

2020 – 2021



CLUB STANDARDS

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COACHING OBJECTIVES

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- Foster the child's appreciation and love of the game.
- Keep winning and losing in proper perspective for their age.
- Understand that each player will develop at a different rate.
- Educate the players about the demands of the game and what their next stages look like.
- Create practices and games with modified rules/sizes to fit their development stage.
- Allow players to experience and play all positions.
- Ensure that each training session is a positive environment with positive feedback.
- Training should leave them feeling better about themselves as people and players.
- Provide the appropriate number of training sessions and matches according to the player's stage.
- Strive to help each player reach their full potential and be prepared to move to the next stage.

GAME DAY CONSIDERATIONS

GAME DAY CONSIDERATIONS

Syracuse Development Academy encourages players, coaches and parents to honor the game collectively by adopting a player-centered philosophy.

Youth soccer games should be viewed in a different context to professional games. The main focus in a professional soccer game is to win. In youth soccer however, the main focus needs to be fun and development; winning will be a byproduct.

Soccer is not a coach-centered sport, it is free-flowing with limited stoppages in play. Once a player enters the game, it is their game and they must make their own technical and tactical decisions. The coach's decisions are more strategic.

Game day is a player's chance to put into action what they have learned from practice. It is purely an extension of the training session where transfer of learning should occur. Players who are over-coached during practice and matches will become robotic and will not be able to make critical game decisions on their own. If the coaches are doing all the talking, the players won't communicate.

The following tables clearly outline our suggested interaction guideline for each party involved in our youth sport process. If followed, a player-centered culture of respect and learning will be the result.

GAME DAY CONSIDERATIONS

PLAYERS

INTERACTION

EXPECTATION

- Coaches

- Respect the decisions of the team coach with regards to playing time, positions and substitutions.

- Teammates

- Encourage other players on your team and support decisions of teammates regardless of the outcome.

- Referees

- Players should not question or argue with a referee's decision for any reason. Mistakes will happen, players should respect the decision and continue with the game.

- Parents

- Players should not look to their parents during the game for feedback or information on their performance.
- Players should focus on the game and their performance with no distraction.
- Players should keep their parents informed of important information that the coach has relayed after the game – this may include logistical information for future training sessions or games, and player development information that relates to focused areas of improvement.

- Opposition

- Fair play and good sportsmanship should be an integral part of all interactions with opposition players. Shake hands and congratulate all players on a good game upon completion of the match.

GAME DAY CONSIDERATIONS

PARENTS

INTERACTION

EXPECTATION

- Coaches

- Parents and team coaches should be on the same page with regards to the team's objectives, which should be communicated during preseason.
- Parents should avoid questioning or confronting the team coach during or immediately after a game. Where appropriate, parents should call or email the team coach to discuss the issue.

- Players

- Be supportive but don't coach from the sidelines. Let the coaches communicate important information to avoid confusing players. A parent's role should be to provide support and encouragement. If parents over-communicate, it takes away the opportunity for players to communicate with each other.

- Referees

- Parents should not ever question a referee's decision for any reason. Mistakes will happen, parents should be a role model for their players. Any communication to the referee should be via the team coach.

- Opposition

- Parent's interaction with players from the opposite team should only ever be positive and sportsmanlike in nature. Parents should never get involved in any type of verbal confrontation or dispute with parents and players of the opposing team, whatever the reason.

GAME DAY CONSIDERATIONS

COACHES

INTERACTION	EXPECTATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Players	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Verbal Instructions should be carefully measured to provide players with the necessary information they need to improve without over-coaching.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Referees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The referee's decisions should be respected and unchallenged. No attempt should be made to influence their decisions or the outcome of the game.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parents should be engaged in the educational process. If possible, parents should be debriefed to understand post game goals and areas for discussion with their children.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sportsmanship and fair play should be of utmost importance. Respect for the opposition's coaches, players, and parents ensures a supportive environment for both sets of players.

RIGHTS AND NEEDS OF THE YOUTH PLAYER

RIGHTS OF OUR YOUTH PLAYERS

- The right to enjoyment both in practice and in competition, with a wide variety of activities that promote fun and easy learning.
- The right to play as a child and not be treated like an adult, either on or off the playing field.
- The right to participate in competitions with simplified rules, adapted to their level of ability and capacity in each stage of their development.
- The right to play in conditions of greatest possible safety. The right to participate in all aspects of the game.
- The right to be trained by experienced and specially prepared coaches and developers.
- The right to gain experience by resolving most of the problems that arise during the practice.
- The right to be treated with dignity and respect by the coach, their teammates and by their opponents.
- The right to play with children of their own age with similar chances of winning.
- The right not to become a champion.

NEEDS OF OUR YOUTH PLAYERS

- **The Need for Safety & Security**

It is an absolute requirement that young players have a safe physical environment to train in, which means playing areas that are free of any dangerous objects like glass, holes, etc. and that are free from outside interference. Rules governing safety should be strictly enforced. Familiar surroundings and setup provide emotional security and an ideal environment for experimentation and variety to keep them from getting bored.

- **The Need for New Experiences**

Experience is the greatest teacher. Coaches must allow young players to explore and discover new things for themselves. This is true for most aspects of life and for all sports, especially for soccer. Instead of constant instruction, kids should preferably be stimulated with simplified games and activities which are within their reach both physically and mentally. These activities also stretch their capabilities enough to be challenging. Through this process of discovery, young players can progressively develop their skills, understanding and intelligence.

- **The Need for Recognition & Encouragement**

Children flourish and are highly motivated in an atmosphere of acceptance, recognition, encouragement and praise. They actually try even harder when they are rewarded for their efforts in this way. For children under 12, a teacher, coach or parent is like a mirror in which they perceive their worth/competence or lack thereof. That is why coaches and parents must learn to be positive, praise generously and use only constructive criticism.

NEEDS OF OUR YOUTH PLAYERS

- **The Need to be Given Responsibility**

Children prefer to do things on their own without too much dependence on adults. They like to reach independence as quickly as possible. The coaching methodology and approach should take this into consideration, by making sure that the children predominantly work out their own solutions to the problems the coach presents. The coach should only intervene when they get stuck. Children should take responsibility for small tasks like collecting cones, but also for the learning process itself, e.g. modifying the rules of a practice game. A good idea is to allow them a period of 10 minutes or so in each training session, where they get to choose what to do, be it a practice, a game or whatever.

- **The Need for Play**

Playing games is as vital for young players as breathing – necessary for the health of body and mind. Since children learn best by playing, the most important part of each training session should be the age-appropriate simplified game, designed exactly to stimulate their particular mental and physical aptitude. The art of coaching is to ensure that the game is adapted to the players and not vice-versa, as is most commonly the case. Playing games stimulates creativity, communication with others and decision making.

- **The Need to Socialize with Others**

Instinctively, children reach out to others of a similar age. The older they are, the more they appreciate the company of their peers. They love to be part of a group, and find their identity often as part of a group or team with common objectives.

- **The Need to Be Active**

It is natural for children to be active, not static. They should not be forced to wait in lines until it is their turn, or stand around listening to coaches for long periods of time. Kids hate these two things, lines and lectures! Simplified games with smaller teams ensure greater participation for all.

NEEDS OF OUR YOUTH PLAYERS

- **The Need to Live in The Present**

Generally speaking, children have no interest in either the past or the future. Their sense of time is completely different to that of adults. A young child lives for today only.

Yesterday and Tomorrow are distant, abstract entities to them. You cannot ask them to take history or some distant future goal into consideration, they just won't get it, so it is crucial to keep it current!

- **The Need for Variety**

More variety equals less boredom and fatigue. A wide variety of stimuli, in terms of presentation and content is critical to keep kids' attention for any length of time. It is also necessary to vary the intensity of the exercises and games. Variation can also be achieved through mixing soccer-specific with general multilateral activities (other sports) or through switching from the global method (games) to the more analytical method (exercises or drills which are specific to one topic), or from individual training to group practice.

- **The Need to Be Understood by Adults**

Children seem to live in a different world to adults. They have different problems than adults, learn in a different way and don't think as logically as adults do. Their ideas, thoughts or reasoning often lack coherence. Their emotional stability depends to a high degree on their speed of biological growth. Generally, they don't know how to use their energy efficiently and therefore can tire very easily, while at the same time they can also recover quicker than adults. Their behavior is governed by the way they feel at any given time.

CODES OF CONDUCT

CODE OF CONDUCT

PLAYERS

- I will play by the rules.
- I understand that I am a representative of SDA, my team and my parents and will act professionally at all times.
- I will not argue with a referee or assistant referee. If I disagree I will speak with my coach.
- I will control my temper and maintain control over my emotions.
- I will avoid negative comments and/or gestures, and I will not deliberately distract or provoke an opponent.
- I will work equally hard for myself and my team, as my team's performance will benefit.
- I will not use foul language or inappropriate gestures.
- I will wear only SDA approved training gear during training, games, and tournaments.
- I will treat all participants in soccer as I like to be treated. I will not bully or take unfair advantage of another competitor at practice or in competition.
- I will cooperate with my coach, teammates, and opponents. Without them there would be no game.
- I understand that my coaches have my best interests at heart and are invested in my development.
- I will look after my body with correct hygiene and nutritional habits.
- I will have good hydration and sleep habits, without which I will not be able to perform or develop to my best capability.
- I will play because I want to play, not to benefit or please others.
- I will respect the rights, dignity, and worth of all participants regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.
- I understand that my attitude can influence the players, coaches, and spectators. I will try to be positive at all times.
- I will notify my coach and manager in a timely manner if I must miss a practice or a game.

CODE OF CONDUCT

PARENTS

I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care and encouragement for my child while participating in soccer at SDA. I recognize that, while winning is important, fair play and development are the essence of the game. I promise that I will set a good example to my child by behaving at all times in accordance with the following:

- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game, practice or other events.
- I will place the emotional and physical well being of my child ahead of a personal desire to win.
- I will be in control of my emotions.
- I will remain in the spectator area during competitions.
- I will not advise the coach on how to do their job.
- I will remember that the game is for our youth -not adults.
- I will not coach my child during practice or games.
- I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.
- I will not make insulting comments to players, parents, officials, or coaches of either team.
- I will not openly criticize the referees before, during or after games.
- I will not openly criticize our opponents or engage in arguments with their parents or officials during or after games.
- I will only give positive feedback to players on both teams.
- I will cheer at all games within the spirit of fair play.
- I will be mindful of our opponent's feelings when cheering for our team in lop-sided games.
- I shall do my best to teach my child to become a student of the game.
- I will show the quality of our sportsmanship during and after each and every match and encourage my child to shake the hands of opponents and match officials after every game.
- I understand that improper behavior may result in a parent being asked to leave the field and may result in a parent being suspended from attending events including but not limited to practices, games, and tournaments.
- I also understand that improper conduct and/or interfering with the development of the program may result in expulsion from the Syracuse Development Academy (SDA).

I will try to give at least 24 hours notice to my coach should my player be unable to attend a team event.

Should I have a soccer-related concern regarding my child that I would like to address with the coach, I agree to reflect for at least 24 hours before raising the issue with the coach.

CODE OF CONDUCT

COACHES

- I will promote the enjoyment of playing the game of soccer through creating a positive learning environment.
- I agree to treat referees, coaches, administrators, and opponents with respect and dignity.
- I will provide positive reinforcement and encouragement to enhance the development of all players.
- I will ensure that equipment and facilities meet safety standards and are appropriate to the age, maturity, and ability of all players.
- I will respect the rights, dignity, and worth of every young person regardless of their ability, cultural background, or religion.
- I understand that their attitude can influence the behavior of players, coaches, and spectators.
- I will always conduct themselves in a professional manner and act for the good of the game, good of the team, and the good of SDA.
- I shall never place the value of winning over the safety and welfare of players.
- I shall instruct players to play within the written laws of the game and within the spirit of the game at all times.
- I shall not seek unfair advantage by teaching deliberate unsportsmanlike behavior to players.
- I shall not tolerate inappropriate behavior from players regardless of the situation.
- I agree that the demands placed on players' time shall never be so extensive as to interfere with academic goals or progress.
- I must never encourage players to violate SDA player's rules or policies.
- I shall stay committed to the development of all players and their total character.
- I shall be committed to being organized and professional and shall seek opportunities to continue with their development.
- I understand that they are a role model and as such shall be responsible for promoting good behavior and communication with all parties.