

National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA) Organization of Practice & Teaching Proper Techniques

Introduction

There are many theories and methods that expound on how to teach techniques to young athletes. While we appreciate that methods can vary from coach to coach, it is our desire to provide a method that sticks to the basics and presents them in a simple, uncomplicated way. By using this format, we are enabling the volunteer coach to increase his or her awareness of teaching proper techniques to young people of specific age groups, and providing to each a foundation for achieving success.

Teaching Proper Techniques

- ◆ Consider what is appropriate for the age group you are coaching
- ◆ Consider difference in maturity and experience within the age group
- ◆ Do the kids understand you? Are you getting your point across?
- ◆ Keep techniques simple and basic
- ◆ Use methods that allow each participant to achieve success
- ◆ Practice the technique
- ◆ Get everyone involved and keep them involved
- ◆ Avoid frustrating phrases like "It's easy! and "Why can't you do it?"
- ◆ Cover as many different areas as possible but stress the most important basic fundamentals that need to be mastered in order to progress to the next level of learning
- ◆ Allow time for individual instruction
- ◆ Use better skilled players to demonstrate
- ◆ Find some portion of the execution of the technique that a player did well and give him or her a compliment
- ◆ Show how specific parts of skills / techniques lead to the whole or complete skill
- ◆ End on a positive note

Organization of Practice Topics

The key to a successful practice is making sure every child is involved and there is no idle time.

- ◆ Site
- ◆ Time allotted
- ◆ Age group
- ◆ How many on your team?
- ◆ Experience factor
- ◆ How many times practice each week? When?
- ◆ How long to practice? (Much can be achieved in 45 minutes)
- ◆ Team leaders
- ◆ Skill to cover

- ◆ Drills to use
- ◆ Break your practice down – team meeting, warm-up, skills, drills, fun time, cool down time
- ◆ Team rosters
- ◆ Set goals – what does each practice lead to...evaluate your practices at the end of each week...comments
- ◆ Team information, phone numbers, medical release, consent forms (coach should have **access to all at times**)
- ◆ Keep practices moving, kids can become bored and cause discipline problems.

How to Conduct your Practice

- ◆ Brief team meeting – preview today's practice
- ◆ Warm-up (5 minutes stretch and warm muscles)
- ◆ Practice specific skills – individually and with partners (demonstrate) – 10 minutes
- ◆ Team drills – 15 minutes
- ◆ Station work – players spend 2 minutes at each station working on a specific skill, moving to the next station at the sound of the whistle – 10 minutes
- ◆ Water / rest break – 5 minutes
- ◆ Use fun game incorporating skills and drills used earlier – 15 minutes
- ◆ Brief review – tell when next practice will be, end on a positive note – say something positive about each player



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