

REASONS FOR SMALL SIDED PLAY

Philosophical

1. Because we want our young soccer players to have more *individual teaching time* with the coach! Fewer players on the field will guarantee this! (Need to feel worthy...need to feel important)
2. Because we want to distance our young soccer players from the external undo pressures of the adult game. (eliminate extrinsic value)
3. Because we want our young soccer players to enjoy the game for its own sake. (foster intrinsic value)

Educational

1. Because we want our young soccer players to touch the soccer ball more often and become *more skillful* with it! (Individual technical development)
2. Because we want our young soccer players to make *more quality decisions* during the game! (Tactical development)
3. Because we want our young soccer players to be more physically *efficient* in the field space in which they are playing! (Reduced field size)
4. Because we want our young soccer players to have *more involved playing time* in the game! (More opportunity to solve problems that only the game presents)
5. Because we want our young soccer players to have *more opportunities to play on both sides of the ball!* (More exposure to attacking and defending situations)
6. Because we want our young soccer players to have *more opportunities to score goals and make saves!* (Pure excitement)

The “Small-Sided” environment is a *developmentally appropriate environment* for our young soccer players. It’s a **FUN** environment that *focuses on the player*.

These are the reasons why US Youth Soccer endorses “Small-Sided Games” for U6, U8, U10 and U12 players across the board...across America.

Four and five year olds (U6 players) are very, very little people. They are very egocentric. The ball represents a toy that belongs to them...they don't share well. They love to run and jump and roll around. They have wonderful imaginations! It's about **PLAY!** It's about **FUN!**

game playing numbers: 3 versus 3 (no goalkeepers)

maximum field size: 30 yards x 25 yards

goal size: 4 ft high x 12 ft wide (use goals provided or cones)

ball size: Number 3

length of game: Four – 8 minute quarters, 5 minute halftime

playing time: every player is to play 50% of game

uniforms: home team to wear pinnies in case of conflict

start and restart: opponent 4 yards from ball

fouls and free kicks: explain to player foul committed and all fouls direct kicks

throw-in: no throw in to be used, kick-in with opponents 4 yards from ball

goal kick: from 2-3 yards from goal, opponents 4 yards away

corner kick: from 1 yard from corner, opponents 4 yards away

coaches: should remain on sideline with team bench

team benches and spectators: spectators to be on opposite side from benches

scoring and standings: NONE TO BE KEPT

The rules above are to be adhered to. If one team is short players, coaches may choose to share players. Please do not increase the # of players on the field.

It is a pity that youth soccer is often compared with soccer played by adults. Often there are instructions given by coaches that the children don't understand. Spectators should NOT get involved with the coaching. Small-sided games begin to give the game back to the players and allow a more player-centered soccer environment. When players are motivated to practice their sport, they'll learn more from it and therefore become a better soccer player. So our aim is to get as much pleasure from soccer as possible.

Safety

Enjoyment

Learning

Sportsmanship

Teamwork

Coaching Resources:

www.usyouthsoccer.org

www.nmysa.net

www.northernsc.org