

Littleton Soccer Club Founded 1960

**LITTLETON**  
SOCCER

**HRSA**



# Rec Coach Manual, U7 – U8

## Principles of Youth Coaching

- Developmentally Appropriate
- Clear, Concise, Correct Information (Brevity, Clarity, Relevance)
- Simple to Complex
- Safe and Appropriate Training Area
- Decision Making
- Implications for the Game
- Guided Discovery

## Characteristics of U7 - U8 Players:

- Attention span beyond U6 but still not extended
- Inclined more towards group activities
- Still in motion, jerking, twitching etc.
- Still very sensitive
- Dislike personal failure in front of peers
- Beginning to develop physical coordination
- Most can ride a 2 wheeler bike at this point
- Still enjoy running, jumping, climbing, rolling etc.
- Sport heroes become important
- Still lack sense of pace, go flat out
- Activities should be individually based and with pairs of players

## Components for a U7 - U8 Practice Session:

- Soccer has to be fun
- Keep things simple
- Prepare before practice
- Information should be minimal, show them as opposed to lecturing
- Let them play
- Use “Guided Discovery” questioning for learning and education, what, why, and how
- Step back, allow the players to make decisions and problem solve
- Praise players continually when they are improving or have something good, i.e. “well done Billy”, “I like the way you pass with the inside of the foot, Jessica”
- Practices should not exceed 60 minutes
- Introduction of partner activities
- Movement education is the basis for activities, i.e. changing direction, agility and coordination
- A mixture of individual and partner games. All games should have an implication (relate) for the game. Include 1v1, 2v1, 1v2, 2v2 games.

- Coaching individuals and small groups
- Put them in an environment that they can be successful
- Always finish with a scrimmage
- Always be positive
- Never single a player out for punishment, they are easily bruised at this age group
- The session should flow from one activity to the next; use water breaks for changing area size if needed.

### Coaching Philosophy:

- Safety First
- You are an important role model
- Be prepared and punctual
- No lines, No laps
- No excessive lectures
- Develop their relationship with their ball
- Never leave a child at the field alone
- Remember they are young children NOT adults, you need to get down to their level. Make it exciting, fun, engage the players without acting like a clown
- The shape of the team is a "Triangle"

*"You forget what you hear, you remember what you see, you know what you do"*

### Typical U7 – U8 Training Session:

- Should not exceed 1 hour
- Warm Up: Soccer movement (changing direction, jumping, hopping etc) Individual ball and partner ball manipulation
- Body awareness activities
- Dribbling, Passing, and Shooting (ball striking) activities
- Small sided scrimmage, 1v1, 2v2, 2v1, 3v1, 3v3, 4v4 etc.
- Cool down/review of session

## Guided Discovery Questioning

This method of learning allows the players to think for themselves, make decisions, and problem solve. We want the players to be creative in applying skills and techniques learnt from a soccer standpoint. We also want them to understand the game better by allowing them to answer questions, problem solve, without us as coaches/adults giving them all the answers. The general rule of thumb is that you would ask 1 to 2 guided discovery questions per activity.

Examples of these are as follows:

- 1) Billy I liked the way you passed the ball, what part of the foot did you use?" the reply is "the inside" good I like that, do you think you could all pass with the inside of the foot, like Billy?
- 2) "Jessica great shot with your laces" why did Jessica use her laces to shoot? Answers your are looking for:
  - More power than the inside of the foot
  - It can be quicker than using the inside of the foot

Good use of Guided Discovery Questioning takes time and practice. Try it at home with your children, if you practice this method you will not only become a better coach quicker- you will empower the children you have to become better soccer players through thoughts and actions.

**"GOOD LUCK AND HAVE FUN"**