

2010 MYSA Winter Symposium

“No Laps, Lines, or Lectures – Foundations of Coaching Children”

Presented by Phil Johnson, MYSA Coaching School Staff, Stillwater HS Boys' Head Coach

I. Introduction

- A. Welcome. Introduce self and MYSA.
- B. Explain the “Y” Course and Outline Format for the 4 hour class.
- C. Mission and Purpose. “Expand Your Coaching Toolkit”.
- D. Resources and Materials – Books & DVDs. Leon Willems Lending Library. Training Materials – Order Form from MYSA and Website Resources. www.mnyouthsoccer.org

II. Child Centered Learning

- A. Explain the “old ways” of coaching education.
 - B. Placed the child in the center with positive and age appropriate activities.
 - C. Safe – Fun – Learning. Meet the child’s need for CARE – COMPETENCE – CHOICE.
 - D. Find the Game In The Child - and the ones that fit the child.
 - E. Let the Game Do The Teaching – Through Guided Learning.
 - F. Children’s’ Needs Are Being Met = Growth, Intrinsic Motivation, Success.
 - G. Why we train coaches in soccer?
- Only 20% of youth sport coaches get any training.
 - Who are our youth coaches? Parent Volunteers.
 - Your greatest reward is “Thank you, coach. I had fun this season. I am coming back next season. I hope you will be my coach.”
 - Across the country – 73% of children who entered youth sports will quit by the time they reach 13 years old.
 - #1 reason why children stop playing a sport is, “It is no longer fun.”
 - We coaches carry this great responsibility while the child is in our sphere of influence. Make it positive and fun while they learn to play.

III. Coaching – The Art and Science

- A. A Good Coach – can be easily identified. A person actively practicing their craft of coaching. Children are drawn to them. Players are active, on the ball, teaching is happening using a variety of methods. Learning and development are happening alongside fun.
- B. Child Centered Development – Starts with who these children are – Be aware of their **social, mental and physical** developmental characteristics. We must make our teaching fit these characteristics for children to learn.
Flow – optimum learning – all needs are met [care, competence and choice].
Slanty Line – Self-Reference Line of Challenge. Learn through trying and mistakes.
Choice and Freedom through multiple Opportunities.
- C. Age Appropriate Activities
Study the Developmental Stages of Child Growth – Physical, Mental & Social.
Recognize other factors that will influence child behavior. Get to know their likes and dislikes.
- D. Principles of Child-Centered Coaching -
 1. Make it Developmentally Appropriate.
 2. Make all Instructions – Clear, Concise, & Correct. Avoid too much information. Get them started and add new rule.
 3. Simple to the More Complex. Add more challenges as you go along.
 4. Make Training and Playing Area Safe and Appropriate. Safe from objects, people, teammates.
 5. Involve Decision Making Often. Are they given choice to solve problems of when, where & how? Take risks to learn.
 6. Give Positive Feedback Often and With Sincerity.
 7. Implications and Modeling for the Game. Make it look and sound like soccer.
- E. Keys for Successful Training
 1. Avoid all lines, laps and lectures.
 2. Reward quality rather than use punishment for failure.
 3. These are Games and Activities rather than Drills.
 4. Soccer is a Fluid and Continuous Game. If you yell instructions often you are manipulating and kids feel like remote control cars. They know they made a mistake. Encourage them and praise them. Talk later about the choices they have.
 5. Ask them Questions Avoid Giving them Answers. Soccer is full of success and mistakes.
 6. Soccer is an Invasion Game – Use Body Awareness, Maze and Target Activities in your Training.
 7. Be Organized – Have a Plan for Training.

8. Instant Activity – Get each activity started without much talking.
9. Use Effective Start/Stop Signals like “Stop”, “Freeze”, or “Stand Still” and “Go”, “Start”, “Dribble” etc. Whistles are for refs not coaches. Use your voice. Teach them to be aware of your voice. When you are talking they are listening.
10. Forming Groups – How do players get partners? Try the Numbers or Math Dribble Game. Form groups without the “ancient” way of picking teams. It was painful, exclusive and time consuming. Use Numbers Dribble for equity, efficiency and positive self-esteem.

IV. Why Teach or Train Using Small Sided Games?

1. More Opportunities. More contact with the ball. If they do not find the ball, the ball will find them.
2. More Opportunities to Score Goals. More players get that chance.
3. More Opportunities to Scheme. Play constantly changes and thus challenging the child to make decisions.
4. More Opportunities to Coach. Perfect for the coach to observe and analyze player choices and decisions.

V. Team Shape vs Formations In Youth Soccer

1. For the very youngest – let them play. They have little concept of space and lines.
2. For U10s and up begin talking and showing how to change the direction of the ball and how to spread wider and longer.

VI. Soccer In The Streets – Choice and Decision-Making

1. It takes many forms. Basically children play soccer without interference or coaching.
2. Offer supervision for safety.
3. No coaching, no parents, no referee.
4. Players are responsible for to organize the games.
5. Players keep their own score, if it is even important.

VI. Children – Who Are They? Get to know these children.

VII. Coach – Get To Know Yourself and Your Motivation For Coaching. Learn What Your Style Is. Be A Champion Coach by Managing Your Ego.

VI. Team Management

1. Protect yourself.
2. Get help. Divide the jobs of management. Parents are eager to do their part for happy children.
3. Team Meeting – Parents, Coaches, & Players. Before the Season and Not out at a field.
 - Give your philosophy.
 - Construct some basic mutual beliefs
 - Product Goals do not fit here but Process and Performance Goals can apply.
 - Discuss the Four Hats Worn at a soccer Game – Player, Coach, Parent, Ref. No one can wear two hats.
 - Discuss what each of those groups Can Control and Can’t Control.
 - Discuss How A Game is A Competition We are Striving to Win, But in a sportsmanlike way.
 - Also A Competition Means to Strive With not Against. Kids hate forfeits. They want to play.
 - Give out schedules and training dates.
 - Talk about how to communicate with each other.
 - Sign people up for jobs. Ask for help.
 - Request of parents that they talk with you privately about any special needs for their children.
 - Remind everyone why we are together. To have fun playing soccer.

VII. Questions