

L - LONG

T - TERM

P - PLAYER

D - DEVELOPMENT



**FEDS U8 Program**

# WELCOME TO FEDS

**The first thing that needs to be acknowledged is that this program could not function without the volunteer coaches, who step up to enable our vision to succeed....THANK YOU.**

**\*\*WE ALWAYS NEED MORE COACHES. PLEASE CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING\*\***

Another vital component is the support, encouragement and positivity that we rely on from parents. This will allow the program to address the desired balance between winning vs development. Hopefully the information in the booklet will make our vision clear and the rationale behind it.

**The U8 program is designed to improve your children in the following areas:**

**COORDINATION**

**MUSCLE MEMORY**

**SOCIAL SKILLS**

**AGILITY**

**TECHNICAL ABILITY**

**TACTICAL UNDERSTANDING OF SOCCER**

All players will be expected to have the following equipment at each session:

**A ball** (let me know if your ball needs re-inflating at any point).

**Appropriate clothing** (Sports attire that allows the players to move freely).

**Appropriate footwear** (Soccer cleats, or light training shoes).

**Shin Guards**

**A water bottle** (drink breaks will be signaled).

## PROGRAM FORMAT

## GIRLS / BOYS

- The U8 program will run for 9 weeks with a field day on the 10th week.
- The program runs on **Tuesdays** and **Thursdays**, from May **21st/23rd** - July **16th/18th**.
- Please have the players ready to go at 7pm!
- The sessions will consist of 2 activities each week, followed by a small sided game (usually 4v4). The following pages show the weekly activity plan and a detailed description of each activity.

## CONTACT:

**If you would like to volunteer as a coach, or to help set up equipment each week please let me know.**

**Also for any inquiries, concerns, or suggestions.**

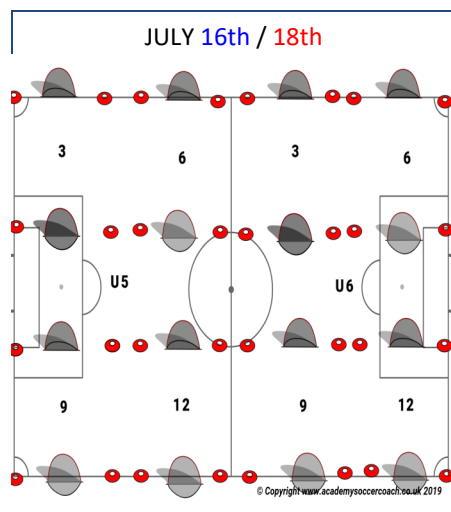
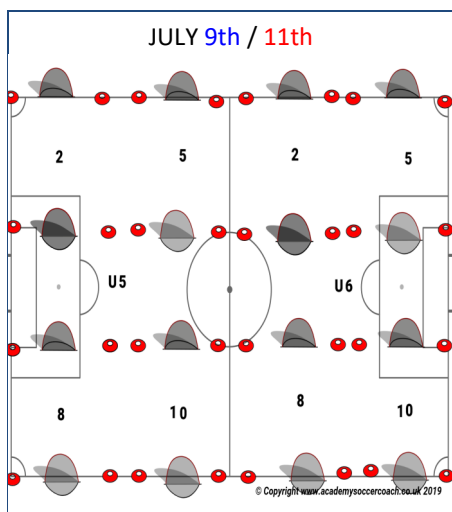
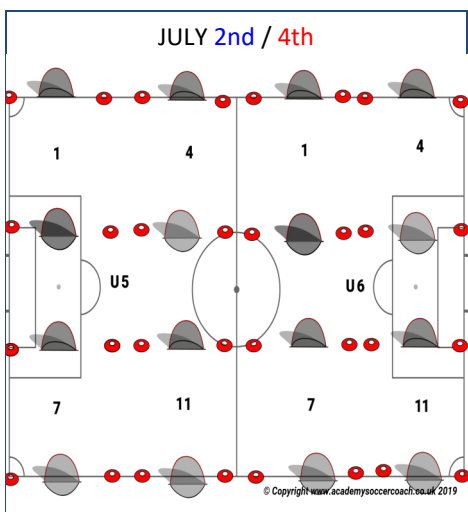
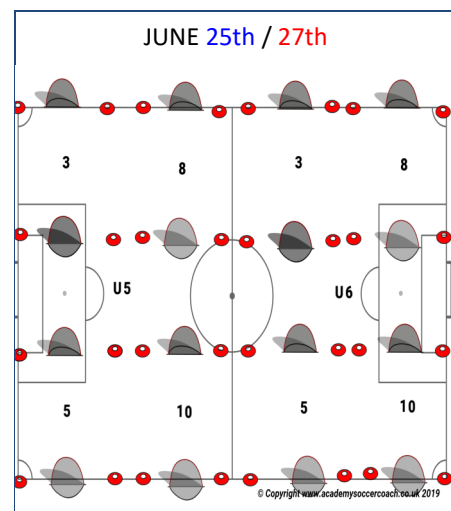
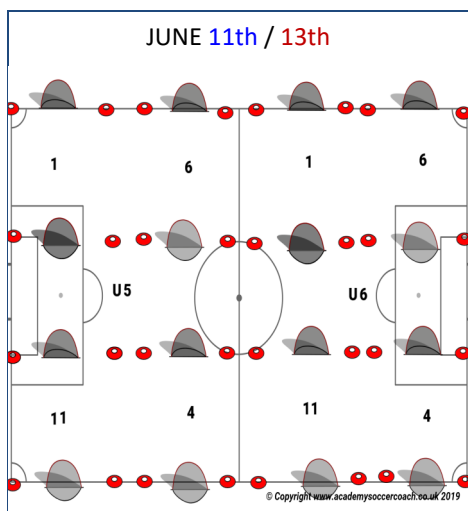
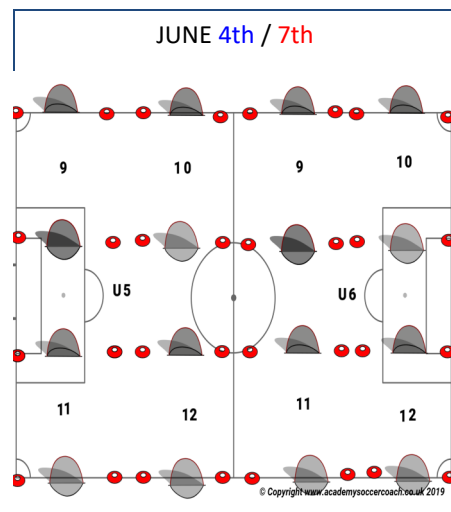
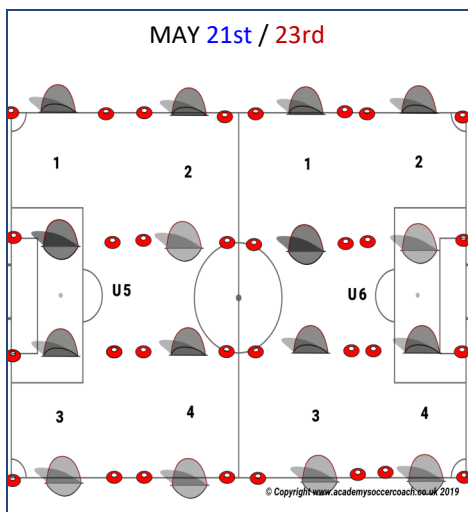
**Dave Smith (Technical Director)**

**fedssoccercoach@gmail.com**

# ACTIVITY PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

# GIRLS / BOYS

Here is a diagram of the activities that we will run each week. A detailed description of each activity can be found on the following pages. (These may change at times, depending on player and coach attendances).

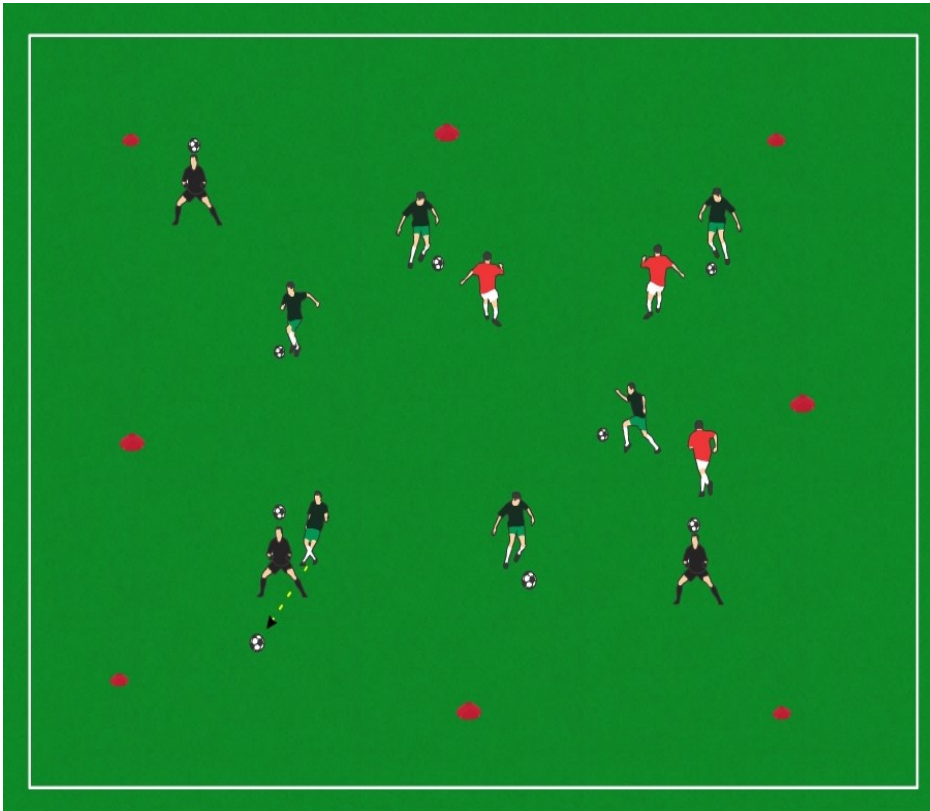


## STUCK IN THE MUD (Fundamentals-Activity 1)



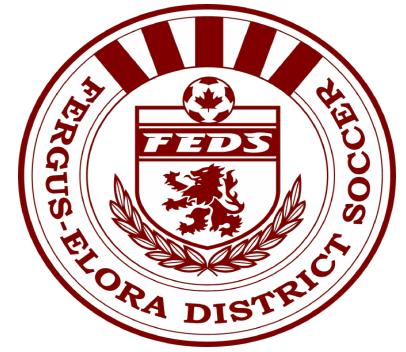
### EMPHASIS:

- Dribbling
- Protecting the ball
- Agility
- Teamwork
- FUN!



- Set up a 20x20m area choose 3 people to be the catchers (Denote them with coloured pinnies). Everyone else is given a ball.
- On the coachers command, the catchers enter the area and attempt to render every player “Stuck In The Mud”. A player becomes stuck in the mud if their ball leaves the area. This can be done by a catcher kicking their ball out, or by the player losing control of their ball and dribbling it out of the area themselves.
- When a player is stuck in the mud, they must stand still with their legs open and hold their ball above their head. They can be freed if another player dribbles a ball through their open legs.
- Play for 1 minute and see how many people the catchers have stuck in the mud at the end of the minute.
- Choose 3 more catchers and repeat the game. The team of catchers with the most players stuck in the mud after a minute are the winners.
- Teach players how to protect their ball when they are pressured by a catcher.
- Players must have their heads up whilst in possession of the ball. This will allow them to see where the catchers are and also to see who needs to be freed.

## Gates (Fundamentals-Activity 2)



### EMPHASIS:

- Dribbling
- Passing
- 1st Touch
- Decision Making
- Agility
- FUN!

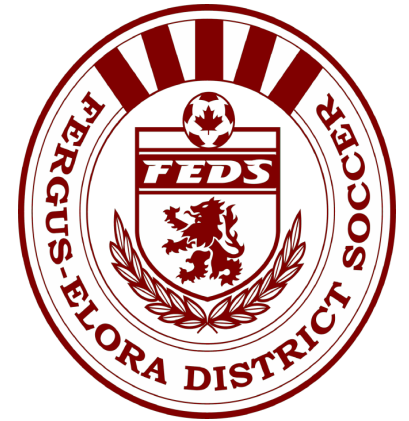
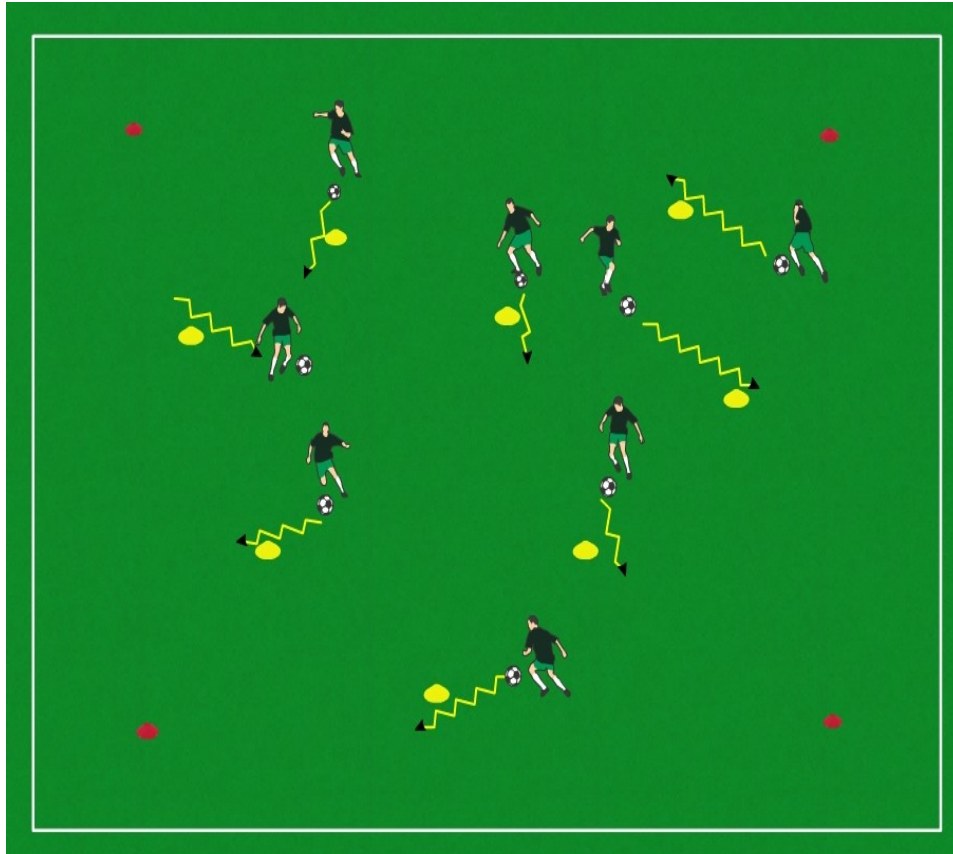


- Set up gates (approx. 1m wide) as shown around the area. Every player starts with a ball.
- Ask players to dribble through as many gates as possible in a 1 minute period. Try again and see if they can beat their score.
- Players get into pairs, with one ball between them. The player with the ball is the attacker and tries to dribble through as many gates as possible, the other player acts as a defender and tries to block the gates and win the ball off the attacker. If the defender wins the ball, they give it back to the attacker and play continues. Play for 1 minute and switch roles.
- In their pairs, players now act as a team and try to see how many gates they can pass the ball through to each other in 1 minute. Let them attempt twice and try to improve on their score.

COACH - Attackers should be encouraged to switch directions and attack a different gate, depending on the position of the defender.

COACH - Communication, a first touch into space and accurate passing will improve the players performance when passing through the gates to each other.

## Ball Familiarity (Fundamentals-Activity 3)



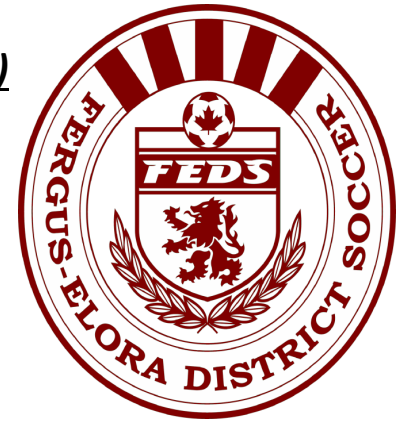
### EMPHASIS:

- Technique
- dribbling
- Coordination
- Agility
- Confidence.

- 25m x 20m area. Place cones around the area (at least one per player). Each player has a ball.
- 1. **Ball familiarity:** Ask players to dribble around the area. Encourage them to use both feet and both sides of each foot. Next ask the players to perform techniques that you call out “BALL DANCING”, “SIDE TAPS” etc.
- 2. **Coordination:** Shout out a part of the body “HEAD”, “KNEE” etc. The players must touch their ball with that part of the body and then keep on dribbling.
- 3. **Technique:** Ask the players to approach a cone and perform a trick. They should pretend that the cone is a defender. Ask the players if they know any tricks that the group can try. Ask them to demonstrate the technique.
- 4. **Speed:** See how many cones the players can dribble around in 1 minute. Let them try again and attempt to improve on their score.

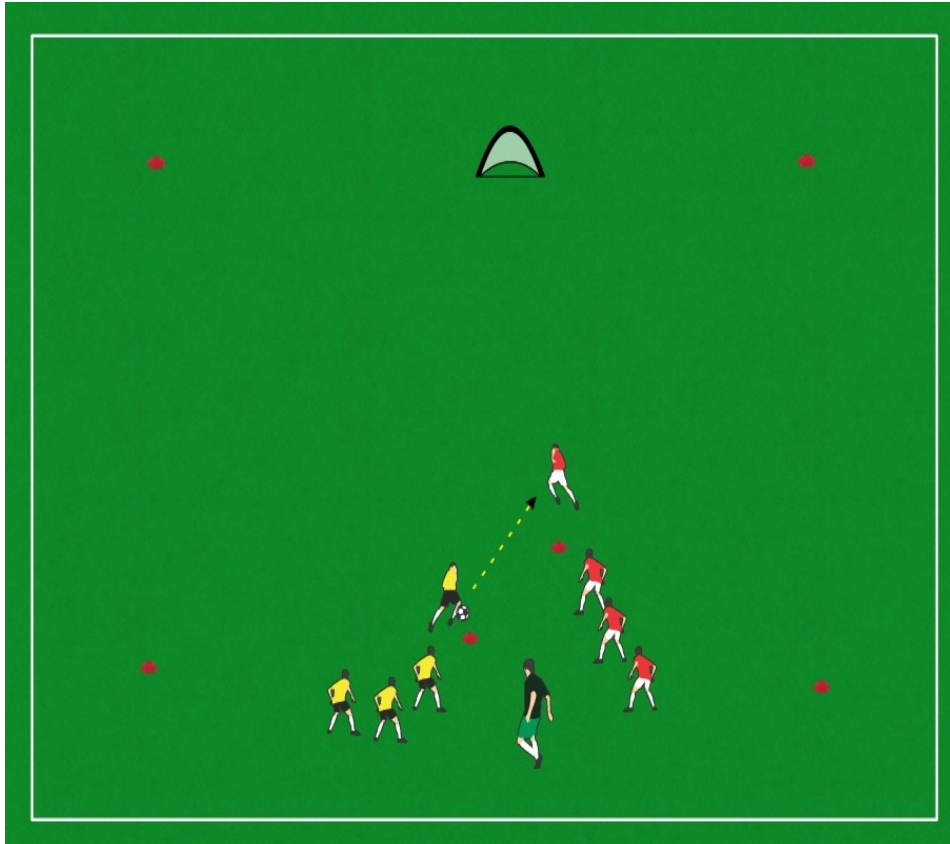


## 1v1 WITH AN ADVANCED POSITION (Fundamentals-Activity 4)



### EMPHASIS:

- Dribbling
- Technique
- Speed
- Finishing
- FUN!



- 20m x 20m area. A goal placed at one end and players placed at opposite end. Split the group into defenders and attackers. Place the defenders at the furthestmost cone and the attackers at the cone closest to the goal.
- Defender starts with the ball. They pass the ball to the attacker and then run to put pressure on the attack from behind.
- The attacker should attempt to cut in front of the defender. This will allow the attacker to protect the ball better.
- The attackers first touch should be out in front of them, so they can begin to advance as soon as they receive the ball.
- Encourage attacker to take care with the finish, so they hit the target.
- Attacker joins defending line and defender joins attacking line.

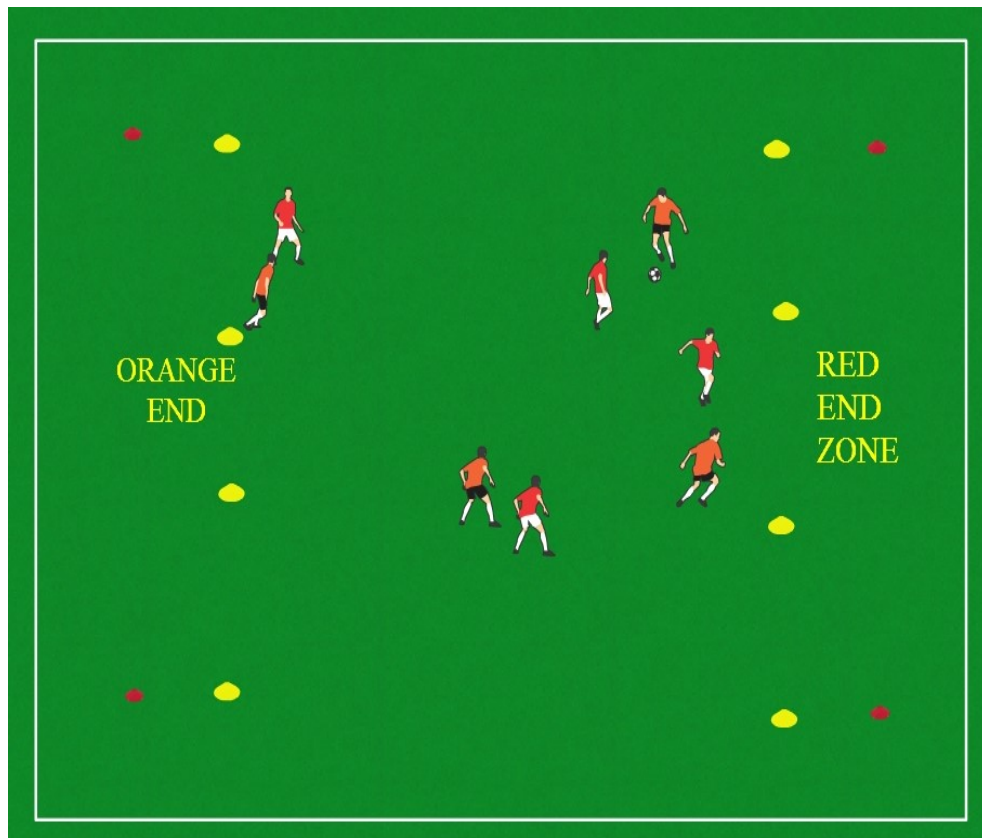


## SMALL SIDED GAME WITH END ZONES (Fundamentals-Activity 5)



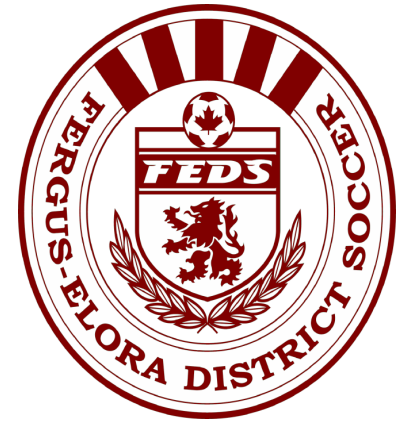
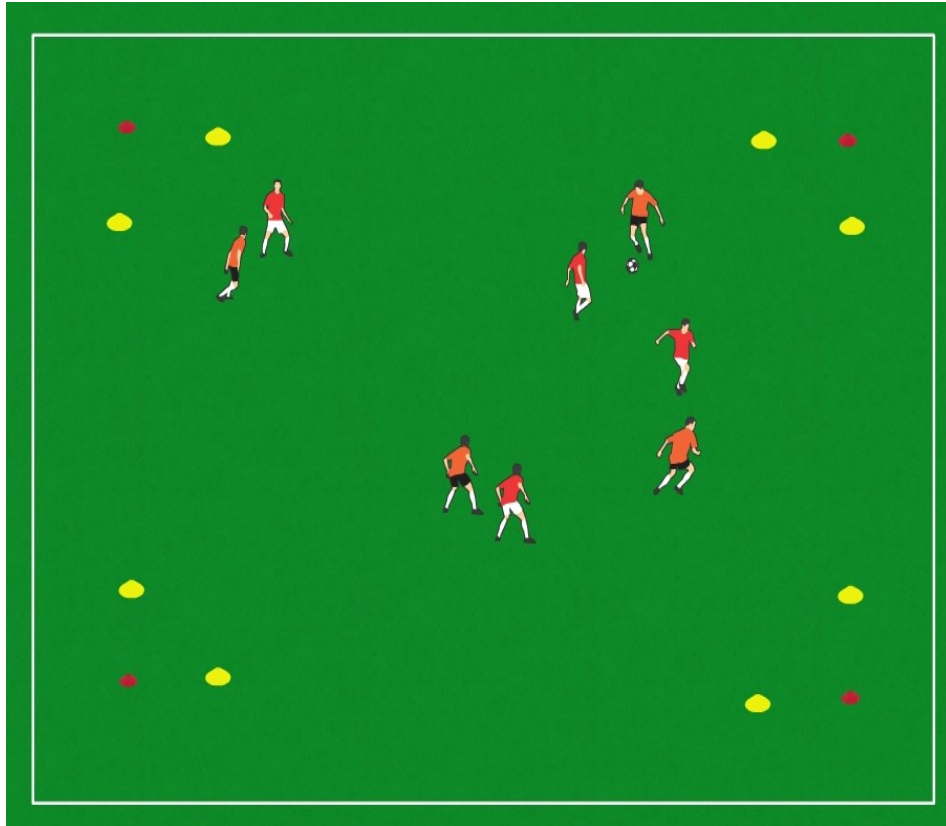
### **EMPHASIS:**

- Spatial Awareness
- Passing
- Creating space
- Team work
- FUN!



- 20m x 20m area. 2.5m “end zone” at either end of area. Split group into 2 teams and give 1 team pinnies. Increase area if need be.
- Small sided game where goals are scored by completing a pass to a team mate in the other teams end zone.
- When a team has possession of the ball they must use depth and width to create space and work as a team to support each other.
- Once a goal is scored the opposing team gets the ball. The team that just scored backs off and gives the attacking team one free pass before pressuring the play.
- Encourage attackers to change directions and attack a different part of the end zone if it gets too crowded. Players can also pretend to attack one area and then pass to a team mate who is in a better position to score.
- Players need to use spatial awareness and be alert to any potential defensive weaknesses across the end zone.

## SMALL SIDED GAME WITH 4 GOALS (Fundamentals-Activity 6)



### **EMPHASIS:**

- Dribbling
- Passing
- Creating space
- Team work
- FUN!

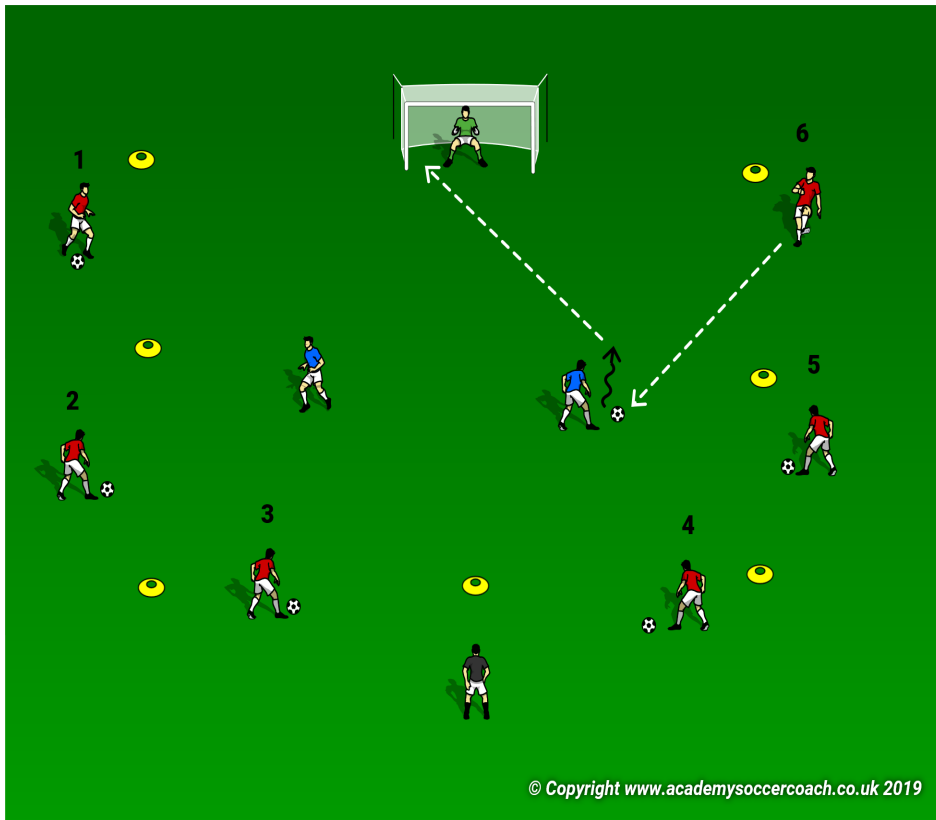
- 20m x 20m area. 2 cones placed in each corner that act as goals. Split group into 2 teams and give 1 team pinnies. Increase area if need be.
- Small sided game where goals are scored by dribbling through a set of cones. Players must have control of the ball as the pass through the cones for it to count.
- When a team has possession of the ball they can attack any goal. They must use depth and width to create space and work as a team to support each other.
- Once a goal is scored the opposing team gets the ball. They can't score on the goal that was just scored on.
- Encourage attackers to change directions and attack a different goal if the one they have chosen is too crowded. Players can also pretend to attack one goal and then pass to a team mate who is in a better position to score on a different goal.
- Players need to use spatial awareness to be alert to any potential defensive weaknesses in any direction

## SHOOTING WITH NUMBERS (Fundamentals-Activity 7)



### EMPHASIS:

- 1st Touch
- Shooting
- Coordination
- Awareness
- FUN!



- Set up 15 x 15m area with a goal at one end. 2 Players become shooters and stand inside the area. The rest of the players stand outside the area with a ball each. The outside players are numbered by the coach. Choose a player to be goalie (or the coach can be goalie if players aren't confident enough).
- The coach calls out a number and the first shooter turns to receive a pass from the corresponding player. They should then try to control the ball, turn and shoot in just 3 touches.
- Once the shot has been taken, the coach calls out another number and the second shooter turns to receive a pass from that player. Continue until all of the outside players have passed their ball.
- Let the same shooters try again and then rotate the positions.

COACH - Encourage players to turn as they control the ball, so they can shoot quicker.

COACH - Aim shots low, into the corners of the goal. Shooters should strike the ball with their laces.

COACH - Encourage players to attempt shots with both feet (praise the attempt, not just the result).

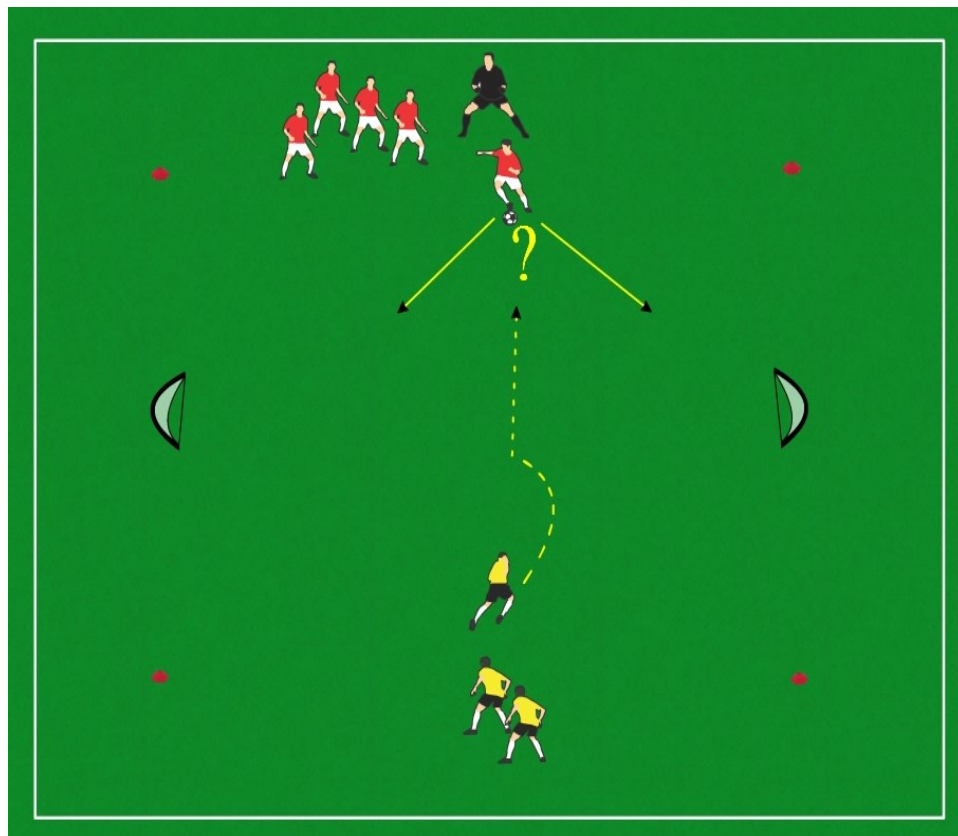
PROGRESSION: A defender can be added inside the area to increase the difficulty.

### 1V1 WITH NETS TO THE SIDE (Fundamentals-Activity 8)



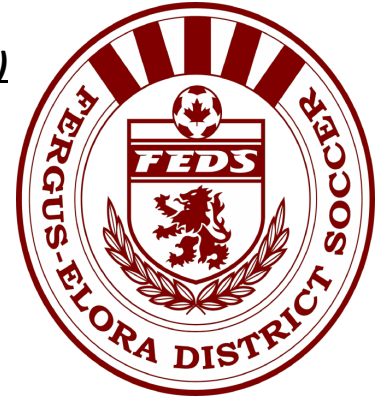
#### **EMPHASIS:**

- Fake and faint.
- Technique
- Speed
- Agility
- FUN!



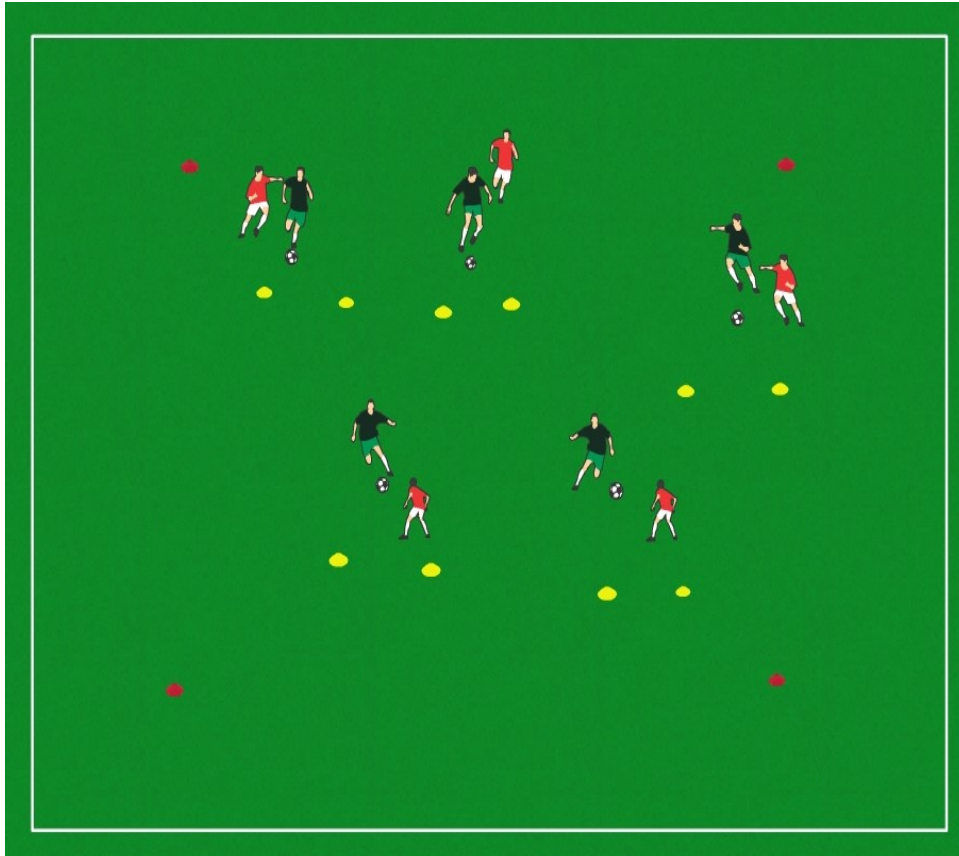
- 20m x 20m area. 1 goal at either side of the area. Split group in half and place half as attackers at one end of area and the other half as defenders at the opposite end.
- Defender starts with the ball. They pass the ball to the attacker and then run to put pressure on the attack. The attacker can choose either goal to attack.
- If the defender gains possession of the ball they must try to play a pass back to the coach (in black).
- The attacker should use a side cut to quickly move the ball in the direction they desire. They should also be encouraged to use a fake, or faint to create more time and space for themselves.
- Attackers need to use their speed and agility to attack the space quickly.
- Encourage the attackers to keep focus and take care with the finish. Accuracy before power when shooting.

## DRIBBLING THROUGH CONES, THEN 1V1 (Fundamentals-Activity 9)



### EMPHASIS:

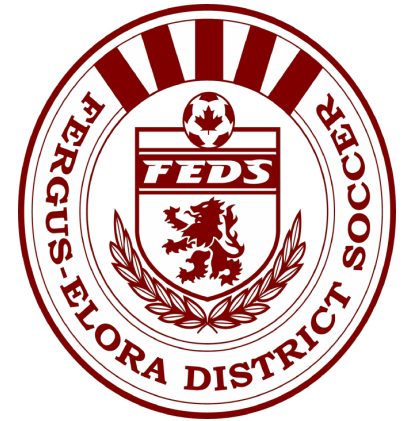
- Dribbling
- Technique
- Coordination
- Agility
- FUN!



- 20m x 20m area. Gates spread around the area. Each player has a ball to begin with. Players split into pairs.
- One of the pair becomes the leader and dribbles through any cone they choose. As they pass through the cone, they perform a move to change direction and head for another cone (inside cut, outside cut, Cruyff turn). Their partner follows them and copies each move.
- Switch roles after 30 seconds. Keep switching until a range of moves have been performed by the players.
- Next the players discard one ball. One player becomes the attacker and the other the defender. The attacker must dribble through as many gates as they can in 30 seconds. Switch roles and repeat so each player gets a few turns to be the attacker.
- During the 1v1, players should be encouraged to keep their options open and head for a different gate if their partner is blocking the one they are trying to go through.

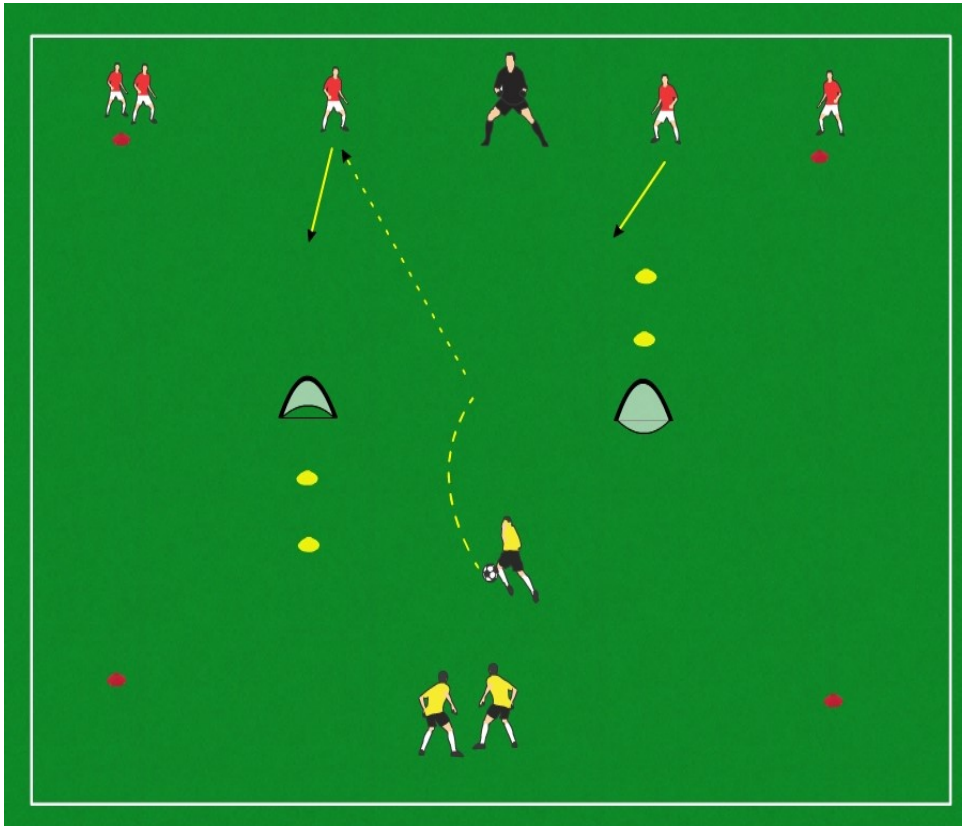


## 2v1 WITH INVERTED GOALS (Fundamentals-Activity 10)



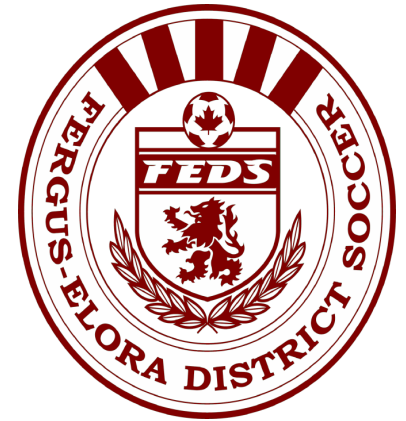
### EMPHASIS:

- Teamwork
- Technique
- Speed
- Agility
- FUN!



- 20m x 20m area. 2 goals 5m apart in middle of area, facing opposite directions. Split group in half and place half as attackers at one end of area and the other half as defenders at the opposite end. 2 attackers and 1 defender take part in activity.
- Defender starts with the ball. They pass the ball to either attacker and then run to put pressure on the attack. The attacker can choose to either attack a goal, or pass to their supporting attacker.
- If the defender gains possession of the ball they must try to play a pass back to the coach (in black).
- The players rotate after each play (the defender joins the attacking line, one attacker joins the defending line and the other attacker plays again).
- Cones can be added to increase the difficulty (as shown in diagram) if too many goals are being scored. The attacker must dribble through the cones before they can score.
- Attackers should use all of the space available to make it hard for the defender.

## POSSESSION PASSES (Fundamentals-Activity 11)



### EMPHASIS:

- Passing
- Teamwork
- Defending
- Movement
- FUN!

- Set up 2 10 x 5m areas with a 5m gap in between. Split the group into two equal teams and place a team in each area.
- One team starts with the ball and attempts to play 5 passes to score a point. 2 players from the opposing team enter the area and try to win the ball. The attacking team keep on passing to see how many points they can score.
- If the defending team wins the ball, they pass the ball across to their team and that team also tries to score points by making 5 passes at a time. 2 players from the opposing team can enter the area and try to win the ball back etc.

COACH - Attacking teams should try to spread out to create as much space as possible.

COACH - Supporting players need to keep on moving, so they can provide passing options.

COACH - Defenders need to work hard and work together to win the ball for their team.

COACH - When defenders win the ball, they should look up early and play an accurate pass to one of their team in the other area.

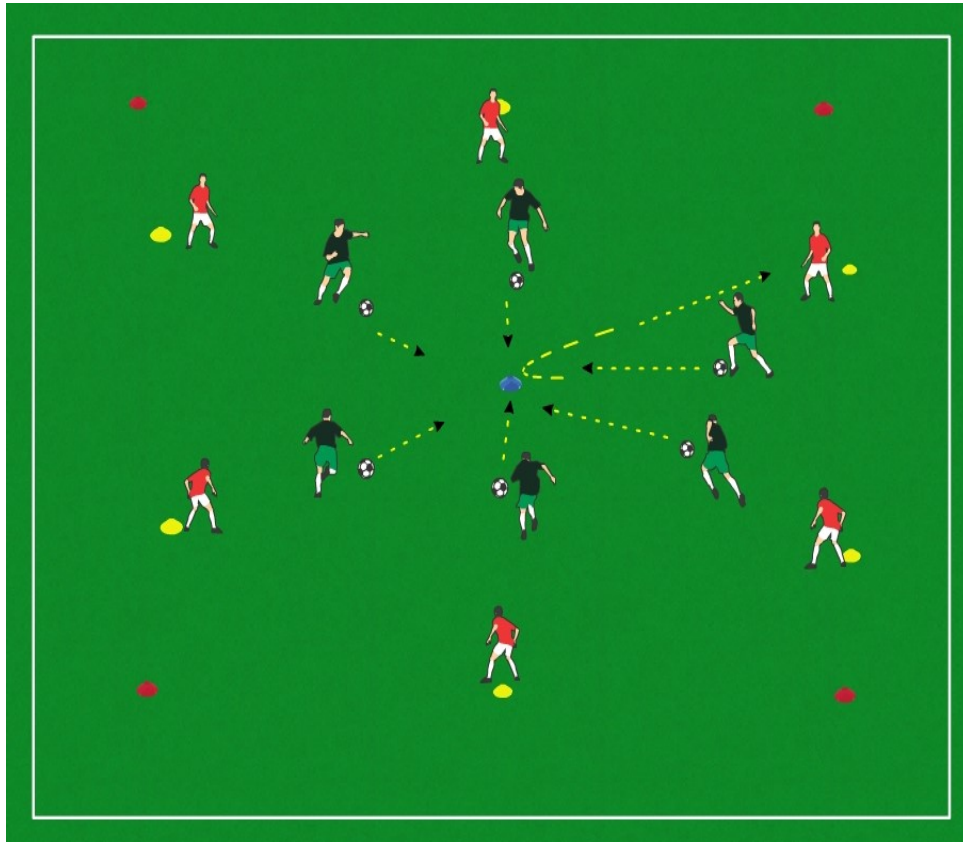


## DRIBBLING TO OUTSIDE PLAYERS (Fundamentals-Activity 12)



### **EMPHASIS:**

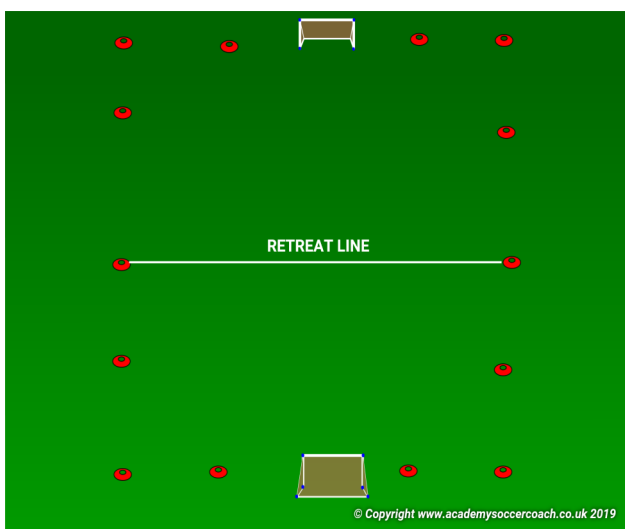
- Dribbling
- Technique
- Coordination
- Agility
- FUN!



- 20m x 20m area. Cones around the outside of the area and one cone in the center of the area. Half the players have a ball.
- Players with a ball dribble to the center and do a turn (inside cut, outside cut, Cruyff turn etc). Next they dribble to an outside cone and exchange the ball with the player on the cone.
- The player on the cone does the same and returns the ball to an outside cone.
- Players need to have their heads up after they turn so they can see which outside player is free.
- Progress the drill by using left/ right foot only

## HOW TO CREATE CONFIDENT AND CREATIVE PLAYERS:

- Encourage players and parents to create a safe, enjoyable and positive playing environment. The emphasis should never be on whether a team is winning or losing. We want to maintain a focus on the following principles:
  1. Are the players having fun.
  2. Are the players working hard and respecting the game.
  3. Are the players working as part of a team.
- Encourage young players to dribble or pass to a team-mate from a re-start, instead of attempting a “big kick” to nobody. We praise the initiative and not the result. If the players keep doing the right thing the results will improve naturally.
- Make sure that the opposing team is being fair and giving enough room during re-starts. Also encourage them to respect the “retreat line” and the reasoning behind it (the retreat line will be at the half way point of the field).
- Be wary that the majority of fouls and hand balls are not intentional at this age. They are mostly due to a lack of coordination. Try to keep the game flowing, rather than stopping it for every minor infraction. Intentional fouls or illegal plays should be dealt with by explaining to the player why what they did was wrong.
- Praise and encourage both teams and most importantly, remember that these young players are learning the game. **BE PATIENT AND FLEXIBLE!**



The retreat line in youth soccer is designed to encourage teams to play the ball out from the back. It gives the goalie and the defenders the space to try and pass the ball short instead of kicking a long pass aimlessly forward.

The opposing team should retreat behind this line whenever a goalkeeper has hold of the ball.

As soon as a defender touches the ball, the opposing team, can start to pressure the ball again.

## COACHING TIPS:

### LEARNING STYLES:

It is important that we are aware of these learning styles when we coach our players. Always try to demonstrate what you want the players to do and also get them to practice, so you know that they understand what you are coaching.

This can also be an effective method of explaining an activity to the players. Use diagrams, or simplified demonstrations to ensure that the players understand the activity. This will allow you to initiate the activities more quickly.



### COACHING STYLES:

**COMMAND:** Coach makes all of the decisions. The players role is to follow the decisions without question. This can be effective for younger players, or players who have little understanding of the game.

**“When you have the ball, I want you to look up quickly and play a pass to a wide player”.**

**QUESTION AND ANSWER:** Coach asks direct questions to the players. This gives the coach the opportunity to gauge if the players understand the topic of the activity. It also gives the players an opportunity to get more involved with their development and gain in confidence.

**“Where can you move, to create a good wide passing option for the ball carrier?”**

**GUIDED DISCOVERY:** Coach will engage with the player, or the team and try to encourage them to solve problems on their own. The questions will be less direct and more vague.

**“Show me how you can work together as a team, to stretch the defence?”**

# FAQ's

- **WHY AREN'T THE SCRIMMIGES LONGER?**

This program is built around the Canada Soccer and Ontario Soccer Association guidelines. Games and activities allow all of the players to have equal time on the ball and it also allows them to learn new skills and techniques in a less hectic and less pressured environment. The purpose of the scrimmage is for the players to further develop the techniques they have learnt in a realistic game setting. We try to encourage a relaxed, not to competitive game environment, so the players have the confidence to take risks without the pressure of making mistakes and letting their team down.

- **WHY DON'T WE KEEP SCORE DURING SCRIMMAGES?**

It isn't so much that we don't keep score, we just don't focus on it. Every player involved in the game and all of the spectators have a pretty good idea what the score is during a scrimmage. If we are going to ask players to take risks and try new techniques during a game, it is inevitable that on occasions the attempt will fail and may result in a goal for the opposing team. We want to focus on the initiative and the attempt rather than the result.

- **WHY ARE THE FIELDS SO SMALL?**

To become competent at soccer, players will be required to demonstrate a range of techniques and skills. Some of these skills include utilizing space with strength and speed and others require close control and balance in tight areas. The problem with too many soccer scrimmages is that the organization and size of the field promotes fast play with kick and chase tactics (the fastest and biggest players succeed, regardless of whether they are technically superior to the other players). Our aim is not to take these attributes away from such players, but to enhance them with the ability to demonstrate close ball control when required. There is always space available on any field. Another mental strategy that our players need to learn is how to create and manipulate this space.

- **WHY DO THEY ONLY PLAY 4V4 DURING SCRIMMAGES?**

The simplest answer to this question is that as the number of players on a field reduces, the number of opportunities for each player to have the ball at any point increases. We want every player to have as many touches as possible, so they can develop the skill that were introduced to them in the activities section.

- **WHAT EQUIPMENT DO I NEED TO PROVIDE FOR MY CHILD?**

Players should have appropriate footwear (ideally soccer cleats). They should also wear shin guards, as the scrimmages and some activities will involve contact. Players should not wear any jewellery, or necklaces, as these can cause harm to themselves, or other people.

- **WILL THERE BE WATER BREAKS?**

Water breaks will be called at the half way point on regular evenings and after each activity on particularly hot evenings. Please stick to the allotted water breaks, as this keeps the session running more smoothly and don't let the players drink too much, just a couple of sips will be enough to rejuvenate them.

- **WHAT IS THE FIRST AID PROCEDURE?**

If any incidents occur during the sessions, please notify myself, or any other coach. There will be a first aid kit at the field, with an emergency action plan attached.

- **WHAT IS THER INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURE?**

If we receive prior notice of imminent lightning storms, we will send an email to all parents, with as much notice as possible. If lightning appears during the session, we will postpone the session and try to reschedule it (this may not always be possible).

## SOUTH RIDGE PARK, ELORA





# **PLAYER/PARENT/COACH AGREEMENT**



## **CLUBS PHILOSOPHY:**

- Create a fun and safe environment.
- Teach the players the fundamentals of soccer.
- Encourage players to be creative and expressive in the way they approach the game.
- Put the focus on fun and development as apposed to winning at all costs
- Always show respect to players. Listen to there insights and opinions.

## **PLAYERS COMMITMENT:**

- Turn up to practices with a positive attitude, ready to work and learn.
- Be dressed and ready to go in cleats and shin guards for the start time of each game/practice.
- Respect the game officials and listen to the coach when they speak and also show respect for my team.
- Work as hard as I can at games/practices and do my part to make it a fun environment.

## **PARENTS COMMITMENT:**

- Respect the officials at every game. They are doing their best and many are also learning.
- Be positive in any comments you make around the players. They are listening!
- Respect the coach and the choices they make, even if you don't always agree.
- Don't shout at, or coach you child to aggressively during games. It generally just confuses them.
- Encourage your child to be on time and let them know how much you enjoy watching them.

**Please let the coach know about any of your child's relevant medical conditions  
and the subsequent emergency treatment.**

## FIELD DAY

There will be a field day at the end of the program. This will take place at Victoria Park fields in Fergus, on Saturday August 3rd. More information will be provided closer to the date.

We will run a group of parent vs player games, so bring appropriate footwear. The players will receive a medal and a complimentary treat at the end of the event.

## EQUIPMENT PICK-UP

There will be an equipment pick up on Saturday May 11th at the Southridge fields in Elora. Players will be able to pick up their uniforms and balls on this day.

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I will leave you with a quote from Sir Ken Robinson. His words express my personal beliefs and the philosophy of FEDS Soccer Club. Thank you for signing up for the program. We will see you in may!

**“Kids will take a chance. If they don’t know, they’ll have a go. They are not frightened of being wrong. If you’re not prepared to be wrong, you’ll never come up with anything original. By the time they are adults most kids have lost this capacity, they have become frightened of being wrong! We are running education systems where mistakes are the worst thing you can make. The result is that we are educating people out of their creative capacities”**

## CONTACTS.

You can reach me at the following email, for any inquiries, concerns, or suggestions.

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