



**“SO NOW YOU ARE THE COACH...
DO’S AND SOME DON’T’S”**

U-5 to U-12 RECREATIONAL COACH





ENJOYING THE GAME

Every child, boy and girl, has the right to practice soccer in a safe, challenging, ever changing environment, and be guided by a caring adult. A playful environment is the best way to learn and explore new things. In this environment the fields are smaller and there are less players on the field. The children will participate in small sided games ranging from 3v3 to 9v9. The field sizes can be as small as 35x25, or as large as 75x55.

These games are designed to speed up the development of young players by providing maximal contacts with the ball.

BENEFITS OF THIS WORLD

- More touches on the ball
- More shots on the goal
- Players can make their own decisions on the field
- The game is easier to understand




PLAY WORLD

The emphasis in this world is on participation and enjoyment. The players need encouragement and positive feedback from the parents and coaches. It is **CRITICAL** to allow the players to make their own decisions on the field. It is good to remember that losing is also a natural part of sports.

The small sided games allow the game to be molded to the needs and capabilities of the children, rather than mold the children to the game. In this world the children have more fun and learn more. Practices should be geared towards learning the relationship of the body and the ball.

Describing the Youth Soccer Environment



The Stark Reality #1
The vast majority of our players never develop a comfort level with the soccer ball.

Describing the Youth Soccer Environment

The Stark Reality #2

Most youth coaches are unfamiliar with soccer and are ill-prepared to work with young players.



Describing the Youth Soccer Environment

The Stark Reality #3

Entry-level programs, particularly for U-6's and U-8's, are invariably structured around the adult sports model – and over-organized.

Describing the Youth Soccer Environment

The Stark Reality #4

Based on player retention figures, 70% of our customer base becomes dissatisfied with our product and leave the sport before entering high school.

Describing the Youth Soccer Environment



The Stark Reality #5
The vast majority of soccer parents are unfamiliar with the sport and serve to perpetuate the “Kick Ball” culture.

5/6 YEAR OLD

THREE THINGS TO EXPECT

- Good behavior
- Avoid injuring teammates
- Listening to BRIEF directions

THREE THINGS NOT EXPECT

- Ability to handle negative feed back
- Correct technique
- Ability to concentrate

ENVIRONMENT

- Practices need to be light, not very demanding, mobile, safe, and fun.
- The important basic motor skills can be practiced with and without the ball.
- Physical and psychological maturity process may vary a great deal at this age.
- The instructions should be brief and to the point
- The adults should be good role models



WHAT KIND OF A CHILD AM I AT 5/6

- I get mad quickly, but get over it quickly.
- I can move forward and backward slow and fast.
- I cannot listen to long instructions or talks.
- A water puddle, or a bug, in the middle of the field is often inviting.
- I think of me, me, me first. Now and then I may let my friend borrow the ball.
- I run willingly run to get the ball, but seldom to help my friend.
- My concentration level is low, but getting better with time
- I mostly move by skipping, jumping, hopping, or running
- I want everybody on the team to like me, including the coach
- My pulse rate is high, so I need frequent water breaks.
- I am just learning the game, so I cannot always be at the correct position
- I want to create my own rules.
- I can kick the ball and even dribble a little.
- I enjoy playing, not so much watching.



SUGGESTIONS 5/6 YEAR OLDS

- As much of positive feed back as possible.
- Praise creates positive feelings and encourages to learn new things.
- Often parents take care of the equipment, encourage the child's responsibility.
- Provide opportunities to play with the outside organized practices.
- As a parent participate, but let the child to organize.
- Provide opportunities to observe professionals and national teams.
- Don't get frustrated with the perceived lack of improvement.
- Remember that the child is not a small adult.



7/8 YEAR OLD

THREE THINGS TO EXPECT

- Respect for team mates and the facilitator/coach
- Make own decisions
- Concentrate on short instructions

THREE THINGS NOT TO EXPECT

- Perfect technique
- Tactical knowledge
- Ability to concentrate for long periods at the time

ENVIRONMENT

- The child devotes a lot of time to learning technique.
- Development occurs in just about every practice and game.
- The child starts to develop physically especially with lower extremities.
- The exercises can be somewhat more complex, although understanding is low.
- Friendships are starting to develop and becoming important.
- Children are starting to value fair play and rules, even without adult presence .



WHAT KIND OF A CHILD AM I AT 7/8

- I am motivated and quick to learn, but I still can't concentrate on one thing for long.
- I need parent's support and often like to do things just please them.
- I can jump, keep my balance, and move to all directions at different speeds.
- I can move further away from the defenders with the ball, but dribbling still requires a lot of concentration.
- I am starting to understand space and that a pass could be the best solution.
- I can make fairly accurate 6-10 yard passes, but usually with only one foot.
- I can most of the time receive and hold a good pass.
- I can move towards an empty space to receive a pass as long as I have enough time to read the situation.
- I am beginning to understand the concept of width and depth in the game.
- Rules, and following them, are becoming important.
- The coach becomes more important and may be admired.
- I am getting stronger and my techniques are improving.
- I am beginning to be aware of adult reactions.



SUGGESTIONS 7/8 YEAR OLDS

- The children get moody, provide a safety island with hugs and kisses. Caring!!
- Coaches and parents need to exercise patience.
- The players like to make their own decisions on the field, but only when they are ready to do so.
- Provide a healthy playing and practice environment.
- Although receiving praise, positive feedback, and experiencing success is important, it is equally important to understand that experiencing disappointments and getting through difficult times increases self-confidence as well.
- Avoid comparisons to others as there is a tendency to over compare, thus creating fear of being unsuccessful.
- Provide an opportunity to play with the ball outside the organized practices.
- If boredom sets in, ask the children to come up with the practice ideas.



9/11 YEAR OLD

THREE THINGS TO EXPECT

- Taking responsibility
- Giving his/her best effort
- Developing a good team spirit

THREE THINGS NOT TO EXPECT

- Life without conflicts
- Exceeding own ability level
- To believe false or manufactured feedback

ENVIRONMENT

- A challenging environment for the facilitator/coach as early signs of puberty start appearing, such as defiance, sensitivity, and awkwardness in motor skills.
- The degree of difficulty in training increases demands.
- Training groups increase in size, more demands on the coach.
- As part of a group, players start forming hierarchies and strengthen their roles.
- Opinions of friends have a big influence in this age group.
- This age group has attrition in participation.
- It is critical to provide an interesting, safe, challenging, enjoyable, and tension free environment for the players.
- Every now and then the interaction can become unscrupulous and aggressive.



WHAT KIND OF A CHILD I AM AT 9/11

- I like to be wanted and earn trust.
- I am well adjusted, active, and interested in variety of things.
- I may be dissatisfied with myself and contemplate bigger things.
- I understand the concept of width and depth in our play when I am in possession of the ball. I am also starting to understand rhythm in the game.
- I can kick the ball well by a variety of techniques.
- I am skillful at dribbling the ball, and I can pass and receive 10-15 yard passes.
- I can receive the ball while I am moving and play it to an advantageous position with one touch.
- I may criticize the coach's and parent's decisions by appealing to their senses.
- I may be developing a sensitive ego.
- I am increasingly aware of peer pressure.
- I already know my position defensively and how I can help my team mates.
- I am able to find free space and signal to my team mates by body position, eye contact, and communicate that I am willing and ready to accept a pass.
- I am getting stronger year by year and the onset of puberty may start showing itself, and I often defend with aggression and strength.



SUGGESTIONS 9/11 YEAR OLDS

- It is important to play as much as possible, but not always in competitive games.
- Be concerned about the practice to game ratio.
- The children may explain their failures as they see fit.
- Encourage persistence, even in the face of adversity. Positive feed back.
- Help the player to believe in his/her abilities and their game decisions.
- It may valuable to participate in camps as they will enhance their social and soccer development.
- When thinking about changing clubs, it is important to see out proper guidance in order to end up with the best soccer solution for the child.
- Provide opportunities to practice outside the organized training an in small, if possible, i.e. with friends, neighbors, or parents. Parks and yards are excellent places.
- Help players with creating their own skill competitions, but allow them to decide.
- Avoid coaching, let the children experiment and be creative without looking over their shoulder.
- Use the written and electronic resources that are available.



TIPS FOR YOUTH SOCCER COACHES

1. Practices should be fun.
2. Emphasize technique.
3. Be positive
4. Practices should be effective and efficient.
5. Encourage players to play fast
6. A good pass is not necessarily to feet.
7. Understand the players ability.



WHAT TYPE OF ROLES COULD PARENTS HAVE AT YOUTH CLUBS

Parents are often include in child's activities. Every club needs parent's help in order to provide a happy, challenging, and safe environment for the players. How the parents can help.

COACH/ASSISTANT COACH

- Enjoy teaching and being a role model.
- Coaching experience is not necessarily needed as good club can provide the necessary training.

SOME OF THE TASKS

- Develop players as athletes and people.
- Serve as a facilitator in practices and games.
- Monitor the development of players and provide positive feed back.
- Create seasonal practice schedule and organize practices.
- Interact with players and participate in the parent meetings.
- Increase own knowledge by attending seminars and coaching courses.



PARENT ROLES IN CLUBS

TEAM MANAGER

- Enjoy being with a team and helping the kids and the club.

SOME TASKS

- Serve as the link between the club and other parents.
- To be present at practices and games.
- Take care of minor bruises.
- Comfort, when necessary, listen, and communicate.
- Make sure the first aid kit is up to date.
- Help to organize the practice, if necessary.



PARENT ROLES IN CLUBS

FACILITATOR

- Enjoy being with young children
- Enjoy guiding the children
- Knowledge of the rules of the game.

SOME TASKS

- Lead and guide the players in learning the basic skills and general movement education.
- Create and allow a playful and safe environment.
- Guide and encourage.
- Be a supportive, approachable, and caring adult during practices and games.
- Explain the rules when necessary.
- Make it possible to enjoy the environment by guiding and advising.
- Serve as an example for the spectators.



EVERY PARENT'S CHECK LIST

- Be on time.
- Take care of the equipment.
- Always have water available.
- Encourage and participate in creating a good team spirit.
- Understand that making mistakes is a huge part of learning process.
- Allow the coach to be the one giving instructions during the game.
- Accept the decisions of the referee/facilitator.
- Use the trip home to allow the player talk about his/her feelings about the practice/game.
- Keep the home trip conversations positive as these often turn out to be filled with negative and critical comments.



WHAT ABOUT YOUR PRACTICE SESSION

Components of a training session:

1. What do you want accomplish, have a goal for the session?
2. Is the space for the exercise of proper size?
3. Is the practice area safe enough?
4. Do you proper equipment available and present?
5. How is your time management?
6. Are the players active enough?

DO YOU EVALUATE YOUR TRAINING SESSION?

- Positioning
- Coachable moments
- Communication
- Demonstration



WHAT IS A CONCUSSION

A concussion is a brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body. Even a “ding”, “getting your bell rung”, or what seems like a mild bump or a blow to the head can be serious.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

You cannot see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or to be noticed until days after the injury. If your child reports one or more symptoms of concussion listed below, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, keep your child out of the play and seek medical attention right away.



CONCUSSION SYMPTOMS

SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to the hit or fall.
- Can't recall events after the hit or fall

SIGNS OBSERVED BY THE ATHLETE

- Headache or pressure in the head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Just not "feeling right" or is feeling down



ACTION PLAN

If you suspect that a player has a concussion, you should take the following steps:

- Remove the athlete from play
- Ensure the athlete is evaluated by an appropriate health care professional. Do not try to judge the seriousness of the injury yourself.
- Inform the athlete's parents or guardian about the known, or possible, concussion and give them the fact sheet on concussion.
- Allow the athlete to return to play only with a permission from an appropriate health care professional.

**IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE A CONCUSSION
Don't hide it. Report it. Take time to recover.**
www.cdc.gov/concussioninyouthsports

Perspective on Player Development

When Kids Organized Their Own Sports...

- ✓ **The Playing Numbers were Flexible!**
- ✓ **The Playing Rules were Flexible!**
- ✓ **The Game Duration was Measured in Hours!**
- ✓ **We played Games; there were no Drills!**
- ✓ **No-one was criticized for taking a risk!**
- ✓ **Defending was optional!**
- ✓ **The Oldest Kids Were In Charge!**

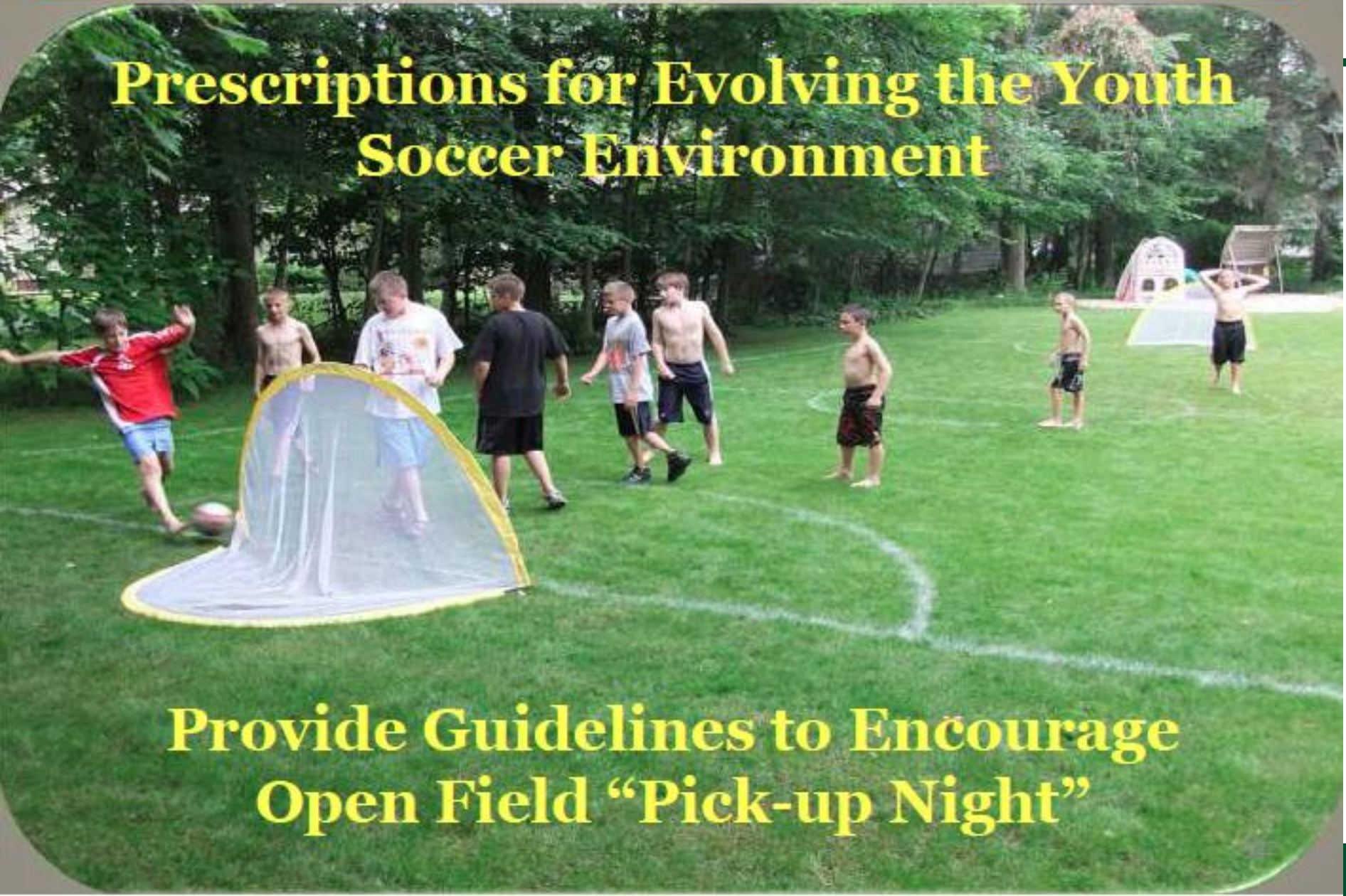
Perspective on Player Development

When Kids Organized Their Own Sports...

- ✓ **The Biggest Kids Refereed!**
- ✓ **The Games Had To Be Competitive!**
- ✓ **If things got boring, we played “Next Goal Wins” and picked new teams!**
- ✓ **We Made Sure We Had Balanced Teams!**
- ✓ **We Took Care Of The Weaker Kids!**
- ✓ **Best of all: NO ADULTS!**

Prescriptions for Evolving the Youth Soccer Environment

Provide Guidelines to Encourage
Open Field “Pick-up Night”





THANK YOU!

Use this slide to end your presentation.



Group Discussion Responses

U5 / U6

5 MIN OR LESS DRILLS

- DIFFERENCES IN SKILL & BALL FAMILIARITY ^{PARENT ROLLS}
- ATTENTION SPAN ^{LOTS OF QUESTIONS}
- ACTIVITIES ARE ENGAGING = NO LINES ^{LOTS OF TOUCHES}
- STAY FUN! (SAFE!)
- + 45 MINS IN LENGTH (PRACTICE)
- INCORPORATING ALL LEVELS OF PLAYERS TOGETHER
- PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT = EVERY KID DEVELOPS @ DIFFERENT RATES.
- STRONG EMOTIONS - SHY, OVER-REACTION
- SILLINESS LESS INSTRUCTION & MORE DISCOVERY

U7 / U8

MENTORS

- PARENTS = SUPPORTIVE (NOT INSTRUCTING)
- FUN v. ENJOYABLE
- ATTENTION SPAN BETTER BUT SHORT
- SESSIONS HAVE A THEME (DRIBBLING/PASSING etc.)
- "PROBLEM" CHILD - HOW DO YOU DEAL w/ THEM? (SOLUTIONS OR HOW TO POSITIVELY HELP THEM)
- MOVEMENT EDUCATION - JUMP, COORDINATION, etc
- FUNDAMENTALS OF THE GAME => THEN GUIDED DISCOVERY
- GREATER SIZE BALLS

U9-U11

NEW PLAYERS

- LONGER PRACTICES ^{LONGER ATTENTION SPAN}
- LESS LIMITATIONS
- EXPERIMENT w/ ACTIVITIES THAT ARE FUN
- TECHNIQUES TO KEEP ATTENTION
- MORE TEAM ORIENTED
- ROLES / EXPECTATIONS
- PARENT / COACH "EXPECTATIONS"
- 8 MIN GAMES ①
- 8 MIN ACTIVITY ②
- 8 MIN GAME ③
- 8 MIN ACTIVITY ④
- 8 MIN GAME ⑤
- END PRACTICE

MASSACHUSETTS YOUTH SOCCER
 INDIANA YOUTH SOCCER
 WASHINGTON YOUTH SOCCER - VIDEOS / LESSON PLANS
 US YOUTH SOCCER
 US SOCCER.COM -> CURRICULUM