



# U6 Pre-Season Clinic

*Logistics, Schedule, Techniques*

## Introduction

The U6 division provides an introductory soccer experience for the youngest one and a half years of our league. It is run by the parents of those children, for those children. In many cases it is also the first “coaching” experience for the parents. It is the goal of our association to provide an enjoyable experience for both the parents and players so that they will return to our program each season.

The purpose of this clinic is to prepare our volunteer coaches for the duties expected of them and to make them aware of their responsibilities for teaching safe and proper techniques to young athletes.

## Administrative

Here's a list of things our group will be responsible for:

- All coaches must have background checks in accordance with Township regulations. If you set foot on the field without such a badge be prepared to answer to a judge. This is a township matter, not just a league matter.
- All coaches must complete online concussion training and turn in certificate to association president
- Field and equipment must be ready for each session before players arrive
- First Aid & contacting emergency services (we administer bandages, ice packs & have phones that reach 9-1-1)
- Lightning – for this division one flash means we're done for the day (off the field for 30 minutes after the last flash)
- Only registered players are allowed to participate. Registered means they show up on league presidents list.
- Distribute team shirts (parents can make this a real headache)
- Collect candy sales or buy out money, plus late fee where applicable.
- Code of ethics forms
- Organize players for Photo Day
- Make sure all players are aware of the schedule (take attendance)
- Reschedule rainouts
- Help with 50-50 ticket sales
- Get players to end of season skate party (not held every year)

## Teaching Proper Techniques

Use the following checklist of things to consider when teaching a technique:

- Consider what is appropriate for the age group you are coaching
- Learn everyone's names & make sure the players learn each others names
- Consider differences in maturity and experience within the age group
- Do the kids understand you? Are you getting your point across? If you are speaking for 60 seconds it's too long for this group
- Keep techniques simple and basic
- Practice the technique then incorporate into a game
- Use methods that allow each participant to achieve success

- Get everyone involved and keep them involved. One ball per player for this group.
- Avoid frustrating phrases like "It's easy!" and "Why can't you do it?"
- Allow time for individual instruction
- Use better skilled players to demonstrate
- Find some portion of the execution of the technique that a player did well and give him or her a compliment
- Show how specific parts of skills/techniques lead to the whole or complete skill
- Players should be tired at the end of the session
- If something you wanted to do isn't working, move on
- End on a positive note

### **Organization of Practice Topics to be Covered**

The key to a successful practice is making sure every child is involved and there is no idle time. When planning practice sessions consider the following:

- Site / Age group / Roster size
- Experience factor
- How many times to practice each week? (ONCE) When? (SATURDAY AM)
- How long to practice (60-75 minutes)
- Skill to cover
- Games to use
- Break your practice down- team meeting, warm-up, skills, drills, fun time, cool down
- Set goals- what does each practice lead to...evaluate your practices at the end of each week...comments
- Team information, phone numbers, medical release, consent forms (*coach should have access to at all times*)
- Keep practices moving, kids easily become bored and cause discipline problems.

### **How to Conduct Your Practice**

When running practice sessions consider the following:

- If you fail to plan, plan to fail
- Start on time
- Safety check – field, equipment, first aid kit, ice, cell phone, contact info...
- Brief team meeting-preview today's practice
- Warm-up (5 mins stretch and warm muscles) – teach for life
- Make sure players know each other's names
- Be flexible. Adjust complexity of activities.
- Station work- players spend 5-10 minutes at each station working on a specific skill, moving to the next station at the sound of the whistle- 4-6 stations
- Water/rest break- 2-3 minutes
- Use fun game incorporating skills and activities used earlier- 10 minutes
- Brief review- tell when next practice will be, end on a positive note- say something positive about each player
- Make sure you are aware of any special medical needs
- Recruit helpers
- Take advantage of training
- Watch other teams practice