



PLAYER DEVELOPMENT AT THE LEARN TO TRAIN STAGE

(GIRLS AGE 8-11 YEARS, BOYS AGE 9-12 YEARS)

MAIN OBJECTIVE

Learn overall sports skills

This is one of the most important periods of sports skills development for children - it is a sensitive period of accelerated adaptation to skill learning. At this stage children are developmentally ready to learn and acquire the general sports skills that are the cornerstones of all athletic development. As building blocks to this, children need to further develop all fundamental movement skills and be taught fundamental sports skills.

GENERAL SPORT DEVELOPMENT



- Although child may have developed a preference for one sport, for full development they need to engage in at least 2-3 different sports in year.
- Provide developmentally appropriate competitions.
- Encourage unstructured free play.

GENERAL FITNESS SKILLS



- Agility*
- Balance*
- Coordination*
- Speed* - 1st "window" of speed training.
- Flexibility*
- Endurance*
- Intro to strength development.

*Key period of development

ETHICAL & SOCIAL SKILLS



- Learn to compete vs win.
- Learn to win/lose gracefully.
- Develop leadership skills.
- Develop friendships.
- Introduce concepts:
 - Personal best / goal setting
 - Continuous Improvement
 - Fair play - spirit of the rules
 - Ethic over outcome
 - Sportsmanship

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT



- Developing self-concept.
- Feel secure with routine and structure in training.
- Begin judging their behavior and that of others.
- Start recognizing differences in abilities and so risk that they will drop out if they judge themselves as inferior in skill.

MENTAL & COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT



- Awareness of moods.
- Decision making.
- Ethical development.
- Goal setting (personal best)
- Personal responsibility.
- Team work.
- Gain greater understanding of how world works.
- Comprehends direct instructions but may have trouble perceiving abstract statements.

COACHING TIPS

- **Players should get as many touches on the ball as possible** - Better opportunity to develop their skills.
- **Focus on the core technical skill application** - Training and games.
- **Don't under value asking OPEN or LEADING questions** - Player feedback will guide the level of instruction.
- **Ensure equal playing time to develop all players.**
- **Positive reinforcement** - Give positive feedback at all times.
- **Create a challenging environment** - Time challenges or mini competitions.
- **Use all teaching tools** - Verbal, Visual & Feeling.
- **"Secret Plan" for every exercise or game** - Create excitement and interest.
- **SHOW & GO** - Don't talk for too long. Demonstrate and let players "feel" the exercise.

DESIRED GENERAL OUTCOMES

Children:

- Feel confident and motivated to participate in physical activities.
- Understand how to lead a healthy lifestyle (Eat healthy, drink mostly water, get your heart going!)
- Develop Fundamental Movement Skills.

Parents understand:

- Children should learn all positions & skills.
- Children should learn FSS in multiple sports throughout the year.
- Children with multi-sport backgrounds are more likely to lead active lifestyles after puberty.
- Children are introduced to competition at this stage but should still play and practice 70% of the time and only compete 30%.