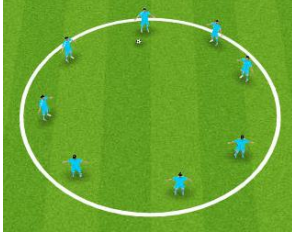


Harleysville FC: Sample U-8 Activities:

Warm-Up: Musical Soccer Balls

Time Needed: 5-10 minutes

**** Great Game to do as a Warm-up while players are arriving ****



Equipment:

- Cones to make a circle
- Soccer Ball for each player

Target Skills:

- Dribbling; Using Foot Brake to stop the ball
- Eyes Up
- Speed/Agility

Setup:

- Create a circle with dome cones on your team's half of the field before players arrive.

Procedures:

- As players arrive, have them dribble inside the circle.
- Once you have at least FOUR players, Introduce the game as "Musical Soccer Balls." On go, players will start dribbling inside the circle.
- When the coach shouts, "**SWITCH,**" all players should stop their ball with their foot brake and run to another soccer ball. Players will then start dribbling with that ball when the coach shouts "Go!"
- REPEAT SEVERAL TIMES so players have opportunities to use several soccer balls.

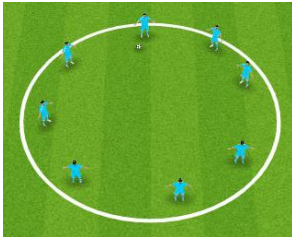
Coaching Points:

- Encourage players to run **QUICKLY** for a new ball.
- Stopping the ball with your foot bake
- Keeping the ball **CLOSE** so that you can stop it quickly

Warm-Up: Freeze Dribbling

Time Needed: 5-10 minutes

**** Great Game to do as a Warm-up while players are arriving ****



Equipment:

- Cones to make a circle
- Soccer Ball for each player

Target Skills:

- Dribbling; Using Foot Brake to stop the ball
- Eyes Up
- Speed/Agility

Setup:

- Create a **LARGE** circle with dome cones on your team's half of the field before players arrive.

Procedures:

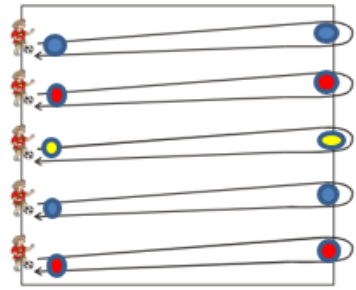
- On go, the players begin dribbling their soccer ball inside the circle area, trying to avoid bumping into other players with their ball.
- When the coach calls out "**FREEZE!**" Players dribble as fast as they can to any of the cones forming the circle and stop the ball with their "foot brake" (sole of the foot).
- Once all have arrived at a cone, Coach Calls out **GO!** And players return inside the circle to begin dribbling again until coach calls out "Freeze!" again.
- Repeat Several Times. Challenge players to dribble faster, keep the ball closer, etc.

Coaching Points:

- Keep the ball close
- Keep your eyes up
- Use both feet
- Stopping the ball with your foot bake
- Keeping the ball **CLOSE** so that you can stop it quickly

Harleysville FC: Sample U-8 Activities:

| Ball Master Time Needed: 5-10 minutes ** Great Game to do as a Warm-up while players are arriving ** | |
|---|--|
| Equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each player has a soccer ball | Setup: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None Players stand anywhere on the practice field area with their soccer ball on the ground. |
| Procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play begins as the coach calls "Go!" All players dribble their ball to either of the Ball Masters (coaches). Once they get near the coach players can PASS the ball to the coach. The Ball Master will then kick the ball to another area on the field. The Ball Masters (Coaches) should be moving about the field at a jogging pace so that the players need to look to find them. Players retrieve their ball each time and continue dribbling back to one of the Ball Masters (coaches) | Coaching Points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>How do you know where your ball is? Look down for it.</i> <i>How do you know where the BALL MASTERS (Coaches) are? Look UP for them.</i> <i>How can you see both the BALL and the BALL MASTER? Look UP and DOWN for them.</i> |
| Link: www.usyouthsocer.org | |


| Warm-Up: The Big Race Time Needed 5 minutes ** Great Game to do as a Warm-up while players are arriving ** | | |
|---|---|---|
|  | Equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soccer ball for every player Dome cones (2 per player) Focus Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dribbling with eyes up Keeping the ball close Dribbling with speed | Set-Up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a grid by lining players up on the sideline with their soccer ball Set up a pair of cones/domes cone at least 10 yards across from the players (as pictured) |
| Procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The coach will say, "Start your engines" after which he will yell go. The players dribble their ball to the other side and around their cone and back to the starting line. The first player back is the race winner. Can add players to the cones as they arrive Challenges: Repeat using different parts of your feet (inside, outside, laces, etc.). Repeat challenging players to dribble faster, keep ball close (SMALL KICKS). | Coaching Points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eyes up to avoid colliding with teammates. Keep the ball close Stop the ball without letting the ball go too far past the cone (foot brake) | |
| Link: https://www.ci.lancaster.oh.us/DocumentCenter/View/522/U6-Drills-PDF?bidId= (Page 16) | | |

Harleysville FC: Sample U-8 Activities:

| Warm-Up: Mow the Lawn Time Needed: 5 minutes ** Great Game to do as a Warm-up while players are arriving ** | | |
|--|---|--|
| Equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every Player with a soccer ball Cones to create a square grid Focus Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dribbling/ball control Keeping the ball close Eyes up to avoid collision | Set-Up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a square with dome cones (Soccer Lawn) Players enter the area with their soccer ball with the mission to “Mow the Lawn” Players should have their soccer balls. | |
| Organization/Procedure: Set-Up: Create a large square grid on the field. | | Key Coaching Points: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each player has a ball at their feet in the designated area. As players enter the area, they should dribble throughout the space trying to cut every piece of grass with your lawn mower (soccer ball) (Complete 2-3x) Encourage players to increase speed by encourage them to finish cutting the lawn (i.e. Almost time to finish, Oh no! we missed a few spots, etc.) | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the players to use both feet to dribble, keep the ball close Speed & Control Eyes up to avoid collision |

| Warm-Up: Walk the Dog Time Needed: 5-10 minutes ** Great Game to do as a Warm-up while players are arriving ** | | |
|---|--|---|
| Equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One Soccer Ball For each Player Target Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Switching from Dribbling to Kicking with Laces | Setup: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None | |
| Procedures: <i>Coaches review how to dribble and how to make a large kick with your LACES before playing this game.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Coach will tell the players to walk their dog by dribbling (slowly/with control) around the practice area. The coach will yell “Oh no, the dog got loose” and the players will kick their ball hard (with their LACES) and immediately chase it. Players should be quick to retrieve their “dog.” Repeat several times until the players get the hang of it. Provide Feedback on kicking with their laces. Additional Challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Now we’re going to add a challenge....when your dog gets loose, the coaches are going to be the “Dog Catcher” try to “catch” your dog first.”</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While players are trying to retrieve their “dog,” The Dog Catcher (coaches) will try to get take their dog. (Coaches should attempt to take the ball, but put fake/light pressure on the players and not really completely steal the ball). | | Coaching Points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dribbling/Ball Control PROVIDE POSITIVE FEEDBACK for kicking the ball with LACES. NO HANDS! |
| Repeat several times | | |

Harleysville FC: Sample U-8 Activities:

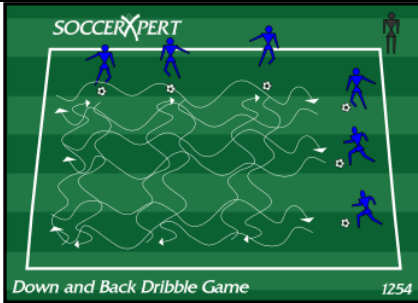
| Dribbling through the Gates Time Needed: 10 -15 minutes | | |
|--|--|--|
|  | Equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ball (one per player) Cones to make "gates" Focus Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eyes up when dribbling Ball control Speed of dribbling | Setup: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a series of "gates" on the field by placing cones roughly shoulder width apart. Space the gates apart so that they're facing different directions and are spread throughout the field (MAKE AT LEAST 6 sets of gates) |
| Procedures: Players play several Rounds of this drill/activity On "go", each player tries to dribble their ball through as many gates as they can during the allotted time period. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Round One: Dribble through as many as you can in two minutes. (Players Count out loud as you go along). At the end of time ask each player how many. (sometimes the kids will embellish this number...just go along with them!) Round Two: See if you can beat your number (encourage players to dribble FASTER!) Round Three: How quickly can you get to each of the gates? When you finish Shoot the ball in the net and cheer for your teammates. <p style="color: red; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 10px;">*** After each round, talk to the players about things they're doing well (i.e. "I like how PLAYER NAME was keeping the ball close."). Then offer a challenge "Let's see if we can...."</p> | | Coaching Points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eyes up to avoid crashing in your teammates and to find the gates. Improve speed of dribbling |
| Website: Dribble Through the Gates | | |

| One v One Time Needed: 10 minutes | | |
|--|---|--|
| Equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pugg Net (on end line) Soccer Balls (behind soccer net) | Setup: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have the players line up on the end line on both sides of the goal (facing toward the center of the field). Coaches stand behind/near the soccer goal. Soccer Balls are placed behind the Pugg Net. | |
| Procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach takes one soccer ball calls out two players names (one player from the left side of the net and one player from the right side of the net) and rolls the ball out toward the center of the field. (try to call players of similar soccer ability to go against each other) Both players attempt to gain possession of the ball and shoot on the goal. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The player who first gained possession tries to keep possession and score. The player who did not gain possession of the ball should attempt to steal the ball away and try to score on the same net. Play ends when the ball goes out of bounds OR a player scores the ball. Repeat using different combinations of players | Coaching Points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> gaining/ maintaining possession, attacking, defending shooting | |
| <p style="color: red; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 10px;">Coaching Tip: Coaches can divide the team into two groups (sometimes split by the most aggressive players in one group and the more timid players in the other group). Each coach can complete the same drill with their group (one group at each of the nets). This will reduce the wait time for players between their turn.</p> | | |

Harleysville FC: Sample U-8 Activities:

Dribble Across a Square/Dribbling in Traffic

Time Needed: 5-10 minutes



Equipment:

- Soccer ball for every player
- Dome cones

Focus Skills:

- Dribbling with eyes up
- Keeping the ball close

Set-Up:

- Create a square with dome cones
- Line half of the players up on one side and the other half of the players on another side (forming an L shape) (See Diagram).
- Players should have their soccer balls.

Procedures:

- On go, have the players all dribble across at the same time to the cones across from them. Players must look up to avoid running into a teammate.
- Players should dribble to the opposite side, and stop their ball when they get across (use their "foot brake" to stop the ball).
- Continue playing with additional challenges (see below). Repeat and challenge players to "beat their score" from before)

Additional Challenges:

- Players dribble across and back to starting point.
- Give players a certain # of times to go across. (repeat multiple times to beat their last score)
- Have players count how many times across in one minute's time (repeat 2x to "beat their score")
- Add the coach to the center and the coach can put "fake pressure" to try to "steal" the players' soccer balls

Later in the season can introduce....

- pull-back and turn to go to the other side. (can be introduced later in the season)
- Discuss/demonstrate pull-back. (can be introduced later in the season)

Coaching Points:

- Eyes up to avoid colliding with teammates.
- Keep the ball close
- Stop the ball without letting the ball go too far past the cone (foot brake)


Introduce later in the season....

- pull-back and turn to go to the other side.
- Discuss/demonstrate pull-back.

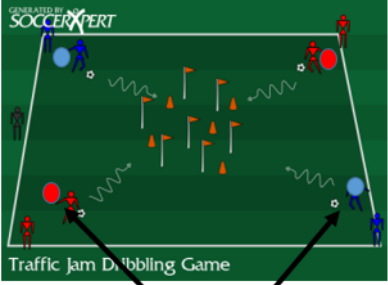
Link: https://www.soccerhelp.com/soccer_drills/Dribble.shtml

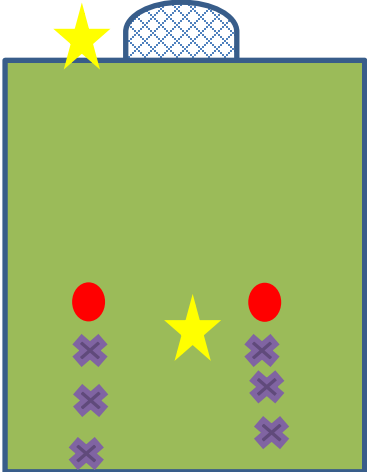
Video Demonstration: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=SbdgdBghG5Q

Harleysville FC: Sample U-8 Activities:

| Red Light, Green Light Time Needed: 10-15 Minutes | | |
|--|---|--|
|  | <p>Equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every Player with a soccer ball • cones (optional) to designate an area to dribble within (or use your practice area) <p>Focus Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dribbling • ball control | <p>Setup:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a grid of cones to create the designated area (or use your practice area). • Each player has a ball. |
| <p><i>** try having the players dribble anywhere within the square/designated area (instead of sideline to sideline). This will discourage players racing to get to the end line!</i></p> | | |
| <p>Introduction: Tell the players you'll be playing Red Light, Green Light. Ask them what red light means, green light, yellow light, etc. Players will dribble the ball in the box (don't go off the road – outside box). <i>Demonstrate and have players practice each command you will be working on this session. (described below) before beginning.</i> First time you play, you might want to start with just red light/green light.</p> | | <p>Coaching Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the players to use SMALL KICKS (baby Kicks) • Try not to 'crash' your car by knocking into another player. • Keep the ball close • Take turns with BOTH feet. • Re-Introduce term "dribbling" • SPEEDING TICKET – If a player is using large kicks and cannot stop the ball |
| <p>Procedures: Players begin dribbling based on the Coaches' Commands -Coach shouts out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Green light" - Players move around the grid randomly. (Demonstrate for players what this will look like) • "Red light" - They stop the ball and put their foot on top (brake). Demonstrate for players, have them show you how they can stop their ball. (Foot Brake) • "Yellow light" – They move around slowly (Demonstrate for players) • "Super green" – They move around fast (speed) Demonstrate for players • "Reverse" -- pull the ball back (demonstrate for the players), practice pulling back several times until the players are comfortable. Play again with all commands. <p>Play for a Couple minutes, Re-Group in the center – Review Coaching Points AND Introduce a new skill:</p> <p><i>You may want to focus on Red/Green/Yellow Lights the first week you play. Then play the following week and introduce Super Green and Reverse. This will keep the game fun and exciting for the players.</i></p> | | |

Harleysville FC: Sample U-8 Activities:

| <h2 style="margin: 0;">Traffic Jam Dribbling</h2> <p style="margin: 0;">Time Needed: 10 – 15 minutes</p> | | |
|---|---|---|
|  <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 5px;">Traffic Jam Dribbling Game</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin-top: 5px;">Players start here!</p> | <p>Equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-4 Soccer Balls 4 corner cones (2 different colors as shown), several dome cones to make center circle (instead of flags as pictured). <p>Focus Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dribbling in traffic | <p>Setup:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a Large Square with 4 corner cones (cones that are diagonal from each other should be the same color see picture). In the center, create a circle made of orange cones (no flags as shown in picture). |
| <p>Procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divide the players evenly at each cone. Two Groups Start with a Soccer Ball (see arrows) In Relay format, have two players start and dribble across (diagonally – i.e. blue dribbles to blue, red dribbles to red) to the other side. When players get to the other side, they should pass their ball to the player that is in the front player of that line, and move to the back of that line. The player that now has the ball will dribble diagonally to where the previous player came from, etc. Continue until all players have gone at least twice. STOP/Give FEEDBACK and Play Again | | <p>Coaching Points:</p> <p>– <i>Emphasis on dribbling/keeping your head up/avoiding collision</i></p> <p>- <i>Stop after a few minutes, provide positive feedback, coaching points, etc. and try again.</i></p> |
| <p><i>Coaching Tips: Start with TWO players starting off with a soccer ball (see arrows). After the players have successfully completed the task, stop, regroup, discuss, and restart this time with a ball at every corner and four players dribble at a time.</i></p> | | |
| <p>Link: https://www.soccerxpert.com/soccerdrills/id1259.aspx</p> | | |

| <h2 style="margin: 0;">Speedy Scoring</h2> <p style="margin: 0;">Time Needed: 10-15 minutes</p> | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every Player with a soccer ball 2 Dome cones <p>Focus Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dribbling with speed Shooting with laces | <p>Setup:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up Dome Cones where you want players to line up Divide the players in half – half at one dome cone, half at the other. One coach stands by the net with all the soccer balls and the other near the payers <p style="font-size: x-small; margin-top: 10px;"> ● = Cones ✕ = Players ★ = Coach </p> | <p>Procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach begins by kicking or rolling a ball on the left side or the right side. The first player in that line should approach the ball, gain control of the ball, dribbles toward the net, and attempts to score. Coach then rolls the ball out to the other side so the first player in that line can do the same. Once the player shoots/scores, he/she should go to the OUTSIDE (not to interfere with the other players’ turns) and get in the opposite line they were in before. Continue until all players have taken a turn, repeat 1-2 times. <p>TIPS:</p> <p>~ Coaches can serve a new ball once the previous player begins dribbling toward the net to minimize waiting time.</p> <p>~ As players get the hang of it, coaches can serve multiple balls.</p> |
|  | <p>Coaching Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quickly approaching the soccer ball. Encourage players to keep the ball close while dribbling Shoot with laces | |

Harleysville FC: Sample U-8 Activities:

Clean Your Room

Time Needed: 10-15 minutes

**** This can be a fun game to play with the opposing team, and use the center line of the U8 fields as the center area ****



Equipment:

- Every Player with a soccer ball
- Dome Cones

Focus Skill:

- Striking a ball

Setup:

- Create a grid as shown above.
- Create a Free Zone in the center as shown
- Divide team into 2 groups (or if playing with opposing team, one team goes on one side, the other team on the other side). All players with a soccer ball.

Procedures:

- Tell players the goal of this game is to keep your room clean (having no soccer balls in your room).
- On go, players begin by kicking their soccer ball across the way into the other teams' room.
- As the soccer balls enter your room, players continue kicking the balls to get them out (making the other team's room a "mess!")
- If the ball goes in the free zone the ball becomes dead (coaches can enter and move the ball to one side).

After a couple minutes of play, start a 10 second countdown. When you get to 0, all players freeze and the team with the **least** soccer balls (the cleanest room) is the winner!

Repeat a few times

Link: [Clean your Room Drill](#)

Coaching Points:

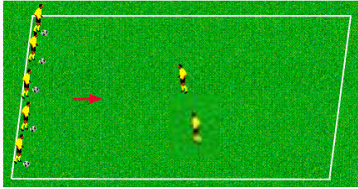
- Encourage proper striking techniques – Non-kicking foot beside the soccer ball; Toe pointed down, kick with LACES!
- **"Oh No! Big Toe"** (use this phrase if player(s) is/are using the toes instead of laces.

Harleysville FC: Sample U-8 Activities:

Sharks & Minnows

Time Needed: 10-15 Minutes

Please note: This is not the best game to play if you have a sensitive team that gets upset more easily. Sometimes players become upset when the ball is stolen from them and can make this game difficult to play!



Equipment:

- Every Player with a soccer ball (except the 2 sharks)

Focus Skills:

- Ball Control (keep ball close, small kicks)

Setup:

- Sideline to Sideline.
- All Players (except the 2 sharks) line up on one sideline as pictured with their soccer ball. Two SHARKS - start in the middle of the grid without a ball, facing the players with the ball.

**** For maximum skill development, minnows should be DRIBBLING the ball with SMALLER kicks (and keeping the ball close). Players should not make LARGE kicks to make it across. Players should have enough control to stop the ball with the bottom of their foot when they get to the other side.**

Introduction: Tell the players that the minnow's job is to make it across the ocean. While the shark's job is to take the soccer ball away from the minnows. When the minnows make it across, they should stop the ball on the sideline. If the shark steals your ball, you will turn in to a shark and help the other sharks.

Procedures:

- The minnows (players with ball) attempt to swim from one end line to the other while keeping their ball away from the sharks. **PLAYERS NEED TO KEEP THE BALL CLOSE – No LARGE KICKS**
- **Ask Players: WHAT SIZE KICKS SHOULD YOU USE IN THIS GAME???**
- The sharks attempt to gain possession and kick the minnow's ball by kicking it away. Once this happens, the minnow becomes a shark.
- **Players who make it to the other sideline should stop the ball on the line (with foot brake), wait for others.**
- Remaining players with ball should now try to make it across to the other side without getting the ball stolen. (Wait until the coach tells them to go).
- **After play stops and the players have made it across – remind the players to use their dribbling skills, small kicks, ball close, etc. Explain to players the need to keep the ball close. Give positive reinforcement to players who are keeping the ball close!**
- Play continues until one player is left.

Repeat the game a couple times

You will want to start with two new sharks each time.

Coaching Points:

- Keep the ball under control
- Stay calm when the sharks get near you.
- Remind players to keep use their DRIBBLING SKILLS and make SMALL KICKS.
- **KEEP THE BALL CLOSE!**
- Use foot brake (stop the ball with the sole of your foot) to stop the ball at the sideline.

Link: [Sharks & Minnows](#)

Harleysville FC: Sample U-8 Activities:

Mud Monsters - Stuck in the Mud

Time Needed: 10 Minutes



Equipment:

- Every Player with a soccer ball (except the Mud Monsters)

Focus Skills:

- Dribbling
- Ball Control
- Communication
- Teamwork

Setup:

- Create a LARGE square with 4 cones (to form the white box area) AND 4 cones of a different color to make the mud-monster area (see orange cones in the diagram).
- TWO Players are selected as the mud-monsters and start off in the small area of dome cones (without soccer ball)
- Remaining players enter the large grid with their soccer ball.

Introduction: Tell the players that the Mud Monsters jobs is steal the soccer balls from all of the players. The players in the grid should avoid the Mud Monsters.

Procedures:

- On Go, players in the grid should begin dribbling inside the designated area to get started and continue dribbling as they prepare to avoid the Mud Monsters.
- Coach will announce "Release the Mud Monsters" and the two mud-monsters enter the grid and attempt to kick the ball away from the players inside the grid.
 - If a player's ball is kicked out of the LARGE grid: the player must grab his/her ball, re-enter the grid, hold the soccer ball up in the air and spread their legs and is now STUCK IN THE MUD!
 - Ball is NOT considered stolen until it leaves the large grid. If a mud-monster is attempting to steal a player's ball the player should not give up on the play and keep fighting for the ball until the ball is kicked out OR the Mud Monster Gives up.
- If you are STUCK IN THE MUD, in order to become free, another player must kick their ball through the player's legs. (those stuck in the mud can call teammates for help).
- Play continues for a few minutes. You can end the round by counting back from 10 and seeing how many people were free vs. stuck in the mud.
- The Round can also end if all the players are stuck in the mud at one time and there's no one to free them.
- **Repeat the game a couple times.** You will want to start with two new sharks each time.

VARIATIONS:

~ Coaches can be the Mud Monsters if there are limited number of players available.

Coaching Points:

-Change of direction and pace to get away from Mud Monsters

Dribble with head up to be aware of surroundings

Teamwork – help your teammates out if they're stuck in the mud.

Communication – Talk to your teammates to get help if you're stuck.

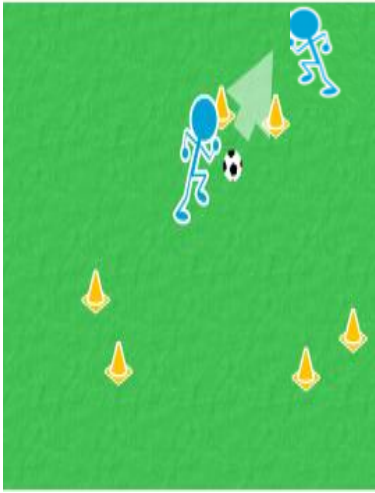
Harleysville FC: Sample U-8 Activities:

PASSING through the Gates

Equipment: Every PAIR with a soccer ball, Cones to make gates

Time Required: 10 Minutes

Organization/Procedures



Setup: Create a series of “gates” on the field by placing cones roughly shoulder width apart. Space the gates apart so that they’re facing different directions and are spread throughout the field (See Picture) (MAKE AT LEAST 6 sets of gates)

Procedure:

Coaches should break the team up into PAIRS. Each PAIR takes a soccer ball (remaining soccer balls can be placed in the net). One person in the pair will start with the ball (passer), the other player is without the ball (receiver)

On “go”, the players in the pairs WITHOUT the ball will run to an empty gate. Their partner with the ball will dribble/run to that gate (on the other side) and pass the ball through to their partner. The player who received the ball will now follow the player without the ball to a new gate. Continue for several minutes as the players work on their passing/receiving.

- **Round One:** PASS through as many as you can in two minutes. (Count out loud as you go along). Once time is up, ask player how many their pair passed through.
- **Round Two:** See if you can beat your number (encourage players to move faster to the empty gates)

Key Coaching Points:

- Eyes up to avoid crashing in your teammates and to find the gates.
- Pass with the INSIDE of your foot
- Receive the pass with the inside of your foot.