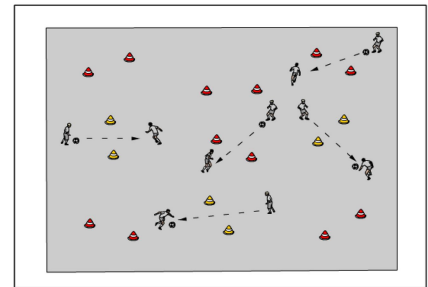


U8 --- Week Seven

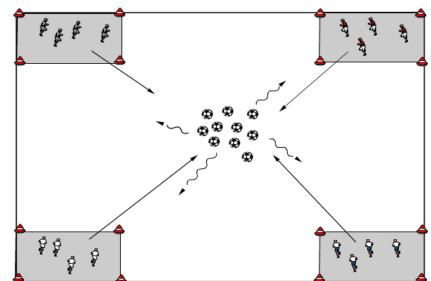
OBJECTIVE: To create an atmosphere that is SAFE and FUN and to maximize ball touches for every player. Therefore, almost all the activities will require one ball per player. During the “practice” portion, our aim is to tap on the child’s imagination and play age appropriate games that help them make a connection between the brain and nervous system to create muscle memory. During the “games” portion our aim is to let them play and gain “soccer/game smartness”. Each session should be 60 minutes. 30 minutes of “practice” and 30 minutes of “games”.

Today’s phrase: “Can you put your body sideways to the ball and the person trying to take it away”.

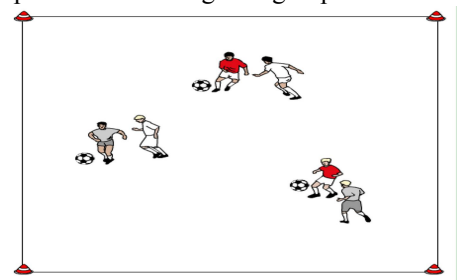
1) Gates Passing--- (10 minutes): Same set up as Gates Dribbling; Set up many pairs of discs, roughly 2 steps apart, randomly placed (different distances and facing in different directions) around the playing area. These pairs serve as gates or many mini-goals. However, players are now paired up and must successfully pass the ball through the cones to their teammate to earn a point. Again, players try to accumulate as many points as possible in the time allotted. Similar to the previous game, have them pass only with their left foot or right foot, or the outside of their foot.



2) Round Them Up--- (10 minutes): Set up three or four “home bases” (squares) with cones roughly 3-4 yards wide. Break up the players into teams and have each team get together in their home base. Place all the balls in the center of the space between the home bases. On the coach’s command the teams are free to gather as many soccer balls as they can into their home base. Players cannot use hands and there is no pushing each other or sitting/laying on the balls. Teams try to gather as many balls as possible into their home bases. Teams can steal balls from each others’ home bases. Coach calls time and count up how many balls are in each space to determine a winner. Coach allows teams 1 minute to make up a new team strategy before playing again.



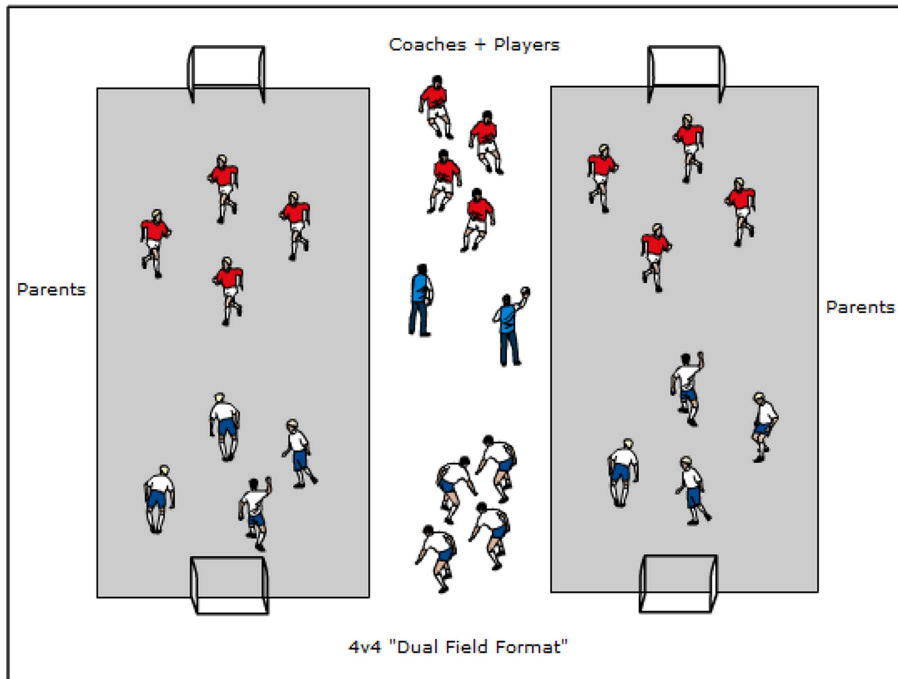
3) Shield-Steal--- (10 minutes): Within a defined space half of players in the group have a ball and half do not. If you do not have a ball you need to steal one from someone who does. If ball goes out of bounds, person who touched it last does not get possession. You can teach players the technical points of shielding as a group at start of activity. Show technique with body sideways, arm providing protection, ball on outside foot, knees bent, and turning as defender attacks, using feel to understand where defender is going. Fix technical shielding errors throughout this activity and make sure entire group knows how to properly shield.



If you go too fast in the first 3 activities then you can play the next one. We’ll start with Game #4 next week.

4) Lights Game--- (10 minutes): All players have a ball and dribble in a defined space. When coach says “red light”, players must stop ball and put foot on top of ball. When coach says “yellow light”, players must dribble very slowly. When coach says “green light”, players dribble fast. Coach controls this game with frequency of light changes and variety of changes. Once players catch on to this game, add light of other colors and affix different actions to them. (i.e. purple light = hop back and forth over ball, orange light = run around the ball, black light = dance, blue light = hide behind the ball etc. etc.).

5) Games---“dual field format” 4v4 NO GK’s (30 minutes):



NO instruction. NO intrusion. This is their world, their game in their terms. We are simply going to let them play and figure out things on their own.

What can we do? You Ask?

- Make sure they know which direction they are going
- Do not let them play outside the lines (they must learn to play within boundaries)
- There are no corner kicks, goal kicks,
- kick-offs or throw-ins. When the ball goes out of bounds the team that did not kick it out re-starts by placing the ball on the line and they can pass it in or dribble it in
- Coach by positive reinforcement:

“great goal, great move” or “that was a good try; next time you’ll get it”

- Celebrate not only the “successes” but also all the “attempts”.
- Let’s encourage them: “What can you do with the ball? Don’t just kick it”, “Where can you go to help out?”, “What do you see? Can you play fast?”, “NO goalies!”

Review: Before dismissing the players, go over a couple of the big phrases

Remember- Youth Games are a “participant’s” sport and NOT a “spectator’s” sport. It will never resemble the real game.