

CYS U10 Suggested Coaching Curriculum

Principals of age appropriate development¹:

- Developing good technique is essential at this age. Create an environment where you can achieve the maximum repetition of technical skills for each player.
- 1v1 and 2v1 attacking and defending situations are important to develop individual skills as well as the passing techniques to develop the necessary team game.
- Use small-sided games to develop basic attacking and defensive principles.
- Other important aspects of tactical training are possession, combination play, transition and finishing in the final third, as well as zonal defending.
- Players will rotate in two or three different positions to avoid early specialization. All players should play some time in goal.
- Speed, coordination, balance and agility are the main physical aspects to improve at this stage.

Skill priorities²

- Continue with dribbling foci from U8
- Passing with inside and outside of both feet
- Shooting with both feet---using laces
- Receiving the ball with all parts of body

Tactical Priorities³

- o Basic Attacking Ideas
- o Basic Defending Ideas
- o Comprehend 1 vs 1 concepts
- o Comprehend 2 vs 1 concepts
- o Introduction to 2 vs 2 concepts
- o Comprehend roles of 1st and 2nd defenders
- o Comprehend roles of 1st and 2nd attackers

US Youth Soccer⁴ recognizes player development has four key areas: tactical, technical, physical and psychosocial. At this age group focus areas are:

TACTICAL: Creating space to receive the ball and keep possession. This often means moving away from the ball to open space. Efficiently occupy space in relation to the ball and to teammates.

TECHNICAL: Accuracy in individual soccer techniques and improvement in collective basic soccer techniques

¹ US Soccer Coaching Curriculum, Dr. Javier Perez, 2011, US Soccer Federation

² MA Youth Soccer F Manual

³ MA Youth Soccer F Manual

⁴ US Soccer Coaching Curriculum, Dr. Javier Perez, 2011, US Soccer Federation

PHYSICAL: Develop speed, coordination and balance with and without the ball

PSYCHOSOCIAL: Positive interaction with teammates during the game and feel confident within the group

Recommended Formations: 2-1-2

2-1-2 : Two defenders, one midfielder, two forwards

By end of U10 players should be capable of:

- Attacking and defending in basic skills in 1v1 situations.
- Application of basic attacking tactics
 - Recognizing when they are under pressure
 - Wall passes and give-and-goes
 - Movement without the ball to support a player or create space
- Application of basic defending tactics
 - Staying between an attacker and our goal when we do not have possession – even if that attacker does not currently have the ball. (Getting “goal-side”)
 - Compressing space when we lose possession
 - Basics of the roles of pressuring and covering
 - Basic techniques on tackling
- Coordinated movements at speed
 - Able to change speed and direction with the ball.
 - Fakes and simple moves to beat opponents
 - Accurate ground passes at 15-20 yards
 - Receive ball while moving and set up next move (dribble, pass, shot) with a good first touch

Typical Characteristics of U10 Players

- Attention span lengthens from U8---they start to show the ability to sequence thought and actions
- They start to think ahead and think “If this, then that”
- They are more inclined towards wanting to play soccer rather than being told to play
- Demonstrate increased self-responsibility – bringing a ball, water and all gear should now be their complete responsibility
- They start to recognize fundamental tactical concepts
- Children at this age begin to become aware of peer pressure
- Players greatly affiliate with their team or their coach—“I play for the Tigers” or “I play for coach Amy’s team”
- Players at this age are extremely rule bound—remember each rule you create is the equivalent of a bar in the prison in which you would like to live
- There is a wide continuum of maturity evident

Practice Suggestions:

Remember, the game is the best teacher. Every practice should end with some type of small sided game. This allows for the most contact with the ball in a game-like environment.

Week 1-2: Dribbling

Week 3-4: Dribbling to beat an opponent

Week 5-6: Dribbling and passing

Week 7-8: Dribbling, passing and shooting

Please Don't Include⁵:

- running for its own sake
- specialization by position – it's way too early
- emphasis on winning – remember their definition of fun is different from yours

Special Topics (mix in as needed):

Throw-ins

Free kicks

References:

Mass Youth Soccer U10 Weekly Practice Plans

http://www.mayouthsoccer.org/coaching/practice_plans_u10.aspx

⁵ - Soccer Calling, A handbook for Youth Soccer Coaches, Dean Conway, 2005