

## FAIRFIELD PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

### YOUTH SOCCER PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Fairfield Parks and Recreation Youth Soccer Program is offered as an opportunity for Fairfield residents in grades K through 8 to enjoy wholesome recreation. Fun, sportsmanship, and skill development are the main purposes of the league and should be the main objective of each player, coach, referee, and parent. There will be no standings, no playoffs, and no trophies. Winning and competing are secondary to safety and enjoyment.

**TEAMS** - Each season, players are assigned to teams at the discretion of the Parks and Rec. Department. Returning players are placed on the previous season's team provided that the team still exists and the numbers allow or unless otherwise directed by a parent. Team sizes are limited. All players registered prior to the deadline are given priority. Players registered after the deadline are placed on a first-come, first-served basis. \*Those players who are playing for the Fairfield United Soccer Club, or any other organized school or travel program, ARE NOT ELIGIBLE to play in the Recreation Youth Soccer Program.

**COACHES** - Volunteer coaches are identified on each team. Each coach is responsible for administering the program as defined by the Parks and Recreation Department in this Coaching Manual.

**EQUIPMENT** - Each team is given 2 balls for game play, however, it is recommended that every player bring their own ball to each practice to maximize the sessions. Two "Pop-up" goals for K-2 teams will be provided to each team, they are to be returned at the end of the season. The Parks and Recreation Department does not provide or make available shin guards, pinnies or cones. (Reversible team shirts and detergent bottles filled with sand are good substitutes) A first aid kit will also be given to all coaches.

**TEAM COMMUNICATIONS** - Coaches are responsible for contacting the players on their team after receiving the team roster and informing them of the time and location of practice. Some coaches send out a pre-season letter with this information and identify a parent to organize a juice and orange schedule and other necessary communications. A sample letter is enclosed.

**GAME SCHEDULE** - All games are played on Saturdays and Sundays at local fields throughout town. The seven week playing season is scheduled around public school vacations and religious holidays whenever possible. No changes will be made to the Official Game Schedule.

**GAME CANCELLATIONS** - Games are played as planned unless canceled by the League Director. Game cancellations due to inclement weather will be posted on our website at [www.fairfieldrecreation.com](http://www.fairfieldrecreation.com) . There are NO make-up games.

**PRACTICES** - Each team will be given one 1 hour practice time per week by the Parks and Recreation Department. Teams may obtain additional practice time, but no team may exceed 2 hours of practice per week.

**PRACTICE CANCELLATIONS** - Field cancellations will be posted on the Parks and Recreation Department website no later than 3:00 PM on weekdays and 8:00 AM on weekends. Each field has an OPEN/CLOSED SIGN that is to be obeyed. (If there is a conflict between what the website says and what the sign says, obey the signs.)

**REFEREES** - The Recreation Program games are staffed by Recreation trained referees. Each is familiar with our program's philosophy and the game. Their job is to provide enthusiastic supervision each week and help the kids learn! Our referees are not traditional officials. We encourage them to interact positively with the kids during games to facilitate safe, developmental play.

**SITE DIRECTORS** - Each field will have a site director who is in charge of the referees, keeping games on schedule, along with any other situations that may occur during a game. If there is a problem at the field the site director is the first person you need to speak with. Each site director knows our philosophy about Rec. soccer and is there to assist players, coaches and fans in any way possible.

**AFTER THE GAME** - Coaches and players are responsible for cleaning up the area around their bench. Please do not leave any litter on the fields.

## OTHER SPECIAL PROGRAM NOTES

**MODIFIED SOCCER PROGRAM:** Kindergarten, first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and grade players are involved in, 4 Vs 4, 7 Vs 7, and 9 Vs 9 games on smaller size fields. The modified soccer program provides players with more ball touches each game. It uses simple rules that allow for fun, play and early skill development. Additional modified soccer program materials are in the program information section of this manual.

## YOUTH SOCCER LEAGUE RULES & REGULATIONS

1. The team coach will be responsible for allowing **only official rostered players of the team** to participate in scheduled games. A player may register and play for only **one** team each season. Official rosters will be given to each coach. Coaches may not add or switch players without the knowledge and consent of the League Director.
2. While games are in progress only the official coach, up to (2) assistants and the officially rostered players from both teams will be allowed on one side of the field. **All others will be considered spectators and must stand on the opposite side of the field.** Coaches and parents will NOT be allowed to stand or coach from the goal line (the end line). Please help our referees enforce this policy.
3. Coaches may practice with their teams as often as necessary prior to the first game. After the first official competition, practices should be held once a week, but not more than twice a week. Coaches must obtain a practice field time and permit from the Recreation Department, 256-3191, at the beginning of each season.
4. Every player attending the game **must play at least one half of the game** unless he/she is injured.
5. All players **MUST** wear the official league uniform. The official league uniform consists of a league jersey, which may be purchased at the Recreation Office, and **shinguards**. These mandatory uniform items may not be compromised in any way. Goalies will be given jerseys of a different color.
6. Players may not wear anything that could cause injury to themselves or another player. All jewelry and earrings must be removed before playing. Metal cleats are not permitted. The referee will have the final authority to decide what is dangerous.

7. There will be no dual rostering of players. If a player is playing for a travel/premier club, she/he will not be allowed to play recreational soccer as well.
8. The referee has complete authority over the conduct of the game. He/she will enforce the rules to the best of his/her ability. Their decision regarding any play during the game is final. The referee is responsible for keeping the official time. **If there is a problem with Coaches, players, or parents acting in an unsportsmanlike manner, he or she will be given an official warning by the site director and the incident will then be reported to the League Director.** The League Director has the authority to take action, including suspension, of any person involved in any incident with the referees.
9. The coaches in the older age divisions should be prepared to provide one linesman for the games if the referees request assistance. The linesman's only responsibilities are to signal when the ball is **completely** over the line of play and to indicate which team takes the resulting throw in.
10. The home team (white shirt) takes the kickoff to begin the game. The visiting team (blue shirt) selects which goal to defend in grades 3 and older. Goal selection should be made prior to the starting time.
11. Coaches and players must be prepared to start games on time. Every game must conclude by the scheduled starting time of the next game. Referees will not allow games to run beyond the scheduled time.

**\*\*\* The "off sides" rule is only used in 5<sup>th</sup> grade and above.**

12. Penalty kicks are taken from 12 yards in front of the goal.
13. No trophies or awards are presented to Recreation players by parents, coaches or any outside organization. No team statistics, game reports or photos are submitted to newspapers for publication.

**ROSTERS** - All players must be registered through the Parks and Recreation Department and placed on the official roster.

**INJURIES** - Site directors need to be informed of any injuries right away. They will fill out an accident report and submit it to the league director. If the site director is not available the Rec. Department needs to be informed by the next working day.

## WHAT TO COACH...BASIC SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Parenting prepares us for many of the demands of the Recreation Program. Encouraging a fun and positive experience for children is something we do everyday at home with our own kids. But, when it comes to supporting the basic skill development of players, many of us, as volunteer coaches, have no idea where to begin.

### BASIC SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Soccer is made up of two simple principles:

**1. The Ball.**

**2. The player's ability to move and hold the ball as the game demands.**

Individual ball control skills are the most important things we can help our players accomplish. Every program, regardless of the level of play, should attend to the players' ability to hold and move the ball. Possession of the ball is essential; you can't score without it and your opponents can't score if you have it! Without the ball, your players cannot develop the basic skills of the game.

Fortunately, ball control comes naturally to many kids. Our job as coaches is to provide opportunities for the players to practice these skills in situations where there is no pressure; light pressure and full pressure (the game). In practice and in games we can enhance natural tendencies and encourage players to try different techniques.

Techniques? Soccer techniques are really no different than those used in basketball or hockey. Players need to learn how to move around defenders without losing control of the ball. Fakes, feints, changes of speed, and direction with the ball build the 1 Vs 1 skills that are used by players at every level.

Good "touch" develops good ball skills and good ball skills develop coordination and balance.

Many of the Recreation players are blessed with speed, size, and/or strength. These are not soccer skills, they are physical attributes. After age 12 or 13, these strengths balance out as other players catch up in their growth or beat players with skilled moves. Every player needs skill development; even those who dominate Recreation play with their physical talents.

The Fairfield Public Library has a good collection of soccer books and videos for reference. The Connecticut Junior Soccer Association also distributes coaching tips and holds licensing clinics. Call CJSA at (860)-224-CJSA.

## PLAYER DEVELOPMENT SIMPLIFIED

**SKILL + BALL CONTROL + POSSESSION = SOCCER SUCCESS**

### **INDIVIDUAL SKILLS:**

- "touch skills"
- Cover ball skills

### **BALL CONTROL:**

- Ability to hold the ball until you can create another (pass or score)
- Ability to beat another player with move or a fake (individual skills)
- Patience, skill, and confidence

### **POSSESSION:**

- You can't score unless you have the ball
- Constructive and creative ball possession
- Player support, positioning, quality passing to feet or intended space

## **WHO AND WHY**

**Know who you are coaching and why you're doing it.**

**WHO** - Review the pages that follow about the characteristics of young children. Remember that somewhere in this group could be the next great soccer player but chances of that are very slim. Coach with emphasis on enjoyment of the game. Teach them to love to play. This is the foundation upon which the talented players can rise in the future. Also understand that these are kids, not professionals and they are not paid to perform. Mistakes will happen, but they won't happen because of lack of effort or desire; mistakes will happen from lack of skill or experience. Let the mistakes happen and let the players learn from them in a positive environment. Use positive reinforcement when correcting, do not use negative criticism.

**WHY** - Chances are that most of you have been conned into these coaching positions by family, friends, or the Parks and Recreation Department. Never mind, enjoy it anyway. If you have fun, the kids will too. If you try your best, so will your players no matter how skilled or unskilled you may be. Recreational coaching is for fun, not a career move. Remember, the kids are depending on you to provide them with soccer skills and fun too.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF U-6 CHILDREN

- Little or no concern for team activities.
- Physical and psychological development of boys and girls is quite similar.
- Eye-hand and/or eye-foot coordination is most primitive.
- Love to run and jump.
- Prefer large softballs and nerf balls.
- Catching skills aren't developed.
- Can balance on good foot.
- No sense of pace-*GO FLAT OUT-(This refers to their racing about in games until complete exhaustion sets in, at which point they stop, breathe, then restart at a torrid pace again)*

### CHARACTERISTICS OF U-8 CHILDREN

- Attention span beyond U-6 but still not extended.
- Inclined more towards group activities.
- Still in motion.
- Very sensitive (Dislike personal failure in front of peers).
- Beginning to develop physical coordination.
- Still into running, jumping, climbing and rolling.
- More into the real balls through imitation of big guys (Sports heroes becoming important).
- Still lack sense of pace (Go flat out).

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF U-10 CHILDREN**

- Lengthened attention span.
- Far more team oriented.
- Still in motion but not as busy. Will stay in place long enough for a short explanation.
- Psychologically becoming more firm.
- Boys and girls beginning to develop separately.
- Overall and small motor skills becoming much more refined.
- Prefer team type balls and equipment.
- Pace factor becoming developed. Do think ahead.

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR COACHING SOCCER**

Time of training sessions and number per workweek:

**U-6** 1 or 2 practices-45 minutes to an hour each. One game per week.

**U-8** 1 or 2 practices per week-1 hour each.. One game per week.

**U-10** 2 practices per week-1 - 1  $\frac{1}{4}$  hours each. One game per week.

Please note that these are organized training and game times, and the players must be encouraged to do much more on their own with a ball.

## **ACTIVITIES**

**U-6** Many of short duration.

**U-8** Many of short duration.

**U-10** Fewer activities, longer periods.



## NATURE OF TRAINING SESSION

Upbeat, encouraging, stimulating, many short water breaks, very little explanation, short demonstrations, lots of player participation. Every player should bring his or her own ball to practice.

## WHAT IS A GOOD COACH?

What makes a good coach? According to John Bies, President of the Tennessee State Soccer Association. **A good coach:**

- **Is a good teacher.** He/she breaks down techniques and tactics into simple segments that players easily understand.
- **Makes learning fun.** Coaches who use drills over and over again without instilling excitement are not doing their job. (In fact, the word "drill" connotes dryness and repetition—try "activity" instead.)
- **Gives encouragement and praise for good play, and corrects mistakes in a positive manner.**
- **Is a student of the game.** He/She never has the attitude that they know everything and cannot learn more.
- **Does not force players into a system or a style of play.** Instead, they adjust their system and style to fit his players' characteristics.
- **Develops players, rather than recruits them.**
- **Instills a life-long love for the game in their players.**

## HOW TO BOLSTER ATHLETES' SELF-ESTEEM

Most coaches realize that athletes with high self-esteem perform better than those who do not feel good about themselves. But how can a coach raise a player's self-esteem? According to sports-psychologist Dr. Alan Goldberg, he or she can:

- **Say something personal to every player at every practice.** This doesn't even have to take the form of instruction; simply saying, "Great shirt! Where'd you pick that up?" lets a player know that you see him or her as an individual.
- **Criticize the group, but praise the individual.** Singling an individual out for criticism in front of the team seldom works in the long run; however, talking about team weaknesses or problems is often very effective.
- **Give each child an identity on the team.** Even something as simple as being the team's throw-in specialist is important to a youngster struggling to find his or her place among peers.
- **Make sure that the more experienced players spend time practicing with less experienced ones.** This "partnering" cuts down cliques, helps both players' self-esteem and ultimately raises team morale.

- **Engage in clear and honest communication with each player, on and off the field.**
- **Stay positive.** Nothing good comes from negativity.
- **Act as a winner, even when feeling bad.** A coach who projects an image as a winner will transmit that feeling to players.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

Each coach is required to sign a code of conduct that explains our philosophy of youth soccer. With their signature each and every coach agrees to be held responsible for their own actions on the field. If a coach violates our code of conduct from he or she will be asked to step down as coach of that team.

- Soccer is a game for fun - for players, coaches, spectators and referees.
- Soccer is a game for learning: learning technical skills, teamwork and fairness.
- Soccer is for learning self-respect and respect for others; for learning to put the team's interest above self-interest and for dealing with success and limitations.
- Soccer is for learning mental and physical discipline and for learning how to deal with frustration, losing, and winning.

## COACHES AND PLAYERS

- Seek no advantages except those of superior skill and sportsmanship.
- Treat visiting teams and spectators as honored guests.
- Accept decisions of officials as honest in intention no matter how unfair they seem.
- Remember, winning is desirable, but winning at all costs defeats the purpose of the game.
- Remember that losing can be a triumph when the team has given its best.
- Remember that you have a commitment to your team. Maintain good nutrition, stay in shape and avoid all substance abuse.
- In soccer, as in life, treat others, as you would have them treat you.

## PARENTS AND SPECTATORS

- Make participation in soccer a positive experience.
- Relieve the pressure of competition, don't increase it.
- Applaud good plays by your team members and their opponents.
- Remember, the opponents are necessary friends; without them, your team cannot play.
- Don't openly question the official's calls or honesty. The officials are symbols of fair play, integrity, and sportsmanship.
- Accept the results of each game and encourage the players to be gracious in victory and to turn defeat into victory by working towards improvement.

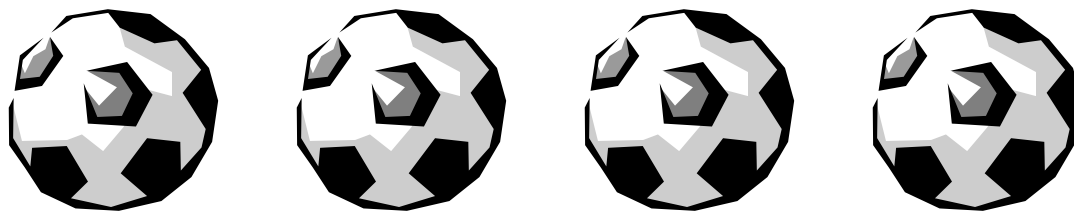
## CHECKLIST FOR COACHES AND ASSISTANT COACHES

1. Learn the names of your players.
2. All players deserve to play equal time.
3. Good sportsmanship is as important a goal as winning.
4. Come to practice prepared.
5. Keep everyone busy.
6. Don't pressure the players.
7. Never leave your players unsupervised. Always have another adult there in case of an emergency.
8. Begin and end your practices promptly.
9. Don't over-coach during games. It's the player's game to win or lose.
10. Take an active role to set the tone of spectator behavior.
11. Respect the referee's decisions. Arguing sets a poor example for everyone.
12. Avoid running up the score. Winning by a wide margin is unnecessary.

13. SAFETY-Before every practice and every game coaches should check the facility and equipment to insure a safe playing environment for all.
14. \*The players will learn the most by example-YOUR EXAMPLE-display good behavior.

### **TIPS TO BE A WINNING PARENT**

1. Teach you child never to view the opponent as the bad guy.
2. Encourage your child to compete against himself.
3. Be supportive but do not coach.
4. Help make the sport fun for your child.
5. Remember whose goal the game is-your child's.
6. Your child isn't their performance-love them unconditionally.
7. Remember the importance of self-esteem.
8. Use failure as a gift to improvement and motivation.
9. Challenge-don't threaten.
10. Stress the process (skill acquisition, mastery, and fun), rather than the outcome.
11. Avoid comparisons and respect developmental differences.
12. Teach your child to have a perspective on basketball and develop expectations.



**Sample letter to send to all parents and players at the beginning of the season.**

## **FAIRFIELD RECREATION YOUTH SOCCER PROGRAM**

Dear Parents and Players,

**Welcome to the Soccer Season!**

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'll be your coach this season.

Our team will practice on:

Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Practices will begin on \_\_\_\_\_ and run each week until \_\_\_\_\_.

Please note these days we will not be practicing because the field will be closed:  
\_\_\_\_\_.

A team roster is attached to help with the arranging of car pools for practices and games, and our game schedule.

In the event of a cancelled practice, players and parents will be notified through the phone chain. Players should arrive to practice on time. I will dismiss the team as scheduled and ask that you be prompt in picking up your child at the end of practice.

The first game will be on \_\_\_\_\_. Games will be every Saturday through \_\_\_\_\_. If a game is cancelled, players and parents may call the Recreation Cancellation Hotline at 256-3144 (press 5). Games that are cancelled will not be made up.

Finally, soccer is a game for the kids and you to enjoy. As this team's coach, I will attempt to make things fun and productive for all players. Everyone will have equal playing time and will have a chance to play different positions. I want everyone to feel good about belonging to this team and I hope you will support our enthusiasm. If your player is ever unhappy about any issue related to our team, or if there are any questions, please call me immediately - my phone number is \_\_\_\_\_. With your help, this will be a fun season for our team.

## FAIRFIELD PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

### 85 Ways to say "Very Good"

1. Good for you!
2. Superb
3. You did that very well
4. You've got it made
5. Terrific
6. That's not bad
7. Couldn't have done it better myself
8. Marvelous!
9. You're doing fine
10. You're really improving
11. You're on the right track now
12. Now you've got it figured out
13. Outstanding
14. That's coming along nicely
15. I know you can do it
16. Good work
17. You figured that out fast
18. I think you've got it now
19. I'm proud of the way you worked today
20. Tremendous
21. You certainly did that well
22. Perfect
23. Nice going
24. You've got your brain in gear today
25. Now you've got the hang of it
26. Wow!
27. Wonderful
28. You're getting better everyday
29. You're learning fast
30. You make it look easy
31. That's a good boy/girl
32. That's very much better
33. Super!
34. You did a lot of work today
35. Keep it up
36. You've got that down pat
37. Congratulations
38. Exactly right
39. Nice going
40. Excellent
41. Sensational
42. You're doing beautifully
43. You've just mastered that
44. That's really nice
45. That's the best ever
46. That's great
47. Way to go
48. That's the way to do it
49. That's quite an improvement
50. Good thinking
51. You're really going to town
52. Keep up the good work
53. That's it
54. That's better
55. You haven't missed a thing
56. Fantastic
57. You outdid yourself today
58. You're doing a good job
59. That's the right way to do it
60. Right on
61. Well, look at you go
62. That's the best you've ever done
63. That's right
64. You must have been practicing
65. Great
66. Keep it up...you're getting better
67. You remembered
68. That kind of work makes me happy
69. You're really working hard today
70. That's what I call a fine job
71. I knew you could do it
72. I'm very proud of you
73. One more time and you'll have it
74. Fine!
75. That's good
76. Good job
77. You really make this fun
78. Good remembering
79. Nothing can stop you now
80. You're doing much better today
81. Keep on trying
82. You're really learning a lot
83. You've just about got it
84. I've never seen anyone do it better
85. You're very good at that

## FAIRFIELD PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

### WHAT DOES FIFA SAY ABOUT SMALL-SIDED SOCCER?

The FIFA advisory board established a new developmental program aimed at youth players. After extensive study by the world's foremost soccer authorities, FIFA has come to the following conclusions and has made these recommendations.

"It could clearly be seen over the years that the countries with the most success at the World Cup and the World Youth Championships were those with the best development in all classes."

"It is now up to FIFA to coordinate the development in all youth groups. One can essentially speak of three main groups: of children (Under-10), adolescents (Under-14), and of intermediate stages, thereby arriving at a fine structurization already starting with an 'Under-6' stage."

**"Under-6":** At this age, a child does not need the fixed dimensions of a playing field. The choice of the ball is very important. In a size and structure it must be adjusted to the child's physical capacities. The child hardly needs any

instruction. In this group it's fun being active."

**"Under-8":** Small playing fields must be found and size of the ball must be adjusted to the group. This would be the age group for street soccer, which the present generation is missing. This is where adults have to step in, in order to imitate street conditions."

**"Under-10":** On a normal playing field, the young player does not have the right control nor does he have the right physical qualities as yet. However, with the presence of two goals, they must at least get the impression of a whole playing field, even if the dimensions do not correspond. By increasing the number of players to a 'small team,' the youngsters become keener on imitating."

The FIFA message is clear:

**For best development of the game, children are to play on "teams and fields" that match their physical and mental maturity.**

### IS SMALL-SIDED SOCCER—REAL SOCCER?

People involved with youth soccer must realize that U-6, and U-8 youth players are, in a sense, not real players. They have not developed enough physically, psychologically, or socially to meet the same challenges as older, larger players do. They are not capable of playing 11 vs. 11 full-field soccer.

Small-sided, small-field games are the way of developing young players in the world's most advanced soccer nations. Youth players in Brazil and Argentina grow up playing small-sided games on beaches and streets with little coaching until they reach the age of 12. In France, Denmark, Holland, West Germany and Italy they play small-sided, small-field soccer exclusively until the age of 12.

These same nations have produced some of the world's greatest players such as Pele, Maradona, Cruiff, and Beckenbauer.

As children in the great soccer countries approach maturity, they have developed all the tools they need to go on to higher levels of play. They have not learned positions, restarts, and systems. They learned dribbling, passing, shooting, and the love of the game.

The small-sided approach has helped thousands of young soccer players to develop much more quickly into competent

junior and senior players. In Europe and South America this is a proven method used for decades. Now it's time the U.S. moved in the same direction.

Using small-sided soccer, players and coaches will have more fun and enjoyment with soccer. The quality of your soccer players will improve at all levels. They will be easier to coach, better skilled, more physically fit and better prepared tactically. U-6, U-8, U-10 small-sided soccer will translate into more wins for your own towns travel team and a more successful high school team.

## WHY SMALL-SIDED SOCCER?

### SKILL, ENJOYMENT, TACTICS AND PHYSICAL FITNESS

It is impossible for a U-10 soccer player to play "real" soccer on a full-sized field 11 vs. 11. They are not big enough nor do they have a correct spacial conception of the field. They are playing soccer within a 10-15 yard radius of their present playing position. Why should U-10 players play small-sided soccer rather than full field 11 vs. 11?

An average child under the age of 10 weighs less than half of what a mature (real) player weighs. They have less than half the strength of a mature adult and are about three-quarters the height.

Asking an under-10 player to play 11 vs. 11 on a full sized field is like asking an adult to play on a field 250 yards long, 150 yards wide, with goals 16 feet by 48

feet, and a penalty area that is 36 yards long and wide. This would be physically impossible for us. Yet we ask our children to play 11 vs. 11 soccer games on a full field at U-10

The biggest problems for these young players are having their goal kicks clear the penalty area. Physically, they just can't do it. Our young players must play on a field scaled down to meet their physical qualities. Small-sided, small field games are the answer.



## FAIRFIELD PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

### BALL SKILLS OR TECHNIQUE

Skill is developed only one way - through repeated ball touches.

The U-8 player involved in an 11 vs. 11 game on a full field will average 5-15 ball touches during a game. That same player participating in a 8 vs 8 game wide will average 30 to 40 ball touches in a one-hour game.

Youth players from the ages of 6-10 playing small-side, small field games will get thousands more ball touches than the child playing full field, 11 vs. 11. Small-sided games are far superior for developing skill among our U-10 youth players.

Skill is the most important component of a soccer player. It's what separates Maradona, Pele, Cruiff, and Beckenbauer from the rest of the world. Under the age of 10, these great players were never asked to play 11 vs. 11 full field. They developed their skill through small-sided, small field games.

Tactics: The game is the greatest teacher. Tactics and systems implemented before age 10 will stifle and discourage many players.

Tactics for the development level player are very confusing and stifling because they interfere with the freedom of learning to participate in the game. Systems of play for very young players promote "agricultural" soccer. This is where players are planted in position rather than playing the game of soccer.

Soccer at the highest level is nothing more than a series of small group games. (1 vs. 1, 2 vs. 1, 2 vs. 2, 3 vs. 2, or 4 vs. 3) strung together by long passes.

Children must be exposed to 2 vs.1, 1 vs. 1, 2 vs. 2, etc. as often as possible in order to learn how to attack and defend in each situation. Small-sided, small field games afford players many, many more opportunities than full field 11 vs. 11 games.

**FAIRFIELD PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT****FACILITY/FIELD RULES**

Dear Coaches:

The Recreation Youth Soccer Program would not be a reality if it were not for the physical educators in the Fairfield School system generously allowing us to use the fields. Remember that the fields are their teaching stations and we should afford them the utmost courtesy and respect for their property and facility. Please respect their requests and teach your players to respect these facilities as well.

**Keep hands off school related property.**

**Keep all players on the field only. Do not let players roam unsupervised.**

**Please teach your players to respect school property.**

**Coaches and players are responsible for cleaning up everything after practices and games.**