**WCSC Coaching**

**U8 Division**

Opening remarks:

* Thank you for volunteering! Our community soccer could not operate without your help.
* WCSC has a goal to provide quality grassroots soccer in our communities, at an affordable price. Volunteer coaches and local referees help us achieve this goal.
* Rowan’s Law is for concussion awareness and protocols for return to play. As coaches, we should try to reduce risk of concussion, be aware of when concussion is a factor after a hit or a fall, and make a coordinated effort for a safe return to playing.
* The Rule of Two is ensure coaches aren’t one-on-one with a player, there should always be two adults present if a player needs to be spoken to or whatever the situation may be.
* Canada Soccer has developed Grassroots Standards. What I find really motivating is that our future National Team players will start their careers in community soccer. The Grassroots goals are for developmentally appropriate play to happen in the age divisions to ensure a fun, healthy, lifelong enjoyment of soccer and an active lifestyle.

U8 Division:

* In this division, players may still be new to soccer, or may have played for a couple years. Starting to lay a foundation of basic skills is important at this time. Learning to get the ball under control, to dribble, pass and shoot are the key skills. Players can understand instructions and rules of the game. In practice, run through parts of the game like kick ins from the sidelines or goal line, corner kicks, and the center kickoff. Keeping the practice fun, engaging, and pressure-free is important.
* Players are encouraged to be creative and expressive without the fear of failure.
* Focus on ball control, moving the ball with a purpose, beginning to string together plays during a game. Agility, coordination, and balance are key athletic movements to work on.
* Coaches could make a rule that players don’t use hands at all during practice, feet only!
* Practices should run 50 minutes and usually end with a team snack.

Practice can be structured as follows:

* + - Warm-up drill with and without ball (10 minutes, water break)
		- Drill #1 (10 minutes, water break)
		- Drill #2 (10 minutes, water break)
		- Small sided game. This is a great opportunity to stop play and teach players by pausing to show them what was going on, the options they had, or a different choice they could have made. Re-doing a play can help reinforce these lessons. “Stop, Demo, Rehearse, Go live” is the coaching here.
		- You can end with a couple minutes of fitness, like sprints from different starting positions (pushup, squat, laying down, cross legged). End with a short cool down and encouraging words to the players.

Drill/Game Ideas for Practice:

* Obstacle Course to dribble through
* Shooting drills
* Dribbling through cones
* Passing to a partner
* Passing in two lines, with varying touches (unlimited, two, one)
* 2v1 to score/defend
* Sharks and Minnows (keep away)

Game play:

* Games run 40 minutes, 2x20 minute halves. 4v4 with out a goalie, or 5v5 with a goalie.
* Equal playing time is important at this age.
* Players should rotate through all the different positions. We don’t assign players to one position at this age, so they can develop skills and knowledge of all positions.
* There are no offsides. When the ball goes out, it is a kick in from the line. For goal kicks, we do ask the other team to retreat back to about half.
* You have unlimited substitutions. Subs happen at stoppages of play and you let the referee know you are switching players. It is generally easier to switch in batches of players or shifts, in order to keep track of equal playing time.
* Nets are provided and it is helpful to have a parent volunteer set it up while the coach warms up the players. A proper warm up is important.
* The focus for game play is to learn and have fun. Winning is fun but not the main goal of the game.

Resources:

[U8 FUNdamentals](https://cdn1.sportngin.com/attachments/document/0112/8178/FUNdamentals-Brochure.pdf?_gl=1*1uv0ce5*_ga*ODE0NDQ1NjQuMTY4MzA0MDA0Nw..*_ga_PQ25JN9PJ8*MTY4Mzg0ODM1Mi41LjEuMTY4Mzg0ODUzMy4wLjAuMA..#_ga=2.26518077.1824809347.1683839605-81444564.1683040047)

[Ontario Soccer Grassroots Coach Guide](https://www.ontariosoccer.net/player-grassroots)

[Rowan's Law](https://www.ontario.ca/page/rowans-law-concussion-safety) [U8 Soccer Drills](https://www.soccerdrive.com/blog/1/7-fun-u8-soccer-drills-kids)

[Rule of Two](https://coach.ca/responsible-coaching-movement/rule-of-two)

[Learn to Train Soccer](https://cdn1.sportngin.com/attachments/document/0112/8182/Learn-To-Train-Brochure.pdf?_gl=1*vaxulb*_ga*ODE0NDQ1NjQuMTY4MzA0MDA0Nw..*_ga_PQ25JN9PJ8*MTY4MzgzOTYwNC40LjEuMTY4Mzg0MjYxNC4wLjAuMA..#_ga=2.30844095.1824809347.1683839605-81444564.1683040047)

[Youth Soccer Lesson Plans](https://www.usyouthsoccer.org/lesson-plans/)

[Player Development and Practice Plans](https://cdn1.sportngin.com/attachments/document/0112/8198/Learn_To_Train_-_web.pdf?_gl=1*ttqel1*_ga*MjAzMjU3MjgzLjE2NjI3MzMyNDE.*_ga_PQ25JN9PJ8*MTY4Mzg5NzExMS4xLjEuMTY4Mzg5ODE2Mi4wLjAuMA..#_ga=2.24877498.127101773.1683897115-203257283.1662733241)

[Four Corner Model on page 5](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Crache%5CiCloudDrive%5CDocuments%20-%20Rachel%5CSoccer%20coaching%202021%5CFour%20Corner%20Model%20on%20page%205)



