

GOALS FOR COACHES

Fun—For 4 to 8 year olds, they play completely for fun. For players 10 to 12 years old, they play for competitive fun, and beyond that, it is mostly for the competition and camaraderie.

Fitness—Always include warm-up and conditioning exercises in your practice sessions. Challenge your players to work on agility and strength drills at home. Any time you are faster and stronger, you'll be a better player.

Teamwork—Young players are very “me” oriented and have very little awareness of the team or “us”. Balance your team by equalizing skills, sizes and abilities. Having strong players help less skilled players can help the less-skilled player greatly.

Skills—Depending on the age of your team, you will have to modify the information you teach slightly or at least lower your expectations. Be sure to prepare your practice sessions in advance. Practice and review previously taught skills, then introduce and practice new skills. Encourage other skills in your “Team Talks”, such as communication and decision-making skills.

Respect—Your leadership and example will instill most of these points. For them to respect themselves, they must feel good about themselves. So, a little praise for minor or major accomplishments goes a long way, and guarantees their respect for you.

- Respect for the game.
- Respect for them.
- Respect for you, the coach. You will foster this by listening and respecting them.
- Respect for the other players and other teams.
- Respect for the rules.
- Respect for the officials.