



Coaching Goals and Objectives

Pre K and Kindergarten

NLSC has goals and objectives for all level coaches. The goals start simple for the younger age groups and increase in difficulty as the kids get older. At the end of each season, success can be determined by the level fun that each player has had and second by the amount of goals and objectives they have achieved. This will diminish the need to view success on a win or a score basis, as most adults do. With these objectives, everyone can look at their team and have a visual picture of the development each player has achieved. After all, it is about the players.

Along with the objectives is a curriculum guide of what topics to coach and when. To enhance the enjoyment and development of the player, it is very important that the training is conducive to the time of the season. Therefore, getting the kids to be comfortable with each other and with you should be the highest priority during the first few practices.

Season Goals and Objectives

- To improve Team cohesion- Knowing names, being comfortable working together
- To improve each players ability to understand the rules of the game- Ball in and out of play
- To get the players to know when to stop and how to start
- To improve each players comfort around the ball
- To praise, set and encourage positive attributes such as responsibility, respect, confidence, courage in all of your players

For the Pre K and Kindergarten level the goals are very simple as is the coaching. In this age you won't see much technical development but if your practices are well organized you will see an increased willingness to participate.

Practice Goals and Objectives

Although Practices are only 45 minutes in duration make sure that you take the following into account:

1. That you have plenty of activities(5-6) planned to cater for their attention span
2. That your activities require imagination
3. That the games all require repetition of the same technique or follow the same theme
4. Make sure that the games become progressively more challenging
5. During the session **key words** and **praise** are used to bring more attempts of the topic
6. After each session you bring the kids in to review the techniques that were coached
7. The “final game” should be conditioned to bring out more of the technique
8. The “game” is judged as successful if the players on your team can demonstrate the theme of the week in the game.

When planning your practice regardless of the week please ensure that all players receive plenty of **1 on 1** time with the ball. Once the practice starts, recognizing if the players are enjoying the activity will allow you decide if you can continue longer.

Golden Rules of Coaching

- **No lines: -Kids should not wait for a turn to play or for contact of the ball**
- **No Laps- Pure Fitness has zero importance. Any physically demanding activity should be done with a ball**
- **No lectures- Recreational soccer is and needs to be kept simple – organize a game and let the kids play, try to 1st establish the rules and 2nd praise successful application or effort Calendar**

Week 1+2

Team Building

The 1st two weeks are of very high importance to the team as the kids are figuring out how to play the game and discovering new team mates. At this point it is vital that they learn to work together as a team. The activities on team building are a series of tasks that each player cannot complete with without the help of others. For responsibility encourage each player pack their equipment bag and bring a ball. Make a player the player of the week and challenge the team to find out as much information about them as possible. In the games created for team building try to let the kids figure out a way to be successful. Their working together to solve the problems will be the foundations laid for your team

Understanding the rules of the game

As you have 6 players on the team at practice you should be playing 3v3. Some coaches already have grand goals of pushing their team to the next MLS Cup final and I sadly must interrupt those visions with some reality.

At this age you have 2 goals on game days:

1. To get the kids to stop when the ball leaves the field of play either for a goal or for another out of bounds.
2. To have 1 person start the game with a dribble in

When a goal is scored, start from the goal line with the scoring team retreating to their half of the field. We cannot stress the importance of your presence in this part of the season. Kids don't play pick up any more and struggle to organize their own games. **Your presence as the coach in the final game at practice and on game days needs to be high at first then slowly reduced to the level that finally the kids are running the game independently.** This will improve their ability to cooperate, improving team building and their ability to self-train.

Dribbling

One common mistake many coaches make is they generalize dribbling and make it only about one thing. This forces the players to only think only about going forward each time they are in possession. Dribbling needs to be broken down into 3 pieces.

1. Dribbling to beat an opponent
2. Dribbling for possession
3. Dribbling for speed

Breaking it down this way allows players to become more comfortable on the ball and become familiar with different situations on the field.

Week 3

Dribbling to beat an opponent

Dribbling to beat an opponent is the recognition or creation of space behind the oncoming defender. For this week each player needs a ball. During the activities the defenders will need to be restricted to get the full affect. Dribbling (like in all techniques) will develop more with repetition in the final game. Make sure that you have either low numbers 2v2 or 3v3 and or have 2-3 soccer balls playing in the game.

Dribbling needs to be kept simple. The players should focus on being efficient at changing direction and speed. The environment created by dribbling to beat an opponent is one that should be recreated during the final game.

Week 4

Dribbling for Speed

Dribbling for speed is covering a large area in a short amount of time while maintaining control of the ball.

Dribbling for speed takes into consideration the physical ability(speed) of the player to determine if the distance the ball is played out of the feet is correct. In order to have a successful session and give the kids the appropriate environment to work in the coach must pay specific attention to the dimensions. When doing a dribbling for speed practice, make sure there are plenty of open areas for the kids to accelerate into. Even relay races are a great way to develop this technique (and a lot of fun!).

Week 5

Dribbling for possession

This technique can be divided into two parts (shielding and turning). This specific part of dribbling is essential as it brings in other rules of how and when to use the body to maintain possession of the ball. Shielding is only legal if the player can play the ball-- anything else is obstruction. It is important players become comfortable with contact to help increase their game involvement and lose some of the fear of getting hurt. The goal in turning is to get them to turn completely with the ball in the opposite direction. The surfaces to turn with at this next age are the inside, and the cleats. (Pullback)

Week 6

Passing/kicking

There is a noticeable difference between kicking and passing that the players need repetition on. Kicking is general –none directed, establishing good contact with the ball. Establishing a difference between passing and kicking is vital for player development as parents often confuse a good kick (gaining distance) with a good pass. A good pass reaches a target or is in a space that is attainable for the team. A good kick is solid contact of the ball. How many times have you heard in a game “good boot “and the ball goes out. Getting the players (and parents) to understand the difference may help them realize how much they have to practice to achieve a good pass. Establishing a good kicking technique will help with shooting and long distance passing.

Week 7

Kicking

In this week your activities should create opportunity for the players to kick the ball, and kick it a lot. Kids at this age are usually ambidextrous but their weakness will be fear of attacking a ball and giving it a big boot.

Week 8

Passing

To increase the accuracy of passing the focus needs to be on the position of non kicking foot, body position and striking area of the foot. The 1st goal of passing is the accuracy- make sure it gets there the power will come.

Week 9 +10

Combination activities

For this last week I want you to combine some of your activities from the season. Ask the players to list their favorites or just replay the ones that work. For the final game try to combine techniques (for example have a scrimmage with 2 balls and one is the passing ball and one is the dribbling ball.) Try to look to the following year's age group and do some of the activities for next year so the kids get a taste of what's to come.

Special responsibility

It is a frightening statistic that 14 Million kids play sports up until the age of 14. After 14 there is a 70% drop out.

Some drop out due to other interests, while another reason is that as a society we are obsessed with winning and we focus solely on the end result as a means to determine success

- **I ASK ALL COACHES AND PARENTS TO FOCUS ON THE KIDS ACHIEVING THEIR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES RATHER THAN JUST THE SCORE OR THE OUTCOME.**

- I NEED YOU TO SHARE WHAT YOU ARE DOING IN PRACTICE WITH YOUR PARENTS AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO RECOGNIZE THE POSITIVE THINGS THEIR CHILD AND THE TEAM DO.
- I WANT THE ENVIRONMENT ON THE SIDE LINES TO BE POSITIVE, IN THAT WE APPLAUD ALL THE KIDS WHO PLAY, TRY HARD AND ENJOY AS THEY ARE ALL SPECIAL.
- I WANT THEM TO ENJOY SPENDING TIME WATCHING THE KIDS WORK HARD AND IMPROVE.
- IF WE CAN LESSEN THE PRESSURE OF A GAME DAY ENVIRONMENT THEN IT WILL HOPEFULLY EXTEND THE DESIRE OF KIDS PLAYING AND ENJOYING NOT JUST SOCCER BUT ALL SPORTS.

The only down side is that the results won't be fully displayed until the kids are 15 years of age and still enjoying playing. But if we create a positive family atmosphere on the sidelines of our children's sporting activities it will help us see what they truly enjoy and will also help the togetherness of our soccer community