




SOCCER FOR SUCCESS



Emotional Health & Community
Awareness Curriculum
Kindergarten - 2nd Grade



INTRODUCTION

U.S. SOCCER FOUNDATION

The mission of the U.S. Soccer Foundation is to provide underserved communities access to innovative play spaces and evidence-based soccer programs that instill hope, foster well-being, and help youth achieve their fullest potential.

We view soccer as a powerful vehicle for social change. By supporting the development of places to play, places to grow, and places to learn, our goal is to ensure that children in underserved communities have easy and affordable access to quality soccer programs that support their physical and personal development.

SOCCER FOR SUCCESS AFTERSCHOOL

Soccer for Success Afterschool is a free out-of-school program developed and supported by the U.S. Soccer Foundation. The program is designed to introduce youth ages 6-14 to the sport of soccer, while also providing them and their families with the tools they need to make healthy lifestyle decisions.

Soccer for Success provides a safe and supportive environment for children to play and have fun in a structured team environment. The program is designed for children to improve their physical health, increase their knowledge about healthy lifestyles, and improve their self-esteem and behavior.

The **Soccer for Success** Curriculum provides coaches with the tools to keep children engaged in fun soccer-based activities three days a week for two 12-week seasons a year. The program begins with developing basic soccer skills while helping children hone and improve their skill sets. As a result, they never become bored with the game and stay engaged throughout the program.

What makes our curriculum unique is that the practices integrate health and wellness information into each of the sessions, and it builds on weekly themes each week. Coaches, who also serve as mentors, educate the children seamlessly during the practice, without interrupting the physical activity.

WEEK 1

PREPARATION SHEET

SOCCER OBJECTIVES

- Understand the technical concepts of running with the ball
- Understand the different parts of the foot used to dribble and control the ball

SOCCER TEACHING POINTS

Day 1: Dribbling - Ball Control

- Explain that the laces, inside, outside, and sole of the foot can all be used to control the ball
- Show how to keep the foot pointed down, knees bent, and arms out for balance

Day 2: Dribbling - Running with the Ball

- Have participants take quick little steps when dribbling, using the outside of foot or laces to dribble (pinky toe)
- Have participants keep their heads up (eyes up) to know what's around them

LIFESKILL OBJECTIVE: RESPECT

- Feel excited to be part of a team experience and bought in to the team culture
- Understand ways to show up as a good teammate
- Collaborate with the team to create a Team Code

LIFESKILL TEACHING POINTS

Day 1: Respect

- Ask players examples of teams they know (ex. soccer, basketball, Olympic) and share new teams that they might not know, emphasizing professional women's teams and adaptive teams (ex. NWSL, WNBA, Paralympics, U.S. Deaf National Teams) to introduce them to new experiences
- Discuss how all teams have a Team Code, or a set of rules, to keep everyone safe and excited to come to practice
- Define a Team Code as a group to ensure everyone feels safe as a member of the team

Day 2: Respect

- Ask players what being a good teammate looks like (ex. cheering on your teammates, passing the ball to teammates, helping players up if they fall down, taking care of the equipment, helping the coach-mentor pick up at the end of practice, listening during the opening and closing circles, following the rules of the game to ensure your safety and the safety of your teammates, not intentionally touching other players because you care if they get hurt)
- Challenge players to do one thing that shows they are a good teammate during practice



WEEK 1: DAY 1 PRACTICE DAY

8 STEPS OF A PRACTICE

1. Staff set-up (15 min.)	2. Warm-up & Opening Circle (10 min.)	3. Activity 1 (15 min.)	4. Activity 2 (15 min.)
5. Scrimmages (10-25 min.)	6. Cool Down (5 min.)	7. Closing Circle & Cheer (5 min.)	8. Staff Debrief (15 min.)

SOCCER TEACHING POINTS - DRIBBLING: BALL CONTROL

- Explain that the laces, inside, outside, and sole of the foot can all be used to control the ball
- Show how to keep the foot pointed down, knees bent, and arms out for balance

LIFESKILL TEACHING POINTS - RESPECT

- Ask players examples of teams they know (ex. soccer, basketball, Olympic) and share new teams that they might not know, emphasizing professional women's teams and adaptive teams (ex. NWSL, WNBA, Paralympics, U.S. Deaf National Teams) to introduce them to new experiences
- Discuss how all teams have a Team Code, or a set of rules, to keep everyone safe and excited to come to practice
- Define a Team Code as a group to ensure everyone feels safe as a member of the team

WARM-UP: ALL MY FRIENDS

Set-Up: Multiple disc cones (one per player) arranged in a 30 yd. diameter circle minus 1 cone (ex. if you have 12 players, use 11 cones)

- Each player finds a disc cone, and the coach-mentor stands in the middle of the circle
- The coach-mentor says loudly, "All my friends who..." and then finishes the sentence with something that is true about themselves (ex. has a sibling, like apples, like singing, etc.)
- As soon as the coach-mentor is finished with the statement, everyone who this applies to moves from their cone to an empty cone that is not right next to them

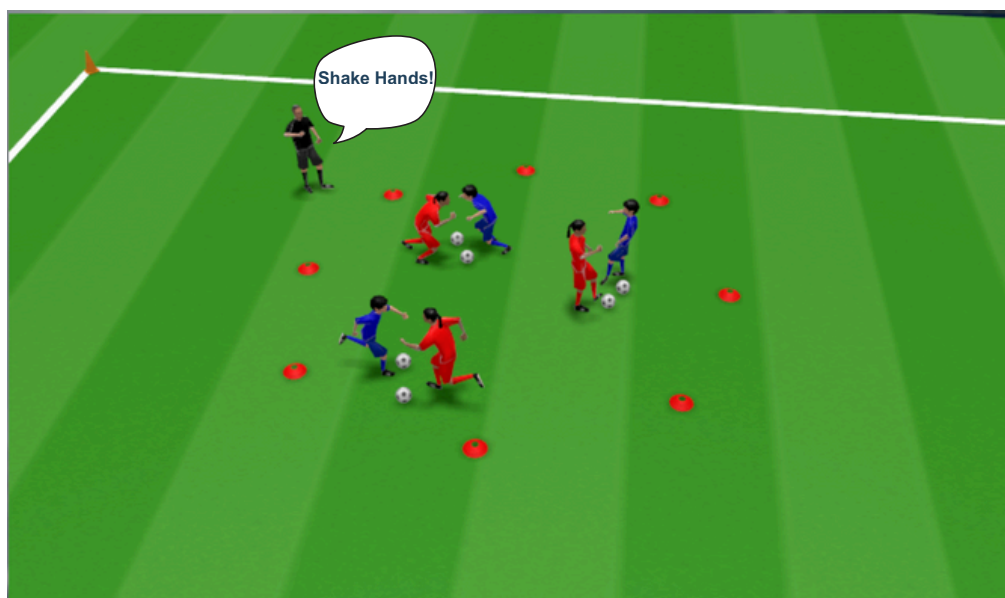
Progression Suggestions

- When players move from cone to cone, they can incorporate other activities (ex. lunges, skipping, hopping, shuffling, etc.)
- Add a ball and have players hold the ball above their head when they move from cone to cone
- Add a ball and have players dribble from cone to cone

Discussion Point: Asking thoughtful questions helps us get to know our teammates, and it shows that you are interested in getting to know someone. This helps us build a fun team, where we know things about each other and can find new friends.

- What surprised you about your teammates?
- What did you learn?
- Why is it important to ask questions and learn more about the people we meet in lives?

ACTIVITY 1 (10 - 15 MIN.): GREETINGS



Set-Up: multiple disc cones - 30 yd. diameter circle, 1 soccer ball per player

- **Phase 1:** Players dribble inside circle; players must dribble with right foot only, left foot only, inside of foot, outside of foot
- Coach-mentor yells, "Stop!", and players stop their soccer ball as fast as they can (encourage them to be creative with how they stop the ball)

Halftime Conversation Starter

- *Ask players to share respectful ways they can greet their teammates (ex. shaking hands, high fives, fist bumps, etc.)*
- *Remind players that respectful teammates find new partners to greet with kind words so they can get to know as many new teammates as possible*
- *Encourage players to continue to respect their teammates and the rules during the activity*

- **Phase 2:** Coach-mentor calls out types of greetings (ex. shake hands, high fives, high tens, fist bumps, etc.) and players find a partner to greet

Progression Suggestions

- Phase 2: Players have a designated greetings partner and must find that partner when the coach-mentor calls out that greeting (either for all greetings or a designated partner for each type of greeting)
- Player Led Progression: Challenge players to discover and suggest the next progression for the activity based on skills that have already been practiced

Soccer Coaching Points

- Take quick, little steps when controlling the soccer ball in a tight space, take longer strides and dribble with outside of foot or laces (pinky toe) when running with the ball

ACTIVITY 2 (10 - 15 MIN.): ELBOWS, KNEES & TOES



Set-Up: multiple disc cones - 30 yd. diameter circle, 1 soccer ball per player

- **Phase 1:** Players dribble inside circle
- Coach-mentor calls out different body parts (ex. "Calf!") and players must stop their ball with that body part, holding the pose - start with easier options (ex. bottom of foot, hand) and progress to harder (ex. left heel, right knee, elbow, shoulder)
- **Phase 2:** Coach-mentor holds up a certain number of fingers every 10-20 seconds and calls out the name of a greeting (ex. shake hands, high fives, high tens, fist bumps, etc.)
- When coach-mentor calls out a greeting, players will hold up a matching number of fingers without stopping

Modeling Moment: Respect players safety by carefully explaining the rules and making sure all players can hear and see the coach-mentor's commands for the Activity

Progression Suggestions

- Phase 1: Call out a sequence of body parts (ex. 1.) thumb, 2.) right toe, 3.) stomach)
- Phase 1: Ask a player(s) to give you an option, or have a player(s) call out the next body part
- Player Led Progression: Challenge players to discover and suggest the next progression for the activity based on skills that have already been practice

Soccer Coaching Points

- Keep your eyes up and use the laces, inside, outside, and sole of the foot to control the ball



WEEK 1: DAY 2 PRACTICE DAY

8 STEPS OF A PRACTICE

1. Staff set-up (15 min.)	2. Warm-up & Opening Circle (10 min.)	3. Activity 1 (15 min.)	4. Activity 2 (15 min.)
5. Scrimmages (10-25 min.)	6. Cool Down (5 min.)	7. Closing Circle & Cheer (5 min.)	8. Staff Debrief (15 min.)

SOCCER TEACHING POINTS - DRIBBLING - RUNNING WITH THE BALL

- Have participants take quick little steps when dribbling, using the outside of foot or laces to dribble (pinky toe)
- Have participants keep their heads up (eyes up) to know what's around them

LIFESKILL TEACHING POINTS - RESPECT

- Ask players what being a good teammate looks like (ex. cheering on your teammates, passing the ball to teammates, helping players up if they fall down, taking care of the equipment, helping the coach-mentor pick up at the end of practice, listening during the opening and closing circles, following the rules of the game to ensure your safety and the safety of your teammates, not intentionally touching other players because you care if they get hurt)
- Challenge players to do one thing that shows they are a good teammate during practice

WARM-UP: ALL MY FRIENDS

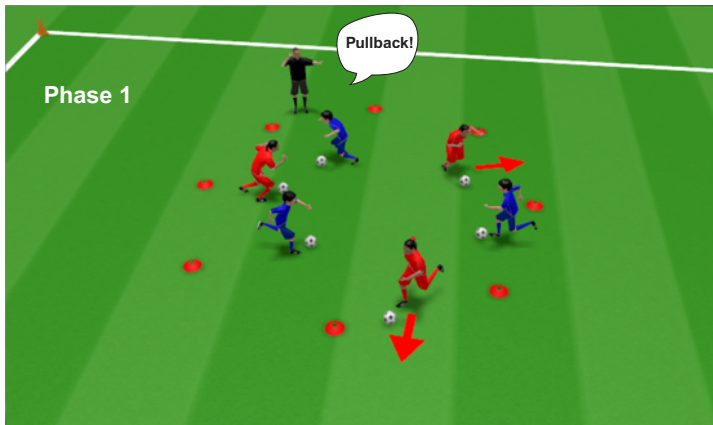
Set-Up: Multiple disc cones (one per player) arranged in a 30 yd. diameter circle minus 1 cone (ex. if you have 12 players, use 11 cones)

- Each player finds a disc cone, and the coach-mentor stands in the middle of the circle
- The player in the middle of the circle says loudly, "All my friends who..." and then finishes the sentence with something that is true about themselves (ex. have a sibling, like apples, like singing, etc.)
- As soon as the player is finished with the statement, everyone (including the person in the center) who this applies to moves from their cone to an empty cone that is not right next to them
- The player who remains in the middle begins the next round of the game
- You can add a ball or incorporate other activities (ex. lunges, skipping, hopping, shuffling, etc.)

Discussion Point: How did you show respect during the activity (ex. by listening to the person in the middle, by quickly arriving to the cone, etc.)?

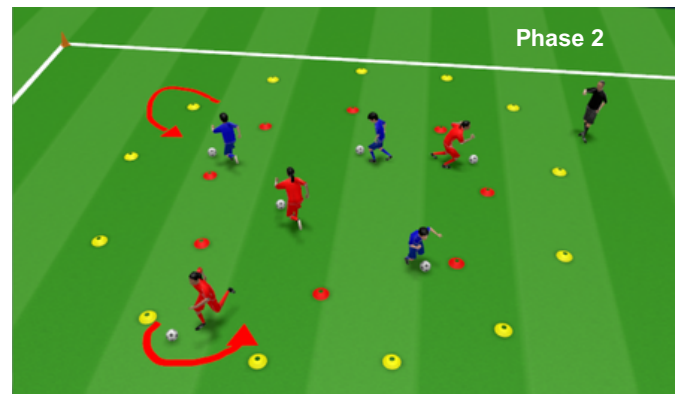
ACTIVITY 1 (10 - 15 MIN.): RE-SPECT!

Set-Up: multiple disc cones - 30 yd. diameter circle and smaller 10 yd. diameter circle in center of circle, 1 soccer ball per player



- **Phase 3:** While players dribble inside small circle, coach-mentor calls out, “RE-”
- Players stop ball, leave it, answer coach-mentor with “-SPECT”, run around a cone of the outer circle, and return to the smaller circle to find a different ball
- After a few rounds, remove one of the soccer balls (the player without a ball now must jog inside the small circle without a ball)
- When coach-mentor calls, “RE-”, players again answer coach-mentor with “-SPECT” and run to outside circle and back
- Player who does not reach a ball has to run around (or star jumps, jumping jacks, etc.) the outer circle, and can call out “RE-” for the next round

- **Phase 1:** Players start without a ball inside the small circle, doing quick feet.
- On coach’s signal, players run to the outside of the large circle, then return back to the smaller circle as fast as they can
- Players then find another player to give a high five and do jumping jacks until last teammate arrives
- **Phase 2:** Players dribble inside the small circle
- On coach’s signal, players explode to the outside and dribble their ball around an outside cone
- Players find another player to give a high five and do Toe Taps until last teammate arrives



Modeling Moment: Demonstrate the different ways to be respectful throughout the activity (ex. high fiving players, checking for understanding, helping players when they struggle with a move, etc.)

Progression Suggestions

- Players must dribble with right foot only, left foot only, inside of foot, outside of foot
- Replace Toe Taps with Foundations, Step-Overs, Scissors, etc.
- Players must jog, side shuffle, frog jump, kangaroo hop, etc., to outside cones then sprint back in
- Player Led Progression: Challenge players to discover and suggest the next progression for the activity based on skills that have already been practiced

Soccer Coaching Points

- When exploding, keep body low, knees bent, arms out for balance, and use the outside of the foot or laces to dribble



ACTIVITY 2 (10 - 15 MIN.): KEEPING TABS



Set-Up: 4 cones - 30 x 30 yd. grid, 1 goal on each end line, pinnies to make teams of 4 or 5, multiple soccer balls for quick re-starts

- Teams play 4v4 or 5v5 on the field. Each teammate has a partner on the sideline, standing by waiting to be tagged
- When coach-mentor says, “TAG!”, the teams on the field abandon play, run to their partner, tags them in, and play resumes

Halftime Conversation Starter

- *Discuss what would happen if there were no rules*
- *Have players identify why it's important to follow the rules*
- *Remind players that cheating takes away the fun of Activities*

Progression Suggestions

- Coach-mentor calls “TAG!” often
- Coach-mentor can call one team and “TAG!” to give the opposite team a quick advantage
- Players can use the rest of their teammates as a wall
- Player Led Progression: Challenge players to discover and suggest the next progression for the activity based on skills that have already been practiced

Soccer Coaching Points

- Keep the ball close to the body, use quick, little touches





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