



★ RECREATIONAL ★ COACHING CURRICULUM

COACHING YOUR PLAYERS

The 'understanding your players' and 'what to expect from your players' sections can be used to identify some areas that are important to remember when coaching players at these ages.

GREET your players to practice! This will help create a welcoming and safe atmosphere for your players. This can include greeting players to practice with a warm smile, a high five and using their name. Taking time before practice to talk and joke with them. Remember the number one priority is FUN!

FACILITATOR or coach? At these ages the coach should act as a facilitator, present and guide players through the rules and boundaries of the activities. Allow activities to be the teacher. When you do make coaching points try guiding the players to the answer by asking questions. Finally, coach with high energy, players at these ages will respond better to someone who is outgoing!

Keep soccer FUN, through ACTIVE PARTICIPATION! All aspects of practices and games should be fun for the players. Choose activities where every player can achieve success and the player to ball ration is 1 to 1. The only activity where this ratio should change is in your scrimmage. Also, don't be afraid to join in games and activities with them.

Keep it SIMPLE & SILLY! All games and activities used should be simple to understand and easy to play. Also, the more silly the game, the more fun the players will have.

Keep is SHORT & SWEET! Especially when introducing new activities or skills. Players have short attention spans and will focus more if the coach is expressive and exciting during practice. Give short, effective demonstrations while explaining the new activity or skill.

Keep PRAISING players! Give players consistent positive feedback, both verbally and non-verbally (high five, smile and a pat on the back).

Allow players to EXPERIMENT! Coaches should provide an environment in training and games where players can experiment with new soccer ideas. There should be a freedom to fail!

Do not focus on WINNING and LOSING! Make sure you use activities where no one player can be singled out as a winner. Be creative in this aspect during practices and games.



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Keep practices EXCITING, FRESH, FUN & CHALLENGING. Avoid static line drills at all costs. Activities where every player has a ball and is moving are ideal. Activities where players have to line up or share a ball will allow them to lose focus and interest in the game. Remember **NO LINES, NO LAPS, NO LECTURES!**

45 MINUTE RULE Soccer contacts should last 45 minutes. Players will go all out for short periods, while it will only take a short time for them to recuperate. Allow for lots of short breaks during your practices.

As well as learning how to coach your players, it is also important to highlight areas of coaching that will restrict learning. We must try to remove these areas from our coaching in order to maximize the learning.

FEAR of failing. We must allow players to make mistakes, both in training and games.

SHOUTING, SARCASM and NEGATIVE feedback. Remember, try to catch them being good!

OVER coaching and LECTURING. Remember the Chinese proverb:

I HEAR - I FORGET - Don't spend too much time in the introduction of activities....

I SEE - I REMEMBER - Briefly demonstrate what you want them to do....

I DO - AND I UNDERSTAND - Have them try the activity and then make rule changes / corrections....

Lack of SUCCESS. Pushing players into activities and skills that do not fit the age group or level of player, will cause frustration, decrease motivation and affect the fun that players have.



Finally, remember the old adage - 'if you're having fun, the players will be having fun'. If there are smiles on the players' faces and they are enthusiastic during activities and games, you are doing a great job!