



# Training Methodology & Guidelines

## **SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT OUR COACHES:**

- They are VOLUNTEERS...they're not paid!
- 70% of them have never played or coached the game...in some cases, they're learning along the way
- They're "giving of their time" to help coach your team/child
- They are required to "focus on player enjoyment, engagement, and development"...not Winning



# Training (Coaching) Methodology

## How we coach...

All registered soccer clubs across the country are urged to use the U.S. Youth Soccer coaching methodology...**The Guided Discovery Coaching Process.**

CCSA puts a high emphasis on this coaching methodology, and it is part of the licensing course each of our coaches are required to complete prior to being able to coach a CCSA team.

### **Guided Discovery – what is it?**

Coach – Player Connection

Combination of information and questions

Guiding the players

**Player Empowerment**

## **So what does The Guided Discovery Coaching Process mean in simple terms?**

It means that our coaches are urged (and monitored) to allow your child to learn from the game vs. telling your child what to do every step of the way.

Have you ever seen that coach who stands on the sideline yelling at the players and telling them what to do every time they touch the ball? Of course you have! The Guided Discovery Coaching Methodology promotes the complete opposite of that. Especially as players progress in age and development.


In essence, we want our coaches to do their teaching/training during practices, and use the games as “implementation sessions” against real opposition. If your coach yells out directions the entire game, what is your child really learning? And what is your child going to do when the yelling stops and there’s no one to tell him/her what to do?

The GDCM is designed to let the players learn by doing, and take ownership of their own development by getting involved in figuring out the game. Our coaches won’t tell your child what they should to, but more will “ask your child what they think they should do”. Whatever their answer is part of their development, and consequently forces them to own their choice

## Practice Format: Play – Practice – Play

### Practice Format:

1. **Light Play** (give 'em a ball and let them play – no goals)
2. **Stretch**
3. **Practice** (Activity)
4. **Play** (implement what they learned from practice activity)
5. **Practice** (Activity)
6. **Play** (implement what they learned from practice activity)
7. **Practice** (Activity)
8. **Play** (implement what they learned from practice activity)
9. **Stretch** - Depart



No Activity Should  
Last More Than 15  
Minutes! 2-3 Minute  
Transitions...



# Training Guidelines

## PRACTICE GUIDELINES

**How long and how often are practices?** While we leave this decision up to the individual coach, our general guidelines for practice frequency and duration are as follows:

**U6:** NO WEEKDAY PRACTICES...practice for 30 min. before each Saturday game day. Play game after!

**U8:** 1 practice per week at a maximum of 60 minutes

**U10:** 1-2 practices per week at a maximum of 120 minutes of total practice time per week.

**U12:** 1-2 practices per week at a maximum of 180 minutes of total practice time per week.

**U14/15/19s:** 1-3 practices per week at a maximum of 270 minutes of total practice time per week.

**COACH CHOOSES DAY AND TIME OF PRACTICE!**

**CCSA does not assign practice days and times. Coach discretion.**

## TRAINING TIME GUIDELINES:

- **Academy (U6):** No weekday practices. Practice/warm up 30 minutes prior to game, then play 30 minute game.
- **U8:** 1 practice per week at a **maximum of 45-60 minutes** of total practice time per week.
- **U10:** 1-2 practices per week at a **maximum of 120 minutes** of total practice time per week.
- **U12:** 1-2 practices per week at a **maximum of 180 minutes** of total practice time per week.
- **U14/15:** 1-3 practices per week at a **maximum of 270 minutes** of total practice time per week.
- **U19 (High School Age):** 1-3 practices per week at a **maximum of 360 minutes** of total practice time per week.

## HEADING PROTOCOL:

For players aged **11 and 12**, heading is permitted in matches. However, their practice of heading is limited to **no more than 30 minutes per week**, with **no more than 15–20 headers per player per week**. This limitation is designed to minimize the risk of head injuries while allowing players to develop heading skills safely .

Players aged **13 and older** have no restrictions on heading in either games or practices.

## U6s...

Selfish

Self Centered

Short attention span

“Can be” Non-aggressive

May not want to be there

May have ‘Dominant’ player

## U8s... **MOST CRITICAL AGE!**

Still a bit selfish

More inclined towards “team play”

Still most interested in “Individual Success”

Athletic ability starts to show

Comfort level with friends

Developing attention span

## U10s...

Want to be “team player”

Interested in “Group Success”

Eager to please...coach/parent

Physical abilities differentiate

May have other sports interests

Better attention span

## U12/14s...

Increasing “Gender (Athletic) Differentiation”

Buddy-Buddy behavior (w/ Coach)

Team Success Important

Skill Differentiation - high

Seeks approval

## Age Group Training Emphasis...

- **U6:** 100% Technical (Ball @ feet & movement w/ ball)
- **U8:** 75% Technical  
25% Tactical/Scrimmaging
- **U10/12:** 50% Technical  
50% Tactical
- **U15/19:** 75% Tactical  
25% Technical

## Age Group Training Tempo:

- U6:** Light, non-competitive vs. others.  
Shorter activities with frequent change  
Build confidence...non-challenging
- U8:** Moderate, variably competitive with self & others  
10-15 minute activities with rapid transitions  
Challenge individual, but not vs. others
- U10/12:** Normal, with more competition with others  
15-20 minute activities with rapid transitions  
Challenge individual as part of team
- U15/19:** High intensity with full competition with self and others  
15-20 minute activities demanding speed of play and problem-solving skill development  
Challenge individual as part of team and self-improvement

# Questions about U.S. Youth Soccer's (CCSA's) Training Methodologies and Guidelines?

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