

### **Components of the Game for the U5 and U6 Age Group\***

**Fitness:** Introduce the idea of how to warm-up and movement education. Begin education about nutrition with players and parents. Balance, walking, running, how to start and stop, jumping, hopping, rolling, skipping, changing direction, bending, twisting and reaching.

**Technique:** Dribbling (stop and start) and shooting. Experiment with the qualities of a rolling ball.

**Psychology:** Sharing, fair play, parental involvement, “how to play” and emotional management.

**Tactics:** Where is the field? The concept of boundary lines, at which goal to shoot and playing with the ball wherever it may go.

\*Please note that the components of the game are in a priority order for this age group

#### **Typical U5 and U6 Training Session**

- Should not exceed 45 minutes.
- Every child should have a ball.
- Free play or a warm-up, including movement education challenges and soccerastics.
  - -approximately 15 minutes-
- Game-like activities, mostly body awareness and maze games. (see practice plans on web page)
  - -approximately 15 minutes-
- Finish with a 3v3 game with two goals, no goalkeepers
  - -approximately 15 minutes

### **Components of the Game for the U-8 Age Group\***

**Technique:** Experiment with the qualities of a rolling or spinning ball. Introduce ball lifting, juggling, block tackle, receiving ground balls with the inside and sole of the foot, shooting with the inside of the foot, toe passing and shooting and dribbling while changing direction. Introduce the push pass.

**Fitness:** Agility, eye-foot and eye-hand coordination, balance, leaping, bounding, tumbling, catching, throwing, pulling, pushing, warm-up activities and movement education. Continue education on sports nutrition with players and parents.

**Psychology:** Encourage working in pairs, sportsmanship, parental involvement, how to play, emotional management, creativity, dynamic activities, participation of all players and a safe and fun environment. There is still a short attention span unless the player has peaked (keep interest high). Like to show what they can do – encourage trying new things. Developing self-esteem – activities should foster positive feedback and attainable positive success.

**Tactics:** Back line and forward line, 1v1 attack and choosing to dribble or pass. Introduce the names of positions (fullbacks and forwards). Institute games of 2v1, 1v2 and 2v2, playing with the ball with a purpose and promote problem solving.

\*Please note that the components of the game are in a priority order for this age group

#### **Typical U-8 Training Session**

- Should not exceed one hour.
- Free play or a warm-up, each player with a ball, dynamic stretching and soccerastics.
  - -approximately 15 minutes-
- Some individual body awareness activities.
- Introduce partner activities.
- A mixture of individual and partner activities. Add more maze-type games. Introduce target games with a variety of player combinations: 1v1, 2v1, 1v2 and 2v2.
  - -approximately 25 minutes-
- Conclude with a Small-Sided Game of 4v4, two goals and no goalkeepers.
  - -approximately 20 minute

### **Components of the Game for the U-11 Age Group\***

**Technique:** Experiment with the qualities of a bouncing ball and running with the ball, passing with the inside and outside of the foot (emphasis on quality push pass), instep drive, receiving ground balls with the instep and outside of foot (body behind the ball), receiving bouncing balls with the instep (cushion) and the sole, inside and outside of foot (wedge), fakes in dribbling and turning with the ball. Introduce heading and crossing. Practice throw-ins. For goalkeepers: ready stance, getting the feet set, how to hold a ball after a save, diamond grip, catching shots at the keeper, punting, recovery from down to the ground and up to set position and footwork exercises. Also introduce goal kicks and throwing.

**Psychology:** Keep soccer enjoyable to foster a desire to play using self-motivation. Working in groups of three, four or five, stay focused for one entire half. There is an increase in responsibility, sensitivity, awareness of how to win or lose gracefully, fair play, parental involvement, how to play, communication and emotional management.

**Fitness:** Factors are endurance, range of motion flexibility, rhythm exercises and running mechanics. Any fitness activities must be done with the ball. Introduce body resistance exercises and the idea of cool down.

**Tactics:** 1v1 defending, roles of 1st attacker and defender, 2v1 attacking, what it means to get goal-side, small group shape in pairs and threes (emphasize support on both attack and defense), playing on and 28 A fake is done with the feet. The goal of a fake is to get the opponent off balance (wrong footed) or going in the direction opposite of where the player in possession of the ball really plans to go.

### **Typical U-11 Training Session**

- Should not exceed one hour and 15 minutes.
- Free play or a warm-up (ball juggling), partner and small group activities, dynamic stretching.
  - -approximately 15 minutes-
- Introduce small group activities (four to six players).
- Add more directional games. Play to targets and/or zones.
  - -approximately 25 minutes-
- Conclude with a Small-Sided Game, 6v6, with goalkeepers.
  - -approximately 25 minutes-
- Finish with cool down activities.
  - -approximately 10 minutes