

Vision Soccer Academy

Player Development Philosophy

Our primary focus is to help each individual player develop, grow, and mature as soccer players, athletes and people. It is a long-term process that cannot be rushed. There is no guarantee that a player will reach his or her potential, but we must give the players an opportunity to become the best that they can be. There is no magic formula, no shortcuts to successful development. Coaching at the youth level is not about collecting or recruiting players to win team championships. It is about working the players and coaches to improve performance by creating age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate environments that are safe, healthy, challenging and competitive.

We need to understand who we are coaching; they are not mini-adults, they are children. Each age group has different characteristics that affect the way we teach and communicate. For all ages, winning is not the end all be all. While learning how to compete and (win and lose) are important, it is the acquisition of skills and life lessons which remains our highest priority. Since players develop at different rates, this is not just for those who are the most advanced for their age. Nor is it just for the best athletes or the most committed soccer players. It is why we should set individual challenges in front of each player.

Such a philosophy means sometimes taking unpopular stands regarding team formation and player placement. It means being honest with parents about the growth and development of their child. It requires us as coaches to challenge each individual player, while not forgetting about the needs of the player vs. that of the team(s) and the club. To accomplish these goals, we must all be committed to understanding the game and learning more about how we can coach, direct and lead. In this way, coaches need assistance, players need direction and parents need guidance.