



Building Blocks of Player Development

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| Effective Date | 16 August 2005 |
| Class Length | 1 hour 15 minutes |

| Change Summary | |
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| 9/25/2008 | Revised for 2009 Section Conferences |
| November, 2011 | Revised for 2012 Section Meetings |
| November, 2013 | Reviewed for 2014 AYSO EXPO |
| October 2014 | Reviewed for 2015 AYSO EXPO |
| January 2015 | Updates after first EXPO |

LESSON PLAN- Building Blocks of Player Development

1. Lesson Goals

Everything we do as coaches is focused on giving the children a positive experience to help them develop as players and people. Coaches spend hours reviewing training materials to find the right technical and tactical drills to help their players develop to meet their potential. Coaches will tell you that their players perform best when they are happy, confident, and can participate in an emotionally safe environment. However, we spend far less time on understanding the psychological aspects that contribute to developing players.

The goal of this module is to gain an appreciation that the attitudes and behaviors we carry outside the lines has an effect on player development. We will discuss expectations we should hold for the attitudes and behaviors for our players, coaches, and parents in support of player development.

Many believe that player development is accomplished solely in the technical and tactical aspects of teaching/learning the game. This module helps our coaches understand that a strong psychological foundation is a key element in player development. If you don't have their minds and hearts, technical and tactical development are more difficult.

Not every player can be a Lionel Messi, however; all athletes can develop and model constant qualities that are an important ingredient in player and team harmony. This session is designed for coaches to understand what type of things can and should be constant from one athlete to the next, regardless of ability.

Not every coach can be a Jurgen Klinsmann. Coaches can develop and model constant qualities that facilitate teaching, learning, and developing players and creating an overall positive team environment.

Parents are a key ingredient to helping the players, the team and coach be successful. We likewise look for constant qualities in our parents to help facilitate player development.

The module concludes with a discussion of opportunities to implement, develop and reinforce the attitude and behavioral expectations discussed in this module.

2. Class Length

1 hour and 15 minutes

3. Instructor Requirements

Advanced Coach Instructor

4. Learning Objectives

We want the coaches to understand that their teaching and training can be more effective if they recognize and implement strategies to create positive attitudes and behaviors for their team. We want the students to be able to identify the attitudes and behaviors we should reasonably expect. We also want the students to appreciate opportunities to implement, develop and reinforce attitudes and behaviors.

5. Student Skills Acquired

Understand what can complete an athletic experience for all individuals involved with the American Youth Soccer Organization. Gain an understanding of the attitudes and behaviors that players, coaches, and parents should constantly be striving to achieve.

6. Prerequisites

None

7. Materials

Power Point Presentation which is preloaded to conference laptop, also available on www.ayso.org along with the lesson plan

8. Equipment

LCD Projector and Screen
Flip chart and markers

9. Instructor Notes:

None

10. Body (Lesson Procedure)

Building Blocks of Player Development

Slide 1: Introduce all instructors involved in the presentation and any guests.

Let your participants know how you want to field questions: 1) as you go, 2) at the end of a chart or section, 3) another way.

Slide 2: Give the students a brief overview of the workshop. Avoid details at this point. Provide just enough information to let them know that you will begin with an overview of player development concepts, move into discussing attitudes and

behaviors that players, coaches and parent should have which are supportive of helping the team focus on player development, and end with ideas that a coach can use to create a positive environment.

Everything we do as coaches is focused on giving the children a positive experience to help them develop as players and people. Coaches spend hours reviewing training materials to find the right technical and tactical drills to help their players develop to meet their potential. Coaches will tell you that their players perform best when they are happy, confident, and can participate in an emotionally safe environment. However, we spend far less time on understanding the psychological aspects that contribute to developing players. We are going to focus on that in our workshop.

Slide 3: So let's begin by discussing player development. Remind the coaches of building blocks of learning for our players.

Recall this information comes from the U-6 to U-12 coaching manuals. We discussed that players must be mentally engaged and physically prepared to achieve technically and tactically in practice and during training. As we discuss players, our building blocks of player development relate to what players bring with them to be ready to develop. A strong foundation in these fundamental psychosocial aspects will result in players who are ready and eager to learn.

Slide 4: Before playing the Claudio Reyna video, state that we want to focus on Player Development first and make Winning a secondary goal. If you take care of player development, winning will follow.

Slide 5: Discuss the aspects of training that most coaches excel in...thinking about drills to train, getting prepared and conducting session. Then ask the question posed in the charts....look for answers from the group. You want to drive home the concept that the psychosocial aspects need to be squared away to really enable the learning.

Slide 6:

This is the last chart that sets the stage for the meat of the discussion. You want to begin by letting the students know that it all begins with the head coach.

You next want to reinforce that the attitudes and behaviors will support player development. It is in the coach's best interest to influence attitudes and behaviors so they have a positive training environment. Consider using a personal story where a distraction away from the field crept in and prevented you from accomplishing your training goal.

Some coaches may be reluctant to set standards and expectations. Reinforce that it is appropriate for them to have expectations and to standards for the team. Creating a cohesive team comes from creating a positive environment.

When you can depend upon consistent attitudes and behaviors, everyone on the team understands and has a common vision of what is expected. Inconsistencies in behaviors (from anyone) can lead to problems...(e.g. if they can do it, why can't I?).

End by reinforcing that it's the coaches responsibility to set standards, role model behaviors, enforce standards when they are subpar and give praise for meeting expectations.

Slide 7: The idea about discussing referees is to use them as an easy reference and get feedback going with the students. The idea here isn't to bash referees or re-tell game stories. It's to get the brains working for the next parts of the presentation.

Ask the following question before revealing the first supporting line:

What do we want referees to be (think about consistency and dependability)
Answers will vary from:

Referees should know the laws of the game.

Consistency from one referee to another is a must.

All referees should be consistent with interpretation of the laws.

All referees should use the advantage rule consistently.

After a brief discussion ask students **WHY** a coach can't expect consistency from all referees with regards to the above. Explain why: knowledge, experience, age group of the match, referee style (free flowing vs controlling referee style), and others should be offered.

Slide 8: This is a transition slide to let the audience know that we are done discussing referees and moving on to players.

Ask what **all** players can and should bring to AYSO. Write their responses down; then continue. Spend a couple of minutes writing down ideas from the audience. Reinforce concepts that are consistent with the materials coming up and those in line with AYSO philosophies. Be prepared to field answers that are not in line with AYSO philosophies and explain an approach or situation aligned with AYSO.

We are going to have slides on responsibilities, respect and dignity, appropriate behavior, and fairness. Leave yourself room to review some offered concepts and introduce items that weren't covered. BEWARE: You can lose time if you don't manage the participation here well.

Slide 9: Start the discussion with the idea of player responsibility. It is ok that coaches have expectations of their players.

You can solicit answers from your participants again as some of the items you listed will pertain to responsibilities or you can just go through each area. The supporting bullets are examples of areas to discuss with the coaches. If you have an example that helps explain a concept or implementation, use it. Be mindful of your time.

All players can be responsible:

Work hard to become a better soccer player

- Help your players understand and appreciate the importance of technical fundamentals; passing, dribbling, ball control, etc.
- Get a commitment from them at a team meeting to be willing to practice these elements to develop mastery
- If you are able to convince to commit to working hard to become a better player on their own, you are solidifying their psychosocial foundation!!

Play by the laws of the game

- Playing by the Laws of the Game is a key element of Sportsmanship that each player can commit to

Will be honest (not lie)

Will be respectful of other people's property (not steal)

- We are building a team, something greater than ourselves. We need to be honest with each other and respect everyone's possessions. This concept is something players should be expected to commit to

For pre-teens and teens....

Not use tobacco or alcoholic beverages

Not use performance-enhancing drugs

Not use "recreational" drugs

- Tobacco, alcohol and drug use hurts their bodies and impacts their ability to meet their potential.

Slide 10: The next 3 slides move from generic concepts to specific examples relating to being respectful of everyone who participates in AYSO.

In this slide we are trying to reinforce treating all participants with respect and dignity. These are fairly straightforward so showing the list should suffice. If you are doing fine on time, you may want to share an example. If you need to expand on treating the game with respect, some thoughts are provided below.

All players should treat _____ with dignity and respect.

Athletes/players

Coaches
Officials
Parents/Spectators
Games

- Doing your best, playing by the laws, being respectful to the other team, not trash talking, appreciate their skill level of other team or players

Slide 11: This chart focuses on how respect is shown. Often folks forget that some subtle choices in words, tone, or gestures (expressions) can make a huge difference in how intent of verbal/nonverbal communications are interpreted. Reminding the players of their responsibilities of being respectful in these areas is a reasonable expectation.

Use appropriate:
Language
Tone
Nonverbal communications

Slide 12: Treat everyone fairly regardless of gender, ethnic origin, race religion, or sexual orientation.

Believe it or not, all of these areas can arise as issues on the soccer field just like they can in any other social setting. Everyone should be treated fairly and with respect. If you have a couple of examples to share where behaviors weren't respectful feel free to share. You may also consider asking for an example or two. Again, be mindful of your time...you still have to cover coaches and parents.

Slide 13: This is the player pledge from the appendices of the U6, U8, U10, and U12 manuals. Give your students a chance to read these. Now is a good time to ask if anyone has any questions on what has been discussed so far.

Slide 14: Ask what **all** coaches can and should bring to AYSO. Write their responses down; then continue. Write their responses down; then continue. Spend a couple of minutes writing down ideas from the participants. Reinforce concepts that are consistent with the materials coming up and those in line with AYSO philosophies. Be prepared to field answers that are not in line with AYSO philosophies and explain an approach or situation aligned with AYSO.

Slide 15: We begin with coaching knowledge. We expect our coaches to:

Support and practice the 6 AYSO philosophies

- what are they? Everyone Plays, Open Registration, Balanced Teams, Good Sportsmanship, Positive Coaching, Player Development

Stay informed about sound coaching principles

- what are they? Technical skills, tactical skills, physiology (e.g. need for water, first aid, concussion awareness), embracing AYSO philosophies

Stay informed about sound child development issues

Depending on time constraints you may or may not want to open up the discussion for the examples above. These notes were created with the intent that an instructor would show the concept, give an example or two and move on.

Slide 16: We start with consistencies in coaches traits: These include:

Enthusiasm
Kindness
Fairness
Honesty
Respectful

Our summary point of this slide is that ATTITUDE IS EVERYTHING when it comes to a coach. People generally have a good experience when a coaches Attitude is positive and encouraging. The experience of players, parents, referees and spectators will be enhanced by a positive, encouraging and respectful coach.

If you only get one idea across to the participants, make sure they know the coach's attitude will drive the season's experience.

Slide 17: We are repeating the theme of respect, it is that important!!! We want our coaches to be role models.

Respect the game
Respect all referee judgments

- emphasize all judgments
- some will be difficult to respect

Respect their own players

- Never ridicule a player

Respect the other team players and their coaches
Respect all parents and spectators

Slide 18:

This chart focuses more on the coach with the players. So drive home that these are essential behaviors in working with the players.

Ensure a safe environment for all players – discuss what this entails
Never ridicule a player
Always set a good example – examples: do's and don'ts
Remember that soccer is a game
Portraying a positive attitude

REINFORCE: ATTITUDE IS EVERYTHING for a coach

Slide 19: This is the coach pledge from the appendices of the U6, U8, U10, and U12 manuals. Give your students a chance to read these. This is another good time to ask if anyone has any questions on what has been discussed so far.

Slide 20: Ask what **all** parents can and should bring to AYSO. Write their responses down; then continue. Spend a couple of minutes writing down ideas from the participants. Reinforce concepts that are consistent with the materials coming up and those in line with AYSO philosophies. Be prepared to field answers that are not in line with AYSO philosophies and explain an approach or situation aligned with AYSO.

Slide 21: This chart is purely for transition and acts as a buffer to prevent you from running the video before you are ready. Just read the instructions to set the tone: listen to a clip from a youth game, focus on what you hear from parents, and we will discuss.

Slide 22: Play the 1min 48 sec video
Ask the participants what they think relative to what they expected from parents...get a few of comments and keep it moving...don't stop for lengthy discussion. Click to show the analysis of the video. You want to get to the next charts because they organize the ideas that have been generated.

Slide 23: We expect parents to be consistent in

Supporting their child

Keeping sport in its proper perspective

While in the child's presence never make negative comments about:

Game

Coaches

Referees

Players

Slide 24: This is the parent pledge from the appendices of the U6, U8, U10, and U12 manuals. Give your students a chance to read these. Another good time to ask if anyone has any questions on what has been discussed so far.

Slide 25: This is a transition slide to get students think about the opportunities they have throughout a season to establish and reinforce positive attitudes and behaviors. Depending on time, you could go to the white board again or just ask for answers. The next slide covers many of the opportunities available to coaches.

Slide 26: This chart is intended to give a rudimentary approach to folding in opportunities to establish and reinforce positive attitudes and behaviors. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list, but following these basics will go a long way in setting a good psychosocial foundation for a team.

Slide 27: Being consistent to the philosophies will keep the experience FUN and one the players will want to participate in.
When they are having fun, they are ready (and willing) to learn!

Its up to all of us to be consistent in demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviors...

Slide 28: Remind the coaches that they are the most important person and the model for the team. Their ATTITUDE IS EVERYTHING.