**U6** Very young players from 5 to 8 years of age love to play. Therefore, all practices should be based on fun games. Players must spend the maximum time possible in contact with the ball and experiment by themselves. For the first time the player has to build a relationship with other players. Give different responsibilities to the players in order to develop a sense of team. Basic motor skills like walking, running or jumping have to be combined with ball handling and ball control.

**U7 U8 BASIC U9** Pre-pubescent players from age 9 to 12 years have a special ability to learn. Therefore, this is the right age to work on specific soccer techniques and skills. Developing good technique is essential at this age. 1v1 and 2v1 attacking and defending situations are important to develop individual skills as well as the passing techniques to develop the necessary team game. Use small-sided games to develop basic attacking and defensive principles. Other important aspects of tactical training are possession, combination play, transition and finishing in the final third, as well as zonal defending. Players will rotate in two or three different positions to avoid early specialization. Speed, coordination, balance and agility are the main physical aspects to improve at this stage.

**U10 U11 U12** **INTERMEDIATE U13** At this stage, training sessions are orientated more toward tactics and the player will practice in bigger spaces. Players must practice all different types of techniques at this stage. Strength and endurance should be part of the fitness training. Coaching methods have to consider and preserve players’ health since they will be experiencing many changes due to puberty at this stage. Warm-ups and cool downs are essential as is dynamic flexibility.

**VOCABULARY** -- back, up, turn, man on, wide, support, square, through, 1-2. tuck in. prep touch.

**COACHES NOTES:** Coaches should be focusing on technique two-three times more than tactics. Technique is on how to do something. Tactics is when to do something, why to do something, and strategy.

**Our youth coaches must focus on developing skill as a priority over winning.**  Skill development will allow our players to find success through years. Winning at youth level will not ensure winning in the future. If players don’t have techniques mastered in older years, the team tactics will not be able to be carried out.