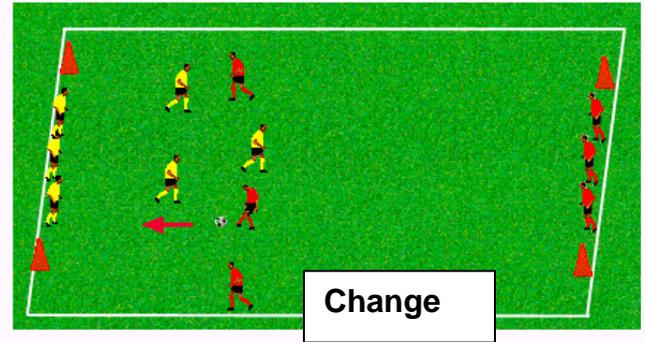
Multiple Goals (U8 and up)

Two teams play a normal game. Each team has two goals to attack and two goals to defend. Goals are placed on the sides of the playing areas. This game is good to teach team shape and to work on getting the team to spread out a bit. When a team is on one side and it is too crowded, can they go to the other side and score?



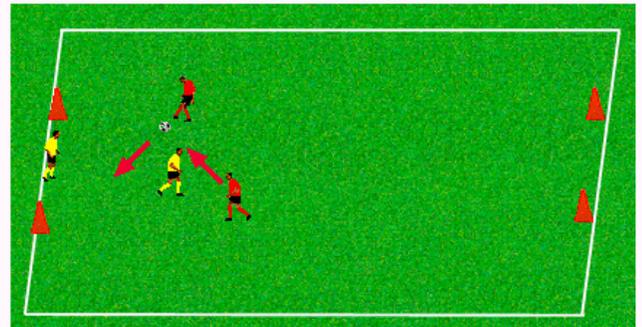
3v3 “Change” (U6 to U12)

Two teams of 6 players. 3 players from each team play out on the field, the other 3 players go into a goal or protect a line. Play like a normal game. When the coach yells “Change” the players who were on the field switch with the players who were in goal. The players simply leave the ball where it was when the coach yells “Change”.



2v1, but in 2's (U10 and up)

Two pairs play together one team. It is a small-sided game that works on 2v1 situations. When a team is attacking, they must attack with 2. The team that is defending, is allowed to have 1 defender on the field and the other player must go back and protect the goal, so it is a 2v1 situation. When the team that is attacking scores or a there is a change of possession, the teams simply change roles. Could play with any number of players, just that when a team is defending someone must go and play the role of the goalkeeper.



Street Games

In this section, I would like to share some "Street Games" with you. The concept of doing a "Street Game" within your training session is so that hopefully players will want to play these games when they are away from training. We want the kids to simply play as much as they can on their own. I have taken some traditional "Street Games" that I played as a youth and put a ball along with it. If you know of anymore "Street Games", please do not hesitate to contact me.

"21" (U10 and up)

This game is played like the basketball game. Points are two for a goal and one for a "Freeby". Play any amount of players, but 3-4 is best. Make a goal with cones, bags, balls tree, trashcan, etc. Like the basketball playground version, it is everyone for themselves. The goal is either made in a triangular shape, or a square. Points (goals) may be scored from any direction, but must be from outside of the goal and go through two cones, bags, hit the trashcan, tree, etc. When someone scores a goal, they get a "freeby" (free throw). A cone, mark, spot is designated to shoot the freeby from. All other players have to line up even with the "freeby" shooter and can enter when the ball has been touched. In order to get the bonus point, the ball must stop inside the goal. The freeby spot is approximately 10 yards or so from the goal. If the ball does not stop inside the goal, then it is live. Whoever gets the ball may score. You could make everyone take the ball back to a line, which would be opposite of the Freeby mark before scoring if desired. It is a fun game that can be modified for even older age groups. For example, make older aged kids chip the ball inside the box for a freeby to count. Like in the street or park, you must end on 21, not 22 or higher. If you do, then you go back to having 13 points. Make up other rules as you go along.

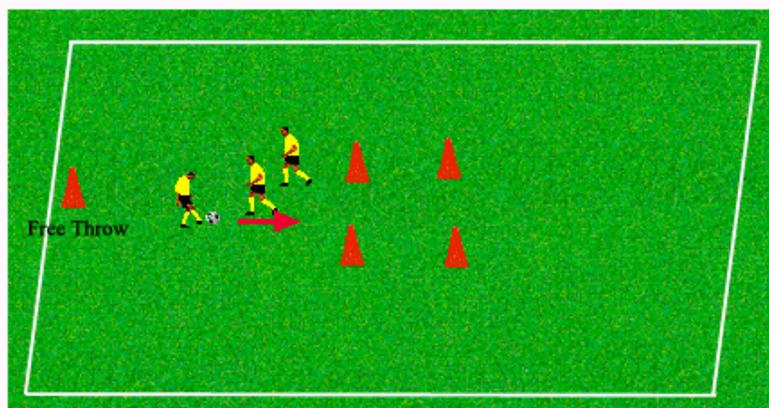
Other Ideas for this game:

- 1) Could place a ball or other type of object to be hit for the point.
- 2) After a freeby, the first player to touch a missed freeby after it has been played checks up with someone and then play is started again.
- 3) Could play in teams and play 2v2, 3v3, etc.

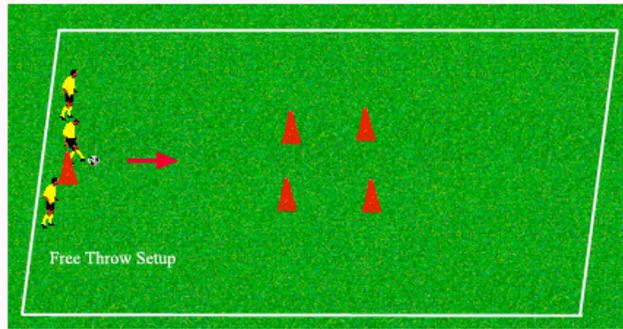
Freeby's- 1) Ball is played into the square with a back heel; 2) Ball is chipped and must bounce once before stopping inside the square; 3) Place a ball inside the square and players must hit ball.

Below are the diagrams for the game:

Original Setup

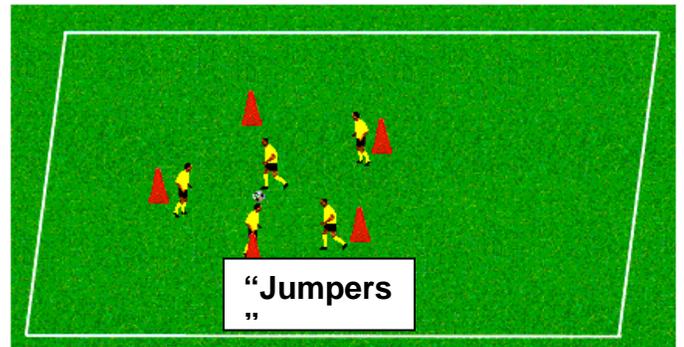


"Freeby" Setup



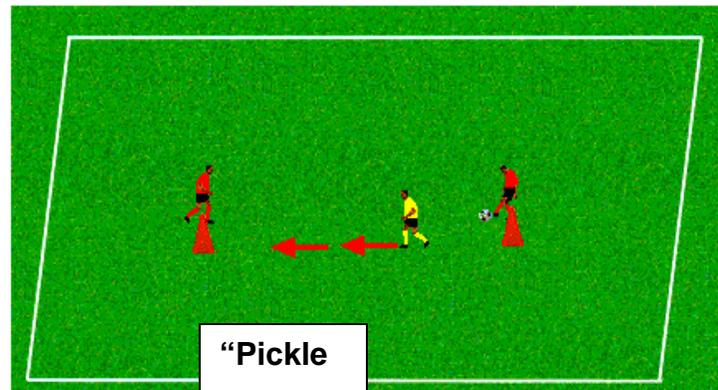
"Jumpers" (U10 and up)

This is an English game. Any number of players can play. It is everybody for themselves in this one. Each person has a goal, bag, cones, whatever to protect. Make a circle with the goals. One ball is used. Each person is trying to score on each other's goal or "jumper". If the ball goes out of the circle, the "jumper" closest to where the ball went out gets to take the ball. Goals are scored by hitting the bag, cones, etc. Play to whoever gets 3 goals (jumpers). Could also play if you get scored on twice then you are out. Make it a knockout competition. Groups of 4-5 players are ideal.



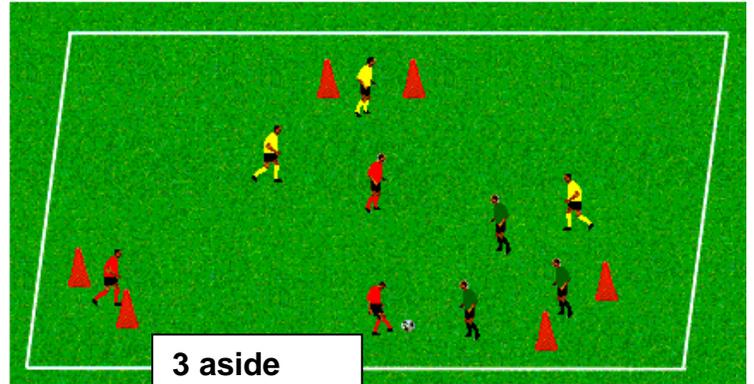
"Pickle" (U10 and up)

When I played this game with a baseball, we called it "hotbox". 3 players for this one. One person is the base runner. The other two take place by a base (cone). Each player guards a cone (base). The two players guarding the base pass the ball back and forth to each other. Whenever the base runner feels, they can run and try to touch as many bases as possible without being tagged. In order to be tagged, the fielder (player guarding base) must have the ball at their feet and then tag the runner with the ball. You can either set the rule that the ball has to be on their feet or allow the players to "tag" the player by passing it and hitting them below the knee. It's fun to see the kids play this one. They play a lot of one touch and don't really even realize it. The fielders try to get the runner in a pickle or get the runner caught between the two bases. Then they can run that player down. Whoever tags the runner becomes the runner. The person that touches the most bases wins.



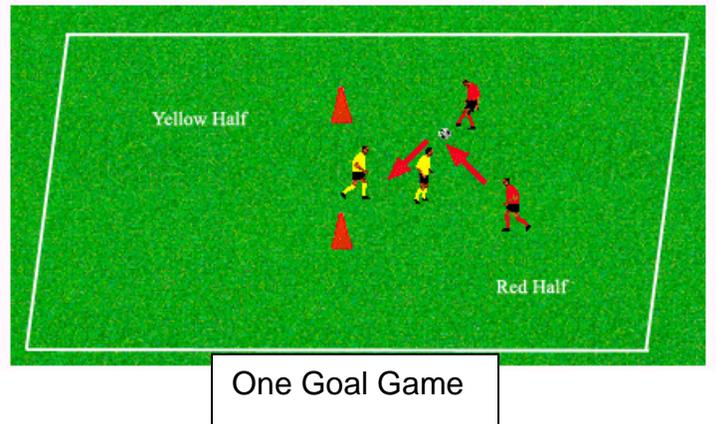
3 a side soccer U10 and U12)

3 teams of 2-3 players. Each team guards one goal. It is every team against each other. The three teams play against each other and try to score goals. Use bags, cones, balls, etc. for goals. The team that gives up 3 goals loses the match. When that is achieved the game starts over. As the game goes, teams pledge allegiances to each other only to be traitors. A team can pass to another team, but they don't have to pass the ball back. Be careful because the team that you may trust, just may turn on you.



One Goal Game (U10 and up)

Two teams of 2, 3, or 4 players. The goal is in the middle of the field. Each team has a designated side in which they can score on. When a team is defending, one person must go into goal. The others remain and defend. When a goal is scored and goes thru the middle goal, the team that was scored on now attacks. The same is true for when a shot is taken and it goes into the other teams then the team that shot the ball must now defend on the other half and the defending team changes.



Prevention and Care of Soccer Injuries

I. Basic Concepts

- The first line of defense in the treatment of soccer injuries is to prevent them. This is accomplished by a well organized program, a proper warm-up, and adherence to the Laws of the Game. **ALWAYS ERR ON THE SIDE OF CAUTION!**
- Proper equipment (shin guards, appropriate/tied shoes, no jewelry, appropriate uniform)
- Upkeep and monitoring of playing surface
- Ample water supply and breaks.
- Prior knowledge of existing conditions (asthma, sprains, etc.)
- If a player is injured, inform parents and follow-up within 48 hours.
- Keep a First-Aid kit accessible
- Have medical release forms, information forms and treatment forms signed by parents for each player.

II. Basic First Aid Information

- R.I.C.E.**-Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation
- Strains are the stretching of tendon or muscle fibers, recommended treatment: **R.I.C.E.**
- Sprains are the stretching of ligaments, recommended treatment: R.I.C.E.
- Dislocations and Fractures involve deformation or breaking of bones, recommended treatment: seek medical treatment **Immediately.**
- Cramps are a result of an insufficient flow of blood to the muscle and can be caused by a blow to the muscle, insufficient consumption of fluids, poor diet or fatigue. Recommended treatment: massage and stretch
- Heat Exhaustion is exhibited by signs of weakness, pale skin, cold and clammy skin, pupils slightly dilated, and a rapid pulse. Recommended treatment: remove from the game immediately, lie down in a cool or shaded area, give plenty of liquids and if improvement is minimal, should see a doctor.

Heat Stroke is a life-threatening situation where the body has lost a significant amount of fluid and salt. Exhibited by high body temperature, hot to the touch, dry and flushed skin, strong rapid pulse, and player is dizzy and weak. Recommended treatment: give a cold bath (pouring ice water over body) and give plenty of cold fluids, get to medical care immediately.

Blisters are often caused by poor fitting footwear, usually shoes that are too big (so the player can "grow into them") and/or wet, causing excessive rubbing against the skin. Recommended treatment: apply adhesive tape to the reddened area and do not use gauze (the sore will rub against the tape rather than the skin.)

Concussions are caused by a blow to the head and are mild bruising of brain tissue. Recommended treatment: get player checked immediately by a physician.

II. Rules of thumb when handling injuries

- When an accident occurs, stop all activity.
- Look for any deformity, discoloration, bleeding or shock.
- Ask questions. Have the player explain where it hurts.
- Stay calm, inspire confidence and reassurance in the injured player
- Follow up all injuries by informing parents. Especially Head Injuries!
- Don't move the player if the injury looks serious.
- Seek professional help when appropriate

Dehydration Facts - It can happen faster than you think!²

In less than one hour of physical activity, an athlete may become dehydrated and performance and health will surely suffer.

Dehydration of just 1-2% of body weight (only 0.6-1.2 lbs. for a 60 lb. athlete) can negatively influence performance.

Dehydration of greater than 3% of body weight substantially increases an athlete's risk of heat illness (heat cramps, heat exhaustion, or heat stroke).

During physical activity, most athletes only drink enough fluid to replace 50% of what was lost.

Thirst should not be used as a guideline. Once an athlete is thirsty, he has already started to become dehydrated.

Dehydration Warning Signs

Basic signs of dehydration are:²

- Thirst
- Irritability
- Headache
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Cramps
- Nausea
- Decreased performance

Risk Factors

The following are risk factors for heat illness. An athlete experiencing one or more of these should be closely monitored while engaged in physical activity in high heat and humidity.^{1, 2}

- Dehydration or previous heat problems
- Physical barriers to evaporation - *(includes athletic equipment or wearing excessive or dark colored clothing)*
- History of Illness - *(Sickness involving sweating, vomiting, and diarrhea increases susceptibility to heat related illnesses.)*
- Overweight

Risk Factors (cont'd)

- Poor physical conditioning
- Lack of adjustment to the heat
- Medications and drugs - *(Some medications result in a dehydrating effect. Also alcohol and caffeine can cause an increased loss of body fluids.)*

- Fluid imbalance - *(This can result from not replacing fluids from a previous exercise session or from vomiting or diarrhea.)*

What to Drink During Exercise

Water is adequate for 45-50 minutes of physical activity. However, if activity lasts longer or is particularly intense, sports drinks are more effective in replacing fluids and nutrients. Through sweat, the body loses essential nutrients that must be replaced to ensure peak athletic performance.² The body loses important nutrients, through sweat, that need to be replaced in order to not affect an athlete's health and performance.

If exercise lasts longer than 45-50 minutes and you are unable to provide a sports drink, cold water (50-55 degrees F) should be provided in order to replace the fluid that has been lost.

What to Drink During Exercise (cont'd)

The carbohydrate concentration in the ideal fluid replacement solution should be in the range of 6-8%.²

Fluids with salt are beneficial to increase thirst and voluntary fluid intake as well as offsetting the amount of salt lost in sweat

What NOT to Drink During Exercise²

Fruit juices, carbohydrate gels, sodas and those sports drinks that have carbohydrate levels greater than 8% are **not recommended** as the sole beverage during exercise.

The use of beverages comprising caffeine, alcohol, and carbonated water is discouraged because they may cause dehydration by stimulating urine production and decreasing voluntary fluid intake.

Hydration Tips²

- Drink according to a schedule based on individual fluid needs. By the time you become thirsty, you're already dehydrated.
- Drink before, during and after practices and games (follow the fluid guidelines listed to maintain hydration and maximize performance).
- Avoid soft drinks and juices during play. Drinks with high carbohydrate content may cause stomach problems.

Fluid Replacement Guidelines²

Before Exercise

- Drink 17-20 oz. of water or a sports drink 2-3 hours before exercise.
- Drink an additional 7-10 oz. of water or sports drink 10-20 minutes before exercise.

Fluid Replacement Guidelines (cont'd)²

During Exercise

- Begin drinking early during the sporting event - even minimal dehydration compromises performance.
- In general, drink at least 7-10 oz. of water or a sports drink every 10-20 minutes. Remember to drink beyond your thirst to maintain hydration. Optimally, drink fluids based on the amount of sweat and urine loss.
- **Athletes should be given unlimited access to fluids.**

- Weight, before and after practice, should be monitored to determine proper hydration levels. Parents may be given this responsibility.

Fluid Replacement Guidelines (cont'd)²

After Exercise

- Within two hours, drink enough to replace weight loss from exercise.

Signs of Adequate Hydration

- Body weight is within 2% from previous exercise session.
- Lighter urine. (Darker urine indicates dehydration.)
- Thirst is satisfied or lightened. However, remember, if you wait until you are thirsty, you are already dehydrated!

US Soccer's Youth Soccer Heat Stress Guidelines

The popularity of soccer among American youth is at an all-time high. Nearly 14 million young athletes (13,832,000) under the age of 18 play soccer at elite and recreational levels in the United States.

The rapid growth of youth soccer participation in recent years, coupled with an increased need for qualified and certified coaches, has made insuring the safety of youth soccer players more important than ever before. Moreover, new youth soccer research from the University of Connecticut and serious cases of heat illness in the past few years across a variety of sports has prompted the U.S. Soccer Federation to issue an updated version of its "Youth Soccer Heat Stress Guidelines."

The aim is to help parents, young athletes and coaches understand one of the most common and most preventable sports injuries - heat-related illnesses, including dehydration, heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

The following information and youth heat stress guidelines provide suggestions for preventing the potentially dangerous and sometimes deadly effects of playing in hot or humid conditions.

PHYSIOLOGICAL FACTORS THAT PUT YOUNG ATHLETES AT RISK

Heat-induced illness is one of the most preventable sports injuries. Parents, young athletes and coaches need to understand the physiological factors that put children and adolescents at risk for heat-related illness and take steps to prevent it.

Exercising children face unique stresses when they perform intense exercise in the heat. Like adults, they may have trouble adapting to the physiological demands of high environmental temperatures when participating in soccer practice and game situations. When a youth is also dehydrated this may exacerbate the response to exercise in the heat.

The physiological/psychological reasons that place children at risk are:

- Children absorb more heat from a hot environment because they have a greater surface-area to body-mass ratio than adults. The smaller the child the faster the heat absorption.
- Children and adolescents may have a reduced ability to dissipate heat through sweating.
- Children and adolescents frequently do not have the physiological drive to drink enough fluids to replenish sweat losses during prolonged exercise.
- Youth athletes may be more easily distracted when occasions allow for them to rest and rehydrate.
- Some youth athletes may be under intense pressure to make a competitive squad and may not want to report feelings of heat distress or take the appropriate amount of time to rehydrate.

FACTORS THAT PUT YOUNG SOCCER PLAYERS AT RISK

In addition to physiological considerations, several factors specific to the sport of soccer place young players at risk for heat illness. However, these risks can be reduced significantly with the close attention of medical staff (i.e. athletic trainers), parents, young athletes and their coaches. These soccer-specific factors are:

- Limited stoppage time during matches, with players constantly running and moving.
- Young soccer players are not encouraged to use the limited stoppage time they do have for fluid consumption.
- Games are held outdoors, often in high temperatures and humidity, on large fields that offer little or no shade. Heat radiated by the sun is a major component of heat stress. This issue is complicated by limited access to shaded areas for players between halves or between games.
- Young players fail to drink enough fluids at tournaments and summer camps, where numerous games and practices take place each day.
- Games and practice sessions are often not modified when players are confronted with extreme heat and humidity conditions.

Additional Factors to Consider

Communication between playing fields and medical tents at tournaments is sometimes insufficient.

Many teams fail to recognize the need and/or importance of using light-colored, loose-fitting uniforms.

Referees could be unaware of the need and/or importance of fluid breaks.

Mental alertness and skill performance decline with dehydration⁶ and could be a factor in injuries occurring late in matches and training sessions.

HEAT ILLNESS PREVENTION TECHNIQUES

Acclimatization to the heat is an important factor in preventing heat illness. The rate of acclimation for children is slower than that of adults⁷. A child needs as many as 8 to 10 days (45-60 minutes/day) in the new climate to acclimate sufficiently. Such exposures can be taken at a rate of one per day or one every other day. A majority of the benefits of acclimatization occur in the first 4-6 days and hence this should be an absolute minimum amount of time provided to children before intense practice and game situations are enacted. During the acclimation process, it's important to drink adequate amounts of fluid to build blood plasma volumes.

When a child becomes heat acclimated, the child's sweat rate and total sweat losses increase because they begin to sweat sooner and produce more sweat than before becoming acclimated. This allows the child to dissipate more body heat into the environment through sweat evaporation. When a child becomes acclimated and the child's sweat rate increases, it's important the child drink sufficient fluids to replace the increased sweat losses and stay hydrated. Medical staff, parents, players and coaches must understand that thirst is not a good indicator of a child's fluid needs,⁸ so children need to drink on a schedule (see FLUID GUIDELINES below).

Children must wear clothing that is light-colored and lightweight to facilitate evaporation of sweat. Parents and coaches should encourage breaks in a shaded area whenever possible, especially during tournaments, multi-game and multi-practice days. It's important to be aware of high temperatures and humidity and change practice and game times to cooler portions in the day, such as morning and dusk. Additionally, competitive rules need to be relaxed during hot weather playing conditions by allowing a 5-minute break in the middle of each half and allowing water bags to be carried by players during play. Practices must be modified based on conditions. Add rest breaks to lower core temperature and provide ample time to rehydrate.

ACTIVITY RESTRICTIONS FOR OUTDOOR PHYSICAL CONDITIONING IN HOT WEATHER

WBGT* Degrees C (Degrees F)	Flag Color	Guidance = for non-acclimatized personnel in boldface <i>Guidance for fully acclimatized personnel in italics</i>
less than 78.0 F	no flag	Extreme exertion may precipitate heat illness
78.0 F - 82.0 F	Green	Use discretion in planning intense exercise <i>Normal activity</i> Pay special attention to at-risk individuals in both cases.
82.1 F - 86.0 F	Yellow	Limit intense exercise to 1 hour, limit total outdoor exercise to 2.5 hours <i>Use discretion in planning intense physical activity</i> Pay special attention to at-risk individuals in both cases. Be on high alert: watch for early signs and symptoms in both cases.
86.1 F - 89.9 F	Red	Stop outdoor practice sessions and outdoor physical conditioning <i>Limit intense exercise to 1 hour, limit total outdoor exercise to 4 hours</i> Be on high alert: watch for early signs and symptoms throughout.
greater than 90 F	BLACK	Cancel all outdoor exercise requiring intense physical exertion <i>Cancel all outdoor exercise requiring intense physical exertion</i>

FLUID GUIDELINES

The U.S. Soccer Federation provides these guidelines to help parents, players and coaches prevent dehydration and heat illness in young athletes who are active in the heat:

1) Weigh each player before and after activity to determine how much fluid he or she loses during activity. If a player is lighter after activity then encourage a little more fluid consumption during the next practice/game. If the player is heavier after activity then encourage a little less fluid during the next practice/game.

2) According to the American Academy of Pediatrics:

Before prolonged physical activity, the child should be well hydrated. During the activity, periodic drinking should be enforced even if the child does not feel thirsty and each 20 minutes the child or adolescent should consume:

- 5 ounces of fluid for a player weighing 90 lbs or less
- 9 ounces of fluid for a player weighing more than 90 lbs. Supporting research states:

To ensure that the child is not dehydrated before the start of the practice session or game, the child should drink 12-16 ounces of fluid approximately 30 minutes before getting to the field.

Once the activity is over, players should drink water or a sports drink every 20 minutes for an hour

* Recent research shows that adolescent males typically lose 1-1.5 liters per hour when performing intense soccer practices/games in the heat, while younger males and females will lose from 0.6 to 1 liter per hour.

3) Teach the youth soccer player to monitor his/her own hydration status with the following tip: If their urine (as it flows, not when diluted in the bowl) is a pale yellow like lemonade then they are likely pretty well hydrated. If their urine is dark yellow like apple juice then they are likely dehydrated. This is an easy and accurate way to assess hydration status and it gets the kids involved on a personal level.

4) Kids need to drink enough of the right fluids to replenish fluid losses during activity.

Flavored beverages that contain sodium (sports drinks) are preferable because the child may drink more of them.

Research shows that lightly sweetened and flavored non-carbonated beverages, like sports drinks, are preferred during exercise and are consumed in greater volumes than water, diluted fruit juice or carbonated beverages.

Research shows that fluids containing sodium chloride (sports drinks) increase voluntary drinking by 90%, compared to drinking plain water.

5) In addition to replacing fluid, children also need to replace the electrolytes, such as sodium, lost through sweat. Electrolyte replacement is important to stimulate an adequate thirst mechanism, help the body hold on to fluid, help prevent muscle cramps¹⁷ and to maintain sodium levels in the blood.

6) Fluids children should avoid immediately before and during activity include fruit juices, carbonated beverages, caffeinated beverages and energy drinks.

Fruit juices have a high sugar content, which can slow fluid absorption and cause upset stomach, may also lack sodium. Carbonated beverages, such as soft drinks, can reduce voluntary drinking due to stomach fullness and throat burn when gulping and lack sodium. Energy drinks should be avoided because many contain caffeine and have high carbohydrate concentrations, which slows the emptying of fluids from the stomach.

7) Be sure that each child has his/her own beverage container and that they have the opportunity to keep it cool during the practice. An individual container will allow them to monitor fluid consumption more accurately, can be filled with beverage of personal preference, will help avoid the spread of germs and viruses and the cool fluid will be replenished at a better rate than a container that sits out in the sun.

Additionally, it is important to note that dehydration also hinders exercise performance. So to maintain the same level of intensity while dehydrated the athlete will have to work even harder to keep up with everyone else.

SIGNS OF DEHYDRATION AND HEAT ILLNESS

If dehydration progresses unchecked, the risk of heat illness increases. Heat illness is best understood in three separate degrees of severity: heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and the most serious and deadly form, heat stroke. The symptoms outlined below are not always additive and do not necessarily occur in progression. This means a young athlete could experience heat stroke in absence of other indicators.

Dehydration

Dehydration during exercise is a common problem. Some young athletes can begin to suffer the consequences of dehydration if they become dehydrated by just 2 percent of their body weight during exercise in the heat. That's why it's important to recognize the warning signs:

Noticeable thirst

Irritability

Decreased performance

Fatigue

Weakness

Nausea

Headache

Muscle Cramping

Dark yellow urine (or no desire to urinate)

Lightheaded feeling or dizziness

Difficult paying attention

Treating the symptoms of dehydration is crucial in preventing more serious conditions such as heat exhaustion.

1) Have the player rest in a cool place

2) Provide a sports drink that contains electrolytes

3) Prevent dehydration in the future by insuring the player consumes fluids before, during and after exercise (educate and allow ample time to rehydrate)

Muscle Cramping

Muscle cramping can be associated with exposure to excessive heat. Painful involuntary whole-body muscle cramps are often associated with loss of fluids and sodium. Some of the signs and symptoms of muscle cramps include:

Muscle spasms

"Knotting" of muscles and muscle pain

Excessive sweat loss

Excessive saltiness of sweat over the skin or visible dried salt on the skin

Excessive dehydration

To treat a young athlete suffering from muscle cramps:

Have them drink fluids with electrolytes, like a sports drink
Gently stretch and massage cramped muscles
Have them rest in a cool, shaded area
Apply ice to the cramped area
Consider additional sodium in palatable food source, like pretzels, etc.

Heat Exhaustion

As a child becomes dehydrated, the likelihood of heat exhaustion may increase if left untreated. Eventually, fatigue and exhaustion occur because the cardiovascular system can no longer support exercise and core body temperature control at the same time. Common symptoms of heat exhaustion are:

Dizziness & Fatigue
Feeling chilly
Rapid pulse
Treatment of heat exhaustion is similar to that of dehydration and should take place immediately.

This treatment includes:
Rest the child in a cool, shaded and place ice cold towels on them
Drink a sports drink that contains electrolytes
Have the child lie down with legs elevated to promote circulation
Athlete should begin to feel better relatively soon, if not, assume heat stroke

Heat Stroke

Heat stroke is a medical emergency, when it is not recognized promptly and treated properly it can result in death. Exertional heat stroke occurs when the thermoregulatory system is overwhelmed and/or fails to act in an appropriate manner. At this point, damage to critical organs can occur if the organs remain overheated for an extended period of time, hence the need for rapid cooling. If rapid cooling does not occur, the cellular damage to the organs could be extreme and have fatal consequences. Symptoms and results of heat stroke include: Very high core body temperature (measured rectally - do not use oral, axillary, tympanic, temporal artery, etc, these other modes are not valid immediately following intense exercise in the heat.

Altered CNS function (i.e. confusion or unconsciousness or altered mental status, feeling out-of-sorts, extreme lethargy)
Otherwise healthy athlete collapses during intense exercise in the heat

If an accurate temperature cannot be obtained then rely on CNS function. Relying on an inaccurate temperature device could delay treatment. Remember athletes get better relatively quickly with heat exhaustion and they get worse with heat stroke. The important thing to remember is that heat stroke must be treated immediately by doing the following: Immediately cool the victim down by whatever means possible

- An ice bath is preferable due to the superior cooling rates (holding head out of bath)
- Ice packs over as much as body as possible
- A cool shower
- Cool, wet towels
- Water spray

SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION IMMEDIATELY (always transport a suspected exertional heat stroke to the hospital! Do not provide fluids since nausea and vomiting are extremely common. Remove from cooling source when temperature is lowered to 102 degrees F.

Courtesy of the US Soccer Federation

Indiana Youth Soccer Code of Conduct

The coaches, managers, parent(s)/adult spectators, administrators, and referees are expected to conduct himself/herself at all times, both on and off the field in a manner which insures a fun, safe, and healthy youth soccer environment."

*Coaches, managers, parent(s)/adult spectators, administrators, and referees shall:

1. Bear responsibility for teaching players to strive for success while playing fairly and observing the laws of the game at the highest level of sportsmanship.
2. Treat officials with respect and dignity, and shall teach their players to do the same.
3. Model such respect for opponents and expect their players to do likewise.
4. In both victory and defeat, the behavior of all shall model grace, dignity and composure.
5. Adhere to the highest standards and the regulations of the institutions they represent: clubs, sponsoring organizations, and sports governing bodies.
6. Model inclusive behavior by supporting cultural diversity and opposing all types of discrimination, including but not limited to, racism and sexism, at all levels of the game.
7. Be responsible for taking a role in educating players about the prevention of and problems associated with drug, alcohol, and tobacco abuse.
8. Be responsible for taking an active role in education regarding the care and prevention of injuries, and risk management.
9. Refrain from all manner of personal abuse and harassment of others, whether verbal, physical, emotional or sexual, and shall oppose such abuse and harassment at all levels of the game.
10. Respect the declared affiliations (clubs, leagues, and associations) of all players.
11. Seek to honor and respect those who uphold the highest standards and principles of soccer and shall use appropriate protocol to oppose and eliminate all behavior that brings disrepute to the sport-violence, abuse, dishonesty, disrespect, and violations of the laws of the game and rules governing competition.
12. Coaches are responsible for the actions of their parents/other relatives and will take an active role in parent education.

Coaches, managers, parent(s)/adult spectators, administrators, and referees will be held accountable to the Indiana Youth Soccer Code of Conduct. Violators may be subject to review by the Indiana Youth Soccer Disciplinary Committee or any other governing organization such as clubs or leagues.

From the Touchline

Vince Ganzberg-Director of Education for Indiana Youth Soccer

“A coach needs to show a face its team needs to see”.

Mike Krzyzewski Men’s Basketball Coach for Duke University

“Too often, we give children answers to remember rather than problems to solve.”

Roger Lewin, US Humorist, Author

Let’s start by looking at some numbers: In a 4 v 4 match there are 56 channels of communication available on the field. In a 6v.6 match there are 132 channels. In an 8v8 match there are 240, and in an 11 v 11 match there are 462 channels of communication on the field. So why do we still do so much coaching from the sidelines? For some of us who played sports other than soccer growing up, that’s the way we were coached. The coach was the sage on the stage, in control of the ship. Yet soccer isn’t basketball, football, or baseball. It is chess in motion, where players are in control of their own destinies, regardless of age and ability. I watch many youth games and my theory as to why kids don’t spread out? They have coaches yelling at them on sideline and then the parents are yelling at them on the other, they don’t really like to hear it so they just all stay in the middle.

We have to remember that when you are coaching, you are also teaching. I remember when I was a director of coaching for a club and I would get parent complaints about their child’s coach is not “coaching” them during the game. My response? GOOD! I would then go on to say that if he/she was then I knew that they didn’t do their job during the week while training them. I also remember hearing Peyton Manning talk about Tony Dungy and the interviewer was mentioning how Coach Dungee really doesn’t get worked up during the games. Peyton’s answer was that “After Friday, coach puts the hay in the barn”. Translation is that there is really not much more that he can do except make some adjustments here or there on game day. The rest is up to the players.

How many of you would expect your child’s teacher to give them the answers to every test? Literally stand by them and scream out the answers by their desks? I am sure that many parents would have “issues” with that teacher because how else is there child going to learn. When I was in the classroom I would use the tests as a measuring stick to see how much my students knew and to also see how well I taught them. If they didn’t do well on the test, then I knew I had to re-teach, but I never once stood by their desks and screamed the answer to make sure that every student received an “A”. The same can apply to youth coaching in that these matches really should just be little quizzes. Let them play without your guidance, encourage them because that is allowed, and whatever the result is, it is. Use these little quizzes to help you with your next week’s training session. In training, it’s important for coaches to put players in situations that force them to improve their vision and decision-making, without coaches telling them where to go, where to run, and when to dribble, pass or shoot. The reason is that players already have to process a great deal of information—much of it coming from off the field! Soccer is definitely a multi-tasking sport. Players need to learn to make their own decisions during game time.

How many of us adults can e-mail one person and talk to someone else on the phone at the same time? Not many. Most of us have to either quit typing and talk, or quit talking and type. The point is that for coaches, there are times to instruct and teach, but these things should be done at practice, not during the game.

Being the “Guide On The Side”

For a player’s overall development, it’s vital for coaches to facilitate the learning environment without controlling it. Coaches need to put the players in control and give them confidence that they can play without guidance from the sideline during the match. Instead of thinking about what they’re going to do with the ball, players need to know what they’re going to do with it. When this starts happening consistently, then we know we’re creating the right environment for player development. Putting players in control of making their own decisions creates learning experiences (both good and bad) that foster development. We need players who “feel” and “sense” the game. We don’t have enough of those players. The only way we get these players is to let them play with freedom and understand that they are going to make mistakes. I saw a coach scream at a player during the state cup for taking a shot and missing! I think he thought that she had a better option. As I continued to watch the match she had several opportunities to shoot. Why does this happen? Soccer and hockey are one of the few games in which you can shoot and miss three feet to the right and the left and everyone still claps. If you miss the hoop in basketball three feet to the right or the left you get “air ball” chanted at you. Football, miss thirty feet to the right and you are probably on the waiver wire the next day. We need for players when they are near goal to take risks and if it doesn’t work out then hope that they learn from it.

Self Worth

I have watched some coaches and you would think that their whole self worth is wrapped up into their kids winning the match. It should not be a win at all cost, but a fun at all cost. I have a teenage son who is looking to play soccer at the next level. On his college resume, we didn’t put on it how many games he won when he was 12 years of age. As a coach, your self worth should be evaluated if your players are out there giving their all even when they are down, not necessarily when they are up. Are they enjoying themselves and smile like Ronaldinho for Barcelona does and Isiah Thomas did while playing. Do they come back to your organization because of how you are as a teacher?

The first quote of this article is from Mike Krzyzewski. A good coach during adversity will show a face that is calm yet displays confidence that his/her team can come back. If a coach starts to panic more than often their team starts to panic. The same goes when screaming at these young referees. When you start to scream, that sets off a red flare to the parents and players that something isn’t right. Even Bill Walsh stated that about “20% of every game is by chance”. There is really not much you can do.

In continuing to improve the environment for Indiana Youth Soccer, we as coaches need to think of us not as soccer coaches, but as a leader that happens to coach soccer. (Another Coach K quote)

Have FUN and enjoy it while it lasts!

Risk Management

Risk Management is a program to promote health, safety and protection of the children in the game of soccer. It is important to designate one person involved in your association to be responsible for managing risk as well as communicating with the state association in all matters regarding the safety of the kids. Accepting a coaching position means accepting responsibilities. **Here are a few important points to remember:**

-**Never** leave a player alone after training or games.

-Be certain that players depart with their parents or designated individuals. Have knowledge of family situations.

-Avoid being left alone with players who are not your children. An idea is to use a "Tag" System. The first parent who picks up can not go until the second parent picks up and so on. This way, you as a coach will never be left alone with a child.

- Goals-Are they safe?
- Proper use of equipment
- Proper fitting shoes
- Upkeep and monitor of playing surfaces
- Weather conditions
 - o Do you have a plan for inclement weather?
 - o Temperatures being too cold/hot
 - o Avoid training when it is too hot
- Ample water supply and rest breaks

Copyright 2005 Madison Newspapers, Inc.
Wisconsin State Journal (Madison, Wisconsin)

September 5, 2005 Monday
ALL EDITION

HEADLINE: UNANCHORED SOCCER GOALS CAN POSE A DANGER

BYLINE: ROGER ANDERSON For The State Journal

Like most youth soccer players, 8-year-old Julia Parisi of Rye Brook, N.Y., was looking forward to a fall soccer game like those experienced by tens of thousands of kids across the country each Saturday morning.

Ten days later, however, the 8-year-old goalie was lucky she could walk at all.

As her coach and father, John, was searching for a hammer to secure the goals on the field his daughter's team would play on, a gust of wind caused the goal to tumble and fall on Julia. The accident crushed the bone that connects her knee and hip into a half-dozen pieces; doctors compared the battered leg to that of a victim who had been viciously attacked with a sledgehammer.

To blame the wind would be easy, and in this case at least partially accurate. But each year it is estimated that 120 Americans are injured by falling soccer goals, the main culprit being homemade, unbalanced and/or unanchored goalposts. Thus, the wind is not all that's to blame.

Because of the unusual risk for recreational players, soccer organizations across the country have put in place regulations requiring goals to be anchored to the ground or counterweighted for correct balance.

And as another fall soccer season begins this week in the Madison area and beyond, safety is again at the forefront.

"The cost of the safety is actually the intangible cost of payroll or time," said Keith McHugh, Executive Director of the Madison Area Youth Soccer Association. "When goals are anchored, it takes longer to maintain the grounds because the goals take longer to move, and then move back. For the larger organizations that have a number of fields - city municipalities and the like - that can add up. The cost of the anchors can be found online but as far as I'm concerned all of it is negligible compared to what is being protected."

Most rules regulating anchors, however, only specifically apply to league games, leaving the onus of practice protection in coaches' hands and unattended goals under the provision of supervising adults. While soccer enthusiasts may consider an unused goal the perfect place for independent practice or a friendly scrimmage, to some children the goal can represent an impromptu play set.

In Houston in June, an 11-year-old boy was fatally injured after climbing on the netting of a goal inside a local park. The goal came crashing down, dealing a fatal blow to his forehead.

Since 1979, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission reports, at least 30 deaths have been caused by soccer goals falling over. While no one involved in danger persists nonetheless.

"The subject of goals falling on players has been in issue throughout the States over the past few years," said Scott Clement, president of the Verona Area Soccer Club. "Safety concerns dealing with goals have been passed on to our club and all others in the Madison area via our local district organization, (MAYSA) and our state organization (Wisconsin Youth Soccer Association). It is also covered in referee certification classes and checking the goals is part of a referee's duties prior to starting a match."

"It has been addressed by implementing a policy that does not permit a match to be played if goals are not anchored," McHugh said. "To the best of my knowledge it has never happened in the Madison area, and only keeping a vigilant attitude about the matter will help keep it that way."

While unmovable goalposts anchored for safety present a very small problem, mobile goals which can be erected each weekend for play must be both properly stored and set up each weekend to protect anyone using them.

"For fields, goal anchors are the responsibility of the owners of the field or the club/organization that has agreed to accept that responsibility," McHugh said. "At Reddan Soccer Park (in Verona), all goals are anchored when any activity is utilizing them. Most of the goals are also counter balanced, but are still anchored regardless of whether or not they seem stable."

As soccer's popularity grows the risk of goal accidents rises in part because more homemade goals are finding their way into action across the country. Because homemade goals are often heavier, weighing upwards of 500 pounds, and more unstable than manufactured ones, the CPSC is working hard to see them removed from use.

With an estimated half-million goals across the country, the risk remains. After the latest death in Houston, that city re-inspected 126 public soccer goals, re-anchoring 63 and removing 11. The unanchored goal that prompted the sweep was determined to be homemade and added to the park after the city's annual inspection of goals.

"Goals are a lot like lightning and automobiles," McHugh said. "They are only a big problem if people don't respect what they can do."

In 2003, after their son Zach, 6, was killed by a falling soccer goal in Libertyville, Ill., the Tran family of Indian Hills, Ill., started an initiative known as Anchored For Safety in an attempt to limit the number of future deaths. Anchoredforsafety.com is now the premier site for soccer goal safety.

"The short-term solution is to make sure all goals are properly anchored. However, Anchored for Safety is working on a more permanent solution; to promote the use of goals that are safe, anchored or unanchored," said AFS co-founder Jayson Tran, Zach's father.

Anchors can be purchased on the Internet for as little as \$1.95.

Cold Weather Guidelines
Courtesy of Minnesota Youth Soccer Association

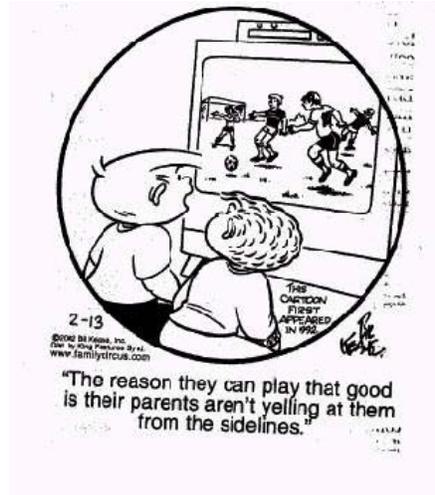
Temperature means either ambient (still air) or wind chill index. Check weather radio frequently for temperature and weather conditions.

Cold Index	Recommended Guidelines
46° and higher	No Change
45° and lower	<p>Allowable Additional Clothing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Layered beneath uniform (for example) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>long sleeves</i> - <i>long Pants</i> - <i>additional socks</i> 2. Gloves or mittens 3. Stocking caps without straps 4. Jackets <i>may be worn under the uniform so that referees get the player's number in the event of a card being issued.</i> <p>Clothing NOT Allowed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hooded sweatshirts <i>hoods so not turn when player turns head; strings present possibility of being grabbed</i> 2. Ear muffs (headbands OK) <i>plastic or metal part crossing top of head presents potential hazard</i> 3. Scarves <i>Isadora Duncan Syndrome</i>
40° and lower	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shorten games 2. 5 min/half
35° and lower	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Suspend games

- Players on sidelines should remain dressed (if in warm-ups) until they enter the game.
- Players coming off should towel off (if sweaty) and get dressed quickly.
- No one should sit or lie directly on ground. The heat is lost faster to ground than to air. Blankets and chairs are recommended.
- Keep hydrated-avoid caffeine and pop.
- Keep an eye on field conditions (wet, icy, etc.). Cold wet conditions can quickly change field from safe footing to slippery.
- Keep an eye on the goalie—usually the player who gets coldest first, as not running or moving like a field player.
- Referees and coaches should discuss weather and fields pre-game.
- Safety and health of the players come first.

Parents

“Screaming parents and crying children or crying parents and screaming children have become part of the fabric of youth sport.” Caroline Silby, PH.D



Suggestions

Make sure that your philosophies, expectations, and policies were communicated up front. This eliminates or at least minimizes a lot of problems. Your policy should focus on player development!

- Put yourself in their shoes. Try to see it from their point of view. Remember that their kid(s) is the best, (not necessarily player) one on the team. It should be that way!
- Repeat to them what they have said to insure that there are no differences.
- Building commitment and developing a team is vitally important. Many children and parents have overstretched themselves with activities. Quite often parents are unwilling to weigh the needs of the group's goals above that of their own child's and their goals.
- If you don't have an answer or if you are getting upset with the conversation then just tell them that "I will have to get back with you on that". You might buy yourself time to cool your jets and sometimes the problem resolves itself.
- Be honest! Be careful with this one, try to word it in a way where everyone wins.
- Be consistent. Treat every player the same and stick with what you believe.
- Be fair!
- Avoid confrontation in front of your players.

August 6, 2006 Sunday
FINAL EDITION

SECTION: MODERN LIFE; ASK CAL; Pg. 1N

HEADLINE: Son should respect father in coach role

BYLINE: CAL RIPKEN JR.

I HAVE BEEN COACHING MY soon-to-be-11-year-old son's basketball teams since he was 7 years old. I love coaching the boys, but at times find it the most challenging having to deal with my own son. He seems to react to me more as a dad than a coach while on the court. If I try to correct his mistakes or get on him about hustling, he tends to make a comment back to me, make excuses, get upset, etc. He never does this with his other coaches in other sports -- he is respectful and never says a word other than "OK, Coach."

I wouldn't have a problem relinquishing the coaching duties to another parent, but having been a former college basketball player and assistant coach, I feel I can offer the most to the boys from a knowledge and experience perspective.

Do you think it would be best for me to give up coaching and allow my son to get some exposure to other coaches and techniques? How would you recommend handling the situation? I've had talks with him about reacting to me the same way as he would one of his other coaches, but I'm not getting too far.

Dave Skaff, Fairfax, Va.

DEAR DAVE / / Your situation is common. Our children tend to listen to the other adult figures in their lives -- teachers, coaches, bosses, etc. -- a lot more attentively than to their parents. I've even run into that when trying to help my son, Ryan, on the baseball field.

Coaching your own child can be one of the most rewarding, yet challenging, experiences for a parent. Before you get too frustrated, take a step back to make sure that you are upholding your end of the bargain. Are you treating him exactly like the other team members? The most important aspect of coaching your own child is to not single him out more than others. This is true with positive and negative feedback.

If you believe that you are treating your son the same way you treat the other players, then it may be time to sit him down again and have another talk. Explain why you want to coach -- that you enjoy spending time with him and helping him grow as a player and that you have a lot to offer the other kids on the team. Tell him how much you love what you are doing, but that you are willing to give it up if he is unhappy, even though the other players may suffer.

If you force your son to participate in a situation that he is not happy with, there is a good chance he will give up the game. I'll bet that he will gain a better understanding of your coaching methods and may show you some ways that you can improve as a coach.

My daughter has played soccer for four years and may be the best player on her under-12 team. She has a very strong leg and was kicking a football with some friends recently when a coach for one of the recreation league football teams suggested she try out. We thought he was kidding at first, but he wasn't. She wants to do it, but my husband and I are undecided. It's not just having her playing football with boys (she's big for her age), but she wants to play both football and soccer and we think that would be too much. What should we do?

Terry Stevens, Kenosha, Wis.

DEAR TERRY / / I believe that as parents one of our important roles is to encourage our children to pursue activities that will keep them active and make them happy. If you have the ability to make sure that she can attend football and soccer practices and she really wants to give it a try, let her give it a shot.

Let your daughter try both sports, but let her know that you are going to keep an eye on the situation. Tell her that after two or three weeks you are going to have a family discussion to see how things are going and determine whether she is capable of participating in both sports without wearing herself out.

My son, who is 13, worked on switch-hitting this summer. He's a natural righty, but has gotten pretty good in practice hitting left-handed. He didn't actually hit left-handed in a game, though. Is there a way to tell when someone is ready to switch-hit in a game situation?

Daniel Grabil, Hopkinsville, Ky.

DEAR DANIEL / / The only way to get better as a hitter and find out where you stand is to give it a shot in a game. However, if your son is having success right-handed, in most cases I would recommend that he continue along that path. If you really feel that he has a chance to be a successful switch-hitter, you will never know for sure until he gives it a try in a game.

Before this happens, it is important to discuss the situation with your son and his coach. Let the coach know that your son would like to try hitting left-handed against right-handed pitchers so that the coach is not caught off guard. The three of you should come to some consensus about how long the trial will last. For example, your son could try hitting left-handed for five games and then the three of you would evaluate his progress.

Your son is not going to become a switch-hitter in just five games. But you may get a pretty good indication about whether he has a shot at becoming a successful switch-hitter and whether he should keep trying. Both player and coach need to understand that there are going to be more failures than successes in the beginning. Player and coach should be prepared mentally for the difficult times and be patient. If you don't feel comfortable that your son and the coach are capable of dealing with this, then the experiment probably should be put on hold until the off-season or the fall, when the games are usually less competitive.

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Have a question or issue arising from your involvement in youth sports? Send it by e-mail to askcal@baltimoresun.com.

August 19, 2007 Sunday

SECTION: SPORTS

HEADLINE: SPOTLIGHT ON YOUTH SPORTS Time for trial, error fleeting as kids commit

BYLINE: BY DOUG CRISE ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

Listening to 9-year-old Lawson Korita reel off his sports schedule can make anyone feel as if they've just been through a workout.

"I play basketball, football, baseball, soccer, swimming," Korita said before pausing to think. "That's mostly all." Though still in elementary school, Korita already has acquainted himself with one very adult concept: If he hopes to excel in his favorite sport, basketball, he'll soon need to start shaving those other activities off his schedule.

"I might just want to play basketball," Korita said.

"There's plenty of good athletes out there," said Greg Hatcher, who for more than two decades has worked as a coach and facilitator for elite youth sports teams in the Little Rock area. "Getting them started early makes all the difference in the world.

Given that sports like soccer, tennis and gymnastics lag behind "mainstream" pursuits like football and basketball in Arkansas, young athletes frequently have no choice but to narrow their focus if they hope to bridge the skill gap between themselves and athletes from elsewhere in the country.

But considering the explosion of personal coaching, AAU summer teams and off-season "passing camps," even the "money sports" are requiring a commitment at an earlier age.

"We are moving to one-dimensional athletes," Hatcher said. "I don't know if I like that." But adding up the pros and cons of specialization doesn't produce any easy answers.

TOO MUCH, TOO SOON

Jack VanderSchilden has been involved in sports medicine for more than 30 years, and serves as an orthopedic sports medicine specialist at UAMS Medical Center. Along with that, he works as a team physician for both UALR and the University of Arkansas.

So when quizzing him about the rise of specialization in youth sports, one might expect a clinical, measured answer.

Not quite.

"The kids are no longer kids," VanderSchilden said. "It's a year-round thing. It's gotten out of hand as far as I'm concerned." VanderSchilden cautions that while he's seen a rise in one-sport athletes, there's more to the idea of "specialization." Keeping a child enrolled in a differing rotation of sports activities, VanderSchilden said, is just as dangerous.

"It's not so much the participation," VanderSchilden said. "It's not giving the kids a break. There should be a middle ground, and there isn't one. Get them off the field and let them be kids for a bit." As an example, VanderSchilden points to the stress fractures he sees from too much running, or the elbow and shoulder problems that he sees in young tennis players or even baseball players.

"Now you see it in junior high kids," said VanderSchilden, who said such injuries usually don't crop up until adulthood.

There are more sides to the issue than that, says Russellville's Kaylie Henne, 18. Henne has been playing or training for soccer, and only soccer, on a year-round basis since she was 12. The results have included a standout career at Russellville High School and a chance to play collegiate soccer at Lees-McRae College, a Division II school in North Carolina.

Henne said she sometimes has flirted with burnout during the 12-month grind, but she believes the gains far outweigh the sacrifices. The sacrifices, though, are sizable. Henne estimates that a typical week of her life over the past several years has included two to three midweek practices, leaving on Friday afternoon to travel to a showcase tournament, playing two games Saturday, two or three games on Sunday and then arriving home late Sunday night.

VanderSchilden said he's treated young soccer players whose weekend workload goes as high as eight games.

"Who the hell plays eight games in a weekend?" VanderSchilden said. "Come on. That's absurd." Absurd but, for less mainstream sports, necessary if a young child wishes to excel at the high school level and possibly play in college.

"It's taken off, probably unbelievably so," said Steve Oliver, an assistant women's soccer coach at the University of Arkansas. "You have people traveling four hours to practice because they want to be on the best team in the area." For Henne, that meant traveling to Little Rock for club soccer during her preteen years and then later drives to Bentonville for sometimes thrice-weekly practices for a club team coached by Oliver.

All the travel, all the practice, all of it beginning before adolescence, isn't for everyone, Henne said. She especially feels it isn't for children still in grade school.

"I would keep it fun for a while," Henne said. "It has to be fun. You have to enjoy the game. I would say 12 or 13 would be the best age to start looking for a better thing."

PUSHY PARENTS

If there's one conspicuous absence from Lawson Korita's list of sports, it's tennis.

That's because his father, Eric, is a former professional player who now works as the director of tennis at the Little Rock Country Club. But Eric Korita says his own experiences as a pro, and seeing other players who were shoved into the sport by their parents, has led him to shrug off his youngest son's indifference to the sport.

Indeed, Eric Korita said most of Lawson's sports teammates remain involved with just as many activities as his son. Hatcher adds that families of every athlete he works with are encouraged to maintain as much variety as possible in their children's sports schedule.

That can govern focus, but it can't govern attitude.

Fort Smith's Doug Pogue has spent 22 years officiating youth sports, including baseball and basketball. Pogue said he's listened to parents express regrets over not forcing their child into a single sport at an earlier age, and he's heard more than a fair share of spoken abuse directed to young athletes from over-expectant parents.

"Parents don't want to see their own kids fail," Pogue said.

It's the idea of failure in which those in favor of competitive sports at an early age differ from the rest of the pack. Hatcher said he runs his programs on the basis of effort and victories, and that young athletes are deprived of life lessons if losing and a lack of effort are accepted.

Parents should push, Hatcher said, but they should push for participation and not individual notoriety or athletic scholarships.

"The only way to be successful, really, in America, is to beat the other guy," Hatcher said.

Eric Korita agrees that sometimes the best thing a parent can do is administer a push when a young athlete is digging in his heels, but he said the line between being tired and being burned out is thin.

Lawson Korita agrees, saying that while he feels he has enough free time, there are days when he'd rather stay home than head to the basketball court or the soccer pitch.

Eric Korita believes he's doing his son a service by making him keep his commitments to each sport, but the demands on Lawson sometimes test his parental intuition.

Many times, he looks at Lawson and remembers quitting tennis for a year starting at age 14.

"I hated it," Korita said. "And I was one of the best in the country. 'Push' can be a good word, 'Push' can be a bad word."

JUST FOR FUN

Like many teenagers, Conway's Will Patterson grew up right when youth sports began the swing from recreational to competitive.

Also, like a lot of teenagers, Patterson, 17, said he feels he's been caught up in the transition.

"You've got to work the whole time," Patterson said. "I always needed a break, and I'd never get one. The way things are now, you don't get one." Patterson grew up in love with sports, a love that was supported by a rapidly sprouting body that would eventually reach 6-5. His physical gifts enabled Patterson to spend his early childhood effortlessly bouncing from sport to sport, eventually competing in baseball, basketball and football.

Now a high school senior, Patterson is minus one sport after quitting baseball for the sake of finding free time. He still plays football and basketball and, given his height, could probably work himself onto a small college basketball roster if he chooses.

Rather, his mother, Kim, says her son likely will attend a large university, possibly Arkansas, and just be a student.

Will Patterson said he began to feel his leisure time being co-opted before high school and even junior high. Summer baseball and AAU basketball were necessary, he said, if he wanted a chance to make a splash in middle school, junior high and beyond. Those demands start well before high school, when football begins to enter the picture.

The problem isn't the demand placed on athletes in high school but rather in the years leading up to it, said Patterson, who considers himself burned out on sports.

"I think I'm at that stage," Patterson said. "It's kind of getting to me. I want to stay back and have fun and do more than play sports all the time." Burnout hasn't always been a common theme with teenagers, but just like the overuse injuries alluded to by VanderSchilden, the age seems to be getting younger and younger.

Patterson doesn't begrudge coaches like Hatcher and parents like Eric Korita, saying that uncompromising competition can be a good fit with kids depending on their personalities.

But Patterson mourns the decline of the "just for fun" concept of youth sports. That's why he spends his summers as a volunteer for "Field of Dreams," a local organization that arranges T-ball games for kids with physical and developmental disabilities.

Patterson's 12-year old brother, Ben, suffers from Neuro Degeneration with Brain Iron Accumulation (NBIA), a rare and often terminal genetic disease that destroys the nervous system.

Will Patterson said his brother has lost most of the movement in his body and is unable to express himself beyond the occasional squeal or yelp. Yet he says Ben visibly lights up whenever the family pulls up to the University of Central Arkansas softball field, where the T-ball games take place.

Patterson said he'd like to take some of the hard-driving young athletes he's met, and their parents, out to one of Ben's games.

"It's not as fun as it used to be," Patterson said. "They only see their kid succeeding, but they don't have to see the challenge of their kid going through something like this. [Sports] is all just fun. You've got to think about bigger stuff in life than sports all the time."

This article was published 08/19/2007

15 things to keep in mind while watching from the sidelines:

Manny Sanchez

1. Let the coaches' coach. If you are telling your son or daughter - or any other player for that matter - to do something different from what their coach is telling them, you create distraction and confusion.
2. It is very unnerving for many young players to try and perform difficult tasks on the field on the spur of the moment when parents are yelling at them from the sidelines. Let the kids play. If they have been well coached, they should know what to do on the field. If they make a mistake, chances are they will learn from it.
3. Do not discuss the play of specific young players in front of other parents. How many times do you hear comments such as, "I don't know how that boy made this team..." or "she's just not fast enough." Too many parents act as though their child is a 'star', and the problem is someone else's kid. Negative comments and attitudes are hurtful and totally unnecessary and kill parent harmony, which is often essential to youth team success.
4. Discourage such toxic behavior by listening patiently to any negative comments that might be made, then address issues in a positive way. Speak to the positive qualities of a player, family or coach.
5. Do your level best not to complain about your son or daughter's coaches to other parents. Once that starts, it is like a disease that spreads. Before you know it, parents are talking constantly in a negative way behind a coach's back. (As an aside, if you have what you truly feel is a legitimate beef with your child's coach - either regarding game strategy or playing time, arrange an appointment to meet privately, away from a soccer field.)
6. Make positive comments from the sideline. Be encouraging. Young athletes do not need to be reminded constantly about their perceived errors or mistakes. Their coaches will instruct them, either during the game or at half-time, and during practices. You can often see a young player make that extra effort when they hear encouraging words from the sideline about their hustle.
7. Avoid making any negative comments about players on the other team, this should be simple: we are talking about youngsters, not adults who are being paid to play professionally. I recall being at a rep baseball game some years ago, when parent on one team loudly made comments about errors made by a particular young player on the other team. People on the other side of the diamond were stunned- and angry. Besides being tasteless and classless, these kinds of comments can be hurtful to the young person involved and to their family as well
8. Try to keep interaction with parents on the other team as healthy and positive as possible. Who's kidding whom? You want your child's team to win. So do they. But that should not make us take leave of our senses, especially our common sense. Be courteous 'till it hurts; avoid the 'tit for tat' syndrome.
9. Parents on the 'other' team are not the enemy. Neither are the boys or girls on the other team. We should work to check any negative feelings at the door before we hit the pitch.
10. What is the easiest thing to do in the youth sports world? Criticize the referees. Oh, there are times when calls are missed, absolutely. And that can, unfortunately, directly affect the outcome of a contest. That said, by and large those who officiate at youth soccer games are hardly over-

compensated, and give it an honest - and often quite competent - effort. At worst, they at least try to be fair and objective.

11. On that note, outbursts from parents on the sideline made toward the referees only signal to our on children on the field that they can blame the refs for anything that goes wrong. Blaming others is not a formula for success in sports.

12. Yelling out comments such as "Good call, ref" or "Thanks ref" may only serve to alienate an official. The ref always assumes they made the proper call, that's why they made it. Trying to show superficial support because the call went 'your' way is simply annoying to the officials, and to anyone within earshot.

13. Walking up and down all game long along the sidelines, following the play, is unnerving to players and totally unnecessary- particularly so if you are trying to yell out instructions to various players, including your own son or daughter. It is likely embarrassing to the player/players involved and simply counterproductive. If you want to coach, obtain your coaching certification and then apply for a job.

14. We all feel things and are apt to be tempted to say things in the 'heat of the moment'. But we don't excuse athletes for doing inappropriate things in the 'heat of the moment' (there are penalties, suspensions, etc.) so we should apply similar standards to our own sideline behavior. Quickly check yourself and ask: Will I be proud of what I am about to say or do when I reflect on it tomorrow?

15. The parking lot is not the time to 'fan the flames'. Whether it is a coach's decision, a referee's call, a comment that was made, let it go. Don't harass the coach, or an official, or a parent on the other team after the game is over. Go home, relax, and unwind. Talk positively with your child. The ride home is sometimes as important as the game itself. Make that time a good memory for your son or daughter by discussing as many positives as you can about him/her, her coach, her teammates, etc

Soccer Glossary

1st Attacker: The player that has possession of the ball.

2nd Attacker: The player or players in immediate support of the 1st attacker

3rd Attacker: The player or players further away from the ball responsible for unbalancing the defense

Breakaway: The situation in a match when an attacker penetrates the defense and is 1 vs. 1 with the goalkeeper

Ball Watching: the tendency of inexperienced players to concentrate on the activity in and around the ball they overlook their responsibilities.

Blind Side: The side of play opposite of where the play is. Also known as weak side

Challenge: When a defender attempts to win the ball from an attacker

Chip: A lofted pass or shot

Coervers: a method of developing skill with the ball

Counterattack: When the defending team wins the ball and moves onto attack.

Cover: Defensive support. When the 1st defender pressures the ball, his teammates provide support from behind. This is the role of the 2nd defender(s).

Crossing: When the ball comes across the field from the sidelines (flank) toward the goal. Also known as service.

Combination Play: An attacking play where 2 or more attackers work in tandem to penetrate a defense. See: Give and go, Overlap, or takeover.

Defenders: The players that play closest to the goal they are defending. Mostly responsible for defensive, but they are attackers also.

1st Defender: The player(s) nearest to the 1st attacker responsible for winning the ball back if

possible. If not, they must delay the attack and look to make the attack predictable by forcing the 1st attacker in one direction. Note: the angle and distance the 1st defender pressures the ball relates to how every other defender must play.

2nd Defender(s): The player or players that provide support or cover for the 1st defender.

3rd Defender(s): The players remaining on defense. They are responsible for balancing the defensive shape.

Depth: A principle of both attack and defense. On offense it refers to support both in advance and behind the ball. On defense it refers to having players in position behind the ball.

Direct Kick: A free kick that can be scored directly from the spot of the kick.

Dribble: A technique that allows a player to move the ball on the ground using various surfaces of both feet.

Endlines: The lines at each end of the field.

Far Post: The goal post furthest from the ball.

Finishing: A technique that completes an attack with a goal using any legal part of the body.

First Time Ball: A ball that is played without using a receiving touch. Also known as a one-touch.

Fitness: One of the four components of the game. Relates directly to all the physical elements of the game.

Forwards: The players who play closest to the goal they are attacking.

Free Kick: A direct or indirect kick awarded to a team whose opponents have committed a foul.

Full Volley: A technique of striking a ball out of mid air.

Give and Go Pass: A simple combination play where an attacking player passes to a teammate then sprints past his defender into open space to receive a return pass. Also known as a wall pass or a one-two.

Goalkeeper: The player who plays closest to the goal his team is defending. The “keeper” is the only player on the field that can use his hands. He is only allowed to use his hands in the penalty box.

Goal Kick: A kick awarded to the defending team when the attackers advance the ball over the endline.

Goallines: The lines at each end of the field, specifically between the goalposts. Also known as endlines.

Goalside: A defensive term that refers to having players nearer to the defending goal side related to where the ball is.

Half Volley: A technique striking a ball at the moment just after it has bounced.

Indirect Kick: A free kick where another player must touch the ball before a goal is allowed.

Instep: The part of the foot where the shoes are laced.

Jockeying: A technique used by defenders to limit the movement of the attacker with the ball by forcing him to one side or the other.

Juggling: A technique used to teach ball control and develop a player's "touch". This is performed by using different surfaces of the body to keep the ball from hitting the ground.

Man-To-Man Defense: A system of defense where each player is assigned a specific opposing player to cover or mark.

Marking: Covering an opponent.

Midfielders: The players in the middle of the field who form the link between the defenders and the forwards both offensively and defensively.

Near Post: The goal post nearest to the ball.

Off-the-Ball Movement: Movement of players who are not in possession of ball. Also known as mobility, this movement is done to unbalance the defense and create penetration.

Offside: When an attacker is positioned on his opponent's half of the field with less than two defenders between him and the endline at the moment the ball is passed.

Offside Trap: A tactic used when defenders move away from their goal to force an attacker into an offside position.

One-Touch: A technique of passing or shooting the ball without receiving it first.

Overlap: A simple combination play where a 2nd attacker runs behind then in advance of the 1st attacker to receive a pass.

Penalty Area: The 18X44 yard box in front the goal at either end of the field. This is the only area where the goalkeeper may use his hands. When a major foul is committed in the penalty area a penalty kick is awarded

Penalty Kick: When a major foul is committed in the penalty area this is awarded. The kick is taken 12 yards from the goal and every other player, besides the kicker and the goalkeeper, must be outside the penalty area when the kick is taken.

Penetration: One of the principles of attack that refers to getting players and the ball behind the defense, ultimately results in a scoring opportunity.

Psychological: One of the four components of the game. Relates directly to all the mental aspects of the game.

System of Play: Refers to the deployment of players on the field. A 4-4-2 is 4 defenders, 4 midfielders, and 2 forwards.

Shape: A term used to describe the positioning of the team either offensively or defensively.

Shielding: A technique where the 1st attacker positions his body between the ball and his defender in order to maintain possession.

Sidelines: The lines of play on each side of the field. Also known as the *touchlines* because when the ball crosses these lines the players may *touch* the ball with their hands to restart play.

Striker: The forwards who play toward the middle and final thirds of the field, usually the players with the primary responsibility for scoring.

Sweeper: A back player positioned behind the rest of the defense who's responsible for providing support, balance, and communication to the rest of the defense.

Tackling: A defensive technique of using the foot to win the ball from an attacker.

Tactics: One of the four components of the game. Relates directly to any decisions a player makes on the field with or without the ball.

Technique: One of the four components of the game. Relates directly to all skills and a players relationship to the ball.

Through Pass: A ball delivered through a seam in the defense to another attacker.

Touchlines: See sidelines

Two Touch: A technique of taking one touch to receive the ball plus another touch to pass or shoot the ball.

Volley: A technique of striking the ball, generally with the instep. See also half/full volley.

Width: One of the principles of attack that refers to having support on either side of the ball. Positive width results in a stretched defense to penetrate.

Wing: The sides of the field. Also known as the *flanks*.

Zonal Defense: A system of defense where each player is assigned a specific area of the field to defend.

