



COACHES MEETING

TRAVEL - SPRING 2026

Soccer Asylum

Apr 2nd 2026 – 6:30pm



AGENDA



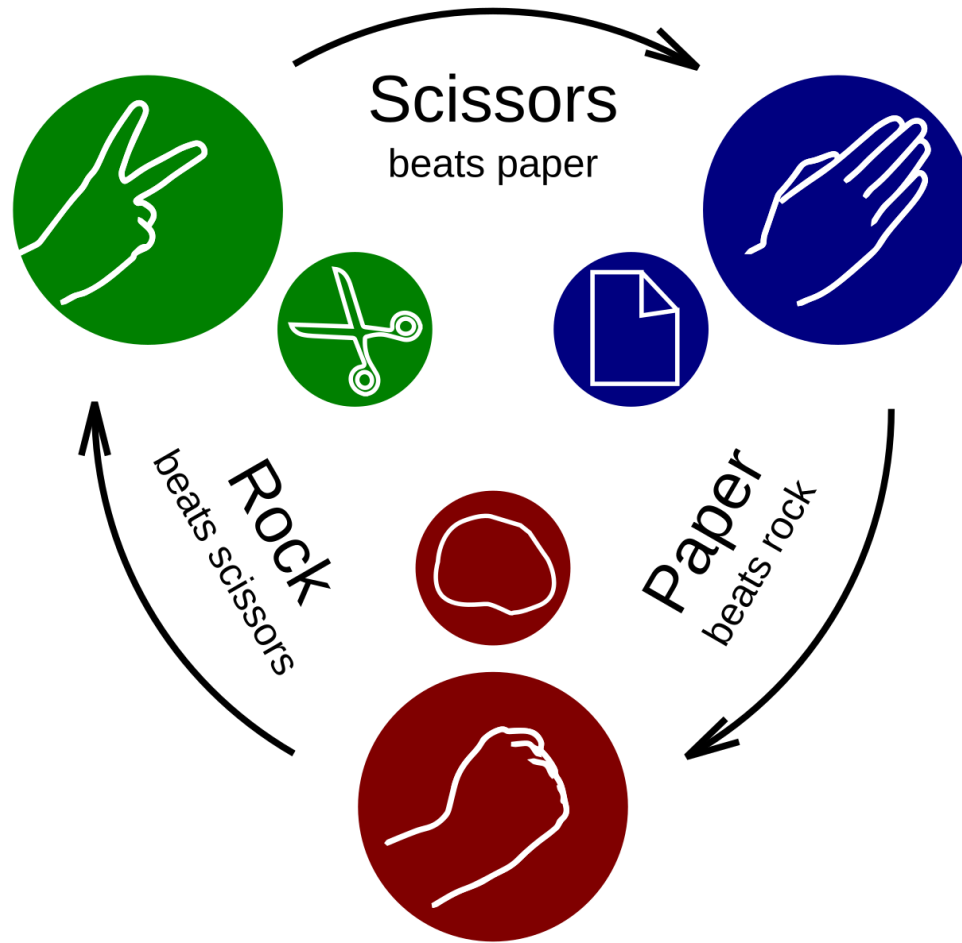
1. Welcome, Agenda & Objectives
2. Key Points of Emphasis
3. Tonight's Focus:
 - I. Why We Coach? Reality Check
 - II. Defining Our Priorities as a HYS Coach
 - III. What Makes A Great Practice?
 - IV. Managing Games When We're Winning And Loosing
- I. Key Takeaways & Closing
- II. Q&A



FIRST OF ALL – WELCOME AND THANK-YOU



ICEBREAKER



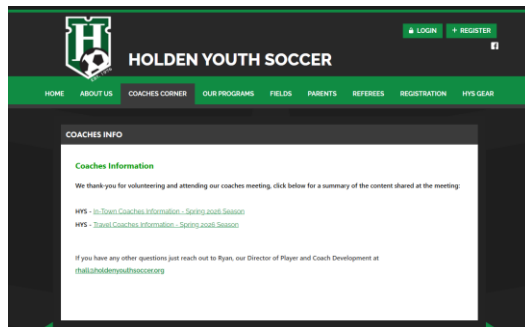
A FEW POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Conduct and Referees
2. Players Positions
3. Play Time
4. Team Goals
5. Jerseys/Photo Checks
6. CMYSL

Set and be the Example
All Players all Positions
Equal, that simple
Try 2-3 points per game
Do it now!!!

- Lanyards
- No redo's on throw-ins
- Offside in every game
- No sliding at U10
- 3 Coaches only on the sideline
- Subs need to wait
- Sportsmanship statement every game – adults only
- 8 second GK rule
- U14 Captains Only (1)

Detailed info on the HYS website





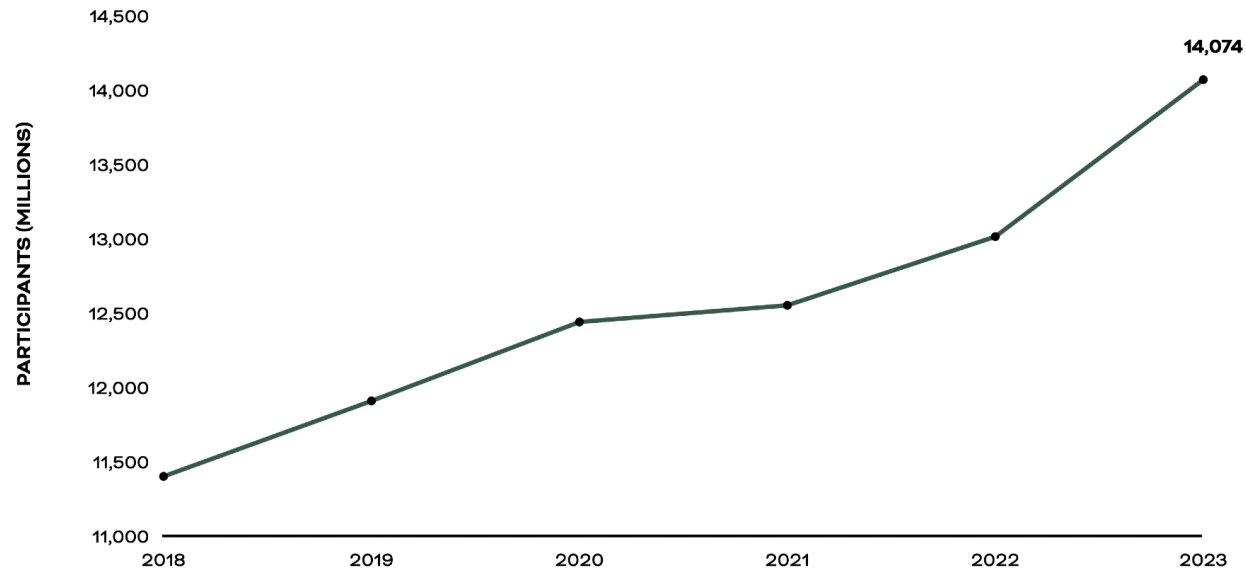
WHY DO WE COACH?



WHY WE COACH, REALITY CHECK



TOTAL SOCCER (OUTDOOR) PARTICIPATION 2018-2023



SOURCE: SPORTS & FITNESS INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION, SOCCER (OUTDOOR) SINGLE SPORT REPORT

Through 2023, outdoor soccer participation among those ages 6 or older reached nearly 14.1 million players.

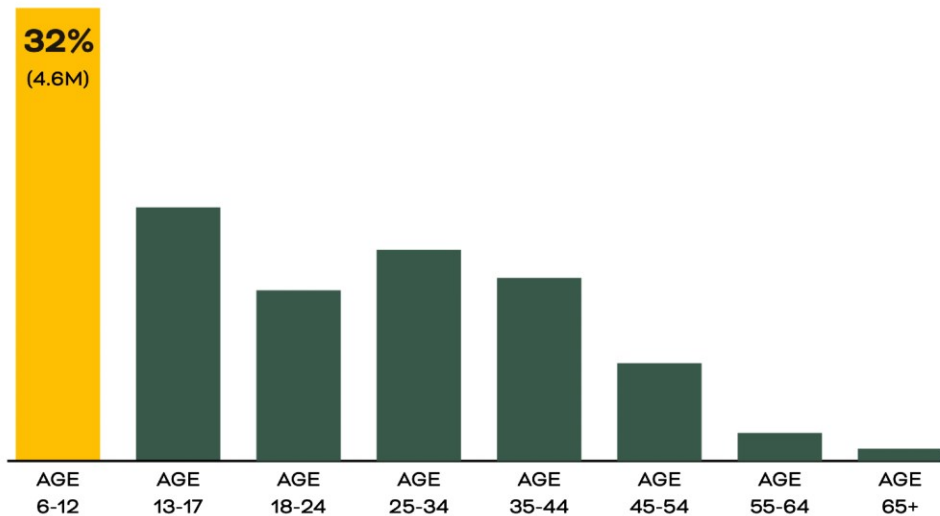
This marks an impressive 8.1% increase from the previous year and a 23% increase compared to 2018.

On average, the total number of participants has increased by 4% per year since 2018.

WHY WE COACH, REALITY CHECK



TOTAL SOCCER (OUTDOOR) PARTICIPATION BY AGE SEGMENT



SOURCE: SPORTS & FITNESS INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION, SOCCER (OUTDOOR) SINGLE SPORT REPORT

Have a guess how many kids stop playing sports by age 13?

45% of kids dropout of youth sports by the age of 10,
70% of by the age of 13, and 80% by the age of 16.

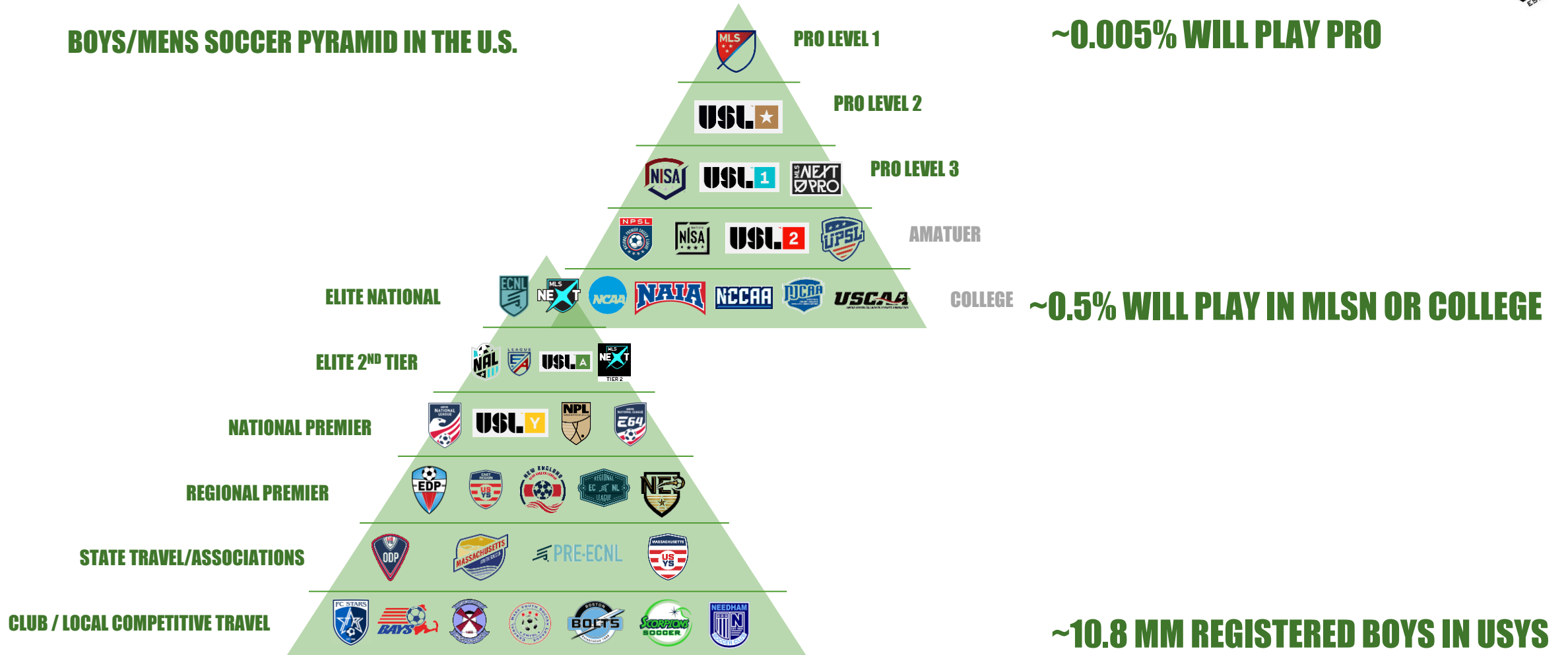
What are the top reasons?

The primary reason for leaving is that it **"stops being fun"**. Other factors include excessive focus on winning, pressure from parents and coaches, and the high cost of "pay-to-play" programs, says Positive Coaching

WHY WE COACH, REALITY CHECK



BOYS/MENS SOCCER PYRAMID IN THE U.S.



WHY WE COACH, REALITY CHECK



Therefore our town program's value = enjoyment, retention, development, life skills, healthy habits — not producing pros.

“FOCUS = LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT AND JOY.”

“FOCUS ≠ WINS/LOSSES & CHAMPIONSHIPS”



PULSE CHECK - ACTIVITY



1. Get into pairs and discuss 3-4 reasons why you coach,
2. Choose 1-2 to tell the group,
3. Share and create a quick crowd-sourced list on whiteboard

WHY WE COACH - SUMMARY



- **Bonding and Shared Experiences:** Coaching offers a unique opportunity to spend quality time with their child, making memories and gaining insight into their growth as athletes.
- **Instilling Values and Life Skills:** Parents want to teach essential life lessons such as hard work, accountability, resilience, and sportsmanship, which extend far beyond the soccer field.
- **Fostering Development:** They want to ensure a positive, nurturing environment where their child—and their peers—can learn fundamental technical skills and foster a love for the game.
- **Active Involvement:** Rather than being a passive spectator, coaching allows parents to be actively involved in their child's sports journey, mentoring them through both wins and losses.
- **Convenience and Control:** By volunteering, parents can control the practice schedule to fit their family's schedule and ensure coaching philosophy aligns with their values.
- **Mentorship and Community Impact:** Many parents feel a sense of responsibility to give back to the community, serving as positive role models and building relationships with other families.
- **Personal Enjoyment and Fitness:** It provides a reason to stay active, get outdoors, and often allows parents to learn more about a game they love.

KEY TAKEAWAYS



- **Coaching is primarily about connection and involvement** — it lets parents spend meaningful time with their child, stay actively engaged in their development, and shape the family schedule and experience.

How can you create a meaningful connection with everyone on your team this year?



- **Coaching is also about impact and growth** — parents coach to teach life skills, develop players technically and socially, give back to the community, and model positive values while enjoying the game themselves.

How can you impact the growth, no matter how big or small, with every player on your team this year?



DEFINING OUR PRIORITIES AS HYS COACHES



GUIDED BY OUR MISSION

Some extracts from our vision and mission statement

1.promote the game of soccer as a means of improving the physical, psychological, and social well-being of children...allowing every player an opportunity to play...
2.create an environment that develops respect, promotes leadership, and instills confidence..... while making the game of soccer available to all who desire to participate.



SHARED MISSION - ACTIVITY



1. Break into small groups (3-5 people per group).
2. Discuss and brainstorm answers to these two questions:
 - I. What are our players top priorities for the season?**
 - a) e.g. build confidence and mental resilience
 - II. What ideal behaviors should coaches model each practice and game?**
 - a) e.g. asking questions vs. yelling solutions
3. Create a list of the top three: Priorities (3), Coach behaviors (3).
4. Report-back - One representative from each group shares their top priority and behavior; facilitator captures common themes and synthesizes into areas of common ground and possible conflicts.

SHARED MISSION - SUMMARY



Kids Priorities:

1. Enjoyment and fun
2. Lots of playing time and meaningful involvement
3. Skill development (ball control, passing, shooting, dribbling)
4. Learning game understanding/decision-making
5. Physical fitness, coordination, injury prevention
6. Positive social environment and friendships
7. Clear, consistent feedback that helps them improve
8. Confidence-building and mental resilience
9. Fairness and safety

Coaching Behaviors:

1. Prioritize player development over short-term wins
2. Maximize equitable playing time and on-ball touches
3. Design age-appropriate, fun, game-like practices
4. Give clear, specific, actionable feedback (more “how” than “you”)
5. Use positive reinforcement; correct errors constructively
6. Teach tactical understanding, not just drills
7. Individualize coaching to player needs and learning styles
8. Emphasize safety, warm-ups, load management, injury prevention
9. Communicate openly with players and parents about goals and roles
10. Model respect, sportsmanship, and emotional control

KEY TAKEAWAYS



Enjoyment & Motivation

Player priorities: Have fun; stay motivated; feel rewarded and excited to play.

Coach behaviors: Create game-like, fun sessions; use positive reinforcement; celebrate effort and progress.

Common ground: Both value enjoyment as central to retention and effort.

Conflict risk: Overemphasis on competition/results can reduce fun.



Skill, Technique & Game Understanding

Player priorities: Improve first touch, dribbling, passing, shooting, positioning, and decision-making.

Coach behaviors: Plan progressive skill work, maximize touches, teach through small-sided games and guided discovery, give clear actionable feedback.

Common ground: Both value technical growth and smarter play.

Conflict risk: Prioritizing rigid tactics or short-term wins can reduce time for individual skill development and creativity.



Participation, Challenge & Outcomes

Player priorities: Regular meaningful minutes, appropriate challenge, chances to compete and succeed.

Coach behaviors: Rotate players, use formats that increase involvement (small-sided), set realistic competitive goals, manage expectations.

Common ground: Balanced competition motivates growth while ensuring involvement.

Conflict risk: Coaches chasing results may limit playing time or push undue pressure, harming development and enjoyment.



Social Environment & Communication

Player priorities: Make friends; feel supported, trusted, and fairly treated; clear roles.

Coach behaviors: Foster inclusive team culture, model respect, communicate transparently with players and parents, give constructive feedback.

Common ground: Positive culture boosts retention and performance.

Conflict risk: Poor communication, favoritism, or misaligned parent expectations undermine trust.



WHAT MAKES A GREAT PRACTICE?



PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

1. One clear objective (soccer skill, soccer decision) per practice.
2. High ball-to-player ratio (maximizes touches).
3. Game-like constraints and progressions (small-sided -> larger contexts).
4. Embedded repetition with variability (practice with slight changes).
5. Positive, specific feedback (coaching points) & player autonomy (guided).
6. Play-Practice-Play structure.



DESIGN-A-PRACTICE - ACTIVITY



1. Break into small groups (3-5 people per group).
2. Each group picks an age group and focus (e.g., U10 - dribbling 1v1; U14 - building out from the back).
3. **Using a one-page template, groups build a 60 min practice plan:**
 - I. Play
 - II. Technical Warm-up,
 - III. Core Activity
 - IV. Expanded Core Activity
 - V. Play
 - VI. Include visual diagrams, coaching cues, progressions, measurement of success (what coach looks for).
4. Presentation & feedback: One group presents a 3-5 min overview; others give rapid constructive feedback guided by the principles.

DESIGN-A-PRACTICE - SUMMARY



1. Pick one clear, observable objective — write it as player behavior (e.g., “use 1–2 touch combinations to break the press”).
2. Design every activity to maximize meaningful touches — target high reps per player, not long queues.
3. Start and finish with a game (Play-Practice-Play) so practice links directly to match actions and motivation.
4. Make activities game-like: use constraints, scoring, and time pressure that mimic match decisions.
5. Build progressions: simplify, coach the skill, then reintroduce complexity in a larger context.
6. Embed repetition with variability: repeat the target action across slightly different scenarios to boost transfer.
7. Keep coaching inputs short and specific — 1–2 cues per player, then let them try and learn.
8. Promote guided autonomy: ask questions, set choices, and let players solve before you instruct.
9. Plan timings and transitions tightly — maximize active play time and minimize coach talk and setup delays.
10. Assess during play: use simple success metrics (e.g., completion rate, shots created) and be ready to adapt mid-session.
11. Prioritize inclusion and safety: scale tasks for different abilities, rotate roles, and watch load/fatigue.
12. Communicate the plan and expectations to players (and parents if needed) so everyone understands the learning focus.

Design around one objective, keep players touching the ball in game-like, variable rep opportunities, coach briefly and purposefully, and always connect practice back to the game.

KEY TAKEAWAYS



#1 ORGANIZED:	#2 GAME-LIKE:	#3 REPETITION:	#4 CHALLENGING:	#5 COACHING:
Is the activity organized in the right way? (is it safe and the ball stays in play?)	Is the activity game-like? (attacking, defending, & transition)	Is there repetition when looking at the overall goal of the session?	Are the players being challenged? (is there the right balance between being successful and unsuccessful)	Is there effective coaching, based on the age and level of the players?

Design around one objective, keep players touching the ball in game-like, variable rep opportunities, coach briefly and purposefully, and always connect practice back to the game.



MANAGING GAMES?

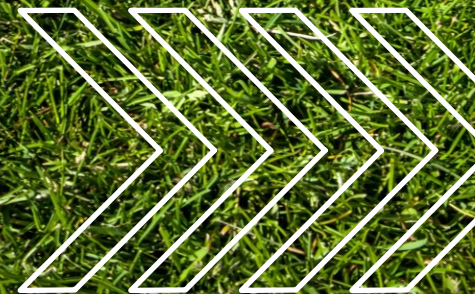


MANAGING GAMES

1. Managing games with lopsided goals is difficult
 - I. Players don't have fun
 - II. Players don't develop
 - III. Players can disengage
 - IV. Coaches tensions rise
 - V. Too often creates opportunities for unsportsmanlike behaviors
2. Our goal is to never let games get away from us (for or against) and try to keep every game competitive. 3-4 goals is the max goal differential we should be aiming for.



3=0



MANAGING GAMES - ACTIVITY



1. Break into small groups (3-5 people per group).
 2. Each group picks a side of the scenario, losing team and winning team.
1. **Create a list of possible strategies to manage the lopsided nature of the game:**
 - I. Technical
 - II. Tactical
 - III. Psychological
 2. Presentation & feedback: Representative from each group shares 1 of their strategies; facilitator captures common themes and synthesizes into areas of focus.

MANAGING GAMES - SUMMARY



Winning-team themes



Make scoring harder (score management & fairness)

- Require extra passes before a shot (e.g., 3+ passes).
- Limit finishing to weak foot or headers only for a set time.
- Impose two-touch or one-touch finishing constraints in the attacking third.
- Zone restrictions: attackers must start outside the penalty area before finishing.



Apply new development goals (skill focus & variability)

- Set technical constraints: 2-touch max, weak-foot-only, or no dribbling in certain zones.
- Reduce players (e.g., play 8v8 in 11v11 space) to emphasize spacing and touch.
- Introduce target challenges (pass to a moving cone = 1 point) to reward skill over score.
- Time-limited challenges: focus 10 minutes on first-touch control or quick combination play.



System experimentation & role rotation (learning in-game)

- Change formation (e.g., 4-3-3 → 3-4-3) and try new tactical shapes.
- Rotate players into unfamiliar positions (defenders forward, midfielders at fullback).
- Use the match to trial pressing triggers, build-from-back patterns, or different set-piece routines.
- Play one player down (with referee/league permission) to create a teaching constraint.



Sportsmanship & dignity (culture & communication)

- Pre-agree score trigger (e.g., +3) and implement calmly and privately.
- Tone down celebrations and model humble behavior.
- Communicate discreetly with officials/opponents when applying constraints.
- Postgame acknowledgement: praise opponents' effort and highlight fair play.

MANAGING GAMES - SUMMARY



Losing-team themes



Defensive organization & risk management

- Shift to compact, narrow formation; protect central lanes and space between lines.
- Force play wide—encourage opponents to cross rather than cut inside.
- Deploy deeper defensive line and simplify marking (zonal or clear 1v1 assignments).
- Prioritize safe clearances and conservative restarts under pressure.



Player management & matchup adjustments

- Place stronger or more composed players centrally to stabilize midfield and defense.
- Pair weaker players with stronger partners; shorten passing options for vulnerable players.
- Use substitutions to alter energy, change matchups, or neutralize key opponents.
- Reassign roles to reduce individual mismatches (e.g., double-mark a dangerous attacker).



Match-scale practice & learning moments

- Turn the game into a learning lab: give specific micro-tasks (complete 3 passes, win 1 duel).
- Change matchups (swap markers, alter wing assignments) to create fresh challenges and learning.
- Focus postgame or next-session drills that directly address breakdowns seen (defensive shape, first touch).
- Emphasize process metrics (possession time, pass completion) rather than final score.



Morale management & short-term goals

- Set small, achievable objectives for the remainder of the match (hold possession 30s, limit shots).
- Use concise, positive cues: “Good shape,” “Next ball,” “Stay focused.”
- Give players brief, specific praise for effort and small successes.
- Keep halftime and postgame messages short, practical, and encouraging.

KEY TAKEAWAYS



Winning-team themes

- Make scoring harder
- Apply new development goals
- System experimentation & role rotation
- Sportsmanship & dignity



Losing-team themes

- Defensive organization & risk management
- Player management & matchup adjustments
- Match-scale practice & learning moments
- Morale management & short-term goals



Cross-cutting best practices

- Agree on any in-game constraints with the opposing coach or referee when possible.
- Use discreet signals/phrases to implement score-management without public shaming.
 - Don't let the score become the focus of the game or decisions.
- Always prioritize player safety and emotional welfare - avoid actions that embarrass or demoralize.
 - Debrief: capture one or two teachable moments for both teams to take forward.



POINTS OF EMPHASIS?



KEY TAKEAWAYS



1. Our focus is on long term development, joy and retention – everything we do and say should drive these priorities
2. Our priorities as a HYS Coach are to bring kids back though joy of soccer
3. Practices should be structured, game like, fun and age-appropriate
4. As coaches we control how we react to winning and losing games
5. You have many resources at your disposal

KEY RESOURCES



Our Board



HYS Resources



Online Resources

THE HYS TEAM

- [Jessica Frenger](#) - President
- [Jarrett Groccia](#) - Vice President
- [Jeff Locke](#) - Treasurer
- [Ryan Hall](#) - Directing of Coaching
- [Pam Sansoucy](#) - Registrar
- [Natalie Dellecese](#) - Secretary
- [Grace Blanchette](#) - Director, Boys Travel Program
- [Andrew Smith](#) - Director, Girls Travel Program
- [Erin Deslauriers](#) - Director, Champions League
- [Joseph Hall](#) - Director, Futures - Pre-K-2 Programs
- [Osman Bilset](#) - Director, TOPS Program
- [Jon-Paul St. Germain](#) - Director, Unified Program
- [Andrea Berger](#) - Director, WS
- [Craig Toney](#) - Director, Winter Indoor
- [Jamie DePari](#) - CORI Director, Risk Manager
- [Regino Mercado](#) - Fields & Equipment Coordinator
- [Luis Garcia](#) - Marketing Coordinator
- [Alan Lampkin](#) - Webmaster, Assistant, Futures - Pre-K-2 Programs
- [OPEN](#) - Uniform Coordinator
- [Josh Gay](#) - Player Development
- [Joseph Hall](#) - Coach Development
- [Inna Epshteyn](#) - Sponsorship Coordinator
- [OPEN](#) - Parent Liason
- [OPEN](#) - Associate Member

Principles of Attack

Attacking Principles of Play

900-100-110

HYS - Style of Play

Attacking Principles

Opponents Hall

900-100-110

MASSACHUSETTS YOUTH SOCCER

	4v4	7v7	9v9	11v11
ATTACKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pass Shoot Pass or dribble forward Support the attack Change the point of attack Support the attack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pass Pass or dribble forward Shoot Support the attack Change the point of attack Support the attack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pass Pass or dribble forward Shoot Support the attack Change the point of attack Support the attack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pass Pass or dribble forward Shoot Support the attack Change the point of attack Support the attack
DEFENDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect the goal Strut the ball Strut the ball Strut the ball Strut the ball Strut the ball 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect the goal Strut the ball Strut the ball Strut the ball Strut the ball Strut the ball 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect the goal Strut the ball Strut the ball Strut the ball Strut the ball Strut the ball 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect the goal Strut the ball Strut the ball Strut the ball Strut the ball Strut the ball
9v9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect the goal Strut the ball Strut the ball Strut the ball Strut the ball Strut the ball 			
11v11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect the goal Strut the ball Strut the ball Strut the ball Strut the ball Strut the ball 			

"As many as possible, for as long as possible in the best environment possible"

Mass Youth Soccer - "The Model Coach"

- Facilitates an enjoyable experience for players
- Leads, inspires, and teaches players to be autonomous decision makers to recognize and solve game situations.
- Creates positive, game-like teaming/learning environments for players.
- Role Models respect for all players, families, opponents and referees.
- Provides a minimum of 50% playing time for all players in every game.
- Takes responsibility for the team culture and inclusion of all participants
- Strives to improve their coaching ability through coaching education and continuous reflection and self-development
- Prioritize the needs of players.
- Ensures a safe environment - on and off the field



THANK YOU & QUESTIONS

