

**U10 & U12**

**Coaches Manual**

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**Characteristics of Effective Coaches**

**Characteristics of Effective Youth Coaches are:**

* **High Moral and Ethical Standards-**Be an appropriate role model
* **Honesty-**Be fair, no one likes it if you cheat
* **Respect of Players, Parents, and Community-**Develop strategies to develop positive relationships with all involved
* **Understanding Readiness Factors for Participation-**Maturation (when to begin, how game is structured), Learning (what are children able to comprehend and how do they learn), and Motivation (internal desire to play and have fun)
* **Communication-**Appropriate verbal and nonverbal responses (body language & gestures) and appropriate language (words, tone, volume, rhythm, and articulation)
* **Development of an Appropriate Temperament for Coaching Children-**Be sensitive to each child, exhibit a calm personality, show patience, observe and guide (don’t direct), and use your normal voice (not a whistle)
* **Ability to Motivate Positively-**Develop high levels of self-confidence through positive coaching (don’t yell)
* **Possess Leadership Qualities-**Be prepared, be organized, demonstrate discipline, and learn to be critical of behavior (not a player’s personality)
* **Be Dedicated to Child Development and the Sport of Soccer-**Understand what is appropriate for different ages and levels of play (Let every child play-and play a lot!)
* **Be Enthusiastic-**Your enthusiasm is contagious so celebrate!
* **Have a Good Sense of Humor-**Keep things light, have fun, smile, and laugh
* **Must Have Current Knowledge of Coaching Youth Soccer-**Learn about children and how they learn, learn the rules, learn appropriate practices, learn appropriate tactics, and learn to have fun

**Developing Practice Protocols**

**Equipment**

* Size 4 Soccer Balls
* Cones
* Pinnies

**Instant Activity**

* Organize activities as players arrive to encourage instant play such as 1v1, street soccer, or juggling

**Start and Stop Signals**

* Devise a common signal for players to ‘start’ and ‘stop’ and activity (i.e. off you go, freeze, relax)

**Forming Groups**

* Coaches need to find creative ways to group players for activities
* Coaches need to find solutions when there are odd numbers (no player should be eliminated or have to wait their turn)

**Characteristics of U10 and U12 players**

**Psychomotor**

* Gross and small motor skills becoming more refined
* Boys and girls beginning to develop separately
* Skill difference between players will be apparent at this age level
* Increased strength and endurance
* Attention span increases-that is ability to stay on task is lengthened
* More prone than adults to heat injuries-they need full rest periods
* Increased risk of hypothermia due to accelerated heat loss

**Cognitive**

* Beginning to think ahead of activities and events
* Players are more intrinsically motivated to play
* Players demonstrate increased responsibility
* Start to recognize fundamental tactical concepts such as changing the direction of the ball
* Repetitive technique is very important, but it **MUST BE DYNAMIC NOT STATIC!**

**Psychosocial**

* More likely to initiate play on their own
* Continued positive reinforcement needed
* Some players are becoming more serious about ‘ their play’
* There is significant peer pressure at this level
* Team identification is becoming important
* Adult outside of the family may take on added significance
* Some players are beginning to show confidence in an independent ability to solve problems

**Integrating Competition in to Training**

* Players have a better understanding of how to play and the elements of competition
* Players are beginning to put winning and losing into perspective
* It is very important for Coaches to balance competition and cooperation during training sessions

**Sample Activities to Integrate Competition**

* **A Slap Behind the Back-**two players stand on either side of a ball with one hand behind their back. The object is to tag the opponent’s hand (the one behind their back) by moving around the ball. Players may not step over the ball and the first to get three or five tags wins the competition. After three to five attempts, they can switch to a new partner.
* **My Ball/Your Ball-**two players face each other with their feet perfectly square to one another. They have a ball between them and each player puts two hands on the ball. At the given signal, each tries to pull the other off balance without letting go of the ball and the task ends when one player loses his balance.
* **Keeper’s Nest-**Groups of four with one ball per group. One player (keeper) guards, but cannot touch the ball. The keeper may stand over the ball and the objective is for the other 3 players to get the ball away from the keeper without being tagged and frozen by the keeper. The keeper’s goal is to freeze the other 3 players and once a player is frozen, he remains frozen until all of the players are frozen or the ball is snatched away. A frozen player can be allowed to return to play after reciting the alphabet or counting to 10 by thousands. Players try to steal the ball by moving it with the sole of their foot or knocking it to another player and the keeper is not allowed to wildly swing his arms. Switch positions after one or two tries.

**Sample Activities to Integrate Cooperation**

* **Between the Head, Up and Down-**two players put the ball between their foreheads and jump up and down on one leg. See how many times they can jump up and down without dropping the ball.
* **Ball Pass Over and Under-**the ball is passed with hands first over the head and then through the legs to see how many passes can be done in 20-40 seconds. Pairs can be back to back or this can be done in lines.
* **Juggling for Numbers-**two or three players juggle the ball and keep it in the air as long as possible.

**Team Management**

**Coaching Philosophy**

* Every Coach should have a personal Coaching Philosophy
* When creating your philosophy, you should consider your beliefs, motivations, and experiences

**Parent-Coach Meeting**

* Pre-Season Parent Meetings are a fundamental part of setting the foundation for an enjoyable season
* Set developmentally appropriate goals and expectations and gather player information (medical, family situation, contact information, previous playing experience)
* Set roles and expectations for parents regarding sideline behavior

**Parent’s Code of Conduct**

* The Fun is Playing
* Know the Game and the Laws
* Support the Team, Not Just Your Child
* Practice Good Sportsmanship
* Let the Players Play
* Let the Coaches Coach
* Let the Referee Judge the Game
* Get Involved with Soccer
* Be a Supportive Soccer Parent
* They’re Only Kids. It’s Only a Game.

**Coaching Activity Check List**

After each match or session, ask yourself the following questions to assess how it was received by the players.

* Are the activities fun?
* Are the activities organized?
* Are the players involved in the activities?
* Is creativity and decision making being used by players?
* Is the space used appropriately? (don’t be afraid to change it on the fly)
* Is the coach’s feedback appropriate?
* Are there implications for the game?

*“For some reason, adults, some who can’t even kick a ball – think it’s perfectly ok to scream at children while they’re playing soccer.  How normal would it seem if a mother gave a six year old some crayons and a coloring book and started screaming, “Use the red crayon!  Stay in the Lines!  Don’t use yellow!? Do you think that child would develop a passion for drawing?”*

***-Claudio Reyna-Former Men’s National Team Captain***

**Risk Management**

**Prevention**

* Proper use of equipment (i.e. shin guards, weather appropriate clothes, no jewelry)
* Monitoring and Upkeep of playing surfaces
* Proper shoes for the surface and proper fitting shoes
* Ample water supply and rest breaks
* Note from physician before a player returns from an injury

**Considerations**

* Proper instruction for activities
* Proper equipment for activities (check field to make sure playing surface is safe)
* Make reasonable selections of players in regards to physical matchups
* Properly supervise training and games (be in a spot to see everything)
* Always err on the side of caution when a player is injured and make sure they receive proper medical attention (have a first aid kit on hand at all times)
* Never leave a player alone after training or games
* Make sure players depart with their parents or a designated individual
* Avoid being left alone with players who are not your children

**FC Boulder Lightning Policy**

* Upon seeing lightning, all players must be removed from fields and taken to closest shelter. No player(s) shall return to play until at least 30 minutes has passed since last lightning strike.

**Integrating Street Soccer in to Training**

Street Soccer is affording players the opportunity to play in a safe but free and unrestricted environment which allows them the chance to define their own vision of the game and dare to take their place among the greats of the game. Every training session should end with some form of free play and ‘street soccer’ sessions should be incorporated every 2-3 weeks of your season.

**Street Soccer Basics**

* **No Coaching**-Adults should be present in a supervisory role but should not interfere with play
* **No Parents**-We love you, but go shopping!
* **No Referee**-Let the players determine what is a foul and how to settle borderline disputes
* **Players are Responsible to Organize the Game**-Who plays where? How should we defend? Who marks who? Players need to make, perhaps for the first time, simple decisions about how they play
* **Players Keep and Report their Own Score**

*“Negative comments or over-coaching only discourage children from continuing to play soccer. The more our young soccer players enjoy themselves, the greater the likelihood that they will remain in the game. “*

***-Steve Sampson, Former Men’s National Team Coach, June 1998***

**FC Boulder Curriculum and Guidelines**

# Principles of Age Appropriate Development

**FC Boulder encourages multi-sport participation. Specializing in one sport is frowned upon until at least the age of 14.**

* Create a context where players have FUN.
* Emphasize the development of skills.
* Provide opportunities for many touches on the ball in every training session.
* Provide many opportunities to repeat exercises and activities.
* Organize fun and competitive games.
* Focus on functional and coordinated movements.
* Spend time on agility, quickness and speed during the warm-up.
* Allow for a great deal of unstructured play.

**Training Expectations:**

**Technical**

* Train all the technical aspects of the game: dribbling, ball control, passing, receiving, and striking the ball.
* Passing: short and long passes.
* Receiving: On the ground, out of the air and using different body parts.
* Dribbling (Coerver training) in tight spaces, with speed, change of direction and change of speed.
* Striking the ball on the ground and introducing striking ball in the air.
* 1 vs 1 to goal.
* 1 vs 1 defending.
* Possession exercises: 3 vs 1, 4 vs 2, 5 vs 2.
* Attacking 2 vs 1 and 3 vs 2 exercises to goal.

**Tactical**

* Attack vs defense. Understanding basic positions and roles.
* Learning to play as units (forwards, midfielders, defenders, right-sided players, left-sided players and central players.
* Understand the rules of the game.
* Developing defensive awareness (Ball-side and goal-side).
* Developing attacking awareness. Moving off the ball. Make the field big.

**Physical**

* Coordination.
* Develop speed by focusing on quickness, agility and change of direction through fun unstructured games.
* Endurance through age specific and appropriate training.
* Basic strength through body weight and balancing exercises.

**Psychological**

* Our players should be able to listen and pay attention to brief instructions.
* Our players should be able to understand simple suggestions and coaching points.

**Coaching Resources**

* [**www.fcboulder.com/our-community/fcb-for-me**](http://www.fcboulder.com/our-community/fcb-for-me)
* [**www.fcboulder.com/our-programs/athletic-performance-program/concussion-information-and-resources**](http://www.fcboulder.com/our-programs/athletic-performance-program/concussion-information-and-resources)
* [**http://nutritioncoaches.com/**](http://nutritioncoaches.com/)
* [**www.soccerindiana.org/education/lessonplans.aspx**](http://www.soccerindiana.org/education/lessonplans.aspx)
* [**www.kysoccer.net/coaches/lesson\_plans/**](http://www.kysoccer.net/coaches/lesson_plans/)
* [**www.ncsoccer.org/education/lessonplans/752500.html**](http://www.ncsoccer.org/education/lessonplans/752500.html)
* [**www.mayouthsoccer.org/coaching/practice\_plans\_u10.aspx**](http://www.mayouthsoccer.org/coaching/practice_plans_u10.aspx)
* [**www.nscaa.com**](http://www.nscaa.com)
* [**www.usyouthsoccer.org**](http://www.usyouthsoccer.org)
* [**www.ussoccer.com**](http://www.ussoccer.com)