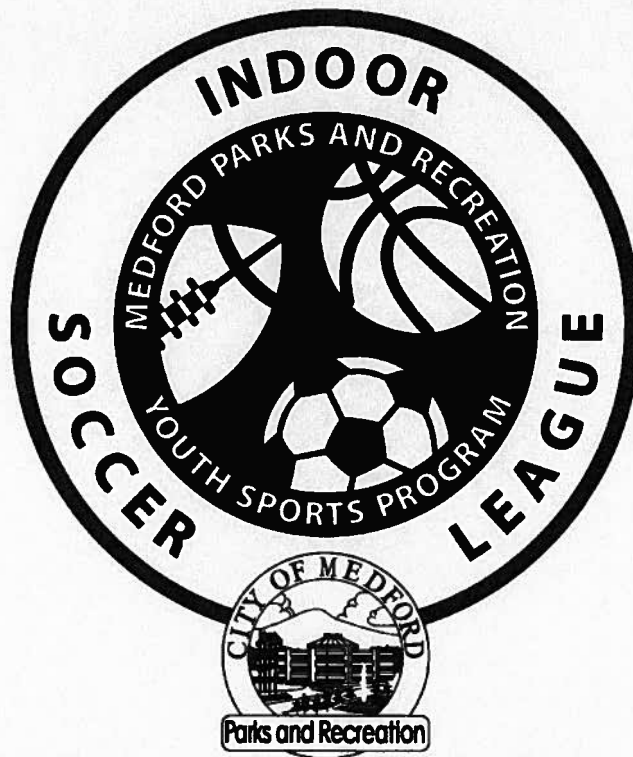


# Medford Youth Indoor Soccer Coaches Handbook



League Director:  
Rich Rosenthal  
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## **Continuous Improvement Customer Service**

Dear Coach,

The purpose of this guide is to help you instruct the children participating within the youth indoor soccer program. The youth indoor soccer program is one of the City of Medford's largest youth programs with nearly 400 boys and girls participating each year.

This program helps youngsters to learn valuable life skills such as socializing, teamwork, leadership, cooperation, sportsmanship; as well as the physical and technical skills.

With your help and cooperation, we would like to help the parents of these young players make these children better people for tomorrow. If there is something within this guide that you feel should be changed, or altered in some way, please let us know.

Thank you in advance for your efforts this season.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rich Rosenthal".

Rich Rosenthal  
Recreation Superintendent  
Medford Parks and Recreation  
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# COACHES

## Responsibilities & Expectations

1. A coach should be enthusiastic without being intimidating. He/she should be sensitive to the children's feelings and genuinely enjoy spending time with them. He/she should be dedicated to serving children and understand that youth sports provide physical and emotional growth for participants. Remember, youth sports are for the children.
2. A coach needs to realize that he/she is a teacher and not a drill sergeant. He/she should help children to learn and work to improve skills. Personal gains are never a consideration. The job does not depend on winning. The best interest of the child transforms into the best interests of the game.
3. The safety and welfare of the children should never be compromised. A coach will consider these factors above all others.
4. A coach needs a tremendous amount of patience. Don't push children beyond limits in regards to practice. Children have many daily pressures and the youth sports experience should not be one of them. Playing sports is meant to be fun.
5. A coach should care more about the players as people than as athletes. The youth sports program is a means to an end, not an end to itself.
6. A coach should encourage his players to dream and set lofty goals. It is important to remain positive and refrain from discouraging remarks. Negative comments are remembered far more often than positive affirmations.
7. A coach needs to remember that the rules of the game are designed to protect participants, as well as to set a standard for competition. He/she should never circumvent or take advantage of the rules by teaching deliberate misconduct. A coach who puts his/her opponents/team at risk should not be involved with children.
8. A coach should be the first person to demonstrate good sportsmanship. He/she should take a low profile during the game and allow the kids to be the center of attention.
9. Parents and players place a lot of trust and confidence in the coach. The coach has an important role in molding the athletic experience of the child.
10. A coach can measure success by the respect he/she gets from the players, regardless of victories or defeats. Children who mature socially and physically while participating in sports are the best indication of good coaching.

## **Code of Conduct & Code of Ethics**

### **Expected Behavior:**

1. I will honor the fact that youth sports exist for youth, not adults.
  - a. Maintaining a positive, helpful and supportive attitude.
  - b. Exercising your authority/influence to control behavior of fans and spectators.
  - c. Exhibiting gracious behavior at all times.
  - d. Accepting and adhering to all league rules and policies related to participation of adults and youth. Playing all players according to the equal participation rules established by the league and the follow the spirit of those rules.
  - e. Fulfilling the expected role of a youth coach to adopt a children first philosophy.
  - f. Allowing and encouraging the players to listen, learn and play hard within the rules.
  - g. Placing emphasis on fun, participation and team.
  
2. I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child and other children involved.
  - a. Recognizing the differences of each child and treating each player as an individual while demonstrating concern for their individual needs and well being.
  - b. Encouraging all players, regardless of skill level, to be included as a member of the team.
  - c. Recognizing that some physical tasks, drills and demands are not appropriate for all youth.
  - d. Recognizing that youth may vary greatly in physical, social and emotional maturation and considering these factors when setting up competitions and when interacting with youth.
  
3. I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players.
  - a. Adhere to plans that are interesting, varied, productive and aimed at improving all players' skills and individual abilities.
  - b. Devoting appropriate time to the individual improvement of each player.
  - c. Conducting practices of reasonable length and intensity appropriate for the age and conditioning of the players.
  
4. I will exercise good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players and officials at every game, practice or other sports event.
  - a. Adopting the position, teaching and demonstrating that it is our basic moral code to treat others as we would like to be treated.
  - b. Abiding by and supporting the rules of the game.
  - c. Providing an environment conducive to fair and equitable competition.
  - d. Using the influential position of youth coach as an opportunity to promote, teach and expect fair sportsmanship and fair play.
  
5. I will make sure all children play in a safe, healthy environment.
  - a. Maintaining a high level of awareness of potentially unsafe conditions.

- b. Protecting players from, assault, physical abuse and emotional abuse.
- c. Correcting or avoiding unsafe practice or playing conditions.
- d. Using appropriate safety equipment necessary to protect all players.
- e. Seeing that the players are provided with adequate adult supervision while under the coach's care.

6. I will insist that my team exercise good sportsmanship.

- a. Becoming knowledgeable, understanding and supportive of all applicable game rules, league rules, regulations and policies.
- b. Teaching and requiring compliance of these rules among players, so that with this understanding good sportsmanship can be maintained.
- c. Teaching techniques that reduce risk of injury to both the coach's own players and their opponents.
- d. Discouraging illegal contact or intentional dangerous play and administering swift and equitable discipline to players involved in such activity.

7. I will provide a sports environment for my team that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol. I will refrain from their use at all Medford Parks and Recreation Department youth sports events.

- a. Being alcohol and drug free at all team activities or in the presence of players.
- b. Refraining from the use of any type of tobacco products at all team activities or in the presence of your players
- c. Refraining from providing any type of alcohol, drug or tobacco products to any of your players
- d. Encouraging parents to refrain from the public use of tobacco products or alcohol at team activities.

8. I will place the safety and physical development of my players ahead of my desire to win.

- a. Using appropriate language in appropriate tones when interacting with league officials, players, game officials, parents and spectators. **At no time is profanity acceptable.**
- b. Including all players in team activities with out regard to race, religion, sex, body type, national origin, ancestry, disability, ability or any other legally protected classification.
- c. Treating all players, league officials, game officials, parents, and spectators with dignity and respect.
- d. Playing all players according to the equal participation rules established by the league and the playing by the spirit of those rules.
- e. Encouraging youth to participate in other sports and activities to promote all aspects of their development.
- f. Allowing reasonable absences from practices.

9. I will support other coaches and league officials.

- a. I will back and support league officials and coaches when working with my players and parents. I will enforce league rules.

- b. If I have concerns or questions, I will direct them to league official or coach at an appropriate time, not during a practice or game. I will not criticize another coach, an official, or a league official in front of my players or parents.
- c. I will cooperate and offer assistance whenever I can.

10. I will remember that children play, referees call, fans cheer and coaches TEACH. Anytime someone steps out of their area of responsibility, a strain is created on other areas involved.

## **Youth Indoor Soccer Rules, Regulations and Procedures**

1. Coaches
  - a. There will be only one "head coach" per team.
  - b. The head coach must be NYSCA certified and criminal background-screened
  - c. Individuals organizing or leading practices/games must be criminal background screened
2. Parents, Spectators and Siblings
  - a. At least one parent/guardian or a responsible adult must be present during games and practices
  - b. Parents and spectators must remain behind the sideline fence during practice and games unless granted permission by the facility supervisor or court official
3. Balls
  - a. All soccer balls, nets and practice equipment will be provided by the Parks and Recreation Department.
4. Practice
  - a. Teams will practice one evening each week for 40 minutes during the season.
  - b. Parents are encouraged to practice skills at home with their children.
5. Player Equipment and Uniforms
  - a. Only authorized uniforms provided by the league are to be worn during the games.
    - Tennis shoes are required.
    - No hard-soled shoes.
    - Shin guards must be worn during games and practices.
6. Number of Players
  - a. The game is played with three (U11), four (U8) or five players (U5) on the floor
7. Officials
  - a. Court officials are Medford Parks and Recreation employees.
  - b. Only one coach per team on the playing floor during games, unless special circumstances arise, as approved by the court official or facility supervisor.
8. Games
  - a. Games are played on Saturdays at the Santo Community Center Gym.
  - b. Each game will last about 40 minutes.
  - c. Coaches should arrive at least 15 minutes early to greet team members.
  - d. Games will be divided into four eight-minute quarters, with a five-minute halftime and one-minute breaks following the first and third quarters. Exception: U8 games may last longer due to roster sizes.
  - e. Clock will run continuously during each quarter.
  - f. Opponents must be on their half of the playing area during the kickoff.
  - g. The team kicking off will alternate each quarter.

## 9. The Ball In and Out of Play

- a. Kickoff Procedures:
  - i. Coin flip determines opening kickoff
  - ii. Scored-upon team kicks off
- b. The ball is out of play only when it goes over the fenced sideline or out of the playing area, or when a player touches the ball with their hands during play.
- c. The ball will be in play off of the walls and sideline fences.
- d. If the ball hits the coach or referee on the playing floor, it will be a live ball.

## 10. Scoring

- a. No scores or standings are kept.

## 11. Fouls and Misconduct

- a. All fouls shall result in a free kick from the spot of the foul
- b. The infraction must be explained to the offending player by the coach or official
- c. Officials on the playing floor will consider the age and experience of the player when calling fouls or letting the game play on.
- d. Safety is always the highest priority

## 12. Goalkeeper and Player Positions

- a. No goalkeeping is permitted during games or practices. Coaches may not allow players to remain near either goal as a permanent defender or forward.
- b. Players should be encouraged to pass the ball and spread out on the playing floor and be involved in play at both ends of the floor.

## 13. Timeouts

- a. There are no timeouts, except for injuries. However, the court official may stop play for any reason.

## 14. Substituting

- a. Teams may substitute anytime during the game.
- b. The clock will not stop for substitutions.
- c. Each player should receive an equivalent amount of playing time unless special circumstances arise.
- d. Court officials and coaches are given latitude to work out mutually beneficial exceptions to rules if a team is short-handed

## REMEMBER...

It takes years to develop good players and coaches. Everyone is doing his or her best, and learning at different paces. Be patient.

Coaches should minimize coaching or instructing players during the game. Loud yelling of directions from sidelines confuses and distracts young players. Any unsportsmanlike conduct or negative remarks from the sidelines will suspend play, and the offending person may be asked to leave the playing area by the supervisor-in-charge.

The City of Medford Parks and Recreation Department's youth sports philosophy is "everyone plays, everyone wins." We strive to enhance every child's personal growth, development, sports skills, fundamentals, fair play, sportsmanship, values, and sense of teamwork and physical fitness. On top of it all ...HAVE FUN!

# Weekly Lesson Plan

## Week 1

Each week we want to teach the players the importance of sportsmanship. This week we want to focus on teamwork. Remember the acronym TEAM: **T**ogether **E**veryone **A**chieves **M**ore. Through teamwork, players learn working together will help accomplish more than if practiced alone. In this case, the team that works better together will be able to both score and prevent more goals on the court.

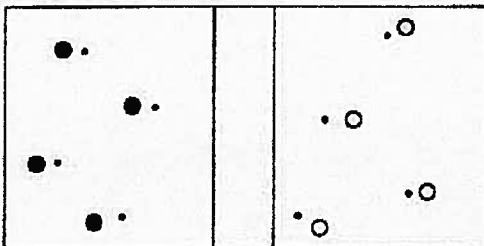
As this is your first practice together, introduce yourself and any other assistant coaches you may have to all of your players and their parents. Answer any questions they may have about you or about practices. Discuss any potential conflicts that any of the players may have during the season.

Before each practice begins, be sure to “warm-up” your players. Teach them the proper techniques of stretching and have them run a quick lap around your court to get them moving.

After warming up, familiarize your players with their surroundings. Give them their own soccer ball to play with while you instruct them on what you want them to do. Starting with the basics, instruct the players how to dribble with the inside and outside of their feet. Also, show them how to pass to their team mates. Teamwork is the lesson of the week and working with each of our teammates is a great step in achieving the goal of teaching good sportsmanship.

Once complete with the instructional time, have a little fun with your players during the time you have left. Set up a scrimmage among your team each practice during the last few minutes.

### Exercise: Clean Your Yard!

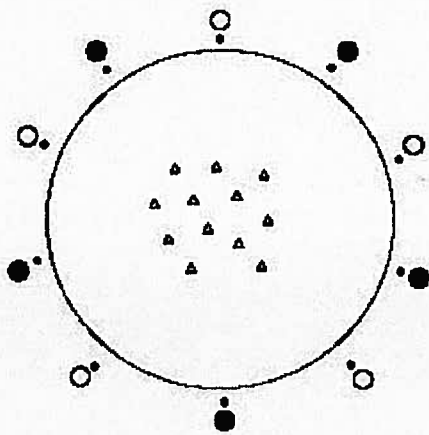


What would happen if lots of soccer balls were left out in the front yard, and mom came home? Obviously, the yard would have to be cleaned!

The team that wins is the team with the least amount of soccer balls left in their yard after one minute. Send them to the other yard!

This exercise works on striking. The middle zone is about 5 yards wide, while the end zones closer to 20. If a ball does not make it across the middle, go get it. Coaches help keep the balls in.

### Exercise : The Holy Grail



Divide the players into two teams. Both teams spread around the circle with a ball. Notice the teams are intermixed. When signal is given, players strike the balls at the cones (the small kind that fall over when hit with a ball). Team that wins is team that knocks down last cone - the "Holy Grail." This exercise works on striking. Coaches, keep a good eye out for form - is ankle locked? Is plant foot pointed at target? Is center of gravity lowered? Is foot touching the ball center?

### Week 2

During the second week, we want to focus on leadership.

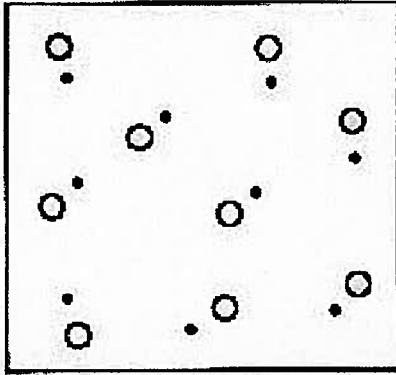
"I suppose leadership at one time meant muscles; but today it means getting along with people." Mohandas K. Gandhi

Try to place each of your players in a position of leadership. Allow them to work together with one another to accomplish their goals. Change up the "leader" allowing each player to act as a leader.

Prior to warming up, pick a leader who will help your team warm up and stretch today. After warming up, pick a new player to help with the next exercise. Practice dribbling and passing again today. Have a different player help show the other players the exercise(s) you have chosen for the day.

Below are several different exercises that allow your players to reinforce the skill of dribbling while having fun. Get the parents involved in the practice as well. Ask for their help, but be specific in what you want them to do.

### Exercise : Dribble in the Square



As the players dribble inside the grid, the coach can have them play:

Go for a Drive: When coach says 'red light,' players stop. Yellow light (most common) means dribble under control. Green light means accelerate. Coach can add turns, moves, etc.

Follow the Leader: Leader runs, follower dribbles. Dribbler must keep ball at feet while chasing partner. If dribbler can tag partner, dribbler gets a point. After 30 seconds, switch.

Body part Stop: While players dribble, the coach calls out a part of the body to stop the ball, beginning with the easiest first: cleats (bottom of foot), knee, elbow, head, chest, etc.

Tunnel Dribble: Tunnels (2 people holding hands) move around inside or outside the square. When the command "tunnel" is given, players dribble through as many tunnels as possible.

Speed Dribble and Slow Down: The command 'speed dribble,' means accelerate, while maintaining ball control (3-5 seconds). When they hear command 'slow down,' decelerate.

### Week 3

This week we want to focus on the value of physical fitness.

When you incorporate staying active as part of your daily life, you see improvements such as not getting tired after taking a flight of stairs. You have more energy for weekend get-togethers with family and friends. You're more alert and will do better at school or at work. Plus you will feel better about yourself.

Fitness is about improving/maintaining endurance, flexibility, and strength through regular physical activity.

The time to begin is right now, it's never too late to get started. Every little bit helps. Being active doesn't have to be strenuous, just start slowly and build gradually. You'll start to notice the difference right away - for your body and mind.

#### Heart health

Regular physical activity can lower your blood pressure and cholesterol levels and can reduce the risk of illnesses such as Type II diabetes or heart disease.

### **Bone support**

Exercise is a good way to build strong, healthy bones and can help slow the bone loss associated with getting older.

### **Sense of well-being**

Being in good shape can give you more energy, reduce anxiety and depression, improve self-esteem, and help you better manage stress.

### **Social life**

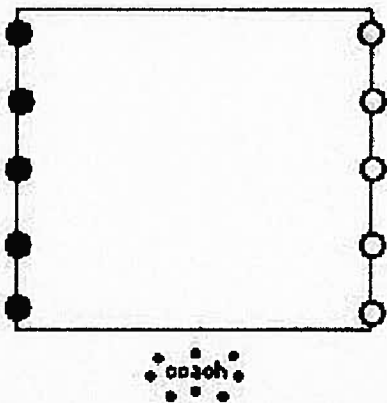
Staying active can be a great way to have fun, make new friends, and spend quality time with family.

### **Physical appearance**

You look better when you're in shape. Staying active helps you tone muscles and maintain a healthy weight - and can even improve your posture.

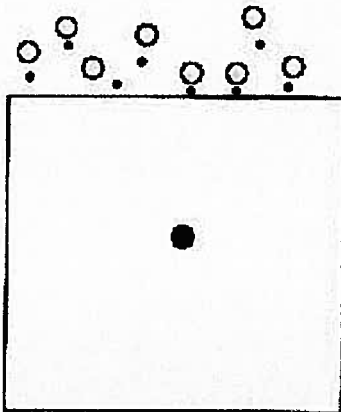
After warming up, the exercises below will allow your players to continue working on their skills while having some fun learning.

### **Exercise: Farm Animals Escape!**



This exercise is hilarious! Divide the players into two teams, and set them up accordingly. Assign one player, each team, to be an animal - a cow, duck, sheep, pig, and horse, for instance. When each player receives his assignment, he must make the sound that animal makes, i.e. a duck 'quacks,' cow 'moos,' etc. When the coach calls out "SHEEP!," he sends a ball into the grid. The two players assigned sheep (one from each team) make the 'baaaaaa' sound, and rush into the grid to play 1 vs. 1, trying to score by playing a ball past the other players, who guard the end line. When the ball goes out, they clear out, and the coach calls another animal. The coach can call 2 vs. 2, if desired. Change animals periodically.

**Exercise: Shark and Minnows**



One player designated as defender in grid (shark). The rest (minnows) get ball and align themselves at end of grid.

The minnows job: dribble to other side. The shark's job is to win any ball, and send it out of grid. Those who make it to other side must wait until everyone else's fate is decided, and coach signals second round to begin. Those whose balls get sent out, become sharks. Each round increasingly difficult.

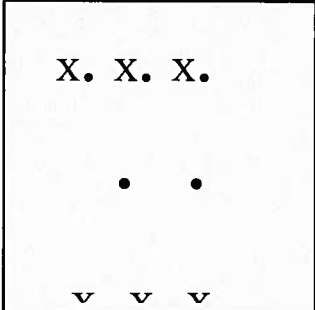
Last minnow declared "Minnow of Year," gets year's supply of worms, and picture on cover of FishWorld Magazine.

**Week 4**

Starting with week 4, we will go over each of the previous three values learned during the season. This week we will go back over teamwork. Emphasizing the effort that the players have put into their practices and their games over the previous three weeks, discuss how teamwork helped in each of those encounters. Reinforce the idea of teamwork and what it means to work together as a team.

**Drill ideas:**

Free Movement with the Ball.	Every player has a ball in a 15 x 20 yd grid. Coach asks all players to move freely with their ball around the grid.	
Free Movement with the Ball at their Feet.	Coach then asks players to move freely with the ball at their feet.	
Goofy Stop and Go	Same set up as above. All players dribble their ball in the grid. When coach says, "STOP!" Players must stop their ball and freeze in a goofy position.	

<p><b>Hit the Ball</b> (Relaxation Activity)</p>	<p>Players line up shoulder to shoulder on one end of the grid. Place 2 balls in the middle of the grid. One at a time players kick their ball and try to hit one of the balls in the middle.</p>	
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**For the U9 coaches, consider these drills:**

- |                        |  |  |
|------------------------|--|--|
| <p><b>Pac-Man</b></p>  | <p>a. two or three players are “it” to start, and have balls</p> <p>b. if you are “it”, try to dribble and hit others with passes below the knees</p> <p>c. players who are not “it” may run and jump to avoid being hit</p> <p>d. if you are hit with a pass, you become “it” too</p> | <p>a. keep ball rolling</p> <p>b. eyes up to find space and who is “it”</p> <p>c. change direction and speed</p> <p>d. fake passes</p> |
| <p><b>Knockout</b></p> | <p>a. every player dribbling a ball</p> <p>b. try to kick other players’ balls off the field</p> <p>c. if your ball is stops rolling or is kicked out, then you must do two juggles before you return to the game</p>  | <p>a. keep ball rolling</p> <p>b. body between ball and other players</p> <p>c. see ball through the bottom of your eyes</p>           |

**Week 5**

This week is leadership week. Looking back over the past four weeks worth of activity, you should be able to see who your early leaders are on your team. Try to work with those players who have yet to show leadership qualities. Empower them to lead your team during practice and see what they can do.

**U6 teams:**

- |                                    |   |   |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| <p>I can do something can you?</p> | <p>The coach begins the activity by saying “I can do something can you?” and demonstrating a physical activity such as jumping jacks. The children then do the same. The coach demonstrations several other physical activities such as: skips, one-legged bounces; star jumps, rolls, etc. After demonstrating several times the coach asked the</p> | <p>Body movement from skipping to balancing on one leg. The important thing is to allow the children to explore how their body moves.</p> |
|------------------------------------|---|---|

children, "what can you do?" and takes their suggestions.

**Snake in the Grass**

In an area 15 yds x 15 yds, two children begin by being "snakes" by lying on their stomachs. The other children's starting position is with their hands touching the "snakes." On the command "snake in the grass" the children try to stay away from the snake while the snake slithers around trying to catch a child. When any child is caught he/she becomes an additional snake. The activity continues until every one is a snake.

The children move in all directions trying to avoid the snakes. Once snakes, the children try to work together to create more snakes.

**U9 teams:**

**Pac-Man**

- a. two or three players are "it" to start, and have balls
- b. if you are "it", try to dribble and hit others with passes below the knees
- c. players who are not "it" may run and jump to avoid being hit
- d. if you are hit with a pass, you become "it" too

- a. keep ball rolling
- b. eyes up to find space and who is "it"
- c. change direction and speed
- d. fake passes

**Knockout**

- a. every player dribbling a ball
- b. try to kick other players' balls off the field
- c. if your ball is stops rolling or is kicked out, then you must do two juggles before you return to the game

- a. keep ball rolling
- b. body between ball and other players
- c. see ball through the bottom of your eyes

**Final Week:**

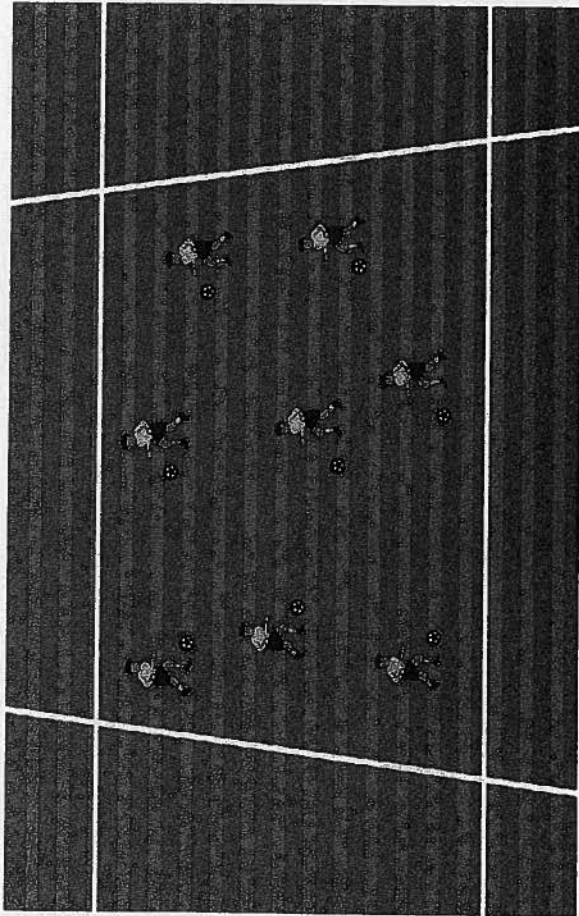
During this week we would like you to wrap up and remind the players about the sportsmanship values that you learned throughout the season. Go over teamwork, leadership and sportsmanship. Discuss the importance of having these qualities and why they think the qualities are important.

You have an open practice this week. Feel free to come up with a fun game to play with your team. Ask some of your leaders to help make up a game.

Be sure to thank everyone for coming out all season and for their willingness to learn.

## Ball Familiarity

### Freeze Dribble



#### **Organization:**

Each player moves around the grid with a ball at their feet. They should experiment using the insides, outsides, bottom and top of the feet while dribbling.

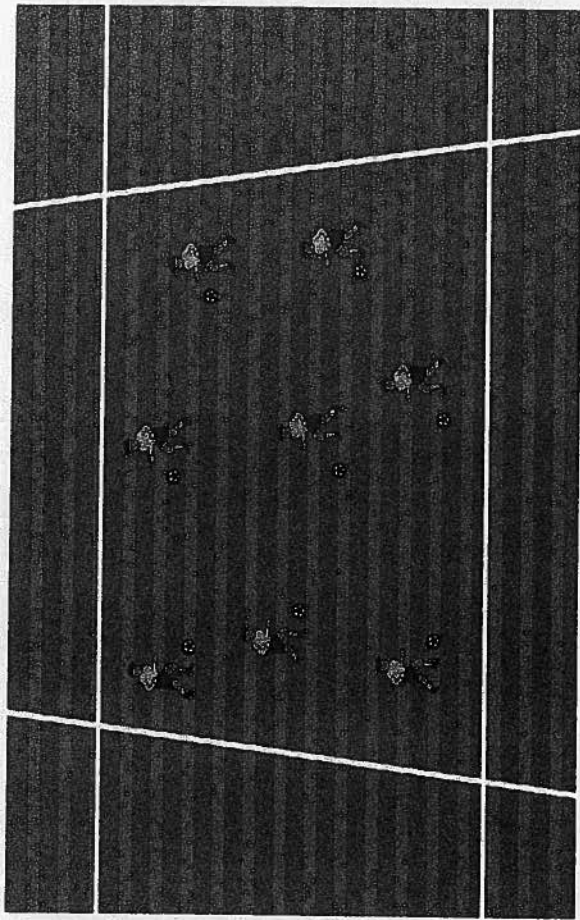
The coach will call out "Freeze" and the players must come to a complete stop putting one foot on top of the ball. Anyone who moves loses a life. The coach can add other commands such as fast, slow, towards me, away from me, etc.

#### **Coach Notes:**

Children can imitate cars, trucks, boats and can make the sounds of their vehicle as they drive around the grid. They can also stop to refuel by doing toe taps on the ball.

## Under 6 Ball Familiarity

### Change Balls



#### **Organization:**

Each player moves around the grid with a ball at their feet. The coach gives instructions regarding how he wants the players to dribble, "slow", "fast", "twisty", "straight" etc. The coach then calls out "Change" and the players must leave their ball and go and find another one and immediately start dribbling. The last one to find a ball loses a life.

The coach can then repeat the game and take one ball away as the players change. The player who does not find a ball loses a life.

#### **Coach Notes:**

The players should be encouraged to look up frequently between touches as they dribble the balls around.

## Under 6 Ball Familiarity

### Funny Bones



#### **Organization:**

Each player moves around the grid with a ball at their feet.

The coach gives instructions regarding how he wants the players to dribble, "slow", "fast", "twisty", "straight" etc.

The coach then calls out a specific part of the body such as "Elbow" or "Knee" and the players must come to a complete stop and put that part of their body on the ball.

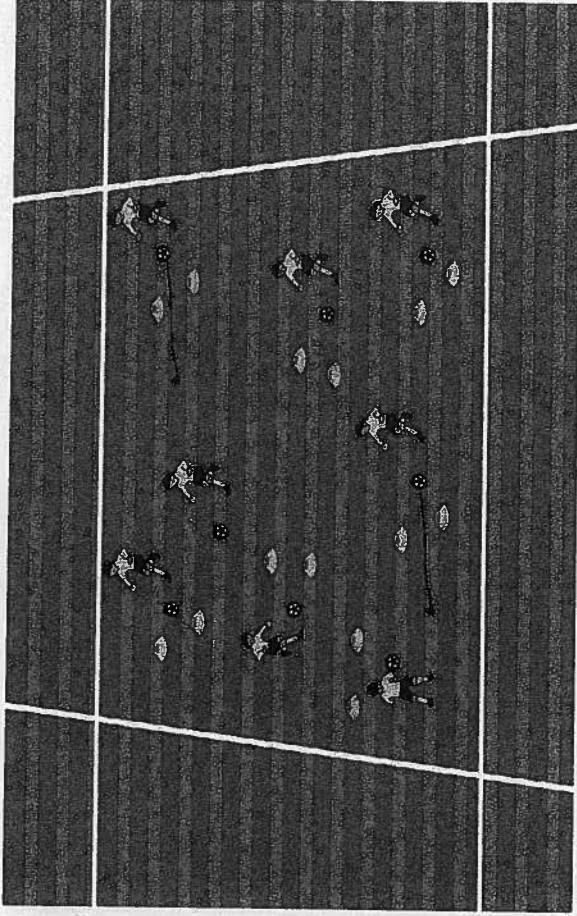
Young players can be encouraged to dribble like certain animals and can make the relevant noises as they move around the grid.

#### **Coach Notes:**

These types of games are a great help in developing balance and coordination in addition to dribbling skills.

## Under 6 Fun Practice Games

### Through the Gates



#### **Organization:**

Each player has a ball in a 20yd x 20yd grid. Cones are placed around the grid in pairs making gates approximately 2 yards wide.

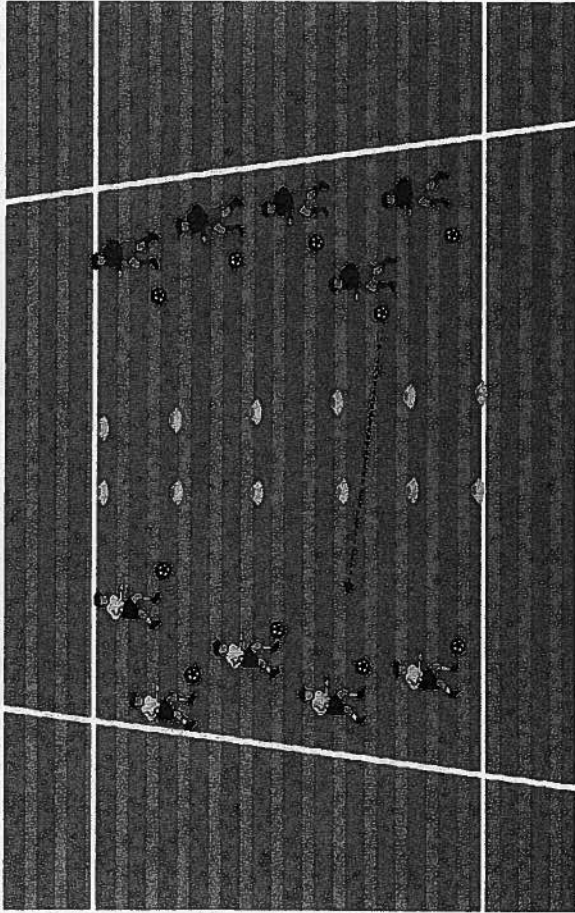
The players attempt to dribble through as many gates as possible in one minute. As the older age groups get used to playing this game, the coach can specify that they must use a specific foot or must pass the ball through the gate with the inside of their foot.

#### **Coach Notes:**

The players should be encouraged to take lots of soft touches so that the ball remains close to them and must look up frequently between touches as they dribble.

## Under 6 Fun Practice Games

### Clean Your Room



#### **Organization:**

The players are divided into two groups and each player has a ball. The two groups stand at either end of a 20yd x 25yd grid, there is a 3 yard "no go" zone marked down the middle of the grid with cones.

The object of the games is to kick as many balls as possible into the opposite half of the grid. As soon as the opponents kick a ball into one half, the other team can kick it straight back. No one can touch balls that end up in the "no go" zone.

#### **Coach Notes:**

You should initially allow the children to kick the ball however they wish so that they get the hang of the game. You should then gradually introduce them to striking the ball with the upper part of the foot, keeping the toes pointed.

## Under 6 Fun Practice Games

### Stuck In The Mud



#### **Organization:**

The players dribble their ball around the inside of a 20yd x 20yd grid, weaving in and out of each other.

Two players wearing contrasting color pinnies will chase after them and try to tag them. Once they are tagged they are "frozen" and must pick up their ball and stand with their feet apart until a teammate can unfreeze them by passing their own ball through their legs.

#### **Coach Notes:**

Players who are tagged should try to call teammates who are in space and not in risk of being tagged them self to come and unfreeze them.

