



**ONTARIO  
SOCCER**

EST. 1901



# 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 is 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.

## Organization

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.

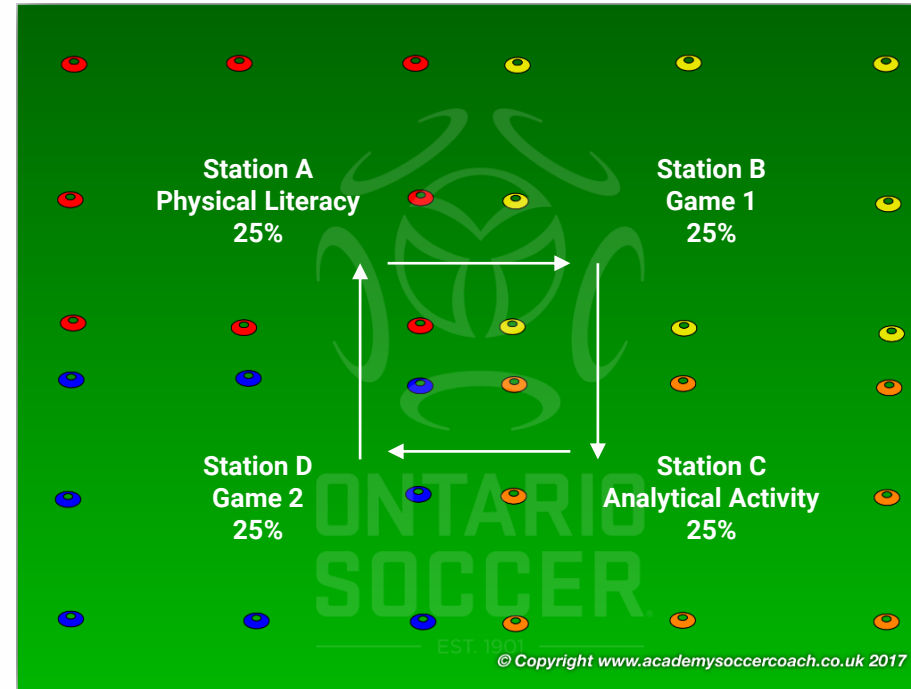
If working with a smaller group, simply move together through all 4 stations until all are complete.

## 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	<b>Priority Key</b> High 1 Medium 2 Low 3 Not Applicable 4		
Patience	3	2			
Respect / discipline	2	2			
Fair play / honesty	3	2			

## 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 – Pilot



#### Organization

Players are placed in the area with a ball each. Cones are scattered randomly across the playing area that look like gates.

#### Procedure

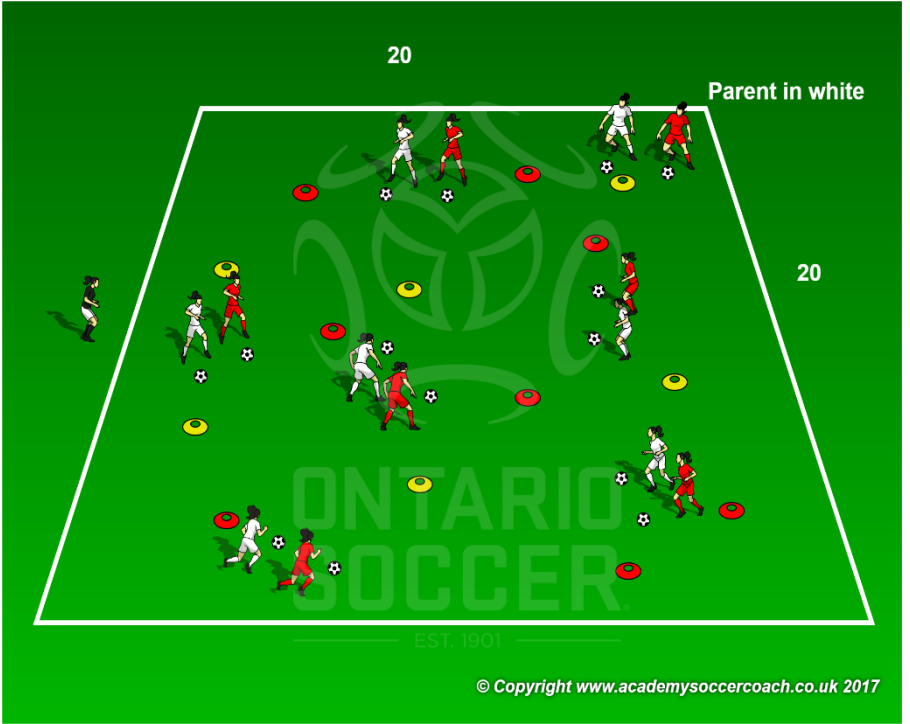
The Pilot steer their plane (ball) in the (playing area) Players do the following. Pilot will do box touches on the ball with the inside of the feet, which means they are on the runway preparing for takeoff. For take off, player will do (10 toe taps) 2 hops and a jump to lift plane and then dribble through gates, which means they are now flying their plane. To land plane- pass the ball forward and crawl to it. Repeat

#### 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 FUN	Confidence Awareness FUN
Social	Physical
Problem Solving Communicating FUN	Agility Balance Co-ordination Change of Speed Change of Direction FUN

#### 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.



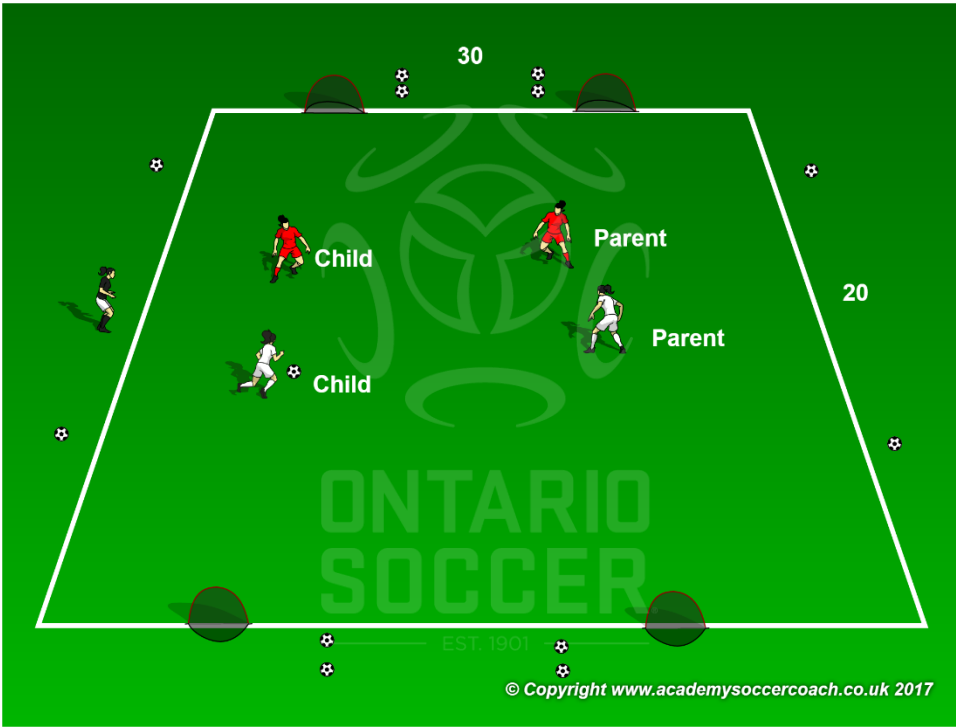
# Active Start

## Station B

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



Organization
Organize players into 2v2 with 2 goals on each side, (1 player and a parent vs 1 player and a parent/guardian)
Procedure
Child and parent/guardian play a 2v2 game with 2 goals to score on. 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 FUN	Confidence Being safe Reactions FUN
Social	Physical
Cooperation Communicating Social FUN	Agility Balance Co-ordination Change of Direction FUN

#### 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.



# Active Start

## Station C

### Analytical – Indy 500



#### Organization

Each player has a ball and starts in the garage, which is smaller area where red players are shown. Larger cone grid is 15x15, smaller cone grid 5x5 and garage 10x10

#### Procedure

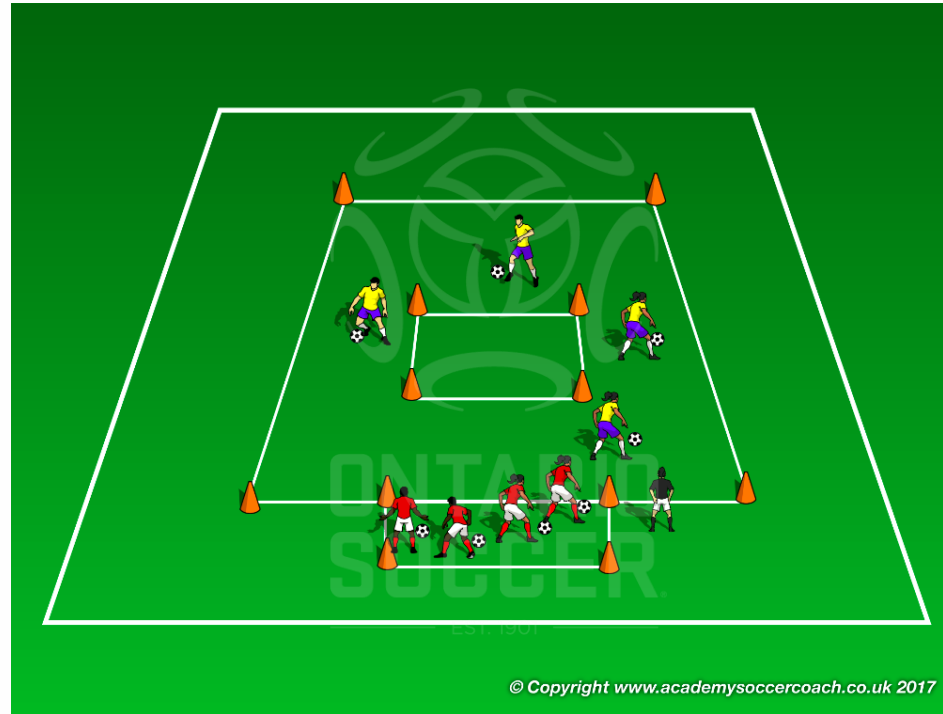
Players drive their ball around the soccer race track. Coach can ask for a change of speed, direction, stopping. Red light=stop, Yellow light=go slow, Green light= dribble the ball, avoid others=use a horn near others (beep, beep) Reverse=drag ball back (sole of foot on the top of the ball and push backwards), to fill up the gas tank, must go to garage and do box touches with the inside foot 6 times

#### Emphasis

FUN, creativity and celebrating!

#### Progression

N/A



Timing	Area
8 Minutes	15 m x15 m outside grid 5 m x 5 m inside grid Garage 10 m x10 m

#### Technical

Ball mastery  
Running with the ball  
Dribbling  
FUN

#### Psychological

Confidence  
Awareness  
FUN

#### Social

Problem Solving  
Communicating  
FUN

#### Physical

Agility  
Balance  
Co-ordination  
Change of Speed  
Change of Direction  
FUN

#### 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.



# Active Start

## Station D

### Small Sided Game – 1v1 (Child vs Parent)

#### Organization

1v1 (child vs parent) are placed on to a 30x22 field with 1 goal on each end. Each player starts with a soccer ball. Once a player has scored, give them another ball to avoid being hit while collecting a ball from a goal.

#### Procedure

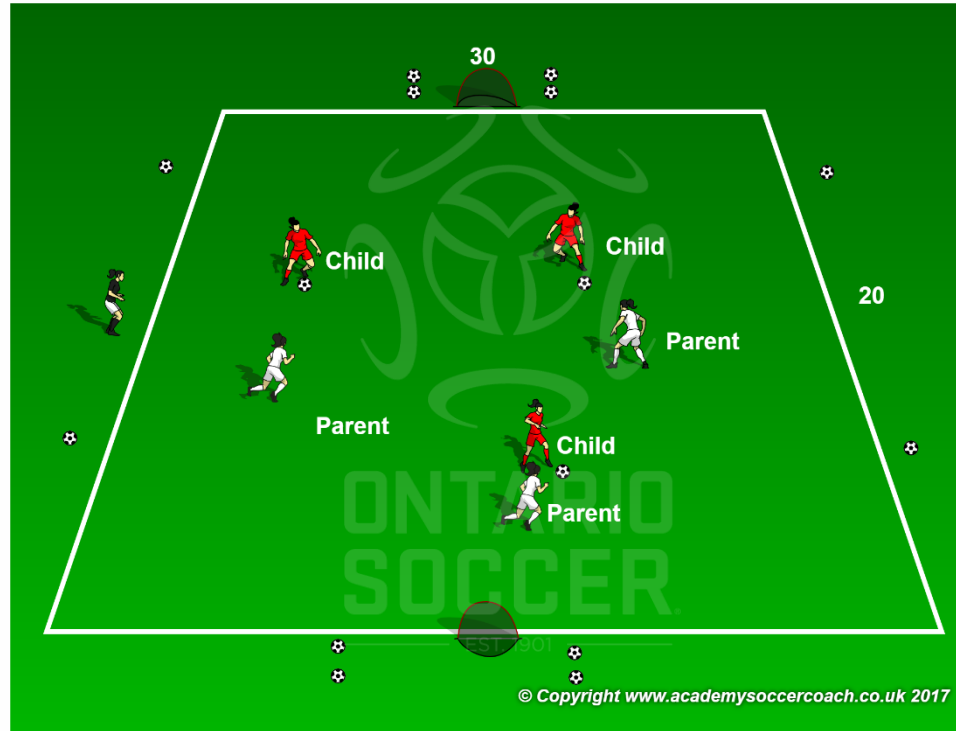
Each player plays as an individual and can score on the opposite goal. Once a player scores they get another ball and score in the other goal.

#### Emphasis

Fun, creativity and celebrating!

#### Progression

N/A



Timing	Area
8 Minutes	30 m x 20 m

#### Technical

Ball mastery  
Running with the ball  
Dribbling  
FUN

#### Psychological

Confidence  
Awareness  
FUN

#### Social

Problem Solving  
Communicating  
FUN

#### Physical

Agility  
Balance  
Co-ordination  
Change of Speed  
FUN

#### 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 Organization Guide](#)
- [Field Organization 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](#)

## Online Practice Videos

## Online Webinars

## Grassroots Curriculum

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

