



Football Coaching – *The Basics*

Things to Focus On:

1. Always be positive, focus on the small achievements
2. Set a good example, both for your players and their parents
3. Design fun, active games that include lots of repetition and touches on the ball
4. Make the session fun for everybody, including yourself
5. Ask other parents to help out with snacks, carpooling, gear bags, WhatsApp groups, and other team management duties
6. Take the time to make each individual feel important and included in the team
7. Know the developmental guidelines relevant to the players' ages
8. Understand the rules
9. Be organised and try to keep session admin to a minimum – kids have a short attention span and can lose focus
10. Have a routine and use it – especially on the days that you aren't organised

Things to Avoid:

1. Do not commit unless you have the time and means to follow through
2. Do not yell at the referee or opposition
3. Do not give instruction constantly from the sideline; the best learnings can come from self-discovery and making mistakes
4. Don't think you can do everything yourself, accept support and work with other parents
5. Do not let your competitive spirit dictate (or ruin) the game
6. Do not judge how kids will grow up; players develop at different ages and stages
7. Do not let a problem parent get you down
8. Do not forget that children have an immense ability and desire to learn
9. Do not expect miracles or put a focus on winning – losses are just as important as wins
10. Remember that kids who don't have fun won't come back

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Football Language – The Basics

On the Ball:

- Man on
- Head up
- Take a touch
- Have a go
- Share (pass) the ball
- Go with him/her (support)
- Have a shot (do not just shout 'shoot')

Off the Ball:

- Mark up
- Don't dive in (jockey the ball/player)
- Close down the space or player
- Get/stay goal side (defend between your goal and the attacker)

Pre-Match Talks:

- Focus on small goals and learnings from trainings, do not put emphasis on winning
- Emphasise the fact that you are part of a team, whether winning or losing
- Only tell players off if they behave in an unsporting manner
- Encourage players to be confident and creative on the ball, even if they fail at times
- Encourage players to support each other to be better, rather than arguing or being upset

During the Game:

- Praise successful actions or positive attempts
- Focus on effort rather than always execution
- Encourage rather than direct, players should learn at trainings not during games
- Remember that younger players like to have the ball at their feet, do not get upset if passing doesn't happen naturally
- Compliment defenders and people who work to set up goals, rather than just the goal scorers

After the Game:

- Do not review the game, this can be done at training
- Remember that players know how they have played, if it was a "bad day" they do not need reminding
- Encourage parents to focus on positives as they head home, and discourage any in-depth "reviews"

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