

Greater Libertyville Soccer Association

Player Development Curriculum

Player Development Philosophy

The development of a soccer player is a long process in which players progress gradually from a simple to a more complex involvement in the game. This progression requires proper guidance and direction from quality, knowledgeable, licensed coaches. This process cannot be rushed, but players should always compete at a level that is both challenging and demanding. GLSA truly believes that there are 9 elements that are essential for proper player development.

- 1) **Competitive Training Environment** that is demanding, challenging, varied, motivating, enjoyable, encouraging, stimulating and realistic to the game on a regular consistent basis.
- 2) **Quality Coaching** to help, guide, direct and assist players through their youth careers from coaches who are pursuing a greater understanding of the game and how to teach. All staff coaches should at least have their State "E" certificate.
- 3) **Ideal Game Environment** that is age / ability appropriate against teams that will push the players to their maximum capabilities, where players receive "Fear Free" continuous playing time and are encouraged to keep possession goal to goal.
- 4) **Competitive Developmental Environment** where development is emphasized over results and where players and teams are placed on teams or put in leagues that will enhance their development. We must have patience in Youth Player Development to have long term success in making players for life.
- 5) **Quality Referees** who understand and can interpret not only the laws of the game, but also the spirit of the laws. We have an excellent referee training program here at GLSA.
- 6) **Quality Facilities** that are numerous and of high quality. LTSC is one of the best in the nation.
- 7) **Proper Equipment** - Proper boots (shoes), Shin guards, Properly Inflated balls, Proper Dress, Goals.
- 8) **Educational Pipeline** of Administrators, Coaches, Referees that when making decisions and policies consider, if it enhances the development of our players.
- 9) **Player Identification System** that can find the top players, in the Lake County area and place them in the appropriate level and program. Tryouts are essential, as well as advertising for team participation. Our recreational program assists in this manner, as well.

There is no guarantee that a player will reach his or her potential, but at least we must give him or her the opportunity to become "The Best They Can Be".

The following pages are a guideline for player development. Each child should be able perform the skills for their respective ages.

U8 FUN PHASE (The Introduction)

The fascination for the ball, the desire to master it and the thrill of scoring goals provides the launching pad. The joy and pleasure of the game are best nurtured by encouraging freedom of expression and organizing children's play in small groups. The activities are best nurtured by allowing freedom of expression within small group situations.

FUN games and activities to encourage participation

Role of the GLSA Coach: Facilitator, Friendly Helper, Organizer, Patience, Enthusiastic, and Imaginative.

Technique / Tactics: Learning through FUN games and age appropriate activities. Activities should be: Fun, promote decision-making, encourage creativity and have all players participating. NO L's: lines, laps, and lectures. Keep it as simple as possible.

Technical Skills

- Dribbling-all surfaces of foot
- Fast Footwork Exercises
- Mastery of 4 Moves
- Ball Striking

Defending

- Pressure to win the ball back immediately
- Confidence in stepping into conflict situations
- Moving feet to keep opponent in front
- Get goal side

Attacking

- Each training session should start with "street soccer"-have the kids set up small sided games by themselves.

Transition

- Simple transition from attack to defense & defense to attack

Competition in Training

A great Deal of Coaching, Teaching within 3 v 3 ~ 4 v 4 Games

U9 - U10

IN-BETWEEN PHASE

(Critical Transitional Period)

The motivation to learn basic skills is very high at the age level. Children gradually begin to change from being self-centered to being self-critical and develop the need for group and/or team games. The game itself should be central to all skills training. Eleven a-side soccer is too sophisticated and complicated for young players – small sided games, which provide the right amount of pressure for the child’s level of development, are more appropriate.

Role of the GLSA Coach: Sensitive teacher, Patience, Enthusiastic, Ability to demonstrate, and Understanding of Technique.

Tactics Fundamental Tactical Concepts

Play a variety of positions □ Develop the complete player

Attacking: 1 v 1

Support, width, Depth □ 3 v 1 training, in a grid

Defending: 1 v 1

Goal-side; immediate chase, recovery runs, pressure to the ball

Technical Skills

- Dribbling-change of direction
- Fast Footwork Exercises-off of combinations
- Mastery of 6 Moves (u9)
- Mastery of 8 Moves (u10)
- Ball Striking
 1. Off partner pass

Passing

2. Limited one touch!
3. Beginning to master proper technique

Off-ball movement

Defending

- Use of Upper Body – in technique
- Small group (u10)
- Situational defending (10)

Attacking

Combination Play (wall pass, overlap, takeover, up/back)

- Each training session should start with “street soccer”-have the kids set up small sided games by themselves.

Transition

- Continue to Build off of U8 exercises

Competition in Training

DEFINED-continuing to focus on individuals & small groups

U11 - U12 FOUNDATION PHASE (Develop the love for the game)

The effect of the model is very important at this stage of development. Hero worship, identification with successful teams / players and a hunger for imaginative skills typify the mentality of this age. This is a time of transition from self-centered to self-critical. Players of this age have a high arousal level in relation to the training of basic skills. **This is the “Golden Age of Learning” and the most important age for skill development.**

Demonstration is very important and the players learn best by doing. This is also an appropriate time to introduce and teach basic principles of play. It is important to establish discipline from the 1st training session.

Role of the GLSA Coach: Enthusiastic; Possesses soccer awareness; Ability to demonstrate; Knowledge of the key factors of basic skills; Give encouragement

Tactics: “Dawn of Tactical Awareness” Basic principles of play

- Play a variety of positions □ Develop an awareness / complete player
- Promote Attacking Soccer □ Possibly play a 2-3-2

Individual □ 1 v 1

Attacking: Keep possession; Encourage risk taking □ take players on 1 v 1 in proper areas of field.

Defending: Proper pressure (in front and behind); Channel / Force player; immediate chase

Small Group □ 2 v 1, 2 v 2, 3 v 1, 3 v 2, 3 v 3

Attacking: Keep possession □ Support, Combination play □ Wall pass, take over, overlaps, double pass.

Defending: Pressure / Cover; Man marking

A Great Deal of Coaching / Teaching within 4 v 4 & 7 v 7

Technical Skills

Dribbling-Taking balls at speed with ‘live’ first touch

Taking balls into space off of diagonal runs ‘cutting in’

Mastery of 8 Moves (4 with weak foot) u11

Mastery of 8 Moves (6 with weak foot) u12

Mastery of 4 Combination Moves u11

Mastery of 6 Combination Moves u12

Ball Striking

Heading

- Defending, Attacking, Head Passing

Passing-Combinations-Refined

Defending

Emphasis on pressure of 1st defender
Role of 2nd Defender Refined

Attacking

- Playing with other players-give it get it back

Transition

- Recovering players, transition in smaller numbers, not off of possession.

Competition in Training

- High Importance-play games to win in training. ALWAYS.
- Create games in training that have "Last Goal" wins

U13/U14

FORMAL PHASE

(The Commitment)

Adult standards and formal rules become the focal point during this period. The pace of development quickens at this level due to the acceleration of physical and mental maturation. **The demands of skill training as well as physical training loads should increase thus provoking improvement in mental toughness, concentration and diligence.** Awareness of tactics within the game becomes an important facet of the learning process. Players tend to be self-critical, rebellious but have a strong commitment to the team.

Role of the GLSA Coach: Strong personality; soccer knowledgeable; enthusiastic

Tactics: Increase tactical speed (Decision making)

Individual □ 1 v 1

Attacking: Keep Possession; Encourage risk taking □ Take players on 1v1 in proper areas of the field – Promote attacking soccer – Possibly play 3-4-3 formation.

Defending: Proper pressure (in front and behind); channel players; immediate chase.

Small Group □ 2 v 1, 2 v 2, 3 v 2, 3 v 3, 4 v 2, 4 v 4

Attacking: Keep possession □ Support; combo play □ Wall pass, Take over, Overlap, Double pass, Width, Depth, Penetration, Crossing w/ proper runs in the box; Simple set plays

Defending: Pressure, Cover, Balance, Compactness, Delay, Tracking Back, Simple set plays

A Great Deal of Coaching / Teaching within 4 v 4 & 7 v 7

Technical Skills

Turning while Receiving

Ball Striking

Passing-Combinations-Refined

Defending

Defending in a line of four

Defending in a block

Individual and Small Group Pressing

Attacking

- Getting out of the back half of the field
- Counter-Attacking- Teaching to play on the break (Emphasis on our outsides back being the first to break out)

Transition

Positive Transition (in the attack)

- Negative Transition (in the defense)

Competition in Training

- High Importance-play games to win in training. ALWAYS.
- Short, intense bouts with stakes attached. (ex. 3 x 5 min games)
- Demand that speed of training mimics speed of the game.