

# **CFSC U6 Player Development Curriculum** suggested practice: 1 day, 45-60min.

What follows is a curriculum of what should be taught to players at this age based on U.S. Soccer's "Best Practices for Coaching Soccer" Guide, the USSF "D" license course manual and other local soccer clubs.

**Technical Training** – the teaching of the techniques of soccer (ball mastery). These physical skills should always be taught with one ball per player or one per pair. They should be taught with little pressure at first (pressure refers to time and space dictated by defense) and then a gradual building of pressure as mastery improves. The idea is if they cannot perform the skill without pressure they certainly will not be able to perform when pressure exists in the games. So take it slow and make sure there is great repetition and most important that it is fun! Demonstrations for all of the following can be found on the websites listed on the back.

**Dribbling** – running with the ball into open space

- Players at this age should begin to feel comfortable with the ball at their feet/between their feet
- Coaching points:
  - Changing speed and direction: encourage players to turn the ball and/or stop the ball in any way
  - Encourage dribbling with any part of the foot other than the toe
  - Encourage creativity: players at this age cannot imagine consequences (i.e., if you do this, what will happen?), so let them learn through their own experiences.
  - Get them to lift their head up occasionally when on the dribble (ask them to look at your eyes or to tell you what number you are holding up in the air)
  - Dribbling the ball and scoring should be the ultimate goal at this age and asking players to "pass the ball" or "not dribble so much" should be avoided – let them master the ball!

**Passing** – playing the ball to a teammate

- Players at this age should pass with both feet using proper techniques
- Inside of foot "push pass" – plant foot is close and pointed in the direction kicking; passing foot should make contact on the top half of the ball w/ankle locked to ensure it does not become elevated

**Receiving** – the ability to control a ball that is played to you

- Receiving ground balls with the inside of both feet and with the sole by making a wedge shape with the toes in the air and the heel closer to the ground
- Try having players take a bouncing ball out of air from partner/coach/self
- Players have to learn not to be afraid of the ball so start small and slow and allow players to gain confidence - trying using Nerf balls or beach balls at first

**Shooting** – the act of striking the ball into the goal

- Proper striking techniques using the inside of foot (see passing above)
- Please allow the use of toeing the ball as a shooting technique, but show them that it is not the best or

**Throw Ins** – when the ball crosses the touch lines of the field players need to throw the ball back into play

- Player needs to keep both feet on the ground and bring the ball behind their head before throwing the ball to a teammate ensuring that the player follows through with one motion and without turning
- At this age it is suggested that the opposing team backs their players away from the players who are trying to receive the throw in. That way, players are encouraged to throw the ball in properly and players are given time to receive the ball properly before being defended!

Tactical training and best practices are found on the back...

**Tactical Training** – the teaching of the tactics (decision making) within the game. There are three types of tactics to be taught: Individual, Small group and Team. At this age only individual tactics are taught for the most part and practice should be 95% technical and only 5% tactical training.

**Individual Tactics** – the decision making when playing 1v1; a portion of each practice should include 1v1 play

- Players should become familiar with the terms “attack and defend” or “offense and defense” and obviously know which goal they are attacking and defending during the game
- When attacking – transition quickly to goal, take chances and keep possession (in that order)
- When defending – transition quickly and apply pressure

**Team Tactics** – tactics of playing 5v5 games should NOT be a priority; instead focus on the individual tactics

- Positions should be introduced as offense and defense only (Johnny you are play offense, Sarah you are playing defense...Johnny should understand his job is to transition quickly with the ball and to score goals; Sarah should understand her job is to transition quickly to defend her goal and apply pressure)
- Players should be playing ALL the positions
- How will your team organize itself on goal kicks, corner kicks and throw-ins offensively and defensively. Things to note at this age:
  - Goal kicks are taken from the top of the goal box and opponents should be behind the midfield line or further (depending on the score and if the skill levels are unbalanced). Again, like with throw ins, our goal as coaches is that the offensively team is given the chance to properly receive a ball before being put under pressure
  - Corner kicks are a good chance to teach defensive “marking” of the opponent
  - If you do not have players who kick the ball long enough on corners and goal kicks, consider passing the ball short to a teammate who could then advance the ball on a dribble toward goal

**Best Practices for a U6 Coach:**     *No lines. No laps. No lectures.*

- There should be a lot of playing with the ball in small numbers for short periods of time (1v1, 3v3)
- Build confidence and success into the drills or they won’t want to come back (i.e. give them 6 goals to score on instead of 2) and keep them short as their attention span is not very long
- Players should have plenty of opportunity to experience the ball at their own pace (without pressure)
- Players should be encouraged not to fear the ball by dealing with balls on the ground and bouncing
- Come prepared with what you want to teach at practice, be able to model it
- Training sessions should be built accordingly: drills with unrestricted space; drills with restricted space; drills that simulate game situations with small goals, target players or lines to cross; and then end with an actual game where players can try to apply what they have learned *without* input from the coach
- Modify drills to fit the lesson being taught by: changing the size or shape of the field, the numbers involved, the number of touches, how score is kept, or by keeping players in zones

**Best Qualities for a U6 Coach:**

- Understand the capabilities and limitation of this age and learn by watching the players play
- Be able to demonstrate proper technique or bring someone who can
- Emphasize fun at all times and foster a sense of love for the sport – you want them playing soccer when they are NOT at practice!

**Best places for designing and planning your practices or training sessions:**

<http://www.youtube.com>

just type in soccer drills or be as specific as you want “how to push pass”

<http://www.expertvillage.com>

<http://www.soccerxpert.com/>

<http://www.soccerclub.com/training/drills/default.asp>

[http://www.finesoccer.com/finesoccer\\_drills\\_archive.htm](http://www.finesoccer.com/finesoccer_drills_archive.htm)

[http://www.insidesoccer.com/learn\\_it/coaches/drills\\_practices](http://www.insidesoccer.com/learn_it/coaches/drills_practices)

<http://www.strongsoccer.com/Kingdrills/clipspractice.htm>