

U6 Soccer

Thank you for volunteering to coach the U6 soccer division. Coaching is the biggest responsibility for the program and we are sure you will find it nothing short of rewarding. It is a very challenging position to volunteer for, and we give you the utmost respect for doing so.

From the U6 division up through the U16 division we believe in a philosophy that promotes “the athlete first and winning second”. While this division will not be as competitive as the older ones, please always keep this philosophy in mind. We expect that you will come prepared to teach the children not just the game of soccer, but how to be a good teammate, good sportsmanship, and respect. These things can be learned as long as you come prepared to practices and games and play every child equally in time and in different positions. The goal is not to go out and crush the opposition but to help the children grow in their development of skills and knowledge of the game while in a pressure situation. You will find that you will have children that have played for a year or so and others that have never played. It is okay. This division is all about having fun and learning for you and the players.

In this packet you will find some very helpful resources. Amongst other things, we outline what you should expect to see from your children by the seasons end. We offer some of our favorite and most effective drills for you to use to get them there.

Please remember our philosophy in anything you do and most of all to have fun. If you ever have any questions or need help feel free to call us or email us.

Russ Matthews
Dan Ayotte

Expectations for U6 Soccer

The expectations for this division are pretty simple. In anything you do have fun. This will be the first introduction to team sports for many of the children. The only goal is to make the children want to come out and play, again and again.

Shooting – The children will kick with the toe or any part of their feet that can touch the ball. Encourage to use the instep.

- **Passing** – The children will probably not pass the ball that much if at all. That is fine.
- **Trapping** - The children will try to stop the ball anyway they can. Since they will not be receiving passes that much it is okay.
- **Heading** – The child will probably not try to head the ball. Any try should be heavily applauded.
- **Tackling** – The children will clump around the ball, so everyone will be tackling the ball.
- **Field Presence** – The child should know which goal they are shooting at and which goal they are defending.

Practice Plans

- There will be 6 stations set up for the children to rotate through. These stations will work on the essential soccer skills and are the building blocks for years to come. You will not have to come up with any coaching activities or plans. Children of this age need to know how to perform the basics first, and have fun.
- **Dribbling** – In this station, children will play a game of red light / green light. They will dribble around in the coned off area and trap the ball when the coach blows the whistle and start again when the coach blows the whistle again. Lastly they will play musical balls, where the children will leave their ball and start dribbling another child's ball when the coach blows the whistle.
Simply encourage players to keep the ball close to them when dribbling so they can control it. Have fun. Be energetic.
- **Agility Space concept**....line the kids up. Have cones spread out through the grid. On coaches "go", the kids run out and try to turn

over all of the cones and come back to start when they are turned over. Times is kept and ask them to go back out and turn the cones back over and beat their first time. Then add a ball for each player and ask them to do the same thing. Encourage them not to go to the same cone as someone else and keep the ball close and trap the ball when they stop to flip the cone.

- **Defense/dribbling** ...Sharks and minnows...2 defenders (sharks) try to take away possession of the balls from the other players (minnows) while they try to go from one end line to another.

Encourage the defenders(sharks) not to all chase after the same minnow, and the minnows not to bunch up..stay in open space, where no-one is. Rotate sharks, do this the long way on the field and then the short way across the field. Make sure the minnows stay spread out and talk about how much easier it is to get across the field when they are doing it the short way versus the long way.

- **Ball Touches**....challenge the kids to do toe taps on the ball, juggling off of their thigh and foot and head. Do rollovers and any other thing that include touching the ball. Make it fun, have them dribble the ball and stop with different body parts...head, elbow, knee, etc...jump in the air with the ball between their feet. Have them jump from one touch line to another with the ball squeezed in between their feet. See if they can jump with the ball between their feet and catch the ball before it drops.
- **Shooting**....2 collapsible nets will be set up. Kids start in the middle of grid, dribble through cones to left and right and down to the goal and shoot

The other shooting drill is a moveable goal. Two coaches take the pole at the station and hold the ends and jog through the grid. Kids try to shoot through the goal at the same time. Have them keep track of how many they score. Instruct them to use the instep(the beginning of the heel from the toe) to shoot/pass the ball into the goal)

- **Passing** ...have 1 touch line as the "end of the world", meaning the line the kids will try to get as close to without the ball falling off the edge of the world. there will be 3 distances. Go through each distance a few times. See who comes closest. See who can kick the ball the furthest, encouraging the instep pass. Another game is knocking the cone down. Make up as many teams of 2 as you can. Setup tall cones for each team and start the team about 5 feet from the cone. The first player in line from each team tries to pass the ball to knock over the cone. After they kick the ball the kicker goes and sets the cone back

up, and then passes back to his teammate and then runs back to where he started to await another turn.

GAMES

All balls out of play are kick ins...no throw ins. Balls that go over the end lines are goal kick regardless who it went out on. Watch for pushing or other rough house antics. Blow the whistle stop play and tell them there is no (whatever the infraction is) in a nice way. Other than that just stay out of their way and encourage them!