**Field Youth Soccer U6 Coaches Manual**

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\* **Field Youth Soccer Philosophy** The Field Youth Soccer Program focuses on creating an environment where all children have an equal opportunity to develop and improve their skills within a healthy and spirited atmosphere that promotes sportsmanship, teamwork, fair play and most importantly, FUN!

**Field Youth Soccer Spectator Conduct**

It is the goal of Field Youth Soccer to provide a safe and enjoyable atmosphere for young children to learn and play the game of soccer. All efforts and energies of the coaches, parents and spectators during games as well as practices should be directed towards this objective. To this end, it is the expectation of this program and the responsibility of the coach(es) to ensure that:

1. There is no smoking on or around the soccer fields before, during or after games and practices. Smoking is only permitted in the Lion's Club parking lot.
2. There is no alcohol at any soccer game or practice.
3. There is no swearing or disrespectful/abusive language, attire or signs of any kind before, during or after games and practices.
4. No pets are brought to the soccer fields before, during or after games and practices. This is for insurance purposes.
5. Parents do not coach their child or other children from the sideline. Restrict your cheering to general and supportive "happy noise".
6. Support your coaches regardless of the results on the field
7. All spectators are to stay five feet or more from the field of play at all times and are not permitted behind the goals during the course of the game,
8. No spectator will be permitted to enter the field of play without the express permission of the referee*/*coach. In the case of an injury the referee/coach will signal the parent (if necessary) to come onto the field to tend to the injured player. Failure to abide by this rule may result in the stoppage of the game and possible forfeiture by the team who violates
9. One side of the field shall be designated for the spectators where they will remain for the duration of the game.
10. Cooperate with requests by referees and coaches
11. Parents will not be allowed to conduct practice or any activity that involves 1:1 interaction with the players unless they have completed the proper background checks and safety courses.
12. Please remember that all coaching and FYS personnel are volunteers who are trying their best - Communicate concerns to the coach in a constructive manner

**HELP! I Volunteered to Coach... What should I do?**

Many first time coaches volunteer or are volunteered for the job. First things first...Relax, Relax and think about how much fun you are going to have with these little Under-6 players.

**Goals of coaching U6 Soccer:**

1. **FUN** - We want these kiddos to enjoy soccer enough to come back. It might not be for everyone and many kids in this age group are trying soccer out for the first time.
2. Basic broad strokes of soccer.
   1. Where to kick a ball
   2. How to kick a ball
   3. Taking turns
   4. Ect.

How?

• Check out the coaches corner for ideas in your age group

• Talk to other Soccer Coaches in the program or in your community who have worked with these age groups before.

• Check out ideas online

-Pinterest is a great place to try

• Call your State Youth Soccer Association and ask to speak with the State Director of Coaching about specific age appropriate coaching courses and age appropriate training materials.

• Call US Youth Soccer at 1.800.4SOCCER or visit their web site at www.USYouthSoccer.org and request and/or order helpful coaching materials and coaching aids.

**Team Management:**

Prior to first practice email or text your parents with the following information:

* Who you are - how long have you been playing soccer and/or coaching
* Why you want to be a coach
* What are the dates and times of practices
* Location of practice
* Best way to contact you: (Group text, Group me app, other coaching apps)
* What they need before the first practice (Ball, shin guard, shoes, socks, athletic wear, & water bottle)

1st Practice:

* Conduct a preseason meeting (prior to practice) to review these rules and go over other important information
* Prepare a list of simple and clear rules for your players and their parents (See coaches corner for FAQ printable handout)
* Schedules and locations for training sessions and games.
* Drop off and pick up times for training sessions and games (At the U6 age group parents cannot leave their child unless there is a responsible adult)
* Player responsibilities and behavior at training sessions and games.
* Parent responsibilities and behavior at training sessions and games
* Player equipment (#3 soccer ball, shin pads, soccer shoes or sneakers, water, appropriate clothing).

If there is a player that is unable to purchase supplies that they need over the years we have had donations - please let them know that these are available and e-mail us at [fieldyouthsoccer@gmail.com](mailto:fieldyouthsoccer@gmail.com) if someone needs these supplies.

**Coaching equipınent**

Size 3 soccer balls

25-30 cones

10 vests/pennies

Basic first aid kit

Instant ice packs

Dry Erase board

Whistle. )

Missing supplies? Email at [fieldyouthsoccer@gmail.com](mailto:fieldyouthsoccer@gmail.com). You may get supplies from the shed if they are missing or get damaged, but please email with what you are taking so we do not think it is stolen. Extra supplies that you are using for a single practice do not need to be e-mailed. Please just return after practice

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**Risk Management**

1. Provide proper age appropriate activities at training sessions and games
2. Assure that training and playing areas are safe
3. Make sure that all players are wearing the correct equipment and that it is appropriately sized
   1. Players must wear appropriate shoes (tennis or soccer - no front center toe cleat), shin guards, and athletic clothing at all practices and games
4. Make sure that you are assisted by another adult when coaching the players (This includes the time when players arrive and when they depart from training sessions and games).
5. Create a plan for any medical emergencies/injuries

**Framework of a Training Session**

Duration: 45-60 minutes

Warm-up: activities include movement education approach...with and without a ball (10 minutes).

Fun games activities which teach skill - with and without a ball (20 minutes) (Usually ~ 2 activities)

Conclude with game scenario games (ex: 3v3 games with 2 goals)

Cool down

**General Information U6**

Roster Size - 8-10 players

Game time set up: 5 vs 5 with or without goalkeepers. Goalkeepers are at the discretion of coaching comfort. In the event that one coach is not comfortable with goalkeepers then it will default to no goalkeepers.

Substitutions: At any stoppage and unlimited .

Playing time: Each player SHALL play an equal amount of playing time (to the best of the coaches ability) Players will not be placed in one position throughout the entire season. Since this is an introduction to the sport coaches are to rotate players to play all the positions.

The Referee: a referee is not really needed for this age group. A coach, Assistant Coach, or Team Parent should supervise the game for safety sake. All rule infringements shall be briefly explained to the offending player. 'Do-overs' should be a regular occurrence allowed by the adult(s) supervising the U6 game.

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

Offside: there shall be no offside called during these games.

Fouls and Misconduct: no caution or send off shall be issued to players. If a child is being too rambunctious then the game official will ask the coach to make a substitution of that player to give the child a chance to calm down before returning to play.

Free Kicks: all free kicks shall be direct. This should keep the game flowing and keep the attention of the kids.

The Penalty Kick: for this age group there will not be any penalty kicks called.

Throw-in or kick in: because most U6 players do not yet have the eye-hand coordination to execute a throw-in to the letter of the law.

Throw ins: are to the best of the child's ability. They do **not** need to keep both feet on the ground until the ball is released from their hand. (To not do it this way would lead to endless retakes from one team to the other.)

Kick ins: If the child does not wish to throw the ball in they may set it down at the approximate place it was kicked out and they may kick it in.

The Goal Kick: The goal kick should be taken anywhere on the goal box line on the side in which it was kicked out.

Opposing players must be four (4) yards away from the ball until it is in play.

Recommendation: Have the opposing team stand on the half line when the ball is kicked giving the kicking team time to turn the ball around.

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

**General Characteristics of U6 player**

Once we begin to understand the following general characteristics of this age group it will help you plan age appropriate activities for practice sessions.

* Short attention span
* Individually Orientated (Me, My)
* Constantly in motion
* Psychologically easily bruised
* Little or no concern for team activities
* Physical and psychological development of boys/girls similar
* Primitive eye-foot coordination
* Love to run, jump, roll, and climb
* Catching skills not developed
* Can balance on good foot
* No sense of pace - Go flat out

**The Basic Coach's Guide U6**

Emphasis - Players should enjoy their soccer experience and want to come back again next season.

Teach Game Knowledge - Don't use hands, direction to attack, what it means to have the ball in and out of play.

Technical Skills -- Coached indirectly through fun games/activities (NO DRILLS)

1. Running with the ball
2. Changing direction with the ball
3. Kicking the ball with different parts of the foot.

Tactics – Knowing what direction to go (During mini scrimmages it is good to make the kid point to the goal they are defending and the goal they are “attacking”/scoring on

Positions - Players should be allowed to run around freely. They should NOT be made to stand around in a certain area. (Recommend setting kids up at the start in “Positions” so they can get the general idea that there are defenders and forwards, but these positions should not be forced. More of a good opportunity for kids to learn the vocabulary of soccer)

Activities ideas - (see Coaches corner and below information)

One player-One Ball activities such as tag games with the ball

1v1 games and small sided scrimmages

NO dribbling in lines around cones - However dribbling exercises are good

**Training Game for U6 Players**

1. 1 2 3 Red Light

Skill: Dribbling

Number Of Players Required: Full U-6 team

Equipment: 4 cones to mark grid and 1 cone and 1 ball for each player

Grid Requirement: Large (~20yd x 20yd)

Organization: All players are required to play within the grid and each player must have a soccer ball.

How The Game Is Played: The coach stands on one endline (good opportunity to teach the word “Sideline”) with his/her back to the players who are spread along the opposite endline. Place 5 cones behind the coach (along the endline), when the coach has back to the players, the players must dribble toward the opposite endline. Before the coach turns around he yells "1 2 3 Red Light '' and then turns around. At that point all players must have stopped the ball with the sole of their feet. Anyone seen moving is sent back to the opposite endline. The coach turns his back again. Repeat. The first player to pick up a cone with the ball at their feet wins.

Coach

Variations: Allow players to only use left foot, right foot, outside of R or L, or use inside of both feet. This might be technically difficult for U6 players at first, but if they are exceling this may be good towards the end of the season.

Goofy 1 2 3 Red Light - When the coach says, “1 2 3 Red light” Players must stop their ball and freeze in a goofy position.

1. Big Bad Coach

Skill: Dribbling

Number Of Players Required: Full U-6 team

Equipment: 4 or more cones to mark grid, 1 ball for each player

Grid Requirement: Large (~20 X 20 yard grid)

Organization: All players are required to play within the grid and each player must have a soccer ball.

How The Game Is Played: The players dribble around the area. The coach must attempt to kick the player's ball out of the grid. Once a player has had her ball kicked out of the grid or has dribbled outside of the grid, she must bring it back into the area and stand with the ball above her head with her legs apart in a stationary position. Players can get back into the game only when a teammate passes their ball through teammates legs.

Variations: Allow players to only use left foot, right foot, outside of Ror L, or use inside of both feet. Coach should play at 20% speed. Increase the speed of play as the players become more comfortable with the game. At beginners level, after the coach steals the ball dribble ball out of the grid (instead of kicking) to give the player enough time to “steal” it back.

1. "Coach Says"

Skill: Dribbling

Number of Players Required: Full U-6 team

Equipment: 4 or more cones to mark grid & 1 ball for each player

Grid Requirement: Large (~20 X 20 yard grid)

Organization: All players are required to stay in the grid and each player must have their own soccer ball.

How the Game Is Played: The coach will explain that he or she will tell the players exactly what he would like the players to do. Like: STOP, START, SIT DOWN, SIT ON BALL, ONE FOOT ON BALL, SPEED UP, SLOW DOWN, ELBOW ON BALL, and so on. They must only react if “Coach Says" precedes the direction. Players should continue old activity if "Coach Says" did not precede direction. (Variation of Simon Says)

Variations: None

1. Into The Well

Skill: Throw-in

Number Of Players Required: Full U-6 team

Equipment: 10 or more cones to mark grid, 1 ball for each player and a trash can.

Grid Requirement: 5-yard diameter circle.

Organization: Circle the players (5 yard diameter circle) around a target (trash can) with a soccer ball in hand.

How The Game Is Played: The players attempt to throw the balls into the trashcan all at once. The object is to improve the number of balls that go into the trash can, not to have a winner. Have the teamwork on improving the number of balls in the target.

Variations: Increase the circumference of the circle. Allow a parent to move around the circle carrying the target.

1. Knock It Off

Skill: Passing/Shooting Number Of Players Required: Full U-6 team

Equipment: 14 or more cones, 4 to mark grid and 10 to place balls on, 11 soccer balls.

Grid Requirement: Large (~20 X 20 yard grid)

Organization: Place 5 cones with a ball on it along each end line of the grid

How The Game Is Played: The coach will roll a ball into the grid and say "Go". Each team fights for possession. The team that gains possession attacks and the other team tries to regain possession. The game is won when all the balls on the end line that a team is attacking are knocked off the cones. If the ball goes out of play the coach will roll it back into the grid, Coach determines which team attacks.

Variations:

Can only shoot with the foot the coach designates.

Let any team attack any ball, the team that knock off the most balls wins.

Have players on the same team alternate knocking off the ball (one player can't knock off two in a row).

1. Target Practice Two

Skill: Passing/Shooting

Number Of Players Required: Full U-6 team

Equipment: 4 cones to mark grid and 6 cones to place soccer balls on, 7 or 8 soccer balls.

Grid Requirement: Medium (~15X 15 yard grid)

Organization: Place 5 or 6 cones with soccer ball on top of them randomly within the grid.

How The Game Is Played: One at a time, each player tries to knock a ball off the cones. After a miss the coach resets the balls and the next player is up. Players can shoot from any place on the line. The first player to knock all six balls of the cones is the winner.

Variations: Direct the players to only use left foot or right foot.

1. The Big Bad Bear

Skill: Dribbling

Number Of Players Required: Full U-6 team

Equipment: 12 cones - 4 cones to mark grid the grid, 8 cones to make two caves and 1 ball for each player.

Grid Requirement: Large (~30 X 30 yard grid)

Organization: Players must stay within the grid.

How The Game Is Played: The coach is the "Big Bad Bear" and the bear must try to capture the players. The players dribble around the area while the bear tries to capture them. The bear cannot capture the players if they hide in the cave. The players can only stay in the cave for 10 seconds and must go to the other cave to avoid capture. If a player is captured they become a Bear and help the Big Bad Bear capture the remaining players. Last player to be captured is the winner.

Variations:

All Bears must hold hands while trying to capture the remaining players.

Bears must always be growling.

1. The Big Race

Skill: Dribbling

Number Of Players Required: Full U-6 team

Equipment: 10 or more cones to mark grid, 1 ball for each player and a cone for each player,

Grid Requirement: Medium (~20 X 10 yard grid)

Organization: Place each player across from a cone that is placed on the other end of the grid.

How The Game /s Played: The coach will say, "Start your engines" after which he will yell go. The players must dribble their ball around their cone and back to the starting line. The first player back is the race winner.

Variations: Have a staggered start. Race in teams of two or three, players. Have the player's race individually against the clock (time trials).

1. Free Movement with the Ball

Skill: Dribbling

Number Of Players Required: Full U-6 team

Equipment: 10 or more cones to mark grid, 1 ball for each player and a cone for each player,

Grid Requirement: Large (~15 x 20 yd grid)

Organization: Place each player in the grid

How The Game is Played: Coach asks all players to move freely with their ball around the grid. Coach tells them to go fast/slow, roll with ball of foot, roll with bottom of foot, yell to change directions

Variations: None

1. The Body part dribbling game

Skill: Dribbling

Number of Players Required: Full U-6 Team

Equipment: Large Grid

Organization: Each player stands in the grid

How the Game is played: dribble their ball in the grid. When the coach yells out a body part, the players must stop the ball with that body part.

1. Hit the Ball

Skill: Passing

Number of Players Required: Full U-6 Team

Equipment: Grid size depending on skill level (small grid for lower level), each player needs a ball, 2 extra balls in the middle

Organization: Medium sized grid - place 2 balls in the middle

How the Game is played: Players line up shoulder to shoulder on (Relaxed)

one end of the grid. One at a time players kick their ball and try to hit one of the balls in the middle out of the grid.

1. Sharks and Minnows (often a team favorite)

Skill: Dribbling and Defence

Number of Players Required: Full U6 Team

Equipment: Large Grid, All but 2 players have a ball

Organization: Players (minnows) stand on one side of the grid with balls - 2 players (sharks) stand in the center of the grid without soccer balls

How the game is played: On the coach's command, the minnows must dribble their ball through the grid and get to the other side without getting their ball stolen or kicked away by the sharks. If a player loses their ball while crossing the grid, he/she becomes a shark.

Variation: As players improve - make it so “sharks” have to dribble the ball out of the grid to make it so the minnow can steal it back)

1. End Line Soccer (3v3)

Skill: Real game like setting

Number of players: Groups of 6 (sub if necessary)

Equipment: Large Grid (~15 yd x 20 yd grid)

Organization: Divide the players into two teams. 1 ball for each set

How the Game is played: Play 3v3 with no goalkeepers on the field. A team scores by dribbling the ball or kicking the ball over their designated end line. Balls are served in one at a time by the coach who is positioned outside the field at midfield.

Cool down idea:

1. Juggling

Skill: Ball Handling

Number of Players: As many as want/able to participate

Equipment: Each player has a ball

Organization: Give plenty of space between each player.

How the Game is played: Every player starts with a ball in his or her hands. They drop the ball on their thigh and catch it. They progress to dropping the ball on one thigh and juggling it to the other thigh, then catch it. Eventually, they can try thigh-high-foot-catch", etc.

Author: Tom Goodman

National Youth Certificate Course

Available Resources

United States Youth Soccer Association - www.usyouthsoccer.org

American Youth Soccer Organization - www.soccer.org

Ohio Youth Soccer Association - www.oysan.org

Soccer Specific.com - www.soccerspecific.com

Utah Youth Soccer Association - www.utahyouthsoccer.net

Coaching Soccer 101 – www.coachingsoccer101.com