

US SOCCER PDI INITIATIVES

OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAYER DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES:

1. The focus moves away from the team and onto the individual player.
 - ✓ Development and winning do not have to happen independently from one another.
 - ✓ Our misguided desire to win at all costs at the youth levels often comes at the expense of individual player development.
 - ✓ This change will cause many parents and coaches to rethink how teams will be formed moving forward and this should take place with each individual player in mind based on his or her developmental needs.
2. The focus moves away from bigger, faster, and stronger.
3. Uniformity across the country and across membership.
 - ✓ The current landscape is highly variable -Having uniformity doesn't mean that all soccer will look the same in all places at all times.
 - ✓ It does mean that the soccer community can be better aligned with U.S. Soccer's player development objectives and we can collectively harness the advantage our nation's diversity and populations has to offer.
 - ✓ A uniform framework also allows U.S. Soccer, and the programs of our members, to provide consistent messaging and education for parents, players, coaches and referees.
4. Aligns with international standards for youth development.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAYER DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE USE OF SMALL SIDED GAMES:

1. Develop improved skills with the ball.
 - ✓ Improve confidence and comfort.
2. Develop intelligence with and without the ball.
 - ✓ Promote faster decisions and better awareness.
3. Develop partnerships within the team.
 - ✓ Provide an age appropriate environment.
4. Standards align with physiological needs of players based on year of birth.
 - ✓ Uniformity across the country and across membership -Similar to the outcomes listed for birth year registration, having consistent standards allows U.S. Soccer, and the programs of our members, to provide more meaningful messaging and education for parents, players, coaches and referees.

Current Landscape: The coaching and playing environment needs to be improved for 6-12 year olds

- Too much emphasis placed on the result of the game
- The priority should be to develop skills and abilities
- There is a need to educate and empower parents and coaches -U.S. Soccer offers grassroots courses specifically designed for introductory coaches working with players 12 and younger

STARTING POINT:

- First set of changes designed to grow and improve the game.
 - ☐ Birth Year Registration -Registering players according to a January 1 to December 31 timeframe – THIS HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED ✓
 - ☐ Small Sided Field Changes (referencing the build out line) - THIS HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED ✓
 - ☐ Small-Sided Games -Development philosophy and playing standards for players 12 and younger – THIS NEEDS TO BE RESTRUCTURED FOR THE YOUNGER AGE GROUPS.

Small-Sided Games Chart



	U6 6 years old and younger	U7 7 years old and younger	U8 8 years old and younger	U9 9 years old and younger	U10 10 years old and younger	U11 11 years old and younger	U12 12 years old and younger
Field Size Ranges (yards)	Length 25-35 Width 15-25	Length 25-35 Width 15-25	Length 25-35 Width 15-25	Length 55-65 Width 35-45	Length 55-65 Width 35-45	Length 70-80 Width 45-55	Length 70-80 Width 45-55
Maximum Goal Size (feet)	Height 4 Width 6	Height 4 Width 6	Height 4 Width 6	Height 6.5 Width 18.5	Height 6.5 Width 18.5	Height 7 Width 21	Height 7 Width 21
Ball Size	3	3	3	4	4	4	4
Players	4v4 No GK	4v4 No GK	4v4 No GK	7v7 GK	7v7 GK	9v9 GK	9v9 GK
Game Time (minutes)	4x10	4x10	4x10	2x25	2x25	2x30	2x30
Offside	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

CURRENT PDI INITIATIVES IN LSC:

- ☐ Current U5 is running within the guidelines of the Initiatives.
- ☐ U6-U8 needs to change.
- ☐ The U9 – U11 needs to change.

PROJECTED CHANGES TO CURRENT PROGRAM:

SSG's 4 V 4: ALL U6 – U8 WILL BE 4 V 4

1. Current **U6 and U7 will need to change from 4 v 4 plus a GK according to 4 v 4 NO GK.**

- a. Changes to the Program effecting players and teams:
 - i. This will eliminate a GK and possibly change the roster size for these age groups.
 - ii. A change in roster size will also require a need for more coaches in this age group.
- b. Changes to the Program effecting the Club:
 - i. Possible need for more SSG fields.
 - ii. Possible need for more SSG goals.
- c. Size 3 ball.

2. **Current U8 will be 4 v 4 but it is suggested that a GK be added at this age to prepare for the addition of field players at U9.**

- a. The roster size in this case can increase.
- b. Possibly look to collapse a team and add those players to other rosters if the teams are formal.

3. **U6 – U8**

- a. A size 3 ball
- b. **Field size – Length - 25-25, Width – 15- 25. This seems like a half of a present intermediate field could work.**

4. **U9 & U10:**

- a. 7 v 7 plus GK
- b. Size 4 Ball
- c. Game time 2 X 25 mins.
- d. Build Out line implemented
- e. Offside rule is in place.
- f. **Field size changes again for these two age groups, Length - 55-65, Width – 35- 45.**

The Player Development Philosophy information is provided as best practice standards. Although not currently mandated, U.S. Soccer believes members should adopt these principles to align with our values and objectives for player development

4 v 4 Player Development Philosophy

1. Results and standings should not be recorded
2. Travel should be limited as much as possible
3. Players should not be participating in events (tournaments, showcases, festivals, etc.)
4. Remember that safety and fun are the top priorities so make adjustments as needed to ensure both are being promoted.

7 v 7 Player Development Philosophy

1. Coaches should have the age appropriate license issued by U.S. Soccer
2. The training-to-game ratio should be 2-3 training sessions per game played
3. Rosters should include no more than 12 players
4. Players should participate in no more than 20 games per calendar year and in no more than one game per day
5. Every player should play a minimum of 50% of the time in each game

9 v 9 Player Development Philosophy

1. Coaches should have the age appropriate license issued by U.S. Soccer
2. The training-to-game ratio should be 2-3 training sessions per game played
3. Rosters should include no more than 16 players
4. Players should participate in no more than 30 games per calendar year and in no more than one game per day
5. Every player should play a minimum of 50% of the time in each game
6. Results and standings should not be recorded
7. Players should have a minimum of 2 rest days per week during the season along with planned breaks from organized soccer during the calendar year
8. Any travel should be limited to day trips with limited allowances for overnight stays
9. Events (ex: tournaments, showcases, festivals, etc.) should provide a predetermined number of games with no advancement, placement games or champions