



# MASSACHUSETTS YOUTH SOCCER

**GOAL** Defending

**Key Qualities** Be Proactive, Take Initiative

**Age Group** 8-U

**Team Tactical Principles** Press the player with the ball, regain the ball

*Is Activity Organized? Game-like? Challenging?*

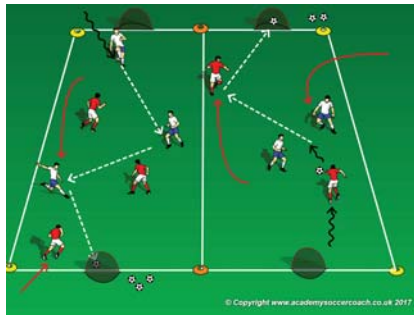
## PLAY - SMALL SIDED GAMES

*Does activity allow for Repetition? Coaching?*

**Objectives:** Regain (Steal) the ball back from the opponents to go and score a goal.

**Organization:** Create two or three 15W x 20L yard fields with a goal at each end. Goals, cones, pinnies, balls.

**Rules:** Each game starts with a kick off. Using local rules, play kick-ins or throw-ins from the sidelines and endlines. Monitor infractions. Play 2v2, 3v2, or 3v3 game per field. Allow players the ability to have free play.



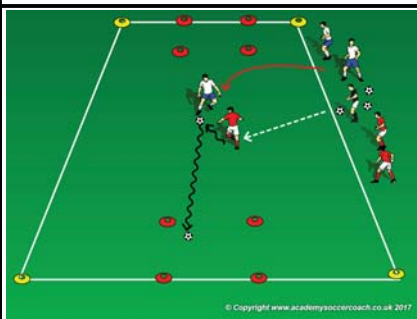
**Coaching Points:** Players closest to the ball go and pressure the attacker with the ball. Steal (regain) the ball from the attacker to go and score.

**Guided Questions:** What is a good indicator players are happy playing the game? They are smiling, playing, and not distracted. What type of instruction should you provide? Say things like "go help", or "go steal the ball".

*Is Activity Organized? Game-like? Challenging?*

## PRACTICE - CORE ACTIVITY

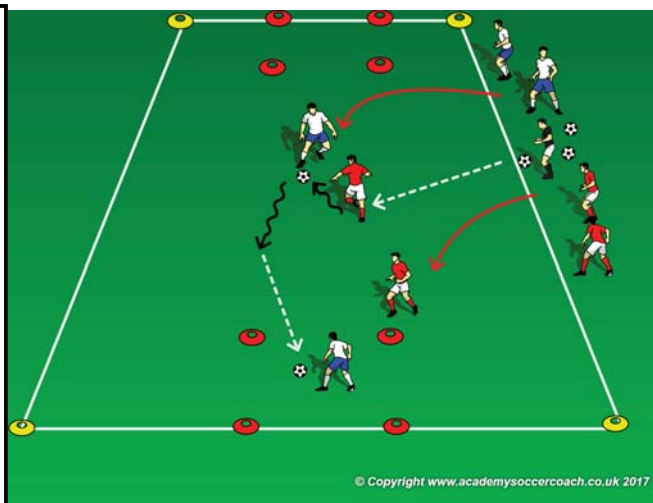
*Does activity allow for Repetition? Coaching?*



### Less Challenging Activity

**1v1 Protect the House:** Play 1v1 to score in the opponents house.

**Rules:** Set up is like core activity. 2 equal teams on either side of coach at midfield sideline. Coach has all balls. Coach plays ball out onto field, 1 player from each team enters the field. Bonus pts for scoring after stealing the ball.

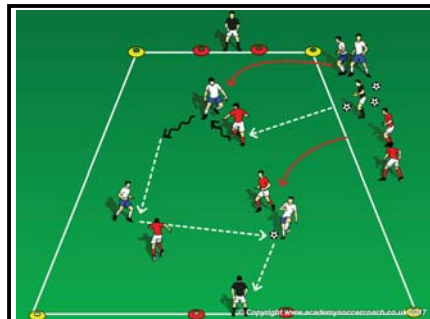


**Activity Duration** 20 min

**# of Intervals** 10

**Time Active** 1 min

**Active Rest** 1 min



### More Challenging Activity

**3v3 to 2 Targets:** Play 3v3 to score by passing to a target.

**Rules:** 2 equal teams on either side of the coach at midfield. Coach has all balls. One target player in a small cone goal on each endline. Coach plays ball onto the field, 3 players from each team enter the field. Bonus pts for scoring after stealing ball.

**2v2 Protect the House:** Play 2v2 to score by putting the ball into the opponents house.

**Organization:** In a 20W x 25L yd grid put a 3W x 3L yd square (or House) off the middle of each end line. See diagram.

**Rules:**

Players in 2 teams on either side of the coach at the midfield sideline. Coach has all the balls. Coach plays a ball out onto the field, 2 players from each team enter the field and play 2v2 to score in the opponents house. Bonus points for scoring after stealing the ball. Play until out of bounds, a score, or 1 minute has passed.

**Coaching Points:** The player who just lost the ball or the player closest to the ball must go and pressure the attacker with the ball. Prevent attackers from playing forward. Steal (regain) the ball to start the attack to go and score.

**Guided Questions:** How do you check for understanding? Ask them, "What do you do if someone from the other team steals the ball from you?" The answer should be, "I go and steal it back." Or ask, "Who should go try to steal the ball back first?" Show them on the field and tell them, "the closest player to the ball".

*Is Activity Organized? Game-like? Challenging?*

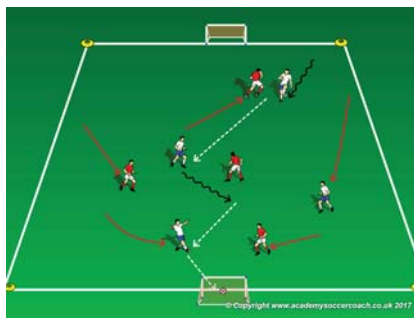
## PLAY - LET THEM PLAY

*Does activity allow for Repetition? Coaching?*

**Objectives:** Steal the ball from the opponents to attack and score goals.

**Organization:** Make a 25W x 35L field w/ a small goal at each end. Make teams of 4, and manage substitutions, fouls, water breaks and rest periods. Goals, cones, pinnies, ball.

**Rules:** All modified 4v4 rules apply, have free play.



**Coaching Points:** Help the closest player to the ball or the player who just lost the ball to know when they should pressure the ball, to steal the ball, to go forward and score.

**Guided Questions:** When should you praise positive play? Immediately after a player has stolen (regained) the ball and kept it, not just kicked it away. How can you acknowledge that praise? With a high-five and a "great job!"