

NYSA



UNDER 7/ UNDER 8

2010 COACHES HANDBOOK

Truths about Children and Sports

1. Fun is pivotal; if it is not 'fun', young people will not play
2. Skill development is crucial aspect of fun; it is more important than winning even among the best athletes.
3. The most rewarding challenges of sports are those that lead to self-knowledge.
4. Intrinsic rewards (self-knowledge that grows out of self-competition) are more important in creating lifetime athletes than are extrinsic rewards (victory or attention from others).

Characteristics of Under 8's

They are

- Self-focused and individualistic (me, mine, my).
- Able to pay attention a bit longer than U-6 players but still not the same as the "competitive" stage.
- Still very honest but most will tell a "white lie" on things that are embarrassing, they cannot do, or they haven't done. For instance if you ask them at practice, kids did you practice at home this week? They will all scream back yeeeeaaahhh. But if you ask them again and make eye contact to one in particular, they will tell you the truth.
- Easily bruised psychologically. They will remember negative comments for a long time! Praise often. Give "hints", don't criticize.
- Inclined towards small group activities.
- Always in motion: scratching; blinking; jerking; rocking. Hand-eye coordination is better, while most will still struggle with eye-foot coordination. Note that this is the exact opposite of children in Italy (for instance) where you will find few U-8 kids who can dribble a basketball yet most of them can begin to juggle a soccer ball.
- Starting to imitate older players or sports heroes. Want the same "gear" as them.
- Developing physical confidence. (Most are able to ride a two-wheeler.)

They

- Understand simple rules that are explained briefly and demonstrated.
- Better at recognizing when the ball is out of play, and remembering what goal they are going for... but, in the heat of battle, they will sometimes still forget. They still find it difficult to really be aware of more than one thing at a time.
- Lack sense of pace. They go flat out until they drop.
- Want everybody to like them.
- Respond well to positive reinforcement
- Have limited understanding of personal evaluations. "If they try hard, they performed well" regardless of the actual performance. Thus, they need to be encouraged constantly, and asked "Now, can you do this?"
- Will still want to wear a pinnie, even when the color is identical to their shirt.

And, moreover,

- Skeletal system growing rapidly. Often results in apparent lack of coordination.

- Cardiovascular and temperature regulation system is not developed. Their heart rate peaks quickly and they overheat quickly. make sure that they get adequate water breaks
- If you are not energetic and fun you will easily bore them.
- Respond well to positive reinforcement.

Under 8's, the Age of Technique, is the time that coaches can lay the foundation for the development of good soccer players of the future. Many of the players have been in the club for two years some have just joined us this year. Clearly, these players will not be all at the same level of development. It is also common at this age to have players that are physically more mature than other players. As a coach you must you must be conscious of these players for a number of reasons:

1. Because they are physically able to just run circles around everyone else, they will tend to not want to practice the fundamentals and learn to pass.
2. As a coach, do not fall to the temptation of “sticking” them at forward and watch them run, score, and win games. You will develop future bad habits for the player and their teammates, as they will grow up thinking soccer is all about giving the ball to one person.
3. Don't confuse their current abilities with “special” soccer skills. Many of these “earlier maturing players” end up giving up on soccer later on, once everyone else “catches up” to them physically and they go from being a superstar to an average player.

The opposite is also true in that you will probably have a player that is developing slower than the other players. Good teachers and coaches always see potential in kids and are never stopped by the current “realities” of a child. You will have players that today are behind the rest, but these kids can be, and often are tomorrow's superstars. I am often asked why I think soccer is the greatest game on earth. The answers are many, but one of course is the fact that soccer players come in all sorts of sizes and shapes, and as a result, the “dream” is available to everyone.

Parents will also play a very crucial and an important role during this time; they are still the most influential adult in their child's life. Their enthusiasm for the game is crucial to their child's enthusiasm for the game. However, many parents are not content simply to provide encouragement and their encouragement turns into instructions and before long there will be as many coaches as there are players. This also has a tendency to lead parents and coaches to make every decision for the players like they are playing a playstation game. For children to enjoy the game and develop as players they need the chance to make good decisions and bad decisions, mistakes and great plays for themselves. You should also remember that you can help a player a lot by correcting him, but even more by encouraging him. Encourage players loudly and they will continue to try and do what is right, building in self esteem and confidence. Correct them quietly and you will not instill a fear of making a mistake or trying new things.

During the Age of Technique we use games to introduce as many techniques as possible, children lose themselves in games allowing them to learn without feeling like they are been forced to learn; ‘playing is learning’ and ‘learning is playing’. The element of play seems to be of great value in the learning process. As long as each activity has a recognizable objective, set rules, and play oriented approach players will stay engaged and enjoy the activity allowing for more repetitions of a skill or technique without being bored. The games that you use in your training sessions should look to improve these four skills individually or in combination:

1. Dribbling the ball

2. Receiving, controlling, passing, and shooting the ball
3. taking the ball away from the opponent
4. Considering their teammates or opponents in attack as well as defense

Important Numbers and Emails

NYSA Director of Player Development: [Don Rother \(don.rother@normansoccer.org\)](mailto:don.rother@normansoccer.org)

Cell Number: 405-650-1881

NYSA Office: 405-573-0070

Good Websites to Visit

<http://www.normansoccer.org/> Norman Youth Soccer Association

www.OKFCSoccer.com Frontier Country Soccer Club

www.OKSoccer.com Oklahoma Soccer Association

Structure of Soccer in the United States

**Norman Youth Soccer Association—Frontier Country Soccer Association—
Oklahoma Soccer Association—USYSA Region 3—United States Youth Soccer
Association—USSF**

Team Set Up Basics

Schedule a parent meeting before your first game. The meeting can be in a formal setting or it can be part of a fun event, like a picnic or parent-player game. Key points to cover in the meeting would include:

Explain your coaching philosophy should include

Players exposed to different positions

Positive Environment

Fun Activities

Smiles and appropriate behavior

Goals for the season

Practice days and policies

Parent Responsibilities

Get volunteers to help with the team

Assistant Coach

Manager

Treasurer

Basic USYSA Under 8 Practice Model

Warm-up Activity - 10 minutes

2nd Activity - 5 minutes

Water Break - 2minutes

3rd Activity - 10 minutes

4th Activity - 5 minutes

Water Break - 2 minutes

Final Activity – 10 minutes



United States Youth Soccer Association

Practice Plan

Name: _____ Date: _____

Age Group: _____ Theme: General

Activity	Coaching Points
<p>1st Activity (warm-up) <i>Island Game</i></p> <p>Use disc cones to set up small islands (small squares) in a large playing area. Have everyone dribble around in the area. On the coaches signal everyone must dribble with speed to an island; however, only two people are allowed per island. The player (or two) who does not get to an island scores one minus point. Play to see who has the least minus points.</p> <p>Progressions: Start game without balls and then add them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ When dribbling for speed the players do not have to dribble the ball as close ▪ Their should be about five or six steps in between each touch of the ball
<p>2nd Activity <i>Ball Stealing</i></p> <p>Split the team into two groups and give one group red vests and one group blue vests. Give one of the teams balls to dribble. Those players try to dribble inside the area without losing possession of their ball to the other team. The objective is to see which team, red or blue, has the most balls at the end. Players from the same team can work together to steal balls or to keep possession (passing???).</p> <p>Progressions: Rotate who starts with the balls.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ When someone is trying to stop their ball from being taken away, can they keep their body in between the ball and the defender? ▪ If you are going to lose your ball can you find a teammate to give your ball to?
<p>3rd Activity <i>Everyone vs. Everyone</i></p> <p>Set up several small gates in the playing area. Give half to three-quarters of the team a ball. Players with a ball try to dribble/shoot through as many of the small gates as they can. Players without a ball try to steal a ball from someone who has one and then they try to score. Play multiple games and allow everyone to have a chance to beat their own score.</p> <p>Progressions: Define how goals are scored - by dribbling or shooting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Don't tell the players that they can't dribble through the same gate twice, see if anyone is creative and dribbles through the same gate back and forth ▪ As soon as players go through a gate they should look up to find an open gate and then go for it!
<p>4th Activity <i>Edge of the World</i></p> <p>Each player gets a ball and stands on one sideline of an area. The objective is for everyone to pass their ball so that it stops as close to the other sideline as possible. If the ball goes past the sideline it falls off the edge of the world. Players gets points for getting their ball within one yard (distance depends upon ability) of the line without going over.</p> <p>Progressions: Players play ball with laces, inside of foot, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Instead of having a line you could also have an end zone that the players try to get their ball to stop in
<p>5th Activity (the game) <i>Outta There</i></p> <p>In a 25 x 15 yard grid with a goal at each end, play 1v1. The coach stands on the touchline with a supply of ball and a small line of players on each side. The coach plays a ball in and the first person from each line plays 1v1. If a player scores they stay on and the other person leaves. A ball is immediately played back into the game. If the ball goes out of bounds both players are "outta there." This should be a very fast paced game.</p> <p>Progressions: Start with 1v1 and progress to 2v2.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This game should be very fast paced ▪ As soon as the ball goes out of bounds throw another ball in immediately ▪ The coach is the master of the balls, look to see for players that aren't having a lot of success and distribute the ball straight to them ▪ Vary how balls are distributed into the playing area



United States Youth Soccer Association

Practice Plan

Name: _____ Date: _____

Age Group: _____ Theme: _____

Activity/ Coaching Points

Diagrams /

Variations

1st Activity (warm-up)	
2nd Activity	
3rd Activity	
4th Activity	
5th Activity (the game)	

Coaching U7/U8: Things You Need To Know

-You will play 4v4 (no goalkeepers) in U7/U8. Each player must play at least 50% of each game.

-Game Length: The U8 game will be 4 quarters. Each quarter will be 12 minutes long. There will be a two minute break between the quarters and a five minute break at halftime. You will begin each quarter with a Kick-Off (see below).

-A center referee will be provided for these games.

****When a team trails by 5 they may add one player, when they trail by 8 they may add another. That team may keep these players on until the score differential equals 3.**

-Kick Offs: The Kick Off is **INDIRECT**. This means: You may not score directly from the kick. Another player from either team must touch the ball for a goal to count. The Kick Off is taken at the beginning of each game, to begin the second half, or after a goal is scored. The ball is placed in the center of the center circle. The player taking the kick has one touch, and may not touch the ball again until another player on the field touches the ball.

-Free Kicks: All **OTHER** free kicks are **DIRECT** free kicks. This means: The player taking the kick may score directly from the kick and the ball does **not** need to touch another player on the field.

-Goal Kicks: Goal kicks are taken when the ball goes over the defensive teams endline (line at end of field) off of the opposing team. The goal kick will be taken from anywhere inside or on the line of the small box closest to the goal they are defending. The player taking the kick has one touch, and may not touch the ball again until another player on the field touches the ball.

-Corner Kicks: Corner kicks are taken when the ball goes over the defensive teams endline off of the defensive team. The corner kick will be taken from the corner in which side of the goal the ball went over the endline. The player taking the kick has one touch, and may not touch the ball again until another player on the field touches the ball.

-Throw Ins: Throw Ins are taken when the ball goes out off of the opposing team over the sideline (lines on sides of field). The throw In will be taken where the ball traveled over the line. The player taking the throw may not touch the ball again until another player on the field touches the ball. Players incorrectly throwing the ball in will have one “do over”.

Game Organization

Pre-Game

- Players arrive, ready to play 15-30 minutes early.
- Warm-up Activity
- Line up and drink of water
- Team Cheer. No aggressive or confrontational language.

During the Game

- ALL Players should play at least 50% of the game.
- Players should be exposed frequently to all positions
- Limit Coaching. Allow players to make their own decisions. DO help but do not joystick
- Positive encouragement and praise for good performance.

Halftime

- Compliment the players as they leave the field.
- Allow Players to relax
- Water and snacks for players and the coach.
- Positive encouraging words to ALL players.
- Line up
- Team Cheer. No aggressive or confrontational language.

Post Game

- Take a deep breath.
- Positive encouraging words to ALL players.
- Shake other teams hands—telling them good game.
- Team celebration Tunnel, snacks, and goodbye.
- Don't review the game with the players.

General Principles when handling an injured player:

- Avoid Panic. Tell the player they are alright
- Treat injury DO NOT assess blame.
- Use common sense.
- Seek professional help if the injury is beyond a minor scrap or sprain.
- Check for breathing, bleeding, consciousness, deformity, discoloration, and shock.
- If the injury is serious avoid moving the players.
- Inspire confidence and reassure the player
- Always ERR of the side of caution

Dealing with Minor Injuries

R.I.C.E. Rest, Ice, Compression, and Elevation.

The 6 Things Parents Should Say to Their Player

A lot of soccer parents with good intentions give a 30 minute lecture, covering all the players supposed deficiencies and giving playing advice, in the car on the way to each match. The kids arrive far off their optimal mental state, and dreading the critique they are likely to hear, whether they want it or not, on the way home. Kids who are massaged in this way tend not to play badly, they just tend to not play, possibly to avoid making mistakes.

The easiest way to detect this problem is just to ask the player if it is a problem. Kids are more than willing to share this grief. The easiest way to correct this problem is to speak to the parents, as a group, about your expectations, and to cover this as a routine problem. Many of the parents will recognize themselves if you can present this problem with humor and illustrate the importance of the kids having fun and arriving in a good state of mind.

For best results, parents should memorize and use the following.

before the match

1. I love you
2. Good luck
3. Have fun

after the match

1. I love you
2. It was great to see you play
3. What would you like to eat?