



Lancaster/Depew Soccer Club

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USSF National Youth License

F.A. Psychology for Soccer - Level 1

NSCAA National Diploma

USSF D - License

Expectations of an under 12 player:

The word “team” now becomes more than an abstract concept and they are, on occasion, looking to pass the ball. This is an excellent age where learning can take place.

However, there is still a wide spread of technical ability and tactical awareness that must be learned. To make training and games an “all or nothing, win at all costs” situation is as inappropriate now as it was at the U-6 level. There should still be an emphasis on the enjoyment of the players. The notion that if the player enjoys the training as a team member, he/she just may do more things with the ball on their own.

Players need to warm up properly, so incorporate a warm up and stretch. They like to solve problems, ask them questions. Technique still needs to be reinforced constantly. Keep asking players to be creative with the ball and to take risks. If they “fail” encourage them to go and take another player on. They need to fall down before they become successful. Ask for feedback from your players, they will tell you what they think is going well and what isn't. Try to hand over some leadership and ownership to the team.

Problem-solving for these players tend to be learned quickly. Children at this age now begin to understand the basic tactical situations of the game and are more aware of movement off the ball and the reasons for tactical choices. They should have the ability to dribble and see the field at the same time. They should be able to trap a ball properly and make one touch passes effectively. Look for your practices to have more pressure activities than in previous years. Players still need to be able to play every position on the field. It will help them in their field and spatial awareness and help them become an all around player. On one team ‘Jonny’ may be a forward but another coach could see him as a defender. This is something that arises many times when players go to college. So get them playing all over the field! And most importantly, keep it fun!!!