



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

# **SOCCER COACHES MANUAL**

**U5/U6**

**YMCA OF HARRISON COUNTY**



# **PRACTICE OUTLINE**

## **YMCA YOUTH SPORTS PRACTICE SESSION PLANS U5/U6**

**Warm-up (5 minutes)**

**Fitness component (5 Minutes)**

**Skills Drills (15 minutes)**

**Game / Play (15 minutes)**

**Team Circle (10 minutes)**

# YMCA YOUTH SPORTS PRACTICE SESSION PLANS

## WEEK 1

### Warm-Up (5 Minutes)

1. Players free kick or dribble the ball using no more than ½ the field.
2. Players dribble or kick at targets (cones or parents) spread out around ½ the field.

### Fitness Component (5 Minutes) GENERAL FITNESS

Following the warm-up, gather your players and briefly discuss the fitness concept for that practice. In this first practice your fitness topic will be more general, but in future practices you will often discuss more specific concepts and issues such as safety, flexibility, healthy habits, and more.

#### **Key Idea:** General Fitness

Gather children about 10 to 15 feet away from a goal or cone. "Everyone jump 10 times. Our muscles help us jump. When you use your muscles a long time without getting too tired, it improves your endurance, which means you can run longer without getting tired. Now run really fast to the goal and back." Wait for them to return. "Running strengthens your heart and lungs. Now touch your toes; try to keep your fingers there while I count. Stretching makes you flexible, like a rubber band. When we play soccer, our bodies run, kick, and move. It makes our bodies stronger and improves our fitness, which means we can run and play longer and faster. Having good physical fitness is important for soccer and for being healthy. At every practice we will talk about fitness in our fitness circles.

# WEEK 1

## Skills/Drills (15 Minutes)

**Dribbling** – Teach dribbling as a series of “little kicks” meant to control the ball. Discuss which part of the foot (outside/inside) you use to dribble.

**Accuracy Game – Bowling for Cones** – Set up 3 cones like bowling alley pins. Place players 10 feet away. Have them kick the ball at the cones seeing how many they can knock down. Have parents ready to re-set cones for next player.

**Red Light/Green Light – Freeze Game** – Have all players with balls on the goal line. Have them start to dribble the ball towards center field. When you blow the whistle they freeze. Make sure all players have control of their ball and stop. If they lose control, they go back to the goal line.

## Game/Play (15 Minutes) KICKING AT CONES

The players should be placed in a circle, approximately 20 feet wide. Place 6 cones inside the circle in various positions. Give the players three balls and tell them that they must kick the balls and knock the cones down. Parents can assist by returning the balls that get kicked out of the circle. You could time them and try to improve the amount of time to knock down all the cones. This will teach kicking accuracy and receiving a pass.



# WEEK 1

## INTRO TO VALUES (10 Minutes)



### TEAM CIRCLE

**Key Idea:** YMCA Four Core Values

Gather players into a circle. "This season we'll talk about the five values of the YMCA. These are values that all good people and teammates have. Number one is CARING. Tell me how you can show caring to others? By helping someone when they fall? Great! Number two is HONESTY. How can you show that you're honest? How about if you tell your parents about something that you accidentally broke? Good! Number three is RESPECT. Do you know what respect is? One way to show respect is by listening to adults when they speak to you, just like you're doing now. Number four is RESPONSIBILITY. If you're responsible, you will pick up after yourself if you make a mess. Don't wait for others to pick up after you. Ask them to share ways that they show the four values in their lives. "Good teammates show these values to each other. We'll talk more about these values during the season.

# WEEK 2

## Warm-Up (5 Minutes)

Have players practice close dribbling. Tell players "Keep the ball close when you run", as they practice. Also, tell players that you will blow the whistle occasionally during practice. When you blow the whistle, they should stop and put a foot on the ball to show they have it under control.



## Fitness Component (5 Minutes)

### CARDIO

**Key Idea:** Cardiorespiratory Fitness

Children gather into a group. "Everyone hold one hand up and make a fist. Squeeze your fist tightly, and then let go. Keep tightening and letting go." Children continue for 10 counts. "Your heart is a special muscle that tightens and relaxes just like your fist is doing. Your heart is about the size of your fist. Let's put our fists over our chests. Every time it tightens, or beats, your heart pumps blood all over. Children continue for 10 counts. When you run during soccer, your heart beats faster. The beat slows down when you slow down. Let's run with high knees for 15 counts while we count together. Stop and feel your heart beat by putting your hand over your chest." Model for players. "Running strengthens your heart and lungs and improves your fitness."

## Skills/Drills (15 Minutes)

### KICKING/TARGETS

#### Egg Hunt:

Kids line up on one goal line. Scatter balls (eggs) on the field. Release kids to get eggs into the opposite goal (basket). Key is to have at least as many balls as kids or even more balls are better.

### Game/Play (15 Minutes)

#### RELAYS/KICKING

Players should be in two single file lines. Place 4 cones in a line directly in front of them. Cones should be approximately 10' apart. The first player in each line should attempt to dribble the ball around the cones and double back to the line. After each player has had a turn, start a relay against each other. Large team practices can use three or four lines. Try to maximize the amount of time the players will touch the ball.

# WEEK 2

## RESPONSIBILITY (10 Minutes)



### TEAM CIRCLE

**Key Idea:** RESPONSIBILITY

Gather players into a group. "I want us all to pretend we are eggs. Eggs have shells that can break. What would happen if we bumped into each other if we were eggs? Right. We would all crack and break. Let's move around the field and still pretend we're eggs. Try not to bump into each other or you'll break!" Continue this activity for about one minute. "We were all good and careful not to bump into each other! So our shells didn't break! That was awesome! You were in charge of your self, or responsible for yourself, when you were moving around. When we are careful not to bump into each other, we are showing responsibility for our space and other players' space. This shows responsibility during practices and games." You are responsible to your team and to yourself to be a part of the team."

# WEEK 3

## **Warm-Up (5 Minutes)** **SOCCER SHAPES**

Each player with a ball. Using different parts of the body (foot, elbow, head, etc.) players make shapes with the ball as ordered by the coach. (i.e. "using your right foot on the ball, make a circle").

## **Fitness Component (5 Minutes)** **MUSCLE STRENGTH/ENDURANCE**

**Key Idea:** Muscular Strength & Endurance

Gather children into a circle. "Everyone find your own space so you don't bump your neighbor. You are going to run in your own spot for 30 seconds, then stop. Ready? Go!" Time children and verbally let them know the time remaining; stop them at the end of the time. "What part of the body did we just use the most when we ran?" Encourage their responses. "When we play soccer, which part of your body do you use the most?" Wait for their responses. "Muscles in our body help us move our legs. Playing soccer will help our leg muscles get stronger and grow bigger."

## **Skills/Drills (15 Minutes)** **DRIBBLING**

The first skill needed to play soccer is dribbling, which is moving and controlling the ball using only the feet. Players can use dribbling to move the ball down the field for a pass or shot, to keep the ball from the opposing team, or to change direction.

Players must be able to use both the insides and outsides of their feet to dribble. To dribble with the inside of the foot, the player turns the foot out, then pushes the ball forward while moving. To dribble with the outside of the foot, the player must turn the foot in, then push the ball slightly forward or to the side.

Players may have trouble dribbling at first. Have them start by walking and dribbling. Once they can do that, ask them to speed up their dribbling pace. Insist that they look up as they dribble and not down at the ball. If they always look down, they are likely to have the ball stolen by an

# WEEK 3

## **DRIBBLING (cont.)**

opponent or may not see a teammate who is open for a pass. Encourage players to use either foot to dribble--this will make it easier for them to protect the ball from opponents.

As your players improve, have them dribble against an opponent. Being marked (guarded) by a defender will require them to vary their speed, change direction, and shield the ball. Have them prepare for defensive pressure by practicing speeding up and slowing down as they dribble and by dribbling around towels or cones.

### **Here are some keys to dribbling:**

- Push the ball softly in the desired direction if you are dribbling close to defenders.
- Look up and watch for other players.
- Keep the ball close to your feet. If it is too far ahead, other players can steal it.
- Shield the ball from opponents.
- Run at a speed at which you can control the ball.
- If you are dribbling fast, push the ball out several feet ahead and sprint to the ball.

**Error:** Letting the ball get away from the player while dribbling.

### **Correction**

- Keep the ball underneath the body, close to the feet.
- Nudge the ball gently in different directions, never letting it get more than a stride's length away.
- Determine whether the grass or ball require adjustments. A highly inflated ball or extremely short grass will cause the ball to roll faster and farther.

### **Game/Play (15 Minutes) RELAYS/SCRIMMAGE**

Set up four goals with cones. Goals should be approximately 8 feet wide. Pair up the players. Ask parents to be goalies. Players will try to score against the parents. They should be encouraged to pass to each other before trying to score. After approximately 30 seconds they should rotate to another goal and repeat. Keep track of how many goals they score.





## **RESPECT (10 Minutes)**



### **TEAM CIRCLE**

**Key Idea:** RESPECT

Gather players into a single file line near two cones about 10 feet apart. "I am going to walk down the line two times. Remember how it feels each time I pass you." Walk down the line and nod to each player. Repeat this, but now tell each player "good game" or "way to play today" and shake their hand. "Which time that I passed by made you feel better?" Ask the players to stand near a cone that represents their answer. "Shaking hands and saying "good game" are important traditions that show we appreciate our opponents' play in the game. It shows respect for your opponents." Divide the team in half and have them practice an end-of-game "respect ritual."

# WEEK 4

## Warm-Up (5 Minutes)

Repeat Relay games from week 3 practice.

## Fitness Component (5 Minutes)

### SAFETY EQUIPMENT

#### **Key Idea:** Safety Equipment & Rules

Bring a small piece of cardboard or a clipboard that can be used as a shield. Get one child to demonstrate. Provide a ball and have the child kick the ball at you at a medium effort. "Watch where the ball goes when Julia kicks it." Allow the ball to hit your legs. Then put the board in front of you, between you and the child kicking. Have the child kick again. "Now watch where the ball goes. This board is just like a shin guard that we wear on our legs. Wearing shin guards protects our legs just like the board protected my legs from the ball." Give each player a turn kicking the ball. "Can you think of other ways to be safe that you should remember to do when you play soccer?"



# WEEK 4

## Skills/ Drills (15 Minutes) PASSING

Passing is another essential skill, as it allows the team to maintain possession of the ball and create scoring opportunities. Passes should be short and crisp; an opposing player is likely to steal long or slow passes. However, players should avoid using passes that are too hard and difficult to control. When passing under pressure, the player should pass, then move into space quickly.

Players should kick short passes with the inside of the foot. Here is the correct technique for short passes:

- Plant the non-kicking foot alongside and near the ball.
- Square up the hips and shoulders to the teammate for whom you intend the pass, and turn out the kicking foot.
- Swing the kicking foot straight at the center of the ball.
- Follow through by swinging the kicking leg well beyond the point of impact with the ball, in the direction of the teammate to whom you are passing the ball.

Sometimes a game situation will call for a player to make a long pass to a teammate across the field. The best way to make a long pass is to loft the ball through the air using the top of the foot. This is the correct technique for lofting passes:

- Plant the non-kicking foot slightly behind and to the side of the ball.
- Point the toes of the kicking foot down, and kick the ball with the shoelace area. Kick under the ball.
- Watch the kicking foot contact the bottom half of the ball and lift it off the ground.



Players should learn to use the outside of the foot to pass to the side, but this technique may be uncomfortable and difficult for them to perform. They also may have difficulty passing with the top of the foot or shoelace area (also called a power pass), as they tend to use their toes instead. Because of these problems, you may want to have young players master the short passes before they learn these other types of passes.

# WEEK 4

## Error Detection and Correction for Passing

### Error

- Lack of accuracy

### Correction

- Plant the non-kicking foot beside the ball with the toes pointed toward the teammate who will receive the pass.
- Square your shoulders and hips to the receiver.
- Keep the kicking foot firm throughout the kicking motion.
- Follow through with the kicking foot.

### Skill Practice

- Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to move to support a teammate with the ball.
- Practice moving to support a teammate with the ball.

### Description

Pairs--Tell partners to practice getting the ball from one end of the field to the other without running with the ball. Ask, "How do you do it?" They should answer "Pass and move forward." After they practice passing the ball and score at the other end, they come back.

## Game/Play (15 Minutes) SMALL-SIDED SCRIMMAGE

Set up four goals, similar to the previous week. However, instead of parent goalies, this will be a 2 on 2 scrimmage. Parents need to assist. 2 players will play defense and 2 players will play offense. After several minutes of play, they should switch from offense to defense.





## HONESTY (10 Minutes)



### TEAM CIRCLE

**Key Idea:** Honesty

Get the players into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. "Can you touch the ball with your hand in soccer? Even if it is an accident? Those of you who think it is okay, stand by this cone. Those of you that think it is not okay, stand by this cone." Wait for players to choose. And then ask them why they chose the cone they did. "Touching the ball with your hand, even if it is an accident is a foul. What should you do if this happens? Those of you who would just keep playing, stand by this cone. Those of you who would raise your hand and give the ball to the other team, go stand by that cone." Wait for them to pick their cone. "It is important to be honest about fouls. If you touch the ball with your hand, even if nobody sees it, raise your hand And give the ball to the other team."

# WEEK 5

## Warm-Up (5 Minutes)

Break groups into 3 or 4 players. Have them pass the ball around the group with either foot.

## Fitness Component (5 Minutes) HEALTHY HABITS

### Key Idea: Healthy Habits

Gather children into a circle. "When your body doesn't eat healthy foods and get enough sleep, it moves slowly. Let's pretend we have no energy to move because we didn't eat enough healthy foods or get enough sleep." Begin to move slowly and encourage children to follow. Move extremely slowly. "Everyone stop. Now I am going to fill your bodies up with healthy foods." Act out giving them foods. "Pretend we're sleeping. When I say 'Wake up!' you can move faster because you have enough energy and enough rest. Wake up and move faster. Stop! What are some other healthy habits you have learned?" Examples: daily exercise, brushing teeth, saying no to drugs, no smoking. "



# WEEK 5

## Skills/Drills (15 Minutes)

### PASSING / RECEIVING

Have them find a partner, one ball per pair. This will take a little while so you might tell them to come back from the break with a partner and a ball before you dismiss them.

First have them pass the ball back and forth while standing about 3 yards apart. They will look hopeless.

Stop them and ask what part of foot to use for short accurate passes on the ground (Answer is inside of foot, show them what you mean; that part of the foot between the heel and ball of foot.) Have them resume. Point out that a pass is no good if it can't be received by their teammate. Ask what that means (Answer on ground, within reach, not too hard, not too soft, when it is expected, for example it does no good to pass to a teammate's back, or to one picking dandelions.)

Stop them and ask them how to receive the ball (Answer: cushion the ball so it slows and is left in front of you so you can step forward to pass it. Don't let them stop the ball under their foot, or so close that the ball is stuck between their feet and must be moved before it can be kicked. Tell them the ball should be keep moving. Now you will also have to tell them to back up after they pass the ball or else they will end up too close together.

In soccer, receiving and controlling a passed ball is called *receiving*. A player can receive the ball with just about any part of the body--the foot, the thigh, or the chest. Here are some key components in receiving:

- Get in front of the ball.
- Watch the ball.
- Cushion the ball.
- Keep the ball near the body.

At this level, you will be teaching players how to receive with the foot, the thigh, and the chest. To receive the ball on or near the ground with the foot, the player should stand in front of the ball and extend a leg and foot out to meet it. After the ball reaches the player's foot, he or she should pull the leg back to slow the ball and relax the foot when



# WEEK 5

the ball makes contact. This technique is called *cushioning* the ball. If a player does not cushion the ball, it will bounce away from the foot and the player will lose control. It will bounce away from the foot and the player will lose control. Receiving with the inside of the foot provides the most surface area and is best for inexperienced players. Eventually, players should learn how to receive with the outside and top of both feet. Note that players receiving with the top of the foot should also use the lower shin and front part of the ankle to cushion the ball.

## **Error Detection and Correction for Receiving With the Foot**

**Error:** Losing control of the ball off the foot.

**Correction:**

- Contact the bottom and side of the ball with the inside of the foot--midway between the heel and toes.
- Cushion the impact of the ball by dropping the foot as the ball contacts it.

A game to play is to give 1/2 the players balls and tell the others to take a ball away and try to keep it. Players with a ball after 1 minute win. Repeat 2 or 3 times.

## **Game/Play (15 Minutes)**

### **3 ON 3 KEEP AWAY**

When doing 3v3, consider using a neutral player to help the team with the ball. Again, reinforce the need to move to get open. Point out what happens if you hold the ball too long before passing (you get ganged up on). Keep such observations very brief and generally make them in the form of a question (to which you will likely get lots of wrong answers, just say "no, that's not what I'm looking for" or "that's it!" when you get the right answer). If the neutral player is reasonably talented, have them ask the players to get open whenever there is no good target. The neutral player needs to move to be a good receiving position all the time. The better the neutral player, the more players that can be involved. Tell the players with the ball to make the longest pass they are capable of to a teammate who is open. (Not the longest kick, but the longest pass to the teammate farthest away from the other team's players; same comments about passes as before, within reach, on ground, not too hard, not too soft).



## **CARING (10 Minutes)**



### **TEAM CIRCLE**

**Key Idea:** Caring

Gather the players into a circle. Stand in the middle of the group with a ball. Pass to each player and give him/her a turn to pass it back to you. "I am going to pass the ball. If a pass comes to you, pass the ball back to me." Work around the whole circle. Talk to the players about playing and learning when they come to practice. "Who had a turn to touch the ball?" Wait for their responses. "I made sure everyone had a chance to touch the ball. Raise your hand if it felt good to be able to have a turn. How would you have felt if you did not have a turn?" Listen to their answers. "We need to share the ball and take turns so everyone can learn and play. Sharing and taking turns shows you care."

# WEEK 6

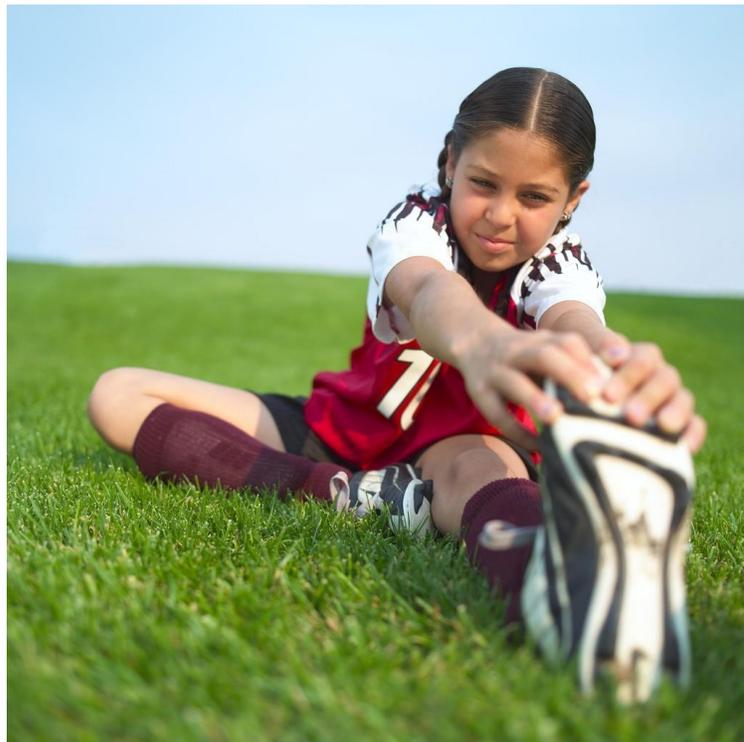
## Warm-Up (5 Minutes)

Play a shorter version of 3-on-3 keep away. See week 5 game/play.

## Fitness Component (5 Minutes) FLEXIBILITY

### Key Idea: Flexibility

Bring a rubber band to use as a prop. "This rubber band is like our muscles. When I pull it, it stretches; when I let go, it pulls back to its original shape." Demonstrate with the rubber band, stretching it out and back, using a gentle, slow action. "Your muscles work the same way. When you reach and stretch, your muscles are stretching just like the rubber band. When your body comes back, your muscles go back to their original shape. Everyone reach down to the ground with your arms slowly, and then bring your arms back up." Have children repeat three times. "Your leg muscles need to stretch because you use them the most in soccer; stretching makes your leg muscles more flexible. When muscles are flexible, it keeps them from getting hurt and makes the muscles feel good."



# WEEK 6

## **Skills/Drills (15 Minutes)** **OFFENSIVE POSITIONS**

**Positions:** Refer to field grid and definition of positions. Wristbands can be useful in managing the lines of players. Forwards (yellow), half-backs (green), and full-backs (red). Discuss the responsibilities of each line. Have parents work with each line to keep the focus of the players on their field duties.

## **Game/Play (15 Minutes)** **SCRIMMAGE**

All the players should be divided in to four teams. Set-up two goals with cones. With two teams at each goal, one team should be defense and one team should be offense. No goalie. Players should try to score on the "half-court" field. After several minutes, teams should switch from offense to defense. Acknowledge teams that use the offense positions and good passing.

End the section with the players scrimmaging the parents and/or siblings using the entire field. Kids should win.





## **FAITH (10 Minutes)**



### **TEAM CIRCLE**

**Key Idea:** Faith

Gather the players into a circle. Explain to the players that to have faith is to believe that they can do anything they set their mind to do. Give them an example of the little train that kept saying "I think I can, I think I can..." over and over until he eventually did what he set out to do. Now separate the players into two lines with one off to the side of the goal and one at the top of the penalty box. Tell the forward to dribble the ball and then kick it into the goal. Tell the goalie to block the ball. As they go into action, tell them to say out loud, "I think I can" before they start. Tell them they should think this in their mind while they are playing in games or at home with their family and friends when playing.

# WEEK 7

## Warm-Up (5 Minutes)

Groups of 3 – Players play 2 vs. 1 in an area 20 feet by 10 feet with a small goal. They must pass three times, and then shoot at the goal.

## Fitness Component (5 Minutes) MUSCULAR STRENGTH / ENDURANCE

**Key Idea:** Muscular strength & Endurance  
Gather children into a group. Show children the differences between a kick with minimal effort and one with close to maximum effort. "Watch how far

the ball goes when I kick it two different times."

Show both kicks to children. "Let's make a circle, and you show me how you would kick the ball. Pretend you are kicking a ball, and show me a short kick. Now step back two big steps and show me a long kick that will make the ball go across the circle." Highlight the ball going farther in the second kick. "You can kick the ball farther when your muscles in your legs are strong. Your muscles in your legs get stronger when you practice kicking."



## Skills/Drills (15 Minutes)

### GOAL KEEPING

**Goalie Position:** A basic understanding of this position is best at this age. It will be easier to teach the child to throw the ball instead of a drop kick. Remember, always throw to the sides, never down the middle.

**Gathering Ground Balls:** From the ready position, goalies should stop shots on the ground through these techniques:

- Quickly shuffle sideways to a position between the ball and the goal.
- Keep your legs straight, with your feet a few inches apart, and bend forward at the waist as the ball arrives.
- Reach your arms down with your palms forward and slightly cupped.
- Allow the ball to roll up onto your wrists and forearms.
- Return to an upright position, clutching the ball tightly to your chest.

# WEEK 7

## Error Detection and Correction for gathering Ground Balls

**Error:** The ball rolls through your hand, between your legs, and into the goal.

**Correction:** Keep your feet only a few inches apart. If the ball slips through your hands, it will rebound off your legs.

**Error:** The ball rebounds off your hands into the area in front of the goal.

**Correction:** Allow the ball to roll up onto your wrists and forearms, and then use a scoop-like motion of your arms as you return to an upright position and clutch the ball to your chest.

## Error Detection and Correction for Distributing the Ball

**Error:** The ball bounces toward the target when it is rolled.

**Correction:** Release the ball smoothly at ground level

**Error:** Your kick lacks accuracy.

**Correction:**

- Step toward the target with your non-kicking foot.
- Square your shoulders and hips to the target.
- Contact the center of the ball with the full instep.

**Error:** Your kick lacks distance.

**Correction:**

- Keep your foot firmly planted and kick through the point of contact, using your instep.
- Swing your kicking foot waist high or higher.





## Game/Play (15 Minutes)

### Keeper Wars

**Goal:** To develop and encourage the basic diving technique for goalkeepers.

**Description:** This game is for two players. Use cones to mark a 15x20 yard area, with one goal (use adjustable goals or four flags) that is 5 feet high (6 yards wide for younger players and 8 yards wide for older players. (If you use flags for the goal, set them up so they are 5 feet high.) The low goals force low shots and diving saves.

Place a goalkeeper in the goal and have the other player shoot at the goal. Give the goalie five tries to dive and save. (Encourage the goalkeeper to land on his or her side and to lead with the hands to make the save.) Award a point for each successful dive and save. Have the shooter redo any shots that don't require dives. Rotate the goalie and the shooter after five legitimate save attempts, and rotate the players through each role three times. Each player will attempt to save 15 shots, so "15" is a perfect score.

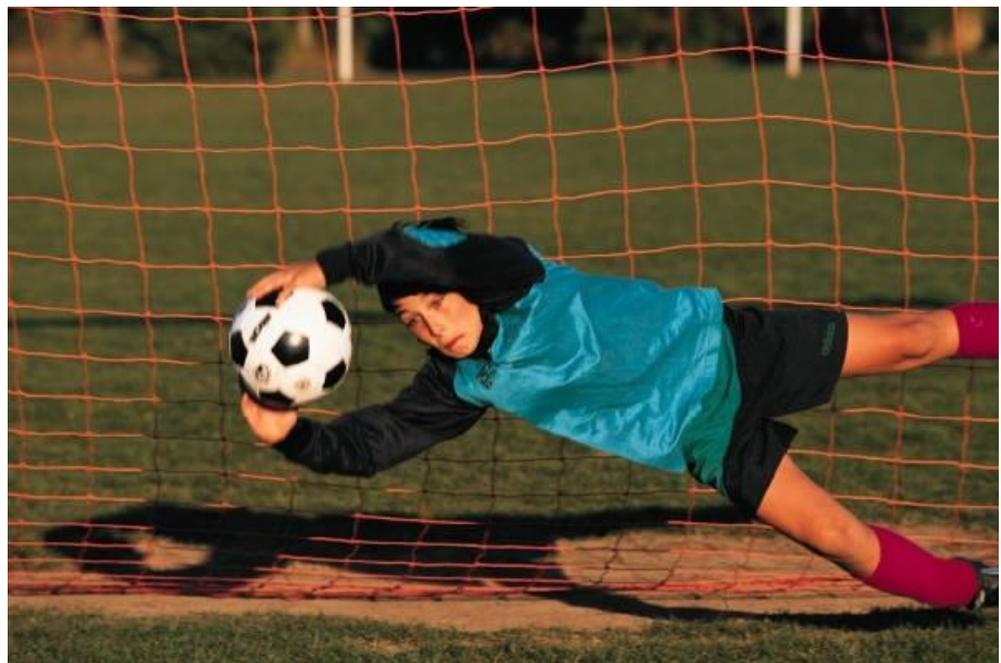
#### To make the game harder

- Increase the width of the goal.
- Add a player who tries to score goals from rebounds if the goalkeeper fails to deal with the shot effectively.

*Note:* You can adapt this game to focus on goalkeepers gathering air balls, too, without diving for them.

#### To make the game easier:

- Reduce the width of the goal.
- Require longer shots.





## **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT (10 Minutes)**



### **TEAM CIRCLE**

**Key Idea:** Family Involvement

Gather the players and their parents into one big group. Have them all sit in front of you. Start a discussion about family and how important it is for them. Tell them about this situation. "One family often bowled together, but the older, bigger kids always won. Finally the family figured out a way for everyone to win. Instead of keeping individual scores, they kept a family total score. If the whole family reached a certain score, they all celebrated by going out for ice cream after bowling." Ask these questions. "Do the members of your family compete? How could you turn that competition into a situation when everyone wins?"

# WEEK 8

## Warm-Up (5 Minutes)

Players shoot a stationary ball into a goal.

## Fitness Component (5 Minutes) TRAINING AND CONDITIONING

### Key Idea: Training and Conditioning

Gather children into a circle. "What will you do tonight after you eat dinner?" Wait for their responses. "At the end of the day, what do you do?"

Encourage children to discuss sleep. "Let's pretend you are at your homes, and you climb into bed to go to sleep. Everyone lie down. Now let's pretend it's morning and a new day. You don't have soccer practice today. Your body needs to move every day to stay in good physical conditions for soccer. What should we do to move our bodies?" Wait for their



responses. If a child suggests an activity (e.g., biking, walking, swimming), have everyone pretend to do that activity. Then have them "sleep" again, wake up, and choose another physical activity idea.

## Skills/Drills (15 Minutes) CORNER / INDIRECT KICKS

Use specific procedures to start a soccer game and to restart it when the ball goes out of bounds. Start the game with a center kickoff; restart the game with a goal kick, a corner kick, or a throw-in.

### Center Kickoff

Soccer games begin with one team kicking the ball from the center spot. (The team is often chosen by a coin toss.) The opposing team's players are not allowed within the center circle during the kickoff. Players on both teams must be on their half of the field during the kickoff, and the kicked ball must roll forward at least one complete rotation before another player can touch it.

# WEEK 8

Follow these same procedures after a goal is scored. In this situation, the team that was scored against restarts the game by kicking off from the center spot, and the team that scored stands outside of the center circle in its half of the field.

## Goal Kick

When an attacking team kicks the ball out of bounds beyond the goal line, as in a missed shot, the opposing team is awarded a free kick called a *goal kick*. The defending team makes this kick, and it must be inside the goal area on the side of the goal where the ball went out of play. The players on the team that kicked the ball out of bounds must stay outside the penalty area.

## Corner Kick

If a team kicks the ball beyond its own goal line, the other team is awarded a corner kick from a corner arc. During the kick, defensive players must be at least 10 yards from the player kicking the ball. The kicker's teammates can position themselves anywhere they choose.

## Throw-In

When a player kicks the ball out of bounds along the touchline, restart the game at the point the ball went out with a throw in. The team that last touched the ball loses possession, and the other team gets to throw in the ball. The player putting the ball back into play must use both hands to throw the ball and keep both feet on the ground. The player should arch the back as far back as possible to help snap the ball forward. The throwing motion should begin from behind the head and be a continuous forward thrust until he or she releases the ball in front of the head. The throw in should be put into play quickly, thrown to a player who is not being marked, and passes so it is easy to control.

## Restarting the Game

Throw in/goal kick/corner kick and after a goal is scored. In this age group, always allow a child to redo a throw in -- *practice makes perfect*.

## Game/Play (15 Minutes) SCRIMMAGE

Repeat any scrimmage from previous practices





## **SAFETY (10 Minutes)**



### **TEAM CIRCLE**

**Key Idea:** Safety

Gather the players in a circle. "What are the easiest ways to get hurt while playing soccer?" Wait for answers (slipping and falling, tripping, getting hit in the head or face with the ball). "What's the best way to keep from getting hurt? How do we prevent these accidents from happening?" Point out that while no sport is injury free, their risks of being hurt are much reduced when they follow the rules and care about each other.



## Warm-Up (5 Minutes)

1 v 1: Each player tries to hit a cone using only his or her feet, not hands.

**Description:** Pairs--When you call "go", one player tries to get away from the other. When you call "stop", the players switch roles, then repeat.

## Fitness Component (5 Minutes) MUSCULAR STRENGTH / ENDURANCE

**Key Idea:** Muscular Strength and Endurance

Have children spread out in a group. "Put your hand on the front of your thigh, then lift it up and set it down. Did you feel the muscle get tight when you lifted it up and then relax when you set it down? Try it again five times." Assist players if needed. "Muscles tighten, or contract, when you move. You use the thigh muscles, or quadriceps, when you kick the ball in soccer. The more you practice kicking the stronger your thigh, or quadriceps muscles, will get: that's called improving your muscular strength."

## Skills / Drills DEFENSIVE POSITIONS

### Skill Practice 1:

- Introduce demonstrate, and explain how to follow an opponent.
- Practice following an opponent.

### Skills Practice 2:

- Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to mark an opponent who is trying to receive a pass.
- Practice marking an opponent who is trying to get free to receive a pass.

**Description:** Groups of three--One player feeds the ball to the attacker. The attacker tries to get free from the defender. Play stops when the attacker or the defender has the ball in space; they then do it again.

### Game/Play (15 Minutes) Bowling Balls

**Goal:** To develop the ability to distribute the ball by rolling it.

**Description:** Play 2v3. Use cones to set up a 20x20 yard area, and create one goal, 4 yards wide, using two flags. The two offensive players attack the goal; after the goalie saves a shot, he or she rolls the ball to a teammate. Give a point for each ball successfully rolled (one that is controlled by one of the goalie's teammates). Rotate goalies after three attempts at rolling the ball.



## HEALTHY HABITS (10 Minutes)



### TEAM CIRCLE

**Key Idea:** Healthy Habits

Get the players into a circle. "When you exercise and it is hot, you may sweat too much. When that happens, you lose a lot of water. That means you have to put water or liquid back inside of you. What do you usually drink when you are thirsty?" Soda, water, milk, juice, fruit drinks. "It is best when you have sweat a lot to drink water. That is the easiest and least expensive thing to drink. When you need something that gives you vitamins and minerals and powers you up, you should drink milk and fruit juices and not soda. Soda has lots of sugar and no vitamins or minerals."

# WEEK 10

## Warm-Up (5 Minutes)

Use any warm up from a previous week.

## Fitness Component (5 Minutes) HEALTHY HABITS

### Key Idea: Healthy Habits

Gather children into a group. Mark boundary areas. "When I say 'go' you are all going to run as fast as you can, without bumping each other, staying in this area. Ready, go!" Children run for about a minute or until they get tired. "You had enough energy to run. But when you don't take care of your body, you can get tired much faster playing soccer. I am going to say a habit, and you shout if it's healthy or unhealthy." (Examples: taking drugs, smoking, brushing teeth, drinking plenty of water, getting plenty of sleep and rest, eating a variety of foods.) "Can you think of any others? Healthy or unhealthy?".



# WEEK 10

## **Skills/Drills (15 Minutes)**

### **FOULS**

Fouls are called when one player runs into, charges, pushes, trips, kicks, or holds an opposing player. A handball foul is called when a player intentionally touches the ball with his or her hand or arm to gain control.

An offside foul is called when a teammate tries to pass the ball to a player in the offside position. A player is in the offside position when he or she gets closer to the opponent's goal than at least two defensive players (including the goalie). The offside rule prevents offensive players from simply waiting at the goal mouth for an easy shot, but it does not apply to throw in or corner kick situations. (We won't use this rule in 3-5 year old play, so don't spend much time explaining it and don't enforce it during play.)

A type of foul you will encounter rarely with YMCA 3-5 year old players is the intentional foul. In regular play, players who intentionally foul or play dangerously are warned once by the official, who presents them with a yellow card. The next time they intentionally foul or play dangerously, they receive a red card and are ejected from the game. Officials also can eject a player without warning if they rule a behavior unacceptable.

Two kinds of kicks can be awarded for fouls, based on where the foul was committed; free kicks or penalty kicks.

Play 2 on 2 keep away, except that the players must keep their hands behind their backs. This means that they can't push or pull each other. Point out how you must move quicker to keep up with the ball.

## **Game/Play (15 Minutes)**

### **SCRIMMAGE**

Repeat any scrimmage from previous practices.



## KEEPING PERSPECTIVE (10 Minutes)



### TEAM CIRCLE

**Key Idea:** Keeping Perspective

Gather players into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. "What did you most enjoy learning about in soccer this season?" Listen to their answers. "Players who thought they tried their best to learn, stand by this cone. Players who think they had fun this season, stand by this cone. Both of those are important. You should try your best and have fun no matter what happens during the season. The most important thing in soccer is to have fun playing with friends and to learn new skills. I think you all did that! Next year is another chance to have fun and make new friends!" Encourage players to come back next season.