

# Boyne Area 4H Youth Soccer

Under 8

Recreation Coaches Hand Book

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# DEDICATION

This handbook is dedicated to you, the volunteer coach who is in the trenches working with the budding stars of tomorrow. We appreciate the time, effort, and dedication you give, not only to the children of Boyne City, but also the sport of soccer.

This manual was created to help guide you, whether you are a seasoned coach, or if you are just starting out and have never coached soccer before:

The information provided is a guideline to give you a starting point.

- We realize that each and every player is different, as are each and every team.
- We hope this manual is helpful with your coaching endeavors and that you continue to refer to it often throughout your coaching career
- Finally, we wish you an enjoyable season and that you continue to coach for many years to come

As far as the manual is concerned:

- We need feedback...this manual can only get better with your input.

Many Thanks!

The 4H Boyne Area 4H Youth Soccer Committee

## **PHILOSOPHY**

Remember back as a kid?

- You participated in an activity because you could play and have FUN!
- If you didn't have fun...you quit
- If the activity was too hard you quit, too easy and you got bored
- You played because you discovered more about yourself and what you can do
- Winning wasn't the main objective...it was how well YOU performed
- You didn't know strategy or tactics...you just knew YOU
- You learned skills through fun games
- You learned by having as much contact with whatever you were playing with
- You learned by playing all the different positions on the team
- When you were on the side lines...you couldn't wait to get back into the game
- You learned at your own rate

You modeled your behavior by observing how your mother, father and coach acted:

- Towards other players
- Towards the opponents
- Towards the referee
- Towards other parents

## **YOU, AS A COACH, ARE AN INCREDIBLY POWERFUL ROLE MODEL!**

The Boyne Area 4H Youth Soccer Committee wishes that:

- You respect the game of soccer
- You respect the players, opponents, the referee, and parents
- You go about your teachings in a thorough, positive, yet humble manner
- You ensure that players come out of their experience with you as better people, better citizens and better athletes

So please take the responsibility of instructing Boyne's impressionable you with a great deal of care and joy.

# Planning For The Season

## PARENT ORIENTATION MEETING

To make this your season the **BEST EVER!**

- Hold a parent/coach meeting at the beginning of your first practice session
- The invested time will pay dividends for all concerned throughout the season

### **The Purpose of a Parent Orientation Meeting**

- Enables parents to understand the objectives of the team
- Allows parents to become acquainted with you, the coach.
- Inform parents about the nature (and inherent risks) of the sport.
- Articulate your expectations of them and of their children.
- Enables you to address any parents' concerns.
- Establishes clear lines of communication between you, parents, and players.
- Allows you to obtain parental support (assistant coaches, team parents, etc.).

### **How Do You Conduct The Meeting?**

#### Introduce Yourself

- Introduce yourself and assistant coaches (or ask for volunteers at this time).
- Give background information about yourself (why you are coaching, experience).

#### Talk About Your Coaching Philosophy

- Discuss the value of the sport and the health benefits to the children.
- Discuss the philosophy of age appropriate activities.
- State the importance you assign to having fun and developing technique.
- State how you evaluate player development through **skills** and not winning.
- Discuss any team rules and guidelines (e.g., must be there 15 min. before kickoff).
- Let them know that all players will receive equal playing time.

#### Discuss Team Guidelines

- Specifics of the program (e.g. players must appear with proper shoes and properly inflated ball).
- Practice and game schedule can be given to the parents
- Discuss how players must respect opponents, coaches, officials, and the game itself.
- Required equipment (shirts, socks, shorts, shin guards, water bottle).
- Recommended size of ball and soccer shoes.

- Inherent risks (soccer is a contact sport, albeit a relatively safe one).
- Briefly discuss rules of the game.

### Discuss Team Management

- Appoint parents to assist with team duties (snack schedule, help with nets/flags).
- Set up telephone tree and /or car-pooling system.

### Furthermore, As a Role Model Coach

- Demonstrate leadership, good sportsmanship, respect, and coach with humility.
- Treat each player fairly.
- Organize practices and teach the game through age appropriate activities/games.
- Provide a safe environment i.e. Inspect playing surface.
- Arrive at practice on time and remain until a parent picks up every child.
- Contribute positively to the development of each player's self-esteem.
- Give regular feedback to players.
- Allow each player to play half of every game.
- Respect referees, know the rules, and conduct yourself respectfully on the field.
- Continue to seek coaching education.
- Define player Responsibilities:
  - Attend practices/games regularly, and arrive on time.
  - Bring proper equipment to each practice and game.
  - Clean your soccer shoes/boots & maintain your equipment.
  - Have your own ball and make sure that it is properly inflated.
  - Inform the coach in advance if it is necessary to miss a practice or game.
  - Try your best at each practice.
  - Work toward good sportsmanship and teamwork.
  - Respect the referees.
  - Be supportive of teammates all of the time.
- Answer questions from the parents.

### Discuss Parent Responsibilities, such as

- Do not coach your child during games. Transport your child to and from practices and games on time.
- Be supportive of all the players (criticism does not improve performance).
- Help your child understand that he/she is contributing to a team effort.
- Focus on mastering skills and having fun, not winning.
- Avoid material rewards for your child (the reward is the fun of playing!).
- Attend games and cheer the team.
- Refrain from criticizing the opponents; be positive with all players.
- Respect the referees (They will make mistakes, but they are doing their best)

## “TRUTHS” ABOUT CHILDREN AND SPORTS

The four underlying concepts provide a number of truths about children and sports that have been identified in other research.

- Fun is pivotal; if it’s not “fun”, young people will not play a sport.
- Skill development is a crucial aspect of fun. It is more important than winning, even among the best athletes.
- Intrinsic rewards (self-knowledge that grows out of self competition) are more important in creating lifetime athletes than are extrinsic rewards (victory or attention from others).
- The most rewarding challenges of sports are those that lead to self-knowledge

## PRINCIPLES OF YOUTH COACHING

- All activities should be age appropriate.
- Give clear, concise brief instructions and correct information.
- There should be a flow of simple to complex activities that is appropriate for the ability of the players and the topic of the practice.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate practice area.
- All activities should promote decision-making.
- All practices should finish with a small-sided scrimmage.

## Under 8 years: 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Graders

### Do you remember being a 6-7 year old?

- You have a lot more movement and coordination experience under your belt
- You still need to work on dribbling
- However, you now enjoy playing with another player

Effective coaching means, we, the coaches need to understand how a 6-7 year old thinks and makes an activity fun for them.

- Fun is still a central factor in their practices
- Since they enjoy playing in pairs...passing and shooting can be introduced into the practices
- At this age...player development will occur if all players are enjoying themselves.

## Typical Characteristics of Under 8 Players

- Tend to play well in pairs – unlike 6 year-olds, these children enjoy playing in pairs. Try to set up the pairs yourself to control the games and manage the personalities.
- Are now able to take another's perspective – they now have a sense of how other's are feeling.
- Still unable to think abstractly – still do not have this capability, be patient *heating and cooling system still less efficient than adults* – still make sure to give frequent water breaks.
- Still much prefer playing to watching – keep everyone active during practice and remember, no lines.
- Limited attention span (on average 15-20 seconds for listening, up to 20 minutes when engaged in a task) – this may vary greatly on any given day depending on school, diet, etc. Try to get a gauge each day and do not fight crankiness.
- Have an understanding of time and sequence – they now understand “if I do this, then that happens”.
- Many have incorporated a third or fourth speed into play – not all players, but many players now have incorporated a speed or two between stopped and as

fast as possible.

- Extremely aware of adult reactions – be very aware of your verbal and nonverbal reactions, as they look for your reaction frequently.
- Seek out adult approval – be supportive when they ask about their performance or try to show you skills. They very much need reassurance and you need to help build their confidence to try new things at this age.
- Begin to become aware of peer perceptions – a social order is beginning to develop. Be sensitive to this.
- Wide range of abilities between children at this age – children all develop at varying paces. You may have an 8 year-old who seems more like a 10 year-old and one that seems more like a 6 year-old on the same team. Your challenge to is to manage this range in your practice in a way that challenges each player at a level that is reasonable for that player.
- Some will keep score – the competitive motors churn faster in some than others. Surely some parents are fueling the motors with their own. Regardless, we do not need to stress winning and losing at this age. Results should not be important at this age.
- Beginning to develop motor memories – by attempting fundamental technical skills they are training their bodies to remember certain movements.
- Less active imaginations than U6 players – still have active imaginations by adult standards, but some of the silliness that 6 year-olds allowed will not be appreciated by this group. Still use their imaginations, just watch their reactions to games to read how far you can go with things.

## GAME APPLICATION

**GameForm:** 3 on 3 is best option for these ages

**GKStatus:** Optional .Players should not be limited to playing one “position”

**FieldSize:** 4 on 4 (40 yards x 25 yards)—3 on 3 (30 yards x 20 yards)

**BallSize:** 3

When ball goes out of bounds, the game is restarted with a kick-in or dribble-in. No throw-ins.

## **DURATION OF PRACTICE, RATIO OF BALL TO CHILD AT PRACTICE**

- Practices should last 45 to 60 minutes.
- For most of the practice, each player should be actively involved with a ball.
- Games of 1 on 1 or games up to 3 on 3 with multiple balls involved (2:1 ratio of player to ball)
- Games to goals are also enjoyable and effective for this age.

### **CONSIDER THIS:**

- Help your weaker players to develop their confidence with the ball.
- Continue to challenge your stronger players to expand their creativity and confidence.
- Confidence is the key. The more time they spend during practice and games with the ball at their feet, the more comfortable they will become, the more confident they will become, the more they will look to get involved, and the more fun they will have with soccer.
- The level of skill and competence that a 9-year-old exhibits is no indication of the skill and competence that he or she will exhibit at 16 or 18 years of age. You cannot predict which 9-year-old will develop into a real player.
- Work to encourage all your players to be competent and comfortable with the ball. This will give all your players the same opportunity to reach their potential.
- Work during practice to move all your players forward at their own pace.
- Do not be concerned with match results. Be concerned that all your players want the ball at their feet and they want to score. If you can accomplish this, you have successfully allowed your group to grow as soccer players.
- During games, you cannot add more balls/goals during games to give kids more chances with the ball. But you can emphasize certain themes for the players to focus on, such as getting involved, attacking the goal, taking chances, and then spend the length of the game reinforcing these points.
- You want to give your players the green light to experiment and be creative-qualities that, unfortunately at the younger ages, are often discouraged on game day, in the name of being safe and winning

## **Skill Level Objectives**

### **Age Group**

### **Skill Priorities**

**Under 8**

**Dribble with all sides of both feet**

**Dribble out of trouble**

**Dribble past someone**

**Shielding**

**Soft first touch**

**Introduce proper shooting technique**

**Introduce passing**

**EVERY PRACTICE SHOULD INCLUDE A SCRIMMAGE!**

# 4 On 4: Under 8

## Laws of the Game

### Law 1 – The Field of Play:

Dimensions: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.

Length:           minimum 25 yards   maximum 35 yards

Width:            minimum 20 yards maximum 30 yards

Field Markings: Distinctive lines not more than (5) inches wide. The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of four (4) yards is marked around it.

The Goal Area: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line 3 yards from the inside of each goal post. The lines extend into the field of play for a distance of 3 yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines is the goal area

The Penalty Area: None.

Flag posts: None.

The Corner Arc: A quarter circle with a radius of 1 yard from each corner is drawn inside the field of play.

Goals:            Goals must be placed on the center of each goal line. They consist of two upright posts equidistant from the corners and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar. The recommended distance between the posts is eighteen (18) feet and the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is six (6) feet. Goals may be smaller in dimension.

**Law 2 – The Ball:** Size three (3).

**Law 3 – The Number of Players:** A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than four players. There are NO goalkeepers.

Substitutions:   At any stoppage and unlimited.

**Playing time:** Each player SHALL play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time. Teams and games may be coed.

**Law 4 – The Players Equipment:** A player must not use equipment which is dangerous to himself or another player including jewelry. Non-uniform clothing is allowed

**Law 5 – The Referee:** An OFFICIAL (Game Manager or Coordinator or Parent or Coach or Grade 9 referee) may be used. All infringements shall be briefly explained to the offending player.

**Law 6 – The Assistant Referees:** None.

**Law 7 – The Duration of the Match:** The match shall be divided into four (4) equal, 12 minute quarters. There shall be two (2) minute break between quarters one and two and another two (2) minute break between quarters three and four. There shall be a half-time interval of five (5) minutes.

**Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play:** Conform to FIFA, with the exception of the opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play. A kick-off is a way of starting or restarting a play:

- At the start of the match
- After a goal has been scored
- At the start of each quarter of play

**Law 9 – The Ball In and Out of Play:** A ball is out of play when:

- It was wholly crossed the goal line or touch line whether on the ground or in the air
- Play has been stopped by the referee

**Law 10 – The Method of Scoring:** A goal is scored when the whole ball passes over the goal line, between the goal posts and under the crossbar, providing that no infringement of the Laws of the Game has been committed previously by the team scoring the goal

**Law 11 – Offside:** None.

**Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct:** The following fouls and misconduct are penalized:

- Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
- Trips or attempts to trip an opponent

- Jumps at an opponent
- Charges an opponent
- Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
- Pushes an opponent
- Holds an opponent
- Spits at an opponent
- Handles the ball deliberately
- Tackles an opponent to gain possession of the ball, making contact with the opponent before touching the ball.

All fouls result in a direct free kick. The referee/coach/parent must explain ALL infringements to the offending player. No cards shown for misconduct.

**Law 13** – Free Kicks: All free kicks are direct and opponents are at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.

**Law 14** – The Penalty Kick: None.

**Law 15** – The Throw in: A throw-in is a method of restarting play. A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw-in is awarded:

- When the whole ball passes over the touch line, either on the ground or in the air
- From the point where it crossed the touch line
- To the opponents of the player who last touched the ball.

Part of each foot either has to be on the touch line or on the ground outside the touch line. The player must use both hands and delivers the ball from behind and over his/her head. The thrower cannot touch the ball again until it has been touched by another player. For this age group an improperly performed throw-in can be retaken once

**Law 16** – The Goal Kick: The goal kick should be taken within 2-3 yards of the goal line anywhere across the width of the field of play at the nearest point from where the ball was retrieved. Opposing players must be 4 yards away from the ball until it is in play. Any member of the team may take a goal kick.

**Law 17** – The Corner Kick: A corner kick is a method of restarting play. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick, but only against the opposing team. A corner kick is awarded when the whole ball, after being touched by a player of the defending team, passes over the goal line, either on the round or in the air. Opponents remain at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.