



Rec-Soccer Coaching Manual

“The Coach Clipboard”

Thanks for Coaching!

First let us thank you for volunteering to coach for Kidsports. We know that it is a significant commitment of your time and energy. By coaching you are helping to provide a wonderful athletic experience for youth in our community. Kidsports would not be able to do what it does without the help they receive from members of the community like yourself.

Sports participation is important because it teaches children the value of physical fitness, sportsmanship, practice and team work. Our hope is that each player is allowed to achieve their personal best while having fun. This manual will hopefully give you some ideas and resources that will prepare you to be able to create a sport environment for all your players that allow them to achieve their personal best....while having fun.

Coaching the U-6(K-1st grade) and U-8(2nd-3rd grade) player

You do not need to be the best soccer coach or even know that much about the techniques of soccer to be considered the “greatest coach in the world” by your players. By creating a fun and safe environment for your players you will give them the room to fall in love with the sport. Teaching soccer is not the most important task you have while coaching your players. In fact the young player must first learn how to run, jump, stop, move, fall, etc. without a ball before they will be physically ready to do all of those movements with a ball. In U.S Soccer's “Best Practices” Guidelines they state that for this age group “Training sessions should be treated more as physical education than specifically as soccer training”. *One of the biggest mistake coaches make during these ages is thinking that this age soccer should look like “real soccer” and that they should be trying to get the little people to play like that as soon as possible.*

This manual is designed on the principle of “fit the activity to the child....not the child to the activity”. This is why we have given you insight into the developmental stage that you are coaching. The hope is that by understanding that the 5 and 6 yr olds that you are coaching are deeply self absorbed and do not typically like to share, you will not waste time trying to teach them to pass and you won't be frustrated or feel you have failed when your players seem to only want to dribble the ball to the goal. We have given you activities that are developmentally appropriate and will teach the appropriate skills in a progressive way. The practices for the U6 teams focus on games aimed at teaching and reinforcing physical movement skills, as well as individual soccer skills such as; dribbling, shooting, throwing, kicking. The practices for the U8 teams continue to reinforce and build everything that they have been taught in the younger groups but also introduce partner based skills such as passing and team concepts. Passing is focused more in the U8 group because they are developmentally ready to learn it.

Through the season KIDSPORTS recommends that coaches have either an assistant coach or another parent be present at all practices or other team activities. Coaches should never be alone one on one with any player. Coaches must have a player transportation form filled out for any player they will be driving to practices or games.

Team Management

Parent Meeting:

The parent meeting is very important. It is an opportunity to get to know your families better and let them get to know you. This will allow you to set the stage for open communication as well as give the nuts and bolts information about team information. In this meeting you should:

- Briefly introduce yourself.
- Tell them what your focus is for the players and team. (i.e. Have fun, teach appropriate skills, have them want to play again)
- Tell them what they can expect from you: to be on time, be prepared, be positive, be fair, etc. (see sample of coach pledge)
- Tell them what expectations you have of them: get child to practice, communicate if they will be absent or late, be positive, pick-up on time etc. (See sample of parent pledge and player pledge)
- Make sure you cover how you will communicate all information about games and practices with them (email, text, bonzi?).
- Make sure you have all the correct emails and phone numbers.
- It is a good idea to have paper copies of the practice schedule and game schedule to hand out even if you plan on sending that information electronically. Nothing gets a family off to a bad sports experience more than not getting information and their child missing practices or games.
- Get parent volunteers for refereeing (for the K-1 group), and help with snacks, carpools, awards, etc.

Team Meeting:

It is also a good idea to take a few minutes to have a team meeting. Keep this brief and simple. Just introduce yourself and have each player introduce themselves. You can also have them answer a simple question such as “what is your favorite food” or “what is your favorite animal”? This is a simple icebreaker that will help the players get to know each other. You also will want to let them know what your coaching will focus on, but in a way they will be able to understand. For example you could say:

“We are going to have a great time this soccer season! We are going to learn all the ways we can move our bodies and learn how to play soccer. You all are going to be learning lots of new things and even if things are hard to begin with I am going to want you to keep giving your best effort. That is how we will know if we are winning our games of soccer....if we are giving our best effort and learning new things. OK?! Now let’s get started!”

You will also want to let them know your rules for the team. Don’t have a big long list, just a few important rules that they will remember. Your rules will all be slightly different depending

on your own personal style. Some examples of team rules are: 1) No talking when the coach is talking. 2) No negative comments to other players. 3) Give your best effort. 4) Have fun!

Game Time:

Game time should be a fun exciting experience that allows the players to freely play and practice all the things they have been learning. For the U6 (K-1st grade) players who have never played against kids they don't know they may be a bit nervous before the first game. For this age you are going to need a parent referee to help run the game. Many coaches find themselves trying to ref one of the micro games because of difficulty getting volunteers to help out. This is problematic because you will not be able to see both games, monitor playing time, monitor players, etc. You can usually get a couple of parents to help if you are clear up front that this is something that will need to happen so that the children can have the best experience. Other important things to consider for game time are:

- Letting families know how early to show up for a game...30 min prior? 15 min prior?
- What warm-up activities will you have your team do before a game? You will want them to get moving and ready to play, especially if the weather is chilly or wet.
- Making sure families and players know what behaviors are acceptable on the sidelines and in the game: cheering for both teams, no negative comments, no coaching from the sidelines, good sportsmanship. Understand that the players and families will follow your example of behavior.
- For the U8 (2nd-3rd grade) game let the parents know that this is the age that the team is required to sit on one side of the field with the spectators on the opposite side. This will be a new experience for all of them, so they will probably need reminding that the team side is just for players and coaches.
- What is the purpose of the game? Not winning at this age....they will keep track of goals. Your job will be to continually re-direct them to look at their own effort and if they are getting better at the skills to figure out if they are "winning".
- Have a plan for keeping track of player play time and rotation. (see attached example of rotation chart) This will be especially important if you have a large roster.
- Remember the developmental stage your players are in. Don't expect the U6 player to pass or not chase after the ball. You can still tell them to spread out....just don't get frustrated when they don't listen. Focus on dribbling and ball control...all the thing you have been working on in practice. For the U8 players you will begin to see them pass the ball and work in pairs more but they still won't generally have the ability to think about team tactics or other more complicated offensive or defensive skills.
- Make sure all players are allowed to play in all areas of the field. No player should be labeled an "offensive" or "defensive" player at this age.
- What will your post game routine be? High-fives? A brief meeting? A team cheer? A snack. Try to be consistent; your players will look forward to whatever you do. The goal is to end the day with a positive message.

COACHING THE U-6 PLAYER

Kindergarten and 1st grade

Developmental considerations: “Me and My Ball”

Psychological/Cognitive

- *Individually oriented (egocentric)
- *Short attention span
- *Easily bruised psychologically
- *Perform tasks one at a time
- *“My Ball” is a commonly used phrase.
- *Limited tactical abilities
- *Biggest concern is which way to go when they have ball.

Physical/Motor:

- *No sense of pace...will often run until they drop
- *Running, jumping, skipping, hopping and maintaining balance are *not* fully developed at this age.
- *Will often fall when changing direction because of high center of gravity.
- *Need multiple breaks during practice and games.

Psycho– social:

- *Typically this is first exposure to team sport.
- *Need to feel secure in practice and games
- *Social development is limited
- *Low interest in team activities.

Coaching Consideration:

- *Give brief directions
- *Use several short activities
- *Lots of water breaks
- *Short training session (45min– 1hour)
- *Emphasize confidence and familiarity with the ball (every child needs To have access to a ball for entire session)
- *Give plenty of encouragement and very little criticism or correction.
- *Primary focus is making soccer so enjoyable that when the child has Choices in activities, they choose to play soccer.

***By the end of the season the player should be capable of: 1) handling the ball with at least one foot and both hands. 2) Occupying an original position during game once action is finished 3) running, jumping and stopping with and without the ball.**

The K-1(U6) Game

3v3 micro soccer. Teams play 2 simultaneous 3v3 games with players rotating between fields. Games consist of six 5 minute periods. No score is kept and parents will officiate. Fields are 30yds by 40 yards. The goal is 12' and flags are used. There is no goalie. Teams use a size #4 ball.

Practice:

Avoid the **"4 Evil L's"**

Laps: warm-up with fun games with the ball instead.

Lectures: Don't speak for more than 30 secs.

Lines: No standing waiting for turn. Have them all with a ball participating

Language: Watch what you say and how you say it. Don't be inappropriate.

Session Length: 45 min– 1 hour

Frequency: 1 to 2 times a week.

Practice Session Structure:

Warm up: 5 min

2-3 fun games to get the excited and ready to play.

Physical: 10 min

1-2 activities to help develop physical abilities:

Running and stopping

Changing direction

Jumping and balance

Technical: 20-25 min (main activities to introduce/refine skills)

4-5 fun game activities approximately 5min each for this age they

Would cover:

Dribbling

Shielding

Passing (just introducing the basic concept)

Finishing (shooting)

Game/Scrimmages: 15min

Small game/scrimmage activities

1v1, 2v2, 3v3, 1v2, 2v3.

Warm-down: 5min

Fun stretching, ending games



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| Name Kidsports united (sample practice) | Date: Sept 6 |
| Age Group: Kinder– 1st grade | Focus: Dribbling and ball control |
| <p>Warm-up: 5mins Activity #1: Sharks and Minnows <input type="checkbox"/> set up 20x20 grid with cones <input type="checkbox"/> Start with no ball</p> | <p><u>Notes/Setup/Coaching points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> progress to players having ball <input type="checkbox"/> remind them to keep ball close and eyes up. |
| <p>Physical: Activity #1: Go Get it! <input type="checkbox"/> Throw balls in different directions <input type="checkbox"/> Have players bring them back in different ways with their body</p> <p>Activity #2: Body part dribble <input type="checkbox"/> 20x20 grid or large circle <input type="checkbox"/> Players dribble in space <input type="checkbox"/> Call out a body part, they have to stop and touch that part to their ball</p> | <p><u>Notes/Setup/Coaching points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on listening skills and knowledge of their body. <input type="checkbox"/> Remember to keep it simple just “elbow” not “left elbow” since players may not know right from left. <input type="checkbox"/> Look for balance and proper stopping techniques. |
| <p>Technical: 20-25min Activity #1: Shadow Dribbling <input type="checkbox"/> Show them how you walk in directions and have them all follow you <input type="checkbox"/> Progress to pairing them up and alternating being the shadow and the dribbler</p> <p>Activity #2 Everybody’s “It” <input type="checkbox"/> 20x20 grid <input type="checkbox"/> Every child has a ball and tries to tag all the other players while trying to avoid being tagged. <input type="checkbox"/> They get a point for every tag</p> <p>Activity #3: Crazy Maze <input type="checkbox"/> Set up gates with 2 cones all over the field area <input type="checkbox"/> Have them count how many gates they can get through in 60 seconds <input type="checkbox"/> First have players run through gates without the ball</p> | <p><u>Notes/Setup/Coaching points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Remind them to keep ball close <input type="checkbox"/> Use both feet and both sides of foot <input type="checkbox"/> Keep eyes up. <input type="checkbox"/> Start with walking and progress to running at different speeds <input type="checkbox"/> Start with just tagging any part of the other players <input type="checkbox"/> Progress for having to tag the other players ball. <input type="checkbox"/> Remind them to stay in control and be creative to keep their ball away for others <input type="checkbox"/> Give them chance to do the game several times <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on improving their own score each time <input type="checkbox"/> Use both feet and both sides of the foot. |

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| <p>Technical:</p> <p>Activity #4 Flintstone Soccer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 4 equal teams on corners of square grid <input type="checkbox"/> All the balls in the center of square <input type="checkbox"/> Give 60 seconds and players on team go one at a time to collect ball <input type="checkbox"/> Second time take ball back to center and leave it <p>Activity #5 Hit the Coach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Players stand in a line each with a ball <input type="checkbox"/> Coach runs away and players dribble after. They get a point for each time they hit the coach. | <p><u>Notes/Setup/Coaching points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on speed running to get ball and dribbling it back to home base <input type="checkbox"/> Stay in control <input type="checkbox"/> Progress to showing how to grab the ball and turn in different ways. <input type="checkbox"/> Vary it in several ways: be creative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Have Assistants or parents help to split them up in to several smaller groups <input type="checkbox"/> Stay under control |
| <p>Scrimmage:</p> <p>Activity #1 4 Goal Open/Close game</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 20x20 square grid <input type="checkbox"/> A goal in the center of each side of square marked off with cones <input type="checkbox"/> 3 teams of 2 to 3 players <p>Activity#2 3v3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 20x30 playing field marked with cones with a goal on each end <input type="checkbox"/> Have each game go for 3 to 5 mins then switch teams | <p><u>Notes/Setup/Coaching points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Coach call out open and close <input type="checkbox"/> When open team on field tries to score <input type="checkbox"/> One team is the “gates” <input type="checkbox"/> Remind them to score quickly and keep ball close <input type="checkbox"/> Progress to using only one ball <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Allow them to just play with minimal instruction or stopping them <input type="checkbox"/> If instruction is needed wait till after they are out of the game. <input type="checkbox"/> Time of creativity and finding the game for themselves. |
| <p>Warm-down:</p> <p>Activity #1 Zen dribble</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 2 players <input type="checkbox"/> One holds the others hand and tells them what direction to dribble the ball. <input type="checkbox"/> go for 30 seconds each <p>Activity #2 Animal stretching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> In a large circle with coach in the middle <input type="checkbox"/> Call out different animals and then stretch like them: cat, elephant, monkey, giraffe <p>Team Cheer / High Fives and goodbye!</p> | <p><u>Notes/Setup/Coaching points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperation and problem solving <input type="checkbox"/> Remind them to be safe and help their team mate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Get them stretching up and then down touching the ground. <input type="checkbox"/> Work on balancing on one foot and booth feet <input type="checkbox"/> Allow them to call out names and be creative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Leave on a happy upbeat note! |



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| Name: Kidsports Lions (sample practice) | Date: Sept 8th |
| Age Group: kinder-1st grade | Focus: Dribbling and agility |

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| <p>Warm-up:</p> <p>Activity #1: Blob tag</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 20X20 grid <input type="checkbox"/> All players with a ball <input type="checkbox"/> Coach is it <p>Activity #2: Follow the Leader</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Coach is leader <input type="checkbox"/> No ball | <p><u>Notes/Setup/Coaching points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Get the kids running and having fun <input type="checkbox"/> Can do one round without ball then one round with ball <input type="checkbox"/> Progress through jogging, jumping, skipping, hopping, side to side, changing directions. |
| <p>Physical:</p> <p>Activity #1: Snake in the Grass</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Small 15x15 grid <input type="checkbox"/> One child starts as "snake" <p>Activity #2: Frogs in a Pond</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 20x20 grid <input type="checkbox"/> Use cones, pennies, or shirts to make lily pads | <p><u>Notes/Setup/Coaching points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on having them move in creative and safe ways. <input type="checkbox"/> Do several rounds <input type="checkbox"/> Have kids jump from pad to pad <input type="checkbox"/> Start with two foot jumps, one foot, skips and leaps. <input type="checkbox"/> Start with pad close together <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on balance and body control |
| <p>Technical:</p> <p>Activity #1: Go Get It!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Use a large area <input type="checkbox"/> Coach has all the Balls <p>Activity #2: Hospital Tag</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 15 x 20 grid with small square about 10 ft away that is marked as hospital | <p><u>Notes/Setup/Coaching points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Throw the balls into all different directions <input type="checkbox"/> Have kids bring back the balls as quickly as possible, first with hands , then with just their feet. <input type="checkbox"/> All kids have a ball. <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage them to keep their ball close and try to avoid being tagged <input type="checkbox"/> Play several rounds |

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| <p>Technical (cont):</p> <p>Activity #3: Race Your Cars</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a “road” with a series of gates made from cones • Coach is finish line <p>Activity #4: Breakfast War</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20x30 field with small goals on each side • Team divided in to 2 teams lined up on opposite sides of the field | <p><u>Notes/Setup/Coaching points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All kids with ball • Instruct them to keep ball close • Eyes up and on the road • Start slow first and then speed up in later rounds. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage players to run quickly to the ball • Use dribbling to control ball • Encourage them to shoot a goal quickly • 1v1 situation |
| <p>Scrimmage:</p> <p>3v3 game</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divide team into teams of 3 • Have 2 games going at same time if possible • If only one game then have them play for 3-4 mins then switch teams | <p><u>Notes/Setup/Coaching points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow for free play • Minimal stoppage of play • Give corrections at breaks. |
| <p>Warm-down:</p> <p>Activity#1: I Can do Something...can you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach in middle of large circle • Stretching and balance moves • Go through progression of static stretches and balances <p>Activity #2: Team cheer and high fives!</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach does several and then asks team...What can you do? • Then follow their lead.. |

Coaching the U8 player

2nd and 3rd grade

Developmental Consideration: “Me and My Partner”

Psychological/Cognitive:

- *attention span a bit longer than U-6 but still limited
- *developing an ability to form a rule structure.
- *still has limited ability to concentrate on more than one task at a time.
- *beginning to understand the relation between time and space
- *effort is synonymous with performance for them; if they feel they tried hard, they feel

they have performed well.

Physical/Motor:

- *Bones still growing; growth plates are near joints. (Be aware of possible Injuries to those areas)
- *still lack sense of pace; will run till they drop
- *Improved coordination from U-6, but physical immaturity is still obvious.
- *boys and girls are still similar in physical development
- *Beginning to develop physical confidence

Psycho– social:

- *beginning to understand cooperative play and are more inclined towards Group activities.
- *High need for approval from adults
- *easily bruised psychologically; negative comments carry great weight.
- *Intrinsically motivated; play because it is “fun” and for their own enjoyment.
- *increased desire for social acceptance.
- *beginning to develop a team identity.

Coaching Consideration:

- *practice should be no more than an hour
- *mixture of individual and partner activities; more activities designed for One ball and 2 players.
- *introduce target games and maze-type games
- *conclude each session with small sided games 3v3 or 4v4
- *Stay away from tactics or team concepts
- *coach should focus on players relationship with the ball...to want it, how to find it, How to deal with it, feel comfortable with it, keep it close, etc.
- ** By the end of the season the player should be able to: 1) pass and receive a pass 2) work cooperatively with a partner 3) dribble while changing direction 4) shoot with the inside of the foot. 5) Make a toe pass. 6) Perform a throw –in 7) begin to gain control while juggling the ball with feet and knees.**

The U8 (2nd-3rd grade) Game

The game is played on a 40 x 60 yd field with 12ft goals marked with flags. There are 6 players on the field at one time with 5 field players and one goalie. 2nd graders play 6x7 min periods and the 3rd graders play 6x8 min periods. It is officiated by one Kidsports referee and scores are kept. All penalty kicks indirect and there is no offsides.

Practice:

Avoid the **"4 Evil L's"**

Laps: warm-up with fun games with the ball instead.

Lectures: Don't speak for more than 30 secs.

Lines: No standing waiting for turn. Have them all with a ball participating

Language: Watch what you say and how you say it. Don't be inappropriate

Practice session length: 1 hour

Practice session frequency: 2 times a week

Practice Session Structure:

Warm up: 5 min

2-3 fun games to get the excited and ready to play.

Physical: 10 min

1-2 activities to help develop physical abilities:

Running and stopping

Changing direction

Jumping and balance

Technical: 20-25 min (main activities to introduce/refine skills)

4-5 fun game activities approximately 5min each for this age they

Would cover:

Dribbling

Shielding and turning

Passing and receiving.

Finishing (shooting) and Goalie skills.

Game/Scrimmages: 15min

Small game/scrimmage activities

2v2, 3v3, 4v4, 6v6

Warm-down: 5min Fun stretching, ending games



SAMPLE PRACTICE PLAN

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| Name: Kidsports Rainbows | Date: Sept 6th |
| Age Group: U8 (2nd –3rd grade) | Focus: Dribbling, striking |
| <p>Warm-up: Activity #1: Follow the Leader</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Players don't need a ball. <input type="checkbox"/> Follow coach | <p><u>Notes/Setup/Coaching points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Start with jogging, jumping, hopping and then progress to front kicks, lunges, bottom kicks, side shuttles. <input type="checkbox"/> Give players the chance to lead with everyone following. |
| <p>Physical: Activity #1: Lava Run</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 20x20 grid <input type="checkbox"/> Set up cones in a zig -zag format in grid <p>Activity #2: Crab soccer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 15x15 grid with goals on each side of square | <p><u>Notes/Setup/Coaching points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Remind them about "fast feet" <input type="checkbox"/> Look for good balance <input type="checkbox"/> Make the goals small so they have to work hard to make a goal. <input type="checkbox"/> This is hard..Have the go for a couple of minutes and then give a break. |
| <p>Technical: Activity #1: Windows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Use the large field <input type="checkbox"/> Set up widows from 2 cones all over field <p>Activity #2 Around the World</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Large circle about 20 ft across marked with cones <input type="checkbox"/> Every player has a ball. | <p><u>Notes/Setup/Coaching points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Remind them to keep their eyes up <input type="checkbox"/> Look for communication between pairs <input type="checkbox"/> Use both feet and both sides of foot for dribbling and passing. <input type="checkbox"/> Remind them of keeping eyes up and ball close. <input type="checkbox"/> Start with simple list of commands and add more as you progress. |

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| <p>Technical (cont):</p> <p>Activity #3 Hospital Tag</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ 15x20 grid with a small square about 10 ft away that is the hospital. <p>Activity #4 Inside/outside</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Pair up players ☐ Set up 2 rows of cones about 10 ft apart <p>Activity #5 Scramble</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ 20x20 or 30x30 grid ☐ Pair up players by shirt color or give pairs colored pennies ☐ One ball per pair | <p><u>Notes/Setup/Coaching points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ All kids have a ball ☐ Keep ball close and avoid being tagged ☐ Add different skills they have to perform in the hospital. ☐ Show players how to receive ball with both the inside and outside of the foot. ☐ Remind them to use 2 touches before they pass back to their partner ☐ Have pairs start on all sides of the grid ☐ Have them move from one side of the grid to the other ☐ Remind players to move after they pass to their partner. |
| <p>Scrimmage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Set up a large 20x30 field with goals on each end marked with cones ☐ Start with 2v2 games ...progress to 4v4 and end with 6 v 6 | <p><u>Notes/Setup/Coaching points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ To begin let 2v2 games to go for 1-2 minutes . As you add players to the games allow game to last longer each round ☐ Limit stoppage or coaching. Allow players to create and have free play. |
| <p>Warm-down:</p> <p>Activity#1:Zen dribble</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Pair up players ☐ 1 ball per pair | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Look for teamwork and communication |

Team Cheer/High Fives and Goodbye!



SAMPLE PRACTICE PLAN

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| Name: Kidsports Rainbows | Date: Sept. 13th |
| Age Group: U8 (2nd-3rd grade) | Focus: Shielding and Shooting |

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| <p>Warm-up: Activity #1: Follow the Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Players don't need a ball. <input type="checkbox"/> Follow coach</p> | <p><u>Notes/Setup/Coaching points</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Start with jogging, jumping, hopping and then progress to front kicks, lunges, bottom kicks, side shuttles. <input type="checkbox"/> Give players the chance to lead with everyone following.</p> |
| <p>Physical: Activity #1: Lava Run <input type="checkbox"/> 20x20 grid <input type="checkbox"/> Set up cones in a zig -zag format in grid</p> <p>Activity #2: Crab soccer <input type="checkbox"/> 15x15 grid with goals on each side of square</p> | <p><u>Notes/Setup/Coaching points</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Remind them about "fast feet" <input type="checkbox"/> Look for good balance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Make the goals small so they have to work hard to make a goal. <input type="checkbox"/> This is hard..have the go for a couple of minutes and then give a break.</p> |
| <p>Technical: Activity #1: Windows <input type="checkbox"/> Use the large field <input type="checkbox"/> Set up widows from 2 cones all over field</p> <p>Activity #2 Around the World <input type="checkbox"/> Large circle about 20 ft across marked with cones <input type="checkbox"/> Every player has a ball.</p> | <p><u>Notes/Setup/Coaching points</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Remind them to keep their eyes up <input type="checkbox"/> Look for communication between pairs <input type="checkbox"/> Use both feet and both sides of foot for dribbling and passing.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Remind them of keeping eyes up and ball close. <input type="checkbox"/> Start with simple list of commands and add more as you progress.</p> |

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| <p>Technical (cont):</p> <p>Activity #3 Grenades in the Goal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pair up players • Makes “goals” for each pair <p>Activity #4 Bottom Soccer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Break up into 2 groups if possible • Coach has all the balls • Half the group sits in front of the goal <p>Activity #5 Crazy Goals!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30x30 grid • Set up as many goals as you can around the grid • Break team up into groups of 3 | <p><u>Notes/Setup/Coaching points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Have the try shooting before 3 bounces, then 2, then one bounce ☐ Go for rounds of 1 min. and then switch <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Have players try to score in any way they can while staying seated ☐ Roll balls at players and bounce balls off players. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ 2 teams are in center and play for 1 min trying to make as many goals as possible ☐ Start with 1 ball and then add balls as they progress. |
| <p>Scrimmage:</p> <p>Game: Freeze Punt!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ 40x60 game field ☐ 4v4 <p>Game: 6v6 regular scrimmage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free game | <p><u>Notes/Setup/Coaching points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let each player get a chance to punt the ball out. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit stoppage and coaching • Allow and encourage creative play! • Give lots of praise...use their names. |
| <p>Warm-down:</p> <p>Activity#1: I can do Something Can You?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach in middle of large circle • Go through stretching and balance move | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do a fewthen let players take the lead and have rest of team follow. |

Resource Guide

This is a list of some of the websites that offer information on the best practices of coaching, as well as sites that offer more ideas for activities, games and drills to help keep your practices fun, exciting and productive.

Websites with free drills and age specific information:

<http://www.kidsports.org/home.php?layout=45107> : The KIDSPORTS website: The Coaches Corner. The Coach Clipboard. Videos, rules, practice sheets etc.

<http://www.coaching-kids-soccer.com/U6-soccer.html>

http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/assets/1/15/2012_coaching_manual_for_web.pdf : A comprehensive guide to coaching the youth player.

http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/assets/1/3/US_Youth_Soccer_Player_Development_Model.pdf ; A US youth soccer coaching manual.

<http://www.soccerxpert.com/u6-u8-soccer-drills.aspx> : Great resource for soccer games and drills.

www.ussoccer.com: You can get manuals, activities, drills, age groups etc from this site.

<http://www.positivecoach.org/our-tools/tools-for-coaches/> : The Positive Coaching Alliance website has resources for coaches, players and parents.

Videos of drills and skills

<https://www.playisoccer.com/> : lots of information and videos for the coach and players.

<http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/players/SkillzSchoolVideos/> : free videos of drills

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9uzZASihBOE> : socceru youth soccer training site.

http://www.coerversoccervideos.com/coerver_soccer_videos.html : Clips of drills and activities

Coach Mentoring:

We have several experienced coaches in all areas of Eugene/Springfield who have volunteered to be available as a resource to new coaches. These coaches are experienced in not only teaching soccer skills, but also in making sure that all players have a positive experience. They are willing to meet with you, come to a practice or help problem solve a specific issue. Please contact Beth Nitkowski for more information. Bethn@kidsports.org

Coach To-Do List

What to do after you get your roster:

- ___ Get all equipment and Uniforms
- ___ Contact all families to let them know when the first practice is and where it will be
- ___ Let parents know when your parent meeting will be
- ___ Give out the Parent - Athlete Concussion Awareness information sheet.
- ___ Print up letter to parents...with parent code of conduct
- ___ Get volunteers for parent referees and team managers.
- ___ Let parents know what they can expect from you
- ___ Get an updated contact list for all parents
- ___ Let families know how you will contact them...text, email, phone call
- ___ Meet with players and go over expectations and team rules
- ___ Plan your first week of practices
- ___ Before the first game prepare your game rotation for game (2nd -3rd grade)
- ___ Have a great season!

Games and Activities

U6 (K-1st grade)

Warm Up Activities:

Sharks and Minnows:

20x20 grid. All players start in a line at one end of the grid, with the coach in the middle. Coach is the “Shark” and on coaches command all players/ “minnows” try to get to the other side without getting caught by the shark. If caught the player becomes a shark too. This can be used without the ball to just get the players moving and with the ball to practice more tactical skills.

Red Rover:

20x20 grid. All players start in a line at one end of the grid, with coach in the middle. Coach call ‘Red rover, red rover, send everyone over’ (or you can pick shirt colors if numbers are too big) the coach tries tags players as they try to run to the other side. If they get tagged they are in the middle with the coach. If they make it they wait on the other side for the coach to call again. This can start without the ball for warm-up and agility training and progress to with the ball for more tactical practice of dribbling. Instruct them to keep their eyes up.

Blob Tag:

20x20 grid. Coach is it and attempts to tag players. If they are tagged they link arms and continue to try to get other players while still linked together. Start this without the ball and then progress to all players having a ball. When tagged the players ball is kicked out of bounds and they link arms and the “Blob” continues to try to catch other players.

Follow the Leader:

Coach is the leader. Lead players in jogging, running, jumping on 2 feet, jumping on 1 foot, skipping, leaping. This gets the players warmed up and having fun while learning important physical concepts. You can allow players to take the lead and encourage them to be creative in their movements.

Everybody’s It:

20x20 grid. Each player runs around trying to tag as many others as possible while not being tagged themselves. Have each session only go for 30 or 45 seconds. This can be used as a simple warm-up without the ball and with the ball as a more tactical game to practice dribbling.

Find the Coach:

Coach has all the players close their eyes and while they are closed the coach moves. On the coach’s command, “find the coach” the children open their eyes and run to tag the coach. The coach starts close and progresses to farther away. Then progress to the coach running away after the players have opened their eyes. This can be used as a simple warm up game to get them moving. This also teaches them to fun in a direction and for a purpose.

Simon/Coach Says:

All players stand in front of the coach. The coach give commands for the player to do, the players follow directions. This is a fun way to warm up the team and get the players ready to follow instructions. This can be modified by introducing the ball in the game and continue with ball related instructions

1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Gear.

Have all players stand on opposite side of the field from the coach. Coach instructs the players that they are going to be cars and they are going to start running in 1st gear...then move to 2nd gear...3rd and 4th on your command. Encourage them to start slowly and then increase each time till they are running as fast as they can in 4th gear. This warms up the players while also helping them learn how their bodies can run in different speeds and general body control. This can also be modified to a dribbling game by adding a ball for each player.

Monster March/Kick the Bottom:

Create 2 lines of cones about 10 yards apart. All players stand along one line of cones. Instruct the players to march like monsters (high knees, stomping, giant steps, etc) across to the other side and then jog back to the beginning. Then have them kick themselves in the bottom (bring heels up to their bottom) as they jog across to the other line. You can vary this to have the perform all sorts of warm up moves...Monster lunges, Monster kicks, etc.

Physical Activities:

Go Get it:

The coach has all the balls and with the players close by. The coach throws all the balls in different directions. On the coaches command the players "Go Get It" and bring it back in different ways. First with their hands, one hand, elbow...then you can proceed to head, knees, and feet. Be creative! This teaches body awareness and control.

Body Part Dribble:

20x20 grid or large circle. Players dribble in space, coach calls out a body part for the player to stop their ball with. Remind the players to keep their ball close. This can progress to calling out different ways to stop the ball when the player has learned

Snake in the Grass:

Small 10x10 or 15x15 grid, dependant on how many players you have. Have child who is the snake lay down in the grass on their stomach. All other players start with their hands touching the snake. On the coach's command, the players try to avoid getting tagged by the snake. The player being the snake can only roll and twist to move around the grid trying to tag the other players. Do several rounds to allow all players to be the snake. Encourage and reinforce creative ways to move.

Frogs in a Pond:

20x20 grid as the "pond" Use colored pennies, shirts or cones to place around the grid that make the lily pads. Coach instructs the players that they are frogs and they are going to leap across the pond, jumping from lily pad to lily pad. Have them start jumping with both feet, then progress to jumping with one foot, then skipping and leaping. Start with the lily pads close together then make them a bit farther apart. Focus on instructing the players in proper jumping and landing form, being balanced and in control.

Crash! :

This is a simple game that your kids will LOVE! A large undefined space is need. The purpose of this game is to teach the players how to fall down and get back up quickly. The coach needs to briefly explain how to fall down safely: bend your legs at the beginning of the fall, roll with the shoulder or hip, and avoid putting your arms out to brace your fall. The coach tells the players that they also need to get up from the crash as quickly as they can. For the game have all players on one side of the field. On the coaches command the players run on across the field until the coach yells out "CRASH" or blows the whistle, then the players fall down and get

back up as quickly as they can and then continue running. Make sure all players have plenty of room and are using safe techniques.

Circus:

This is a circuit activity. Set up several different squares with cones and tell the players that they are going to be different animals performing in each square. You can be creative with what movements and animals you chose for the session. Some examples are: Crabs- on back crawling like a crab with hands and feet, Frogs-jumping and hopping, Gazelle- leaping and galloping, Bears- Bear crawl. On the coaches whistle the players run to a square and become that animal, each time the coach blows the whistle the players move to another square. After a few times you can ask the players to come up with other movements and ideas.

Throw and Roll:

Large field area is needed. Have each player with a ball. On the coach's command have them throw the ball over their head, do a front roll, get up and get their ball. Instruct the players in how to bring the ball over their head with both hands and toss it forward with both hands. Do several rounds. You can add other things to do in between throwing the ball and retrieving the ball, such as spin around, clap 5 times, do 2 jumping jacks ect.

Hop and Catch:

Have players spread out around the field so they have enough space. All players have a ball and begin the drill kneeling on the ground with their ball in their hands. On the coaches command the player throws the ball into the air and then tries to hop to their feet, and catch the ball. You can progress to having them try from a sitting position. This is great for eye/hand coordination, as well as upper and lower body agility.

Rewind:

Set up 2 rows of cones about 10 to 15 ft apart. Have all players' line up along one row. Tell the players that you are going to call out an activity (jog, hop, side shuffle, skip etc.) and they are going to do that to the opposite set of cones but on the way back they are going to "rewind" what they just did. Demonstrate for them, starting with walking. Have fun with this, telling them they can be actors in an action movie and you are rewinding the movie. Pay attention to their bodies while going backwards; make sure they have bent knees and good balance. Have plenty of room so they don't bump into each other.

Jump The Snake:

You will need 2 jump ropes for this drill. The coach has a jump rope in each hand with the players are close by. The coach holds the ropes close to the ground while turning and spinning the players have to jump over the "snakes". You can start with jumping with 2 feet and then on 1 foot. Remind players to have good balance and stay on their feet so that the snakes don't get them.

Put Your Heads together:

Put players in groups of 3 and have them face each other in a small circle and hold a ball between their foreheads. Once the ball is in place, have the players attempt to move around while keeping the ball in place on their foreheads without using their hands. This is a fun cooperative game that uses all large muscles and makes them figure out the needed applied pressure. A great bonding game. Play several rounds and as they get better be creative with what they are required to do as group.

Technical Activities:

Shadow Dribbling:

Use the whole field for this activity. All players have a ball. Start by telling all the players they are your “shadow” and they need to follow you wherever you go. Do this for about a minute then pair them up and have them take turns being the shadow. Have them start this walking, reminding them to keep their ball close, the eyes up, and to use both feet. Progress to going faster each round.

Everybody's It:

Use a 20x20 grid. Every player has a ball and is inside the grid. Have them start dribbling their ball inside the space, on the coach's command all the players try to tag all the other players while trying to avoid being tagged. They get a point for every tag. Start with having them tag any part of the players and then have them progress to have them have to tag the other players ball. Remind them to keep their ball close, in control and to be creative to keep their ball away from others.

Crazy Maze:

Set up gates with 2 cones all over the field area. Have the players see how many gates they can run through in 60 seconds. Have them do this once without the ball and then have them dribble their ball while going through the gates. Do several rounds and give encouragement for improving their own score each time. Remind them to use both feet and both sides of the foot.

Flintstone Soccer:

Set up a 20x20 grid. Divide players up into 4 equal teams and have them start at the 4 different corners of the square. Have all the balls in the center of the square. Tell the players they are the Flintstones and they are building a house, the balls are the bricks they will need to build their house. On the coach's command the teams send players one at a time to go get a “brick” and bring it back. Give 60 seconds for each round and have the teams count up how many bricks they have. Focus on speed running to the ball and dribbling in control on the way back home. You can progress to having them grab the ball in different ways to bring it in a different direction (pull back, outside foot turn, inside foot turn etc. You can further modify this game in many ways....only using left, only using outside of the foot, “tricks” ...be creative.

Hit The Coach:

This a simple game that can be modified in many different ways, and the players LOVE it. Have each player with a ball. Have the players dribble after you trying to hit you with the ball, they get a point for each time they hit the coach. Start walking and progress to running in different directions. Have an assistant or parent help to split them up into smaller groups if possible. Remind them to keep their ball under control.

The Gatekeepers:

Set up a 20x20 square grid. Make a goal in the center of each side to the square with cones. Make 3 groups of 2 to 3 players. Have one team be the “Gatekeepers” and they each stand in the goal. The coach stands in the other goal. Instruct the gatekeepers that they are to act as a gate that opens and closes (by stepping aside or in) when the coach call their name. Have the other 2 teams are inside the grid each with a ball dribbling when a gate opens they try to score on any open goal. Have each team keep track of how many goals the get. Progress later(2nd- 3rd grade) to having each team only have 1 ball and pass to each other before scoring...then to having one ball in the drill and the 2 teams going against each other trying to score on any open gate.

Go Get It! :

Use the large field area. Coach has all the balls and the players are standing close by. The coach throws the balls into different directions and on the coach's command, "GO Get It!" the players go bring the balls back as quickly as possible. Do a round with them using their hands and then progress to using their feet. You can add requiring them to do 5 toe taps before dribbling the ball back.

Hospital Tag:

15x20 grid with a small square (the hospital) a few yards away from the main area. All kids have a ball. Make 2 players taggers, who have to chase the others. If tagged the player must go to the hospital and do something before returning to the game. The ideas are endless...you can have them do 5 toe touches, throw the ball up and spin around and catch it, bounce the ball on their knee 5 times...etc. As they get older you can add more advanced skills. Encourage good dribbling techniques (keeping ball close, using both feet and both sides of foot) Play several rounds.

Race Your Cars:

Use a large field area. Set up a road with a series of gates made from cones. The coach is the finish line. Tell your players they are all race cars. Have them start their cars by doing toe taps and making car rev sounds. When you say GO, they race through the cones, one at a time to the finish line. You can get all players involved by sending them through 5-10 seconds apart. Have them start walking and progress to jogging. Remind them to keep their eyes on the road and to stay in their car (if their ball is too far away they aren't in their car)

Breakfast War:

20x30 field with small goals on each end of the field. Divide the team up into 2 groups and have each group line up on opposite sides of the field. Instruct the team what goal is their goal and have them point to what way they will be scoring. Starting on one end of the line goes through and tells the players they are items for breakfast: pancakes, bacon, eggs, toast, etc... You start the game by throwing a ball into the center of the field and calling out a breakfast item. A player from each side of the field who was assigned pancake runs to the ball and both players try to gain control of the ball, dribble and score as quickly as they can. You can point to one line and say "pancake" and point to the other and say "eggs"and those 2 players compete. Start with 1v1 situations and then you can progress to calling "pancakes and eggs" or "toast and bacon" and 2 players from each line run out to compete against each other (2v2)....and "pancakes, eggs, and bacon" for a 3v3 game.

Minefield:

20x20 grid. Put your remaining cones all over the field. Divide the team up into 2 groups have each group take a turn dribbling their balls through the "minefield" and trying to knock over as many cones as they can in 30 seconds. You can vary this by having the players dribble around the cone and they pick it up.

Edge of the World:

Set up 2 lines of cones about 15-20 ft away. Have the players all line up on one side of the cones, each one of them with a ball. The coach stands on the other side...on the "edge of the world" Have players kick their ball to see how close they can get to the edge without their ball going over the edge. You can go one at a time or everyone at the same time. You can also do this with throwing the ball (to practice throw-in techniques)

Math Dribble:

20x20 grid. All players have a ball and dribble within the grid. The coach calls out a number and the players must form groups of that number. Do a few rounds and then call out a simple math problem...1+1, 2+2, 1+2, etc. and have them form groups of the answer.

Out of the World:

Make a circle (the “world”) with cones and place 4 or 5 players around the world. All the other players stand around the outside of the world and have ball in their hand. On the coaches command the outside players roll balls into the world. The inside players must quickly kick the balls back out of the circle...or kick them “Out of the World”. The outside players continually collect the balls and roll them back into the world. Do several rounds of 1 to 2 minutes then switch players.

Face Up: Set up a 10x15 yard grid with small cones on each end. Team is divided into two groups on opposite sides of grid. Coach serves a ball into play and one player from each line moves out to the ball. Coach plays ball to slightly favor one player. Player without the ball closes to the ball, faces up to attacker, gets body behind tackle and attempts to tackle without crossing the feet or reaching. Play continues until ball goes out of bounds or a goal is made. Coach immediately plays another ball into play.

Warm-Down Activities:**Zen Dribble:**

Have players pair up. One ball for each pair. Have one player close their eyes, the other player holds their hand and tells the player with the eyes closed what direction to dribble the ball. Go for 30 seconds each. You can do a couple of rounds. Remind them to be safe and helpful.

Animal Stretching:

Have players form a large circle with the coach in the middle. The coach calls out different animals and the players stretch like them: cat, monkey, elephant, giraffe, and snake...ect. Be creative to get them balancing, touching their toes and stretching up high. Allow them to call out names and everyone else follows their lead.

I Can Do Something....Can You?:

Large area for all players to have plenty of space. Coach call out “I Can do Something...Can You?” and proceeds to perform something like front roll, or stand on one foot with the other leg stretched out behind you(like a ice skater) or touch your toes. Go through several variations and then have them call out what they can do, while everyone else follows their lead.

Super Slow Mo:

20 x 20 grid. This is a very simple cool down activity that get the kids slowed down and cooled down. Have all players lined up on one side of the grid with their ball. The coach tells all players they are going to be in super slow motion now. Have them dribble, kick, run, turn, stop, fall....all in slow motion, around the grid.

Juggling:

All players have a ball on the field. Have the players try to “juggle” their ball with either their feet or their knees. Start with just having them try to drop the ball onto their foot or knee and have it bounce back to their hands. Then progress to dropping the ball and having it touch their foot or knee twice before grabbing it with their hands.

Games and Activities

U8 (2nd -3rd grade)

All of the above games and activities are suitable for this age group as well. Using those will help them continue to refine those individual skills and physical abilities. In particular the warm up and warm- down activities can be used for many years. The Following games and activities are used to introduce new skills and focus on partner or small groups skills. Use all of these to get you started and then modify them as your season progresses.

Physical Activities:

Lava Run:

20x20 grid. Cones are set up across the grid in a zig zag formation. Have all players line up along one side of the grid. Tell players the inside of the grid is filled with lava and they have to run to the other side. The only way they cannot get burned up is to run with “fast feet” (on the balls of their feet and using quick rapid steps) from cone to cone. When they make it to the other side tell instruct them to balance on one foot for 30 second and then the other for 30 seconds to “cool off” their feet. You can run the team through quickly by having them go a few seconds after each other. Look for good form, agility and balance.

Crab Soccer:

Set up a 15x15 grid with goals on each side of the square. Divide players up into teams of 3 or 4. Have 2 teams on the field at a time. All players need to be on their hands and feet with their bottoms off the grass. The coach throws a ball into play and the players try to make goals while staying “crabs”. This is difficult to do, so just have them play for short rounds of 1-2 mins. and then get a break.

Row Your Boats:

This is a simple partner activity. Pair up the players and have players sit facing each other with knees slightly bent and toes touching. Both reach forward and clasp hands and then attempt to perform a rowing motion. Look for how well they cooperate with their partner.

Partner Pass:

In pairs players stand back to back with one player holding a ball. Players pass the ball over their head to their partner who then passes the ball under their legs to their partner. Do this for 20 or 30 seconds and then call out “Reverse!” and they should go in the opposite direction. Progress to having them pass from side to side and then do both passes with players having to communicate where the ball is. See how many passes they can do in 30 seconds.

Partner Bounce:

Have players in pairs with one ball per pair. Instruct players to throw the ball overhead to their partner and their partner needs to grab the ball before it bounces 3 times....then 2 bounces...then have them try to get it on 1 bounce. Remind them to move their bodies toward the ball. This can progress to the player catching the ball with their feet instead of their hands, bringing the ball into control with their feet before the indicated number of bounces.

Weave In and Out: Place cones in a zig zag pattern about 3 yards apart across 20 yards. Have players sprint from one cone to the other touching each cone. Emphasize taking quick side steps rather than turning to sprint forward. Have a player go every couple of seconds to keep the drill quick. Have players jog back to the starting line.

Hop Spin and Go: Set out 2 cones for each player approx 20 yards apart. Coach stands on opposite side of grid. Demonstrate to players how to do a 2 foot jump up, come down and immediately jump and spin 180 degrees, then sprint to the other cone. Progress to jumping on 1

foot and then add spinning 360 degrees. Look for proper technique in jumping and landing under control.

Technical Activities:

Windows:

Use the large field. Setup windows from 2 cones all over the field. Divide the players up into pairs with one ball per pair. All pairs are on the field at the same time. Have partners pass through the windows as many times as they can in 60 seconds. Remind them they can't go through the same gate 2 times in a row. Encourage them to keep their eyes up and use both feet and both sides of their foot when passing. Also look for players touching the ball 2 or 3 times before passing it to their partner. Do several rounds, having them try to beat their score each time.

Around the World:

Make a large circle about 20ft across marked with cones. Every player has a ball and is standing around the circle. Have players begin by dribbling around the outside of the circle all in the same direction. Tell the players to listen to your commands and then perform the actions. You can start with: **Jog**-dribble at a comfortable speed. **Full Speed**-dribble at their top speed. **Cut**- players cut their ball in the other direction and continue dribbling in the new direction. **Cross**- Players cross across the circle to the other side. Making sure to keep their eyes up, avoid other players and their balls. Add more commands as you progress.

Inside/Outside:

Pair up players with one ball per pair. Set up 2 rows of cones about 10ft apart. Have pairs pass the ball back and forth. Instruct players how to receive the pass with the inside of their foot and with the outside of their foot. Have players listen to the coach calling out "inside" or "outside" and they all must receive the passes with that part of the foot. Remind them to use 2 touches and pass under control. You can progress to setting a time limit and seeing how many passes teams can get in 1 minute.

Scramble:

Large 20x20 or 30x30 grid pair up players by shirt color or give pairs colored pennies to wear. Have teams start on all sides of the square and instruct them to move across the grid passing the ball to their partner. Remind them to move after they pass, keep their eyes up, and communicate with their partner. Go for a couple of rounds 2-3 minutes each.

Mine:

Pair up players with one ball per pair. This is a shielding drill. Begin by having on player put both hands on the ball and use their body to keep their partner away from the ball. Do this a couple of times and then progress to having them use just their feet and body to shield their partner away from the ball.

Scary Monster:

20x20 grid. The coach starts as the monster. All players dribble a ball inside the grid. The "Monster" tries to take players balls and the players must use shielding techniques to keep possession of the ball. Add if you are able to take the players ball they become a monster too. Do several rounds

Grenades in the Goal:

Players divided up into pairs. Make a goal for every pair. One partner stands in front of the goal the other partner bounces the ball to them. The player in front of the goal tries to shoot a goal before the ball bounces 3 times...then 2 ...then one. Have players alternate after 1-2 minutes.

Bottom Soccer:

Use one goal. Divide team into 2 to 3 groups. One group sits in front of the goal. The other groups stand behind the goal. The coach rolls or bounces the balls into the players and they try to shoot a goal while staying in the sitting position. All the other players retrieve the balls and roll them back to the coach. Go for 2 minutes and then switch groups. Encourage them to make goals in creative ways and with all parts of their body.

Crazy Goals:

30x30 grid. Set up as many goals as you can around the grid. Break team up into groups of 3. Have 2 groups on the field at a time trying to score as many goals as they can in 1 min. Start with one ball into play and then add a second/third ball as it progresses. Do several rounds. Alternating teams as you go.

Freeze-Punt:

Set up a large 40x60 field. With goals on each end. Split up players into teams of 4. Have 2 teams play a regular game but on the coach's command of "freeze!" all players freeze and the player who is closest to the ball picks it up and punts it as far as they can. The coach rolls a new ball back into play and the game continues. Allow the players to have a few opportunities to whack it!

Soccer Ball Smash:

Set up a large grid 30x40. Pair up players and have each player have a ball. The pair stands near each other inside the grid but spread away from the other pairs. One player passes their ball forward. When the player 1's ball stops moving, player 2 passes their ball towards player 1's ball, attempting to hit player 1's ball. If player 2 misses, then player 1 gets to try to hit player 2's ball. They get a point for every time they hit their partner's ball. You can progress to having them pass with a certain part of the foot. Watch their passing technique. Looking that their plant foot is pointed toward the target and they are striking the ball properly.

Dribble Attack: Team divided into groups of 3. Divide by shirt color or give 2 teams different color pennies (bibs) 30x20 playing grid. All players on one team get a ball. Team with the balls is attacking players and must try to dribble past defenders. Start with having them able to attack in any direction and then progress to making them attack in a specific direction. Encourage the use of turns, fakes, and feints and dribble moves with change of speed to get past defenders

Battle Across: Set up 1 or 2 10 to 15 yard grids (depending on the number of players) split players equally on opposite sides of grid. Coach puts the ball into play and 1 player from each end comes out to attempt to receive the ball and then dribble the ball within control to the opposite end line. Players switch lines after their turn. Emphasize dribbling in 1v1 situations. Progress to playing 2v2.

Outta There: 25x15 yard grid with goal at each end. Have team divided equally on each side. The coach stands on the end line with a supply of balls and a small line of players. The coach plays the ball in and the first person from each line plays 1v1. If a player scores a goal they stay on and the other person leaves. A ball is immediately played back into the game. If the ball goes out of bounds both players are "Outta there". This should be *very* fast paced game. As soon as ball goes out of bounds throw another ball in immediately. Vary how balls are put in play.