

If a coach is constantly talking or yelling at players during the game, it prevents them from thinking for themselves. Steve Sampson - Former US Men's National Team Coach

True player development focuses on the development of the player, not the development of the team! Up to age 12, this should be the only criteria used in designing and running youth soccer programs.

**Oregon City Soccer Club Fall Youth Coaching Education General Guidelines**

Principles of youth coaching - safe and appropriate training area - developmentally appropriate - clear, concise, and correct information - simple to complex progressions - activities should involve decision-making

**ELIMINATE LINES, LAPS, AND LECTURES**

Do not use laps as a form of punishment

Characteristics of drills V game/activities (Drills - static, military, lines, boring, no thought) (Games - dynamic, organized but unstructured, free movement, fun, decision making, age appropriate)

Learning can and does occur through play and games - Children learn best when their own interests motivate them

Checklist for practice activities - Are the activities fun? Are the activities organized? Are the players involved in the activities? Is creativity and decision making being used? Is the space appropriate for the age group and the number of the players? Is the coach's feedback appropriate?

As a coach you are a role model - Your personality, action, and words could have a positive or negative effect on each and every child. The value of understanding children, being fair and enthusiastic, as well as being a positive role model, cannot be underestimated.

Consult the Oregon City Soccer Club Developmental Philosophy Spreadsheet when deciding coaching topics for specific ages. Try to avoid basing your coaching topics on what the group did badly as a team and instead focus on what they can improve on individually.

For example, do individuals keep turning into pressure? Do your team players use deception and moves to try to get themselves out of difficult situations? Trying to develop team tactics for young players will hamper their long term development as soccer players and in the short-term they will not have fun.

**Remember, it is all about the kids**

**Negative comments or over-coaching only discourage children from continuing to play soccer. The more our young soccer players enjoy themselves, the greater the likelihood that they will remain in the game.**

Steve Sampson - Former US Men's National Team Coach

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