

## The 12U Training Session

- ✓ The training session should involve fun and imaginative game like activities, as well as technical and tactical repetitive activities.
- ✓ The training session has a technical and/or tactical theme (focus). For example: dribbling technique and/or 1v1 decision-making.
- ✓ Introduction to functional training (position specific) is appropriate.
- ✓ Small-sided directional games such as: 4v4, 5v4, 5v5, 6v5, 6v6 and 7v6 should be included as well.
- ✓ Training should always conclude with an 8v8 game with goalkeepers if possible. (7 field players and 1 goalkeeper on each team) The duration of the training session should be 90 minutes.

## Sample 12U Training Session Format

**Warm-Up/Stretch** – the warm-up prepares the player both physically and mentally for the rest of the training session. Warm-ups should incorporate a technical and/or tactical element as a lead in to the training session. *Stretching* should be integrated throughout the warm-up.

**Small Sided Activity** – small group games that provide a lead into larger group games. Small group activities will provide the majority of the work within the coaching session and should cover one chosen topic (i.e. dribbling or shooting). This activity may be non-directional such as a keep-away game or directional including goals or targets at each end of the field. These activities will continue providing the technical repetitions as introduced in the warm up and progress to simple tactical concepts.

**Expanded Small Sided Activity** - Small-sided games that now include more players and closely resemble the game of soccer. This activity must be directional and include a goal (can be multiple goals, end-lines or target players). Your topic still needs to be focused and taught during this activity. It is important that your coaching be simple, specific and detailed covering technical and tactical issues related to your session's theme (topic).

**Scrimmage** – this does not necessarily mean 8v8. It means a game without any stipulations. Ideally, you would want playing numbers matching the league play numbers (8v8). This is impossible if you have rosters of 10-14 players. So play the largest scrimmage possible with your numbers.

**Cool Down** – following the training session a cool down of light, low intensity exercise and static stretching aids the player to recover from the training session. They have worked hard and this will help them to unwind physically and mentally.