



**ONTARIO
SOCCER**

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Active Start Session Plan

For coaches of U4-U5 year-olds



Ontario Soccer Player Development Model: The Station Concept



The activities provided illustrate how stations can be used during Grassroots practices.

All sessions take a holistic approach to developing our youth. Each game and activity will focus on 4 main areas of the child's development; these include social/emotional, physical, psychological and also technical.

Total practice time 40 minutes as per the Recreational and Development Matrix.

Play. Inspire. Unite.





Ontario Soccer Player Development Model How it works



Introduction

During the practice players will spend an allotted time at each station having fun, developing specific skills and qualities before moving onto the next station. By using station work we create an environment where players are continually motivated and challenged.

Organisation

If working with a larger group, organize players into groups of 6. Each station has a coach who leads that specific station for the session.

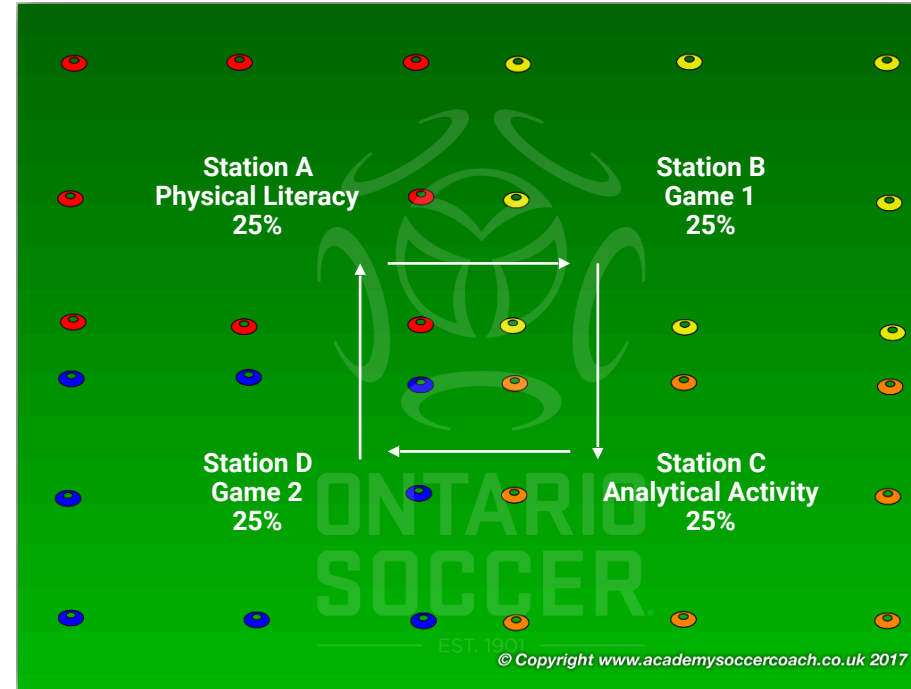
If working with a smaller group, simply move together through all 4 stations until all are complete.

Procedure

Players rotate every 8 minutes. Provide a 2 minute break in between each station for water and to allow movement to the next station.

Emphasis

In these examples one station focuses on Physical Literacy, two stations on movements with the ball or small sided games and the 4th station is focused around technique with decision making.



Timing	Area
Total Time: 40 4 x 8 minute Stations	20 x 20 m (x4)

Technical			Physical		
	U4	U5		U4	U5
Dribbling	1	1	Running Forward	1	1
Running with the ball	1	1	Running Backwards	1	1
Shooting	1	1	Jumping	1	1
Ball Control	3	2	Skipping	1	1
Passing	3	3	Hopping	1	1
Receiving	4	4	Bounding	2	2
Heading	4	4	Crawling	2	2
Shielding	4	4	Turning	2	2
Crossing	4	4	Falling / diving	3	2
Finishing	4	4	Twisting	2	2
1v1 Defending	4	4	Rolling	3	3
1v1 Attacking	4	4	Other Sports	1	1
Social			Psychological		
	U4	U5		U4	U5
Listening	2	2	Motivation	1	1
Co-operation	3	3	Self Confidence	1	1
Communication	1	1	Competitiveness	4	4
Sharing	3	3	Concentration	4	4
Problem-solving	3	3	Commitment	4	4
Decision-making	3	2	Self Control	3	3
Empathy	3	2	Priority Key		
Patience	3	2	High	1	
Respect / discipline	2	2	Medium	2	
Fair play / honesty	3	2	Low	3	
			Not Applicable	4	

Top Tip

Encourage the players to make decisions and have fun. When talking to the players, crouch down so you are at eye level with them rather than towering above them. This can be intimidating for young children. Speaking to the players at eye level allows you to better connect with them.



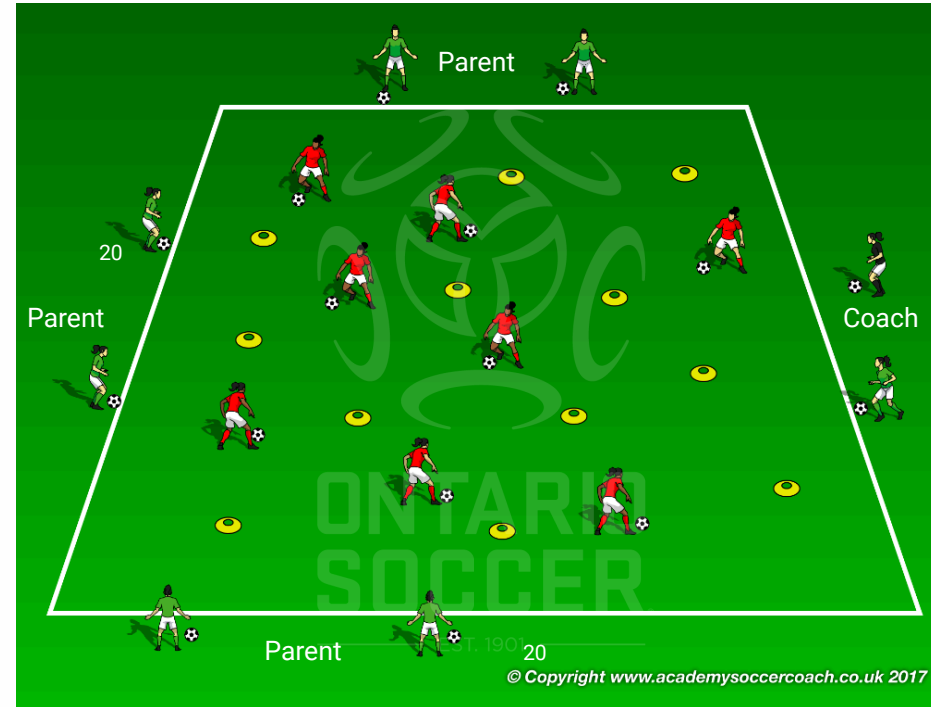
Active Start

Station A

Physical Literacy - Pirates



Organisation
Players are placed in the area with a ball each. Cones are scattered randomly across the playing area. Ask a player what noise a Pirate makes or if they know any famous Pirates (Captain Hook, Long John Silver, Jack Sparrow)
Procedure
The Pirates steer their ship (ball) around the sea (playing area) Players do the following. Climb the mast (10 toe taps) Strong winds (boxes - touches of the ball with the inside of the feet. Walk the plank, hops and a jump. Reverse, drag back (sole of the foot on the top of the ball and push backwards) Scrub the deck - pass the ball forward and crawl to it.
Emphasis
Imagination, safety and FUN!
Progression
N/A



Timing	Area
8 Minutes	20 x 20 m

Technical	Psychological
Ball mastery Running with the ball Dribbling	Confidence Awareness
Social	Physical
Problem Solving Communicating	Agility Balance Co-ordination Change of Speed Change of Direction

Top Tip

Did you know that the key window for learning Physical Literacy is between the ages of 3-6 years old? The focus at the Active Start age groups is centred around the development of Fundamental Movement Skills rather than sports skills.



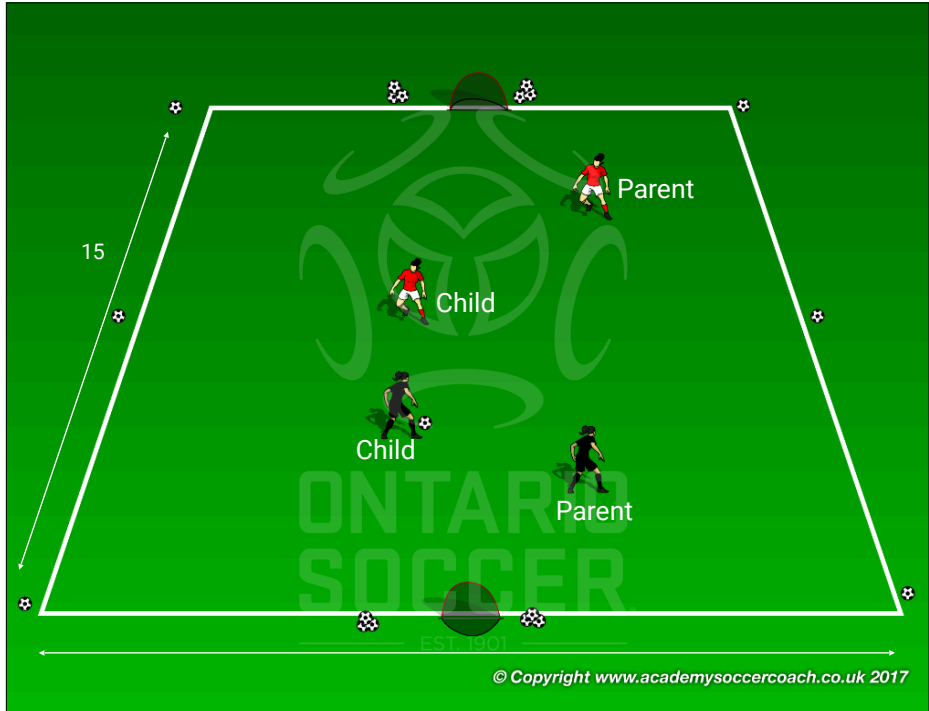
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Station B

Small Sided Game – 2v2 (Parent & Child v Parent & Child)



Organisation
Organize players into 2v2 (1 player and a parent vs 1 player and a parent/guardian)
Procedure
Child and parent/guardian play a 2v2 game. If the ball goes out of the field, take the closest ball to keep the game moving. Parents / guardian should help the children as much as possible.
Emphasis
Free Play and FUN!
Progression
N/A



Timing	Area
8 Minutes	20 m x 30 m

Technical	Psychological
Dribbling Lots of touches Ball mastery	Confidence Being safe Reactions
Social	Physical
Cooperation Communicating FUN Social	Agility Balance Co-ordination Change of Direction

Top Tip	Engage the parents throughout the session. This can help with the organization, but more importantly creates that backyard feeling between parent and child.
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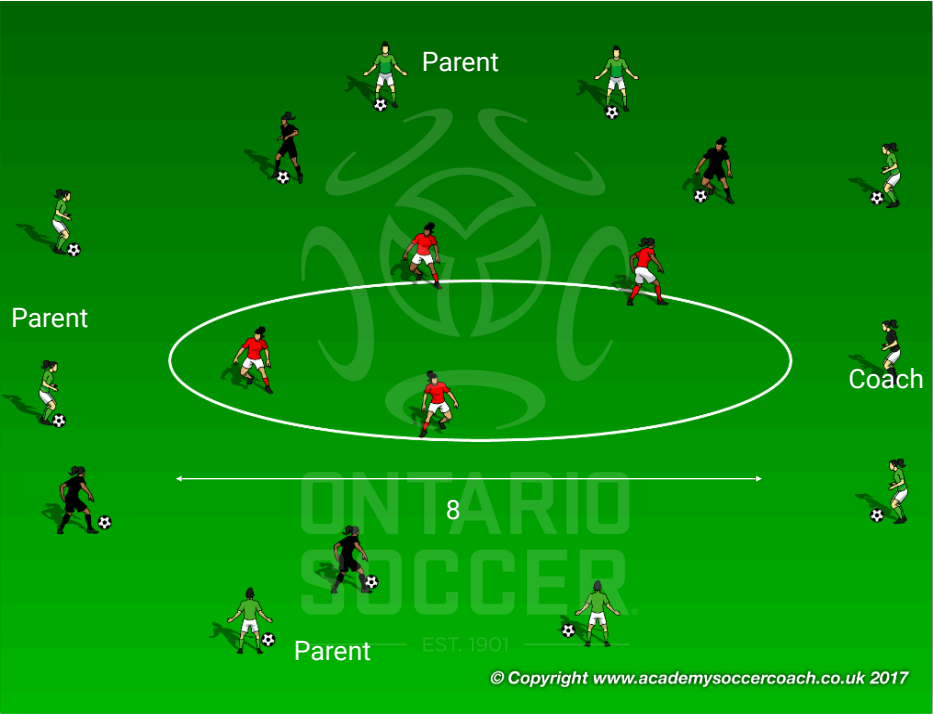
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Station C

Small Sided Game – Pirates and Lifeguards



Organisation
4 players are placed inside the circle without a ball. 4 players are placed 10 metres away from the circle with ball. Parents are on the outside and have a ball close.
Procedure
The Pirates (Black) must put their treasure (ball) on the beach by dribbling on to it. The lifeguards (Red) have to defend the beach. If a piece of treasure lands on the beach, the life guards must kick it away. Play for two minutes before swapping. Tell the players not to worry if their ball is kicked away, it's part of the game. Ask players and parents to count how many times the deliver/clear.
Emphasis
Imagination, creativity and celebrating!
Progression
N/A



Timing	Area
8 Minutes	8m diameter

Technical	Psychological
Ball mastery Running with the ball Dribbling	Confidence Awareness
Social	Physical
Problem Solving Communicating	Agility Balance Co-ordination Change of Speed Change of Direction

Top Tip	Active Start players are very egocentric and working with others is an abstract concept. Don't ask them to share the ball, give them a 'toy' each.
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Active Start

Station D

Small Sided Game - 3v3 (As individuals)



Organisation

Two teams of 3v3 are placed on to a 30x22 field with 1 or 2 goals at each end. Each player starts with a soccer ball. Spare balls & parents are placed around the outside of the field. Once a player has scored, give them another ball to avoid being hit while collecting a ball from a goal.

Procedure

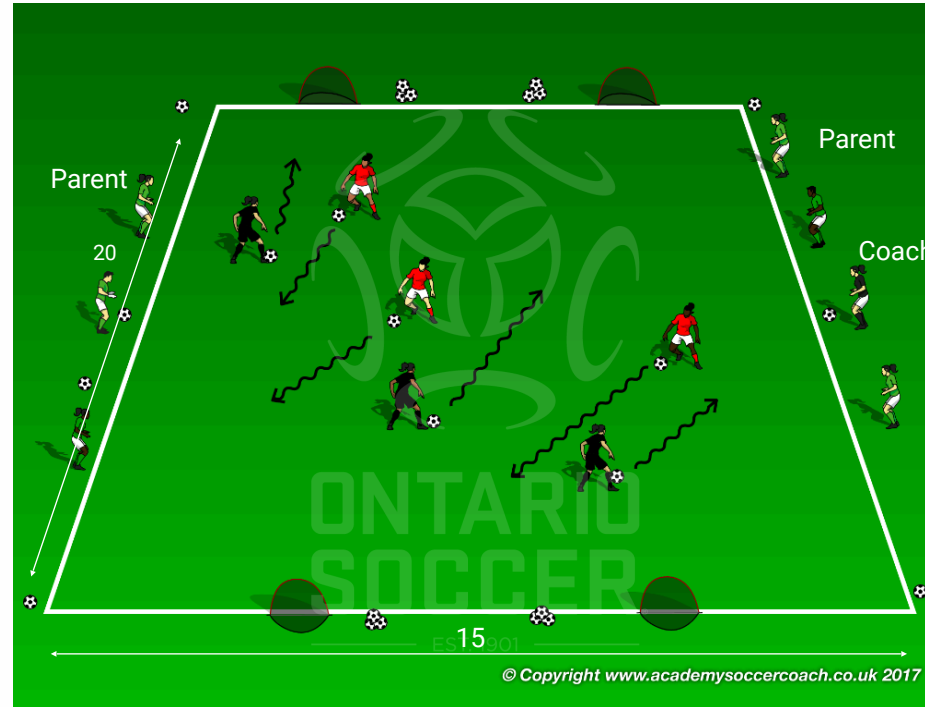
Each player plays as an individual and can score in any goal. Parents count the goals. Once a player scores they get another ball and score in another goal. If a player is dribbling towards the side line, a parent who is close can help them stay within the field.

Emphasis

Fun, creativity and celebrating!

Progression

N/A



Timing	Area
8 Minutes	15 m x 20 m

Technical

Ball mastery
Running with the ball
Dribbling

Psychological

Confidence
Awareness

Social

Problem Solving
Communicating

Physical

Agility
Balance
Co-ordination
Change of Speed

Top Tip

U4-U5 players have a short attention span therefore it's important we tailor our practices accordingly. Shorter activities lasting 6-8 minutes are recommended.

Ontario Soccer Resources

Coaches' Guides

- Game Organisation Guide
- Field Organisation Guide
- Festival Guide
- 8 Ways to Develop the Grassroots Game
- How does the Inclusive Programming Model work at your Soccer Club?
- Incorporating Physical Literacy in our Practices

Grassroots Curriculum

- Active Start U4-U6 Brochure
- Active Start Workbook and Practice Plan
- Active Start U4-U6 (Curriculum)
- All other online Grassroots Practices

Online Practice Videos

Online Webinars

