

Tips for Coaching Field Hockey with Elementary School Kids

Practice Tips:

1. Come to practice with a plan. Decide what drills you want to run in advance.
2. Don't waste time on conditioning – you only have an hour. A warm-up lap is sufficient.
3. KEEP IT SIMPLE! Most of your kids will be novices and they won't be able to execute complicated drills.
4. Plan to run each drill no more than 10-15 minutes so come prepared with 4 to 6 different activities.
5. Plan for a range of drills that cover all the basic skills in each practice – dribbling, push passing, hitting and defensive skills (basic blocking and tackling). Include some individual drills, activities to do in pairs, and small group drills. Keep it interesting!
6. Minimize time spent standing around. With two coaches, you can run two drills at the same time so everyone stays engaged.
7. Try to include one game-like activity in every practice – things like continuous 3v2, corners, or scrimmaging with the whole group. This is what the kids enjoy the most and you want practice to be fun!
8. Please stress playing safely during practice. High sticks, high balls, and physical contact are not permitted.

Game Management Tips:

1. Everybody plays in every game and time should be split as evenly as possible.
2. Have a substitution plan in place for every game and communicate it to the kids.
3. Try kids at different positions so they can learn different skills.
4. Stress good sportsmanship and be sure to model it!
5. Offer abundant praise but don't be afraid to correct a child when they execute a skill improperly or commit fouls.
6. Explain fouls when they are called and provide specific instruction on what to do differently.
7. There will be no visible score board. You can keep score if you choose but try not to focus too much on who is "winning" and who is "losing".
8. Again – stress playing SAFELY!

If you need help, please reach out to Lucy Miller at 502-468-3494. We can provide information on effective drills and offer feedback and advice. We appreciate your willingness to coach and want to support you!!