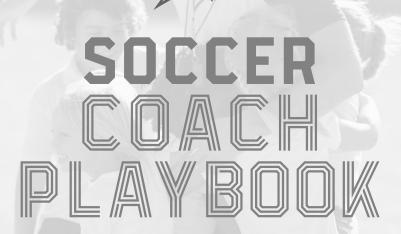


A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO PROVIDING THE BEST LEAGUE EXPERIENCE! DEVELOP SKILLS | STRENGTHEN CHARACTER | HAVE FUN



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COACHING ESSENTIALS

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→ Goals For The Season

The goal of our sports ministry is:		
Success looks like:		
Success looks like.		
Success in our sports ministry is measured by:		
Success in our sports ministry is measured by.		

→ What You Do Matters

Thank you for coaching this season! You are about to influence the lives of families for the next several weeks but don't worry. This league and Upward Sports provide the tools you will need for the journey, even if you are new to a sport.

Matthew 5:13-16 - You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless. You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

→ Your Role in Sports Ministry

As a coach, you play a vital role in the sports ministry to players and families. You are on the front lines of what takes place this season.

Sports ministry requires that the sport and ministry are both done with excellence as you give your best effort in teaching the sport and caring for people through ministry opportunities. Your league is not "just an Upward league" or "just a church league." Sports ministry is your chance to provide the best youth sports experience in your community and demonstrate the gospel to the families you serve.

Hebrews 12:1-2 reads, Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer, and perfecter of our faith.

How do you plan to grow spiritually and as a coach this season?	

→ An Upward Sports Coach

Whether you are a first-time coach, veteran coach, or somewhere in between on the coaching journey, there are five crucial things to do as an Upward Sports coach.

Five Keys To Coaching:

- Be organized to teach the sport Take time to teach the fundamentals of the sport and the rules through organized and detailed practices. Refer to the practice plans for drills and look to enhance each player's skill development.
- 2. Lead the practice devotion Coaches lead a devotion, discussion, and prayer during practices using the devotion materials. If you need help, let the league director or coach commissioner know, as they are ready to provide support.
- **3. Communicate with parents** Parents on the team want you to communicate with them. Send a weekly email, text, or both to let parents know how the team is doing and remind them of upcoming events.
- **4.** Instill sportsmanship, a competitive spirit, and a growth mindset Help your players learn how these work together.
 - Great sportsmanship involves valuing others and showing appreciation for opponents, teammates, and officials regardless of the scoreboard.
 - ◆ A competitive spirit is about doing your best in all situations during practice and games.

- ◆ A growth mindset focuses on growing and improving at each opportunity so that small improvements lead to more significant change as they compound over time. There is always growth potential.
- **5. Follow the Circle of Affirmation** Support game day officials by being their biggest fans and following the Circle of Affirmation on game days. Following the Circle of Affirmation will provide families with a positive experience and show we value people as God's creation.

As a coach, invest time in giving your best while considering Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:7. Realize that God created the participants you are coaching and those around you. As image-bearers of God, we should treat everyone with the love that God treats them, as you promote the discovery of Jesus.



GENESIS 1:27

"So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them."

GENESIS 2:7

"Then the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man's nostrils, and the man became a living person."

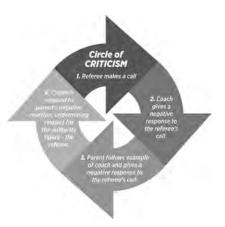
→ Circle of Affirmation

Game Day Attitude

Choosing the right game day attitude is a key to being an effective Upward Soccer Coach. Actions and reactions on the field can either open or close the door to ministry. The Circle of Criticism and the Circle of Affirmation are simple diagrams that illustrate the results of a coach giving a referee either negative or positive feedback.

In Upward Soccer, coaches and referees work together as a unified team. Coaches have the opportunity and the responsibility to stop the Circle of Criticism by starting the Circle of Affirmation.





The Circle of Affirmation goes beyond the referee. A coach's affirmation of players inspires encouragement and praise from parents, family members and other players. Practicing the Circle of Affirmation makes the game a better experience for everyone.

→ Three Layers of Coaching

The three coaching layers are essential to understand the dynamics of coaching a team. They include a player, the team, and the coach.

THE PLAYER A coach will need to observe each player's skill level and teach accordingly. You may have a wide range of skill levels, with players who have experience and skill and some who have never played the sport. Work one-on-one with players and give them direction on individual skills to try at home. Celebrate success as they develop and be patient with their mistakes.

THE TEAM

As you coach each individual, you must also bring the team together. In a team sport, players must learn how to work well with each other. The team concept changes as players become more mature, advance in age, and can focus on others and not just themselves. Small-sided scrimmages and in-game scenarios at practices can aid in developing the team concept. Helping them communicate with each other by using participants' names and showing them how to encourage each other will help them come together as a team.

THE COACH You must prepare for practice and games to coach a team. Coaches should be willing to invest the time it takes to be ready to lead. Spend time reviewing practice plans and thinking about backup plans so that you can move forward if something isn't working. Take time to check the Scouting Report section of the practice devotion and spend time praying for your team.

→ Interacting with Players, Parents, Coaches, and Referees

As you are in a coaching role, people watch how you respond at practices and games and how you lead the team. Your interactions influence the atmosphere of the league, if a family will return next season, and the league's and your ability to conduct ministry.

Interacting with players

Interacting with players is pivotal for a coach. This coaching opportunity may place you as someone's first-time coach. In sports ministry, you have the chance to impact someone for eternity.

Here are ten tips on interacting with your players.

- Greet each player by name as they arrive.
- Always be mindful of speaking on a level that the player can understand.
- ♦ Tell participants the details of what you are teaching, show them what you are teaching, have them do it, and then apply it in a game scenario.
- ♦ Focus on one skill at a time as you teach so that players can learn each one thoroughly.
- ♦ Recognize differences in skill levels so that you can help each player improve.
- ◆ Be familiar with the devotion and allow time for discussion.

- Hold a ten to fifteen-minute meeting with parents at the end of the first practice to set expectations and answer questions.
- Allow players to be creative during the game. Teach at practice and observe and encourage during the game.
 You don't need to control all of the player actions.
- Understand that there is a lot of information a player is processing during a game. When a player is not in the game, one simple question to gain understanding is, "What did you see?" This question requires listening and patience to discover what they saw from their perspective.
- When distributing stars on game days, give specific reasons each athlete earned a particular game-day star. Don't underestimate the value of recognizing players!

What about distracted and disruptive players?

A challenge for coaches is what to do with distracted or disruptive participants. Here are four things to understand in these situations that will help.

- 1. Understand that players have short attention spans. Be patient.
- 2. Players come into practice and, like coaches, are influenced by things that have already occurred during the day. Greet them by name to welcome them into a new environment, so they know you see them.

- **3.** Maintain engagement by cutting down on lines and lectures. To do this, ask parents to help run a drill, so there are multiple stations.
- **4.** Praise desired behavior right away, use the player's name, and let them know how it helps the team. Other players will recognize this and follow.

If undesirable behavior continues, address it with the player and parent so that the player doesn't disrupt a learning environment. Let the parent know that you need their help, as they may be able to offer insight into working with their player.

Interacting with parents

Start the season by getting to know your players' parents and families. Include parents in your first post-practice huddle. Here are a few tips for interacting with parents.

- ♦ Introduce yourself to parents, share expectations, and explain why you are coaching.
- ♦ Share your contact information.
- Each week take time to have a conversation with one family.
- Encourage parents to have fun working on skills at home with their players.
- ♦ Be ready to step into any spiritual conversation with parents and talk about what you teach during devotion time.

- ◆ Demonstrate care and concern for players, so parents know you are looking out for their players.
- Be organized and prepared for practice. Parents want to know you value their time by coaches being prepared and organized.
- Communicate one time per week through email, text, or both. Keep it short and simple.

After you receive your roster, contact the parents right away. Families are eager to hear from you, and it cuts down on the number of calls and emails a league director has to spend time answering.

Interacting with Other Coaches and Referees

An Upward Sports league can set the standard in your community by how coaches and referees interact on game days. Parents, players, and families notice how both team's coaches and referees work together to provide a fantastic player experience. Remember, youth sports are about the youth.

Here are some tips on how to interact with coaches and referees.

- ♦ Introduce yourself to the other coaches and referees on game day, and remember their names.
- Realize that you would not have a game day without the other team and referees. It's essential to work together.

- Review Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:7 and understand that we are all God's creation, which should be reflected in how we interact.
- ◆ Be the referee's biggest fan. If you want to have referees for your league, critical behavior does not help.
- Coaches work together for the experience of all participants.
- ♦ Love one another, John 13:34.
- ♦ Thank the coaches and referees after the game.
- ◆ Review the Circle of Affirmation and follow it.

What sets this league apart from others is that when differences of opinion or mistakes are made during a game, we are all part of one team, providing a great player experience that honors God.

→ Create a Positive Culture

A positive culture is one of safety, learning, and fun. A team's attitude and mindset often mirror that of its coach. Use the beginning of the season to set a tone of positivity through the weeks ahead.

- ◆ Set expectations of behavior and communicate them with players and parents.
- ♦ Start and end each practice on time.

- ◆ Encourage players to support each other by cheering for teammates.
- ♦ View mistakes as teaching opportunities, not a chance to be critical at the moment.

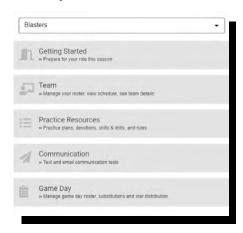
One practical way to create a positive team culture and teach communication is to establish a team huddle at the end of practice. Have players circle up and include the coach. The coach can talk about things done well in practice.

Next, have players look to the person on their right, use their name, and offer something they saw their teammate do well in practice. Continue around the circle until everyone has had a chance to speak. The topic could be different at each practice, such as something the player would like to improve on their own, something they appreciate about the other player or something they would like to see the team accomplish in the next game.

→ Coach Resources and Tools

Many resources are available to help you provide a great experience for your team, plan and efficiently use your time this season.

MyUpward.org - This is the primary tool for you as a coach. The league director will send you an invitation to access resources on MyUpward.org. After you accept the invitation and create a username and password, you can also create an icon on your home screen when accessing from a mobile device.



- Getting Started includes how-to videos and other resources to help you this season.
- Team area helps you manage your roster and see participant information and the schedule for practices and game days.
- ◆ Practice Resources provide a step-by-step outline for each practice, devotions, skills and drills, and sports rules.

- ◆ Communication is where you will find email and text capabilities, as well as attaching a link to the team page.
- ◆ Game Day helps you to manage the substitutions with the Upward Sports game day rotation and the ability to track game day stars.

Devotions - Weekly devotion content for your practices is located on MyUpward.org under the "Practice Resources" and can also be found in the Coach Playbook.

Game Day Stars – Use these stars on game day to highlight each player's contributions during the game. The Star Distribution Form can be found in the Appendix of the Coach Playbook.

Gospel Video - Sent out from the league director to families to share a video version of the gospel message with them during the season.

Green Practice Stars – Use these stars at practice to encourage participation in the practice devotion, scripture learning, or the goals your league has outlined for the devotion content.

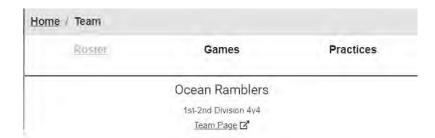
Practice Cards - The practice cards show the bible verse associated with the weekly devotion. Depending on the devotion track, you will hand out cards every week or only at designated weeks noted in the devotion.

Practice Plans – Use the practice plans found on MyUpward.org under the "Practice Resources." These can be printed before practice or used directly from your mobile device.

Season Celebration - Celebrate the season with your team. Your league may have individual team parties or a leaguewide celebration.

Team Page – Share the team page with your team to give them access to the practice and game schedule. The team page also includes your contact information and a team roster. The team page link is available to send from the communication area of the mobile view of myupward.org.

Team pages can be accessed on MyUpward.org through the "Team" tab. A link to the Team Page will be under the team name and division.



Upward.org/coach - Helps you learn more about sharing the gospel using the 3 Circles.

→ Play with Purpose

A coach can help develop not only a player but a person. That person has a long-term impact on the community, their family, and eternity. You coach, and they play with purpose. This relationship develops someone through a player development model that is remembered by the acronym M.A.S.S.

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT MODEL = M.A.S.S.

As an Upward Sports Coach, you play a major role in encouraging your players mentally, athletically, spiritually and socially as they participate on your team.

This approach is based on Luke 2:52: "And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man."



Mental development for young athletes is a byproduct of the weekly practices and games where players participate. Players grow in confidence, courage, decision-making, and cognitive self-regulation.

Confidence and Courage - As players learn and improve their skills and confidence will increase. Players then gain the courage to attempt new skills and recognize that mistakes are a part of the game that they can overcome.

Decision-Making - The intricacies and complexities of sports, help train young athletes on making correct decisions quickly. When to pass a ball, when to attempt a move or make a defensive play are all part of building decision-making. Through observation and repetition, players improve their muscle memory and learn when and how to make individual and team decisions.

Cognitive self-regulation - Through intense games and drills, players learn to self-regulate emotions and gain focus. Through sports, they will enter various experiences (practices, scrimmages, games, etc.) where they will learn to narrow their focus from a broad range to a specific individual focus and team responsibilities in the pursuit of attaining particular goals.



ATHLETICALLY

Athletic development compounds through small improvements over time. Players learn and grow in their sport to achieve long term growth

Exercise: In a recent State of Play report, the Aspen Sports Institute reported only 24% of youth ages 6 to 17 engage in at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day, down from 30% a decade earlier. With many kids spending over 6 hours in front of screens each day (TVs, computers, phones/tablets), the desire to get out and be active is waning.

How can you tell if a child is getting proper exercise? Sweat. Sweat requires constant activity with little "downtime." Practices should have drills that allow for continuous movement using various muscle groups. Avoid players standing in lines when possible. Keep practice fast-paced and fun, allowing for water breaks and short periods of rest.

Physical Development: Physical development has enormous benefits for children, including stronger bones and muscles, improved heart and brain health, and lowered risk of diseases such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Participants may learn fundamental movements that allow them to run, jump, throw, catch, balance, and change direction. Basic moves will help participants enjoy a variety of sports and begin a path to physical literacy.

Fun: The key to getting kids interested in physical activity is by making it fun. Sports do just that, provided the coaches in charge are focused on the development of the athlete. Practices should teach the game using fun and safe methods.



SPIRITUALLY

Spiritual growth is an essential part of sports ministry. You play a vital role in the spiritual development of players on your team and help them discover a sense of self and a sense of purpose. This development happens in various ways.

Practice devotions - By guiding discussion around the practice devotions each week, you plant seeds of discovery within the minds and hearts of young athletes. Remember to guide every practice devotion conversation back to the Gospel and what Jesus has done for us.

Your relationship with players - You are a safe, trusted adult in the lives of young athletes. You hold a remarkable amount of influence. Listen intently, guide carefully, and be someone who continually points young athletes to Christ in your interactions.

Your relationship with parents - The top spiritual influence in a child's life is their parents. What they learn from their home life will speak more into their spiritual development than anything else. Your relationship with a child's parents must be strong. Share with them what their child is learning each week in practice. Discuss the devotions. Talk about how their child is developing in their skills. When parents know you care and are investing in their child's well-being, they'll trust you and your spiritual influence on their child.

Your example - Be ready to step into opportunities God provides during practices, games, and your communications to demonstrate and share the gospel message



SOCIALLY

Participants develop socially by learning how to work as a team, communicate, and serve others through a sport.

Teamwork: Through team sports, children learn how to interact with peers and adults in positive ways. These include numerous opportunities for "selfless" behavior, focusing all mental and physical efforts towards the goals of the team. Participants learn how to navigate relationships, encourage others, and recover from mistakes.

Communication: Players learn how to communicate in complex social situations with teammates and competitors. This learning carries over to other areas of life, helping them communicate in school, at home, and in other environments.

Serving: Serving others becomes a critical component for social development in team sports. Children learn to share the ball, encourage teammates, and give their best effort to help the team and not just themselves.

SECTION 2

PRACTICE

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→ Invest in the team by preparing for practice

Your investment shows in the results each week. There are entire practice plans for each week of the season found on MyUpward.org. These plans have been designed for each age group and include age-appropriate skill development and devotion material that progress through the season.

As the season continues, you may need to modify the plans based on what takes place in practices and the game. Be sure to always focus on the fundamentals of the sport. As you become more experienced, you may begin to include other resources for practice. Be sure to use the weekly devotion material as you design a practice.

Coaches are named as the top reason parents and players return or not each season. Parents want to see organized and detailed practices.

→ Practice breakdown

Opening practice huddle (3-5 minutes) - Start on time the signal to the team parents that you are ready to begin. Point out a couple of things that you will cover in practice. Once games occur, use the first few minutes of practice to talk about the previous game and something you will work on from the game and highlights from the game.

Warm-up activity (3-5 minutes) - Provide players with the opportunity to warm up their bodies slowly.

Practice skills through drills (20 minutes) - Focus on specific skills that matter to the sport. Use drills and game scenarios that reinforce skill development.

Practice devotion (5-7 minutes) – Share the practice devotion for each week. Be mindful of the opportunities to demonstrate the gospel throughout practice, so players see you living it out.

Scrimmage or skill challenges that teach (20 minutes) – Use a controlled scrimmage or skills challenges to test their skills.

End of practice huddle (3-5 minutes) – Review the skills learned at practice and praise efforts. Hand out practice cards and stars and do things to create a positive team culture.

Post-practice time - After practice, take time to get to connect with one family each week.

Here is a chart that outlines the weekly practice plans you can find on MyUpward.org.

Practice	Practice Focus	Team Meeting	Rules to Cover	Skills & Drills
1	Get to know each other Evaluate skills Set practice rules Teach dribbling fundamentals	Get to know each other through introductions Discuss practice ground rules Introduce attacking basics	› Practice rules	› Dribbling Page 32
2	Continue skill evaluation Teach passing fundamentals Teach positions and responsibilities	Re-introduce players and coaches Discuss common fouls Explain substitutions	Re-start (kickoff, corner kicks, goal kicks, throw-ins) Game format and substitutions	> Passing Page 35
3 week of first game	 Review re-start situations Teach shooting fundamentals 	› Discuss practice focus	> What are the common fouls	> Shooting Page 40
4	 > Skill development > Review positions and responsibilities > Teach defensive tactics 	 Discuss practice focus Discuss successes from first game 	> What happens after a foul	> Tactics - Defense Page 44
5	> Skill development > Teach offensive tactics	Discuss practice focus Answer players' questions about the game Discuss successes from previous game	> Review all rules as a fun quiz	> Tactics - Offense Page 46
6-11 through last practice	Continue skill development	Discuss practice focus Discuss successes from previous game Answer players' questions about the game	Continue to review rules for clear under- standing	> Improvements from games

→ Warm-Ups & Stretching

Use the first five minutes of practice to get the players moving. This can be done by incorporating athletic development exercises like the examples below. Warm-up first and then follow with stretching.

Here are warm-up activities that you can use. Add music, move to the beat and create a warm-up activity you will use at the start of each practice.

- ◆ **Arm Circles**: Hold arms out standing in a T and circle them.
- ◆ Back pedal: Run backwards while stepping back as far as possible.
- ◆ Donkey Kicks: In a standing position or moving forward, kick heels toward up toward your back side.
- ◆ Feet on fire: Running in place.
- Heels to Hands: Have players line up on one of the sidelines. On the coach's signal, players jog slowly with knees pointing toward the ground and their heels kicking upward toward their backsides where their hands are. Once all players have made it to the other side of the field, have them return to the starting point by sprinting back across the field.
- ◆ **High Knees**: With hands in front and waist high, lift knees up and alternate between knees. Vary speed as desired.

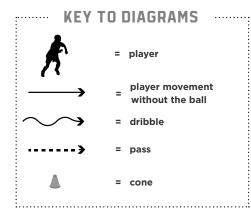
- ♦ Hops: This can be done in one movement. It can be done on one foot or both feet.
- ◆ Jumping jacks: Players jump in place, extending arms out to the side and kicking legs out to the side.
- Log Step: With both feet on one side of an imaginary log, high step sideways with one foot and then the other to cross over the "log." Vary speed.
- Lunges: From a standing position, large step forward while keeping the back foot in place without the knee touching the ground.
- Push-ups: May use a modified version for very young players.
- ◆ Running: One minute of running. If you have limited space, run in place and change the pace.
- ◆ **Shoulder circles**: With arms by your side, lift your shoulders and take them back down, creating a circular motion.
- ◆ Side lunge: Feet wider than shoulder width apart, keep one leg straight while the other bends into a squat position. Keep your back flat, chest up and rear out behind you.
- ◆ Sprint to Backpedal: Have players line up on one of the sidelines. On the coach's signal, players sprint across the field then backpedal to the starting point. As players backpedal, instruct them to lean slightly forward and land on the balls of their feet so they don't trip and fall backward.
- ◆ **Trunk twists**: From a standing position, twist back and forth slowly.

Basic Dribbling and Passing

Basic dribbling and passing work can be used in the team warm-up time. Pair players up with a teammate or two. Give each group a soccer ball and have them dribble and pass to each other within your practice area.

→ Skills and Drills

This section reviews the fundamental skills of soccer, explains why each is important, and emphasizes the skill's key teaching points. Each skill is followed by a basic drill that reinforces it. These drills are acceptable for any age group as an introduction to the concept behind each skill. For more advanced age-appropriate drills for each skill, as well as complete practice plans, go to MyUpward.org.



Many of the drills described in this playbook require one ball per player. If you are limited in the number of soccer balls you have for practice, you will need to modify the drill by creating lines based on the number of soccer balls available.

Dribbling Skills

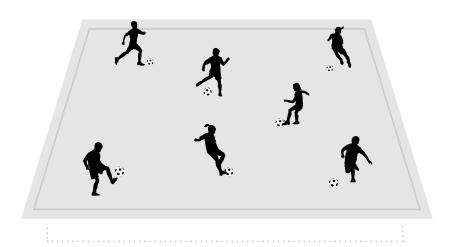
The information below will help you to teach players to control the ball when dribbling.

Techniques and skills to emphasize:

- ◆ Get comfortable dribbling the ball in different body postures (standing straight for slower control, leaning to the side for turns and fakes or leaning forward for speed).
 - » Repetition is the key to becoming comfortable with all styles of dribbling.
 - » Activity should be done slowly to learn the technique; Remind players it is not a race.
- Focus on making clean touches on the ball; avoid being sloppy with things like balance, body positioning, and loose ankles.
- ♦ Keep looking up, down, and around as often as possible to know your options to keep the ball close.
- Keep the ball close so it doesn't go out of bounds or is not lost to an opponent.
- ◆ Encourage players as they begin to see success while dribbling. Dribbling is very unnatural at first, so increasing confidence is important.

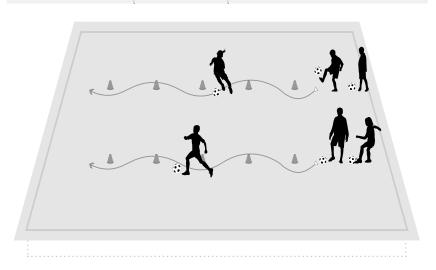
DRILL: FREE DRIBBLING

OBJECTIVE	EQUIPMENT	PROCEDURE
Training players to keep the ball in their possession by tight/clean touches on the ball	One soccer ball per player	On the coach's signal, players begin to freely dribble throughout the practice area using different parts of their foot. This will increase player's confidence with the ball.



DRILL: BASIC DRIBBLING

OBJECTIVE	EQUIPMENT	PROCEDURE
Training players to keep the ball in their possession by tight/clean touches on the ball	One soccer ball per player and ten markers/ cones	On the coach's signal, the first player in each group begins to dribble (weaving) through the line of markers/cones in front of their group. As players dribble through the markers/cones, give specific instructions to dribble with emphasis on different techniques of dribbling: "Inside of the foot only" (left and right foot); "Outside of the foot only"; "Inside & Outside of the foot" (alternating).



Passing Skills

The information below will help you to teach players to become confident passers.

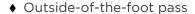
Techniques and skills to emphasize:

- ♦ The support leg holds body weight and the kicking leg strikes the ball and follows through with it in the direction of the pass.
- ♦ The ball should be struck with a "locked" ankle and toes slightly raised toward the shin.
- When striking the ball for a pass, imagine a horizontal line drawn through the middle of the ball and strike the ball just above the line. This keeps the ball from going up in the air. If the ball is hit on the lower half, it typically pops up in the air.
- Do not pass with the toe, because it does not result in an accurate pass.
- Use both feet to pass instead of relying on the dominant foot.
- ♦ Inside-of-the-foot pass
 - » The ball is struck on the inside of the foot, right above the arch of the foot.
 - » Toes should be slightly raised toward the shin to lock the ankle.
 - » Posture: Knees should be slightly bent for balance and the plant foot is pointed in the direction of the pass.

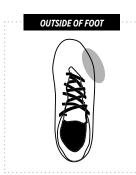




- » Focus: Eyes are on the ball, which is generally hit at its center with a locked ankle.
- » Follow through when first learning. As players progress, it is a quick "popping" motion, with more force and less follow through.



- » The ball is struck with the outside of the foot, just behind the small toe.
- » Toes should be turned in and down to help lock the ankle.
- » Posture: Knees should be slightly bent for balance and the body stance is in a line with the ball.
- » Focus: Eyes are on the ball and players crouch or hunch over for balance and to increase force on the ball.
- » Follow through when first learning. As players progress, it is a quick "popping" motion with more focus and less follow through.





Receiving/Trapping Skills

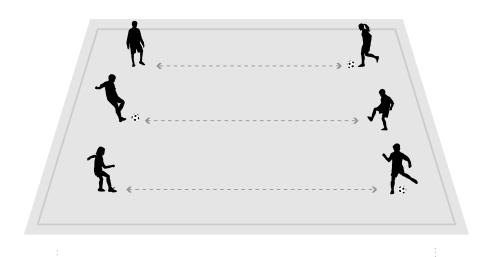
The information below will help you teach players to receive a pass.

Techniques and skills to emphasize:

- Anticipate a pass from your teammate by being ready.
 Know where the ball is at all times, don't stand flat footed, and move to an open space.
 - » Think about the options you will have once you receive the ball.
 - » Be aware of teammates and opponents and their positioning on the field.
- The support leg holds body weight and the receiving foot moves back with the ball once it touches the foot. This absorbs the force of the ball and allows for better control.
 - » The force of a pass is absorbed by placing the foot in alignment with the ball while stepping forward with the support leg. The ball is absorbed into the foot by carrying it backward or wedging it against the ground with the sole of the foot.
 - » Step forward when the ball is approaching to get your body ahead of the ball as you receive it. This will prevent the ball from getting too far away and helps with balance when absorbing the ball into the foot.
- Keep your head and eyes moving up and down, left and right. This helps increase ball control and gives better awareness of other players on the field in the game.
- As players master the basics of receiving the ball, teach them to "cut down" on the ball as it arrives, with a fast motion using the inside of the foot. This creates a backspin to keep the ball close to the body.
- Use both feet to receive passes instead of relying only on the dominant foot.

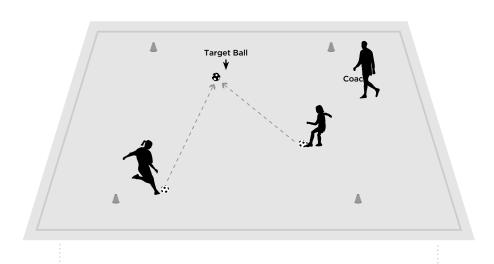
PASSING & RECEIVING/TRAPPING DRILLS DRILL: BASIC PASSING

OBJECTIVE	EQUIPMENT	PROCEDURE
Players learn the touch of good passing and receiving/ trapping to control the ball	One soccer ball per player	On the coach's signal, players pass to each other back and forth. After players have passed for two to three minutes, change passes to seven to 10 yards apart, then progress to jogging around the field and passing.



DRILL: HIT THE TARGET

OBJECTIVE	EQUIPMENT	PROCEDURE
Players learn the touch of good passing with accuracy	One soccer ball per player, one clearly identified ball to be used as the target, and four markers or cones	To begin the game, the coach will kick the target ball into play. Players attempt to hit the target ball with their own soccer ball by passing at the target ball. After a couple of players hit the target ball, the coach should kick it to another area inside the grid. Players do not have to use the same soccer ball throughout this drill. They should use the ball nearest them (other than the target ball).



Shooting Skills

The information below will help you to teach good shooting fundamentals.

Techniques and skills to emphasize:

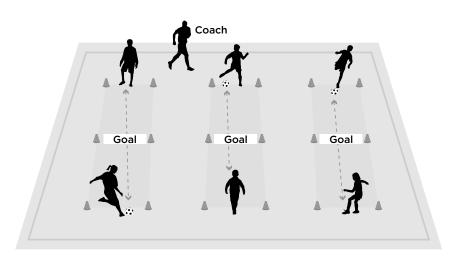
- Striking the ball when shooting
 - » Use inside the foot (push-pass) for accuracy shooting.
 - » Use instep/laces of the foot for power shooting.
- The plant foot should be located next to the ball with the shooting leg drawn back. The shooting leg is bent at the knee at a 90 degree angle with the knee directly above the ball.
- ◆ Keep your head down and over the ball when shooting to keep the ball from going too high.
- ♦ Shooting accuracy
 - » Concentrate on shooting the ball through the openings of defenders accurately.
 - » To establish the foundation for fundamental shooting, aim for one of these areas on the goal:
 - Corners (on the ground or the upper corners)
 - Near post (post closest to the ball) with a push-pass or accuracy type shot.
 - Far post (post furthest from the ball) and strike the ball with power.

♦ Shooting skill progression

- » Shoot the ball while it is stationary to develop confidence.
- » Shoot with the ball in motion, while players take two to three steps to approach the ball and shoot.
- » Shoot the ball while the player and the ball are in motion without defensive pressure.
- » Shoot the ball while the player and the ball are in motion with defensive pressure.

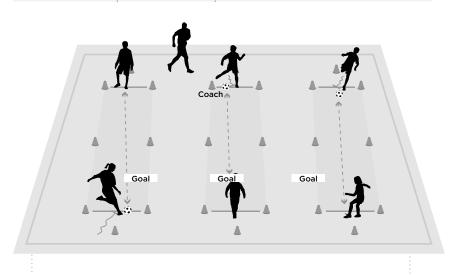
SHOOTING DRILLS DRILL: INSTEP SHOOTING (STATIONARY)

OBJECTIVE	EQUIPMENT	PROCEDURE
Teach the posture and positioning of how to shoot the ball	18-24 cones and one soccer ball for every two players	On the coach's signal, the player with the ball shoots the stationary ball through the target or goal. The ball should pass through the target or goal where the partner will retrieve it and bring it back between their markers/cones. Players should continue shooting back and forth. As players are shooting, walk from grid to grid to give more detailed shooting tips and encouragement to players as they practice.



DRILL: INSTEP SHOOTING (WITH MOVEMENT)

OBJECTIVE	EQUIPMENT	PROCEDURE
Learn the posture and positioning of how to shoot the ball while moving	24-28 markers/ cones and one soccer ball for every two players	On the coach's signal, the player with the ball slowly dribbles the ball up to the line and then shoots the ball through the target or goal to their partner on the opposite side of the grid. The ball should pass through the target or goal where the partner will retrieve it and bring it back to their line. Players should continue shooting back and forth. As players are shooting, walk from grid to grid to give more detailed shooting tips and encouragement to players as they practice.



Defensive Tactical Skills

The information below will help you teach players a solid defensive philosophy.

Techniques and skills to emphasize:

- Good balance is a key to properly playing defense. Be aware of your timing in attacking the ball controlled by an opponent. Play defense in a clean but hard fought way.
- ◆ Be aware of the whole field when playing defense, including passing lanes and the support players from the opposing team in order to limit their options.
- When defending the attacking player, you should have one foot slightly in front of the other and knees slightly bent. You should also be on the front part of the foot and slightly crouched.
- Be patient and aware of timing the tackle or "winning the ball." If you simply wait until the attacker makes a bad touch on the ball, it allows you to win it from them. Being too aggressive and jumping into the situation without thinking can result in a good attacker dribbling right past a defender.
- Play "light-on-your-feet" so you can react quickly to the play in front of you.
- ◆ Stay in the defensive position as much as possible, keeping the player with the ball in front of you.
- Don't cross your legs when marking an attacker. As you slant the attacker, move your legs in a shuffling motion.
- ◆ Don't approach the ball "flat" with both feet side by side and heels on the ground. This allows the attacker to dribble around the defender much easier.

 SOCCER COACH PLAYBOOK

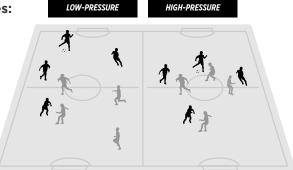
DEFENSIVE DRILLS

DRILL: DEFENSIVE SHAPE

OBJECTIVE	EQUIPMENT	PROCEDURE
Training players to work as a team by having defensive shape (positioning as a team)	narkers or cones, pinnies for half of the team and one soccer ball	This is meant to be a time to walk through play. Give possession of the ball to one player and have the defense adjust to the location of the ball. The attacking team moves the ball at walking speed (instead of game speed) to another teammate. The defense should not attempt to win the ball at this time; they should only be working on positioning as a team. After moving the ball eight to 10 times, switch possession of the ball to the other team.

Teaching Points/Phrases:

♦ Low-pressure defense: When a team plays lowpressure defense they let the other team pass the ball around and wait for a win the ball.



LOW-PRESSURE

 High-pressure defense: When a team plays high-pressure defense they are trying to win the ball from the opposing team as fast as they can. They move quickly and often with more than one player on the ball.

Offensive Tactical Skill

The information below will help you teach players a solid offensive philosophy.

Techniques and skills to emphasize:

- ♦ Players should learn where and how to move without the ball.
 - » Often the player without the ball plays a more important role in a play than the attacker with the ball, because the player without the ball is needed for support of the player with the ball.
 - » Players should be moving to open spaces to keep possession of the ball.
 - » While moving to open space, try to maintain the triangle support positions, so players with the ball have at least two passing options.

OFFENSIVE DRILLS

DRILL: OFFENSIVE TACTICS WALK THROUGH

OBJECTIVE	EQUIPMENT	PROCEDURE
Teach players the general rules and guidelines for playing soccer	A ball, pinnies, and lines on a field (or use cones)	This is meant to be a time to walk through play. Give possession of the ball to one player and have the defense adjust to the location of the ball. Assign one team to offense and the other to defense. Put players into positions and cover each of the scenarios below, ensuring each player understands their role. As time allows, have players put the ball in play using each method.

Offensive Methods:

For the Offensive Tactics Walk-Through Drill, go through the following offensive methods.

- ♦ Kickoffs
- ♦ Out-of-bounds restarts
- ♦ Corner kicks

- ♦ Goal kicks
- ♦ Throw-ins

OFFENSIVE DRILLS DRILL: OFFENSIVE SHAPE

PROCEDURE Teach Eight Triangle: On the coach's signal, plavers markers or players pass the ball from corner "shapes" cones and to corner. After the ball is passed, of how to two soccer the players on the markers or provide balls cones move to support the player who now possesses the ball and support to teammates keep the triangle shape. The with the ball shadow defender is passive on defense by only moving toward the player with the ball. The shadow defender should not GENERAL RE-STARTS attempt to kick or take the ball away at this time. Change players to be the shadow defender every TOUCHLINE / SIDELINE THROW-INS 60-90 seconds. Diamond: In the diamond shape, players practice keeping the shape while passing the ball to one another. The shape of a diamond provides good width and depth so a team has good spacing. Support Width

TRIANGLE

SUPPORT / SHAPE

DIAMOND

♦ NOTES

PRACTICE DEVOTIONS BIBLICAL THEMES THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

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→ Devotions

As an Upward Coach, you are not only teaching skills for the sport but also values for life. The devotion time allows you to teach the character of Christ through biblical themes. This season will focus on themes which are taught in your practices and are highlighted by Bible verses. The chart below is designed to assist you as you organize and prepare for your devotions. It shows biblical themes and verses for each group of practices.

PRACTICE NUMBER	BIBLICAL THEME	VERSE
Week 1	The Fruit of the Spirit	"But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!" GALATIANS 5:22-23 (NLT)
Week 2	Love	"Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions." 1 JOHN 3:18 (NLT)
Week 3	Joy	"Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice!" PHILIPPIANS 4:4 (NLT)
Week 4	Peace	"Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you." 1 PETER 5:7 (NLT)
Week 5	Patience	"Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love." EPHESIANS 4:2b (NLT)

PRACTICE NUMBER	BIBLICAL THEME	VERSE
Week 6	Kindness	"Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too" PHILIPPIANS 2:4 (NLT)
Week 7	Goodness	In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father. MATTHEW 5:16 (NLT)
Week 8	Good News	"For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ." 2 CORINTHIANS 5:21 (NLT)
Week 9	Faithfulness	"Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance." 1 CORINTHIANS 13:7 (NLT)
Week 10	Gentleness	"Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls." MATTHEW 11:29b (NLT)
Week 11	Self-Control	For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline. 2 TIMOTHY 1:7 (NLT)



Scouting Report | Coaches, here's an inside look at this week's devotion.

• Background: This season, our devotions will focus on the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23. While these characteristics are beneficial for anyone, this list is specifically about the spiritual versions of these characteristics that can only be produced by God's Spirit at work in the life of a Christian. The imagery of "fruit" is quite helpful in understanding this process. The goal for a Christian is to become more like Jesus. Over time, as the Spirit tends to us, we'll see these characteristics that Jesus perfectly exemplified growing in our lives—like fruit growing in a garden or an orchard. In John 15:1-17, Jesus compares Himself to a vine. He is the source of everything we need to grow and produce this fruit. To be more like Him, we must stay connected to Him through His Spirit.

So, why did Paul address the fruit of the Spirit in his letter to the Galatians? The church in Galatia was made up of Gentiles, people who did not come from a Jewish background. Though Paul had taught them the gospel of salvation through faith in Jesus, other Jews showed up with the message that in addition to believing in Jesus, the Galatian converts must also become Jewish proselytes: they must be circumcised and follow the Old Testament law. Paul's letter argued against this idea. He insisted that rather than this performative adherence to Jewish tradition, Christ was all they needed. He warned them to avoid any legalism that could elevate their own work above Christ's saving work for them. At the same time, Paul writes that this is not an invitation to sin and live as they had before they knew Christ. Instead, a Christian should be guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit to live like Jesus, and the fruit of the Spirit describes what this looks like.

• **Big Picture**: For more insight, read Galatians 5:16-26; John 15:1-17; Matthew 7:15-20. *If you don't own a Bible, you can download the YouVersion Bible App for free.*



- Encouragement: "Once you're marked, or immersed, in the Spirit, what we do have control over is how much influence the Spirit gets in our lives. We do have control over how much of us the Spirit is going to be able to transform . . . We garden our lives by listening to the gospel and by actually making choices that will make our lives more hospitable gardens." Tim Mackie
- Coach's Question for Reflection: Does the fruit of the Spirit describe my character? Why or why not?

Practice Devotion | Share This With Your Team

KEY VERSE

But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!

Galatians 5:22-23 (NLT)

Note: Before you begin, choose one player to be the timekeeper and one to keep count. Make sure the timekeeper has a stopwatch or stopwatch app to keep time on and the counter has paper and a pen to keep a tally on.

We're going to start our devotion time with a challenge. We're going to see how many different fruits and vegetables we can name in one minute. Ready, set, go! (Let athletes call out fruits and vegetables until the timer runs out. Have the counter share the final tally.)

Wow! That's a lot of fruit and veggies. You know, it's pretty cool that God created so many different kinds for us to enjoy.

ASK (All Ages): Can anyone explain where fruits and vegetables come from?

If you've ever grown a vegetable garden, visited a farm, or learned about plants in school, you know that you can plant a seed in good soil, and over time, if it has enough water and sunlight, a plant will grow. And depending on what seed you put in the ground, you'll get that kind of plant. If you plant tomato seeds, you'll get tomatoes. If you plant apple seeds, you'll eventually get a whole tree full of apples!

This season, we're going to be talking a lot about fruit—but not the kind of fruit that grows from plants in the ground. We're going to be talking about the fruit of the Spirit. These are characteristics that grow in your life through the work of God's Holy Spirit. Galatians 5:22-23 (NLT) in the Bible says this: "But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!"

Do you know what all these things have in common? They are all characteristics of Jesus, the Son of God. When He was on earth, He showed all of this fruit in His life because He was living in step with the Holy Spirit.

ASK (All Ages): Think about this list: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. What would it be like to be around someone who was all these things all the time?

It would have been awesome to hang out with Jesus and see Him live this way. The Bible teaches that when you become a Christian, the Holy Spirit begins working in your life to help you be more like Jesus. That means the Spirit wants to help you grow this fruit in your life. He wants to help you be loving, joyful, kind, patient, and so much more! When we live this way, we point everyone around us to Jesus.

ASK (All Ages): Let's think back to the idea of growing fruit and vegetables in a garden.

What are some things a good gardener or farmer might do to help their plants grow?

A good gardener will tend to their plants while they grow. They might pull weeds or put up a fence to keep out animals that want to nibble on the leaves. They might even water the plants if it doesn't rain enough. But, when it comes down to it, the gardener or farmer doesn't make the plant grow by their own power. They just do what they can to help it.

The fruit of the Spirit works like that, too. If you want good things like self-control and peace to grow in your life, you can make choices that will help them grow. You can count to five when you feel angry instead of immediately reacting. You can talk to your parents when you're worried about something instead of keeping it to yourself. But do you know why those things are really going to grow in your life? Because the Holy Spirit is working in you to make you more and more like Jesus.

ASK (K-6th grade): Which fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control—do you think is easiest for you? Which is the hardest?

ASK (7th grade and up): How can you team up with the Holy Spirit to see this fruit grow in your life?

LET'S PRAY

God, we are so excited for this season. Thank You for bringing us together as a team. Thank You for Jesus and the way He lived—and that we can look to Him to show us what it looks like to live in step with Your Spirit. Open our hearts and minds to learn about the fruit of the Spirit. Please help them grow in each of our lives. We love You, Lord. Amen.



Note for Next Practice: For the rest of the season (except for Practice 8, the gospel presentation), you can bring in a different kind of fruit for each practice to add an interactive and visual element to each devotion time. For each practice, bring the "mystery fruit" in a paper bag or lunchbox to conceal it, as athletes will guess what kind of fruit you brought each practice. Activities related to the mystery fruit will be indicated by a fruit symbol in each devotion. If you choose not to use the mystery fruit idea, simply skip that part of each devotion. You may use the following example list of mystery fruit as a guide or choose your own fruit/order:

- Practice 2 (Love) Orange
- Practice 3 (Joy) Strawberry
- Practice 4 (Peace) Peach
- Practice 5 (Patience) Banana
- Practice 6 (Kindness) Blueberry
- Practice 7 (Goodness) Grape
- Practice 8 (Good News) No Mystery Fruit
- · Practice 9 (Faithfulness) Pear
- Practice 10 (Gentleness) Apple
- Practice 11 (Self-Control) Lemon

Practice Card Reminder: If your league uses practice cards, remember to distribute the practice cards entitled "Practice 1" at the end of practice.

Green Practice Star Reminder: If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.



Scouting Report | Coaches, here's an inside look at this week's devotion.

- Background: It's no coincidence that Paul's list of the fruit of the Spirit begins with love. The rest of the items on his list must flow out of love. A few verses earlier in Galatians, Paul writes, "Use your freedom to serve one another in love. For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'' (Galatians 5:13a-14, NLT) It is impossible to truly be kind, gentle, or patient in a way that mirrors Jesus' example without love. The kind of love Jesus demonstrated throughout His time on earth and in His sacrificial death was unconditional, self-sacrificing, and active love. This is the kind of love He expects His followers to exhibit. As 1 John 4:19 (NLT) says, "We love each other because he loved us first." Our love for others reflects the love of God and points people back to Him. "No one can see God. But people can see us. And when we love one another, it is the love of God they see." (Christopher J. H. Wright, *Cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit*)
- **Big Picture**: For more insight, read 1 John 3:16-24; 1 Corinthians 13:1-7; John 13:34-35; 1 John 4:7-12.
- Encouragement: "[Jesus'] every thought and action is marked by this other-centeredness. He is never once motivated by personal interest or selfish gain, but rather is always moved and motivated to help, heal, and care for others. This is why he lives: for grace, mercy, and compassion . . . We see it in synagogue sermons, meals with outcasts, miracles for the poor and sick. It is love that marks the tenor of his every conversation, and love that compels him on exhausting mission trips and preaching tours. His heart, overflowing with love for the loveless, draws him like a magnet to the needs of the wayward and lost." Jonathan Landry Cruse, The Character of Christ
- Coach's Question for Reflection: Is my life marked by love for others? What would it look like if it were?

Practice Devotion | Share This With Your Team

KEY VERSE

Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. 1 John 3:18 (NLT)

Bottom Line: I want to love like Jesus.

Note: For each practice from now on (except Practice 8), you may bring a different "mystery fruit" with you for the athletes on your team to guess. See the end of last week's devotion for a full explanation.



For the rest of the season, we're going to play a little guessing game every practice. I'm going to bring a different fruit with me, and you're going to guess what it is. Ready? Who thinks they know what today's mystery fruit is? (Let athletes guess until someone guesses correctly.) Alright, good job. Now, who can tell me why we're talking about fruit? (Let athletes answer.)

Last week, we talked about the Fruit of the Spirit. This is a list of characteristics that God's Holy Spirit grows in our lives to make us more like Jesus. Today, we'll be talking about the first fruit on that list. Can anyone guess which fruit of the Spirit that might be? (Let athletes guess.)

Today, we're talking about love. Love is a word we use a lot. You tell your family you love them. When you go to a wedding, the whole celebration is about the couple's love for each other. You might say you love your dog, or your favorite sports team, or ice cream. We love. But the kind of love that Jesus showed during His time on earth is a special kind of love.

ASK (All Ages): How do you think Jesus' love was special?

Jesus loved everyone. Even people who didn't deserve it. Even people who hated Him.

Jesus also loved at all times. Even when He was tired. Even when it was inconvenient. Even when He had to go out of His way to care for someone.

Jesus loved big—even at the cost of His own life. He loved us so much that He was willing to die a terrible, painful death on the cross in order to save us. We'll talk about that more later this season

Jesus' kind of love is a love without limits. And that's the kind of love the Holy Spirit wants to grow in our lives. It's easy to love when we're feeling good, or when someone is nice to us, or when it doesn't cost us much.

ASK (K-6th Grade): Why is it hard to show love to people when we feel bad? What about when someone is mean to us? What about when we have to give up something to love someone else?

ASK (7th Grade and up): What are some differences between our culture's definition of love and Jesus' definition of love?

Learning to love like this isn't easy. It takes practice, and it definitely takes the Spirit working in our lives to help us see people like Jesus sees them and to be aware of their needs. There's a verse in the Bible that says this: "Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions." (1 John 3:18, NLT)

ASK (3rd Grade and up): What is this verse saying?

This verse is telling us that it's easy enough to say that we love other people like Jesus does. But what we really need to do is to show we love them by our actions.

ASK (All Ages): Let's think about some of the people we're around regularly. What's a way you can love your parents? Your siblings? Your teammates? Your classmates at school? What about that kid that no one talks to? What about a homeless person?

LET'S PRAY

God, we love You. Thank You so much for loving us and sending Jesus to show us what love really looks like. Help each of us to learn how to love everyone, to love at all times, and to love big. Grow our love, Lord. Amen.

Practice Card Reminder: If your league uses practice cards, remember to distribute the practice cards entitled "Practice 2" at the end of practice.

Green Practice Star Reminder: If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.



Scouting Report | Coaches, here's an inside look at this week's devotion.

- Background: The second and third items on Paul's list of the fruit of the Spirit (joy and peace) go together. They both speak to having a Christlike attitude and outlook as we navigate the hills and valleys of life. Our circumstances will change throughout our lives—that's a given. But the joy of Jesus shows us that our response to any circumstance can be rooted in our hope and confidence in Him rather than in our momentary feelings, worries, or inclinations. Hebrews 12:2 (NLT) says of Jesus, "Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne." Jesus' sacrifice for us was motivated by the joy of heaven, while our joy is the result of His sacrifice—because we know that He secured a place for us in heaven. "Joy, then, is that ever-deepening awareness that our lives are hidden in Christ and that we can be led by the Spirit through anything." (Jack Hayford)
- **Big Picture**: For more insight, read Philippians 4:4-9; Luke 10:1-24; James 1:2-4; Psalm 16:7-11.
- Encouragement: The days of the early church (after Jesus had died, risen, and returned to heaven) were exciting as many people came to believe in Jesus, but the circumstances were not always easy. The believers often faced intense persecution but found plenty of reasons to rejoice. Examples can be found in Acts 2:46, 8:8, 8:39, 11:23, 15:3, 15:31, and 16:34.
- Coach's Question for Reflection: Do I have joy in Christ and what He has done for me, or is my contentment based on my circumstances?

PRACTICE 3 (CONTINUED) JOY

UPU#AD

Practice Devotion | Share This With Your Team

KEY VERSE

Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! Philiopians 4:4 (NLT)

Bottom Line: I can have joy because I belong to God.



I've got another mystery fruit today. Who thinks they can guess what it is? (Let athletes guess until someone gets it right.) Good job. Now, who can tell me what other kind of fruit we're talking about this season? That's right—the fruit of the Spirit. And, who thinks they know what the second fruit of the Spirit we're going to be talking about is? (Let athletes answer.)

Today, we're talking about joy!

ASK (K-6th Grade): Who can tell me what joy means?

When we hear the word "joy," we often think of happiness. But happiness is based on our circumstances. It can go away just as quickly as it appeared. Joy is a gladness that isn't based on what's happening around you or to you. Joy is based on who God is. When you have joy, you are trusting in God's great plan for the world, including His great plan for you. When you have joy, you can be bursting with gladness because of what Jesus did for you and because you belong to Him—no matter what is happening in your life.

ASK (All Ages): Do you think Jesus was a joyful person? How do you know?

In the book of Luke in the Bible, we read that Jesus sent out seventy-two of His followers to the towns and places He planned to visit to preach and heal people. When they came back, His followers were excited because they were able to do powerful things in His name—even demons obeyed them. But Jesus told them, "Don't rejoice because evil spirits obey you; rejoice because your names are registered in heaven." (Luke 10:20b, NLT)

It was great that the disciples' mission was so successful, but Jesus didn't want them to just be happy because of what had happened. He wanted them to have joy because they were following Him, and they could be confident that their future would be with Him in heaven forever.

Jesus knew that there would be hard times ahead for His followers. There would be times when they wouldn't be so successful in their mission. There would be times when people would throw them in jail and even try to kill them for following Jesus. It's in the tough times that you need joy to help you get through.

ASK (All Ages): Can you think of a time when your circumstances made you feel low

instead of happy? How might you be able to find joy in that situation?

Of course, God wants us to be happy—He loves us and rejoices over us. We should celebrate and praise God when things are good! But we should also praise God when things are hard. He is always the same. He is always good. And we are always His.

ASK (7th Grade and up): Have you ever heard someone call a funeral a celebration of life? Why would someone want to celebrate after their loved one has passed away?

LET'S PRAY

God, thank You for joy! Thank You that we can find such faith, security, and love in You that we can rejoice in all circumstances. Please teach us how to find joy even in the hard moments. We are so glad that we belong to You. Amen.

Practice Card Reminder: If your league uses practice cards, remember to distribute the practice cards entitled "Practice 3" at the end of practice.

Green Practice Star Reminder: If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.



Scouting Report | Coaches, here's an inside look at this week's devotion.

- Background: As we said last week, joy and peace go hand-in-hand. Think about it. If you know someone who is really joyful, they often also have a sense of peace about them. Like joy, peace is a perspective in which you remain fixated on God, trusting Him in every situation. In *The Character of Christ*, Jonathan Landry Cruse identifies three kinds of peace: eternal peace (between God and humanity), internal peace (in our hearts), and external peace (between people). Our devotion will focus on these kinds of peace in the life of Peter, one of Jesus' disciples. It is the eternal peace that Jesus brings about through His death that enables Peter to be empowered by the Spirit toward internal and external peace.
- **Big Picture:** For more insight, read 1 Peter 5:6-11; Matthew 14:22-33; John 18:1-12; Luke 22:54-62; Acts 12:1-11; John 14:25-27.
- Encouragement: "I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world." John 16:33 (NLT)
- Coach's Question for Reflection: Is there anything holding me back from internal or external peace? If so, what is it?

Practice Devotion | Share This With Your Team

KEY VERSE

Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you. 1 Peter 5:7 (NLT)

Bottom Line: I can have peace when I trust in God.



Okay, by now, you probably know what we're going to do. First, who thinks they can guess our mystery fruit today? (Let athletes guess.) What about our next fruit of the Spirit? (Let athletes guess.)

ASK (All Ages): Today, we're talking about peace. What does peace mean?

Peace makes us think of rest and calmness. You can have inner peace when you aren't worried or stressed. That means you're trusting in God to take care of you. You can also have outward peace between you and other people. That means you stay calm in tough situations instead of lashing out with your words or actions. You don't have to rush to defend yourself because you trust that God's got your back.

ASK (All Ages): Why is it good to have inner peace? What about outward peace? What are some things that can make it hard to have peace?

There's a verse in the Bible that says this: "Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you." (1 Peter 5:7, NLT) This was written by a guy named Peter. Peter was one of Jesus' first followers. He heard the things Jesus taught and watched Jesus perform miracles. But Peter had a problem with peace.

There are several stories about Peter where we see this peace problem. Peter walks on water, but when he takes his eyes off Jesus, his doubt and worry take over, and he starts to sink. When soldiers come to arrest Jesus, Peter turns to violence and cuts off someone's ear with a sword! After Jesus is taken away, Peter lets his fear take over and denies that he even knows Jesus.

ASK (All Ages): Can you think of a time when you wish you would have had more peace? What happened?

Thankfully, after Jesus dies and is raised from the dead, things start to change for Peter. He must have realized that he really could trust God, and the Holy Spirit started to work in his life. His inner and outward peace started to show up in his life.

In Acts 12, we read that Peter is thrown into prison for preaching about Jesus. When an angel arrives to rescue him, Peter is sound asleep! The angel has to give Peter a little smack to wake him up! Old Peter would have been too worried to sleep, but now he is able

to rest in the peace he has because he trusts that God will be with him and take care of him.

Peter went on to eventually be killed for his faith in Jesus. And he didn't fight back. He didn't deny Jesus again. He realized he could trust that even though they could kill his body on earth, he would be in heaven with Jesus when he died.

ASK (3rd Grade and up): After hearing Peter's story, why do you think he wrote in 1 Peter 5:17 (NLT): "Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you"?

Peter knew what it was to worry. He knew what it was to be afraid. And still, he learned to trust God in difficult moments instead of letting inner or outward fear take over.

ASK (All Ages): What are some things you tend to worry about? How can you remember to trust God when those things come to mind?

ASK (All Ages): When are you the most tempted to lash out at someone else with violent words or actions? What can you do to remember to act peacefully in those moments?

ASK (7th Grade and up): The Bible calls for Christians to be peacemakers. What do you think that looks like?

LET'S PRAY

God, we know You want us to have peace in our hearts and minds and to be at peace with the people around us. Help us to grow in peacefulness. Teach us not to give in to worry or violence. Instead, help us trust that You are with us and You care for us. Amen.

Practice Card Reminder: If your league uses practice cards, remember to distribute the practice cards entitled "Practice 4" at the end of practice.

Green Practice Star Reminder: If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.



Scouting Report | Coaches, here's an inside look at this week's devotion.

- Background: Perhaps one of the best definitions of patience comes from J.I. Packer. He writes, "Patience is the Christlike reaction to all that is maddening." We all face many frustrations in life, often daily. Though it seems simple, patience is sometimes extremely difficult—especially in our fast-paced, instant-gratification-obsessed culture. The word for patience in the Bible is sometimes translated as "longsuffering." Essentially, it is being willing to endure hardship and put your preferences aside for something better, whether that's choosing the welfare of others, submitting to God's plans, or promoting peacefulness in your mind. In the Old Testament, we learn of God's great patience toward the nation of Israel as they continued to sin over and over again. In the New Testament, we read about Jesus' great patience for the people around Him, as well as His patience toward every single one of us, as we continue to sin over and over again. He was patient with us all the way to the cross, where "God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners." (Romans 5:8, NLT)
- Big Picture: For more insight, read Ephesians 4:2-4; Galatians 6:7-10; Psalm 37:7-9.
- Encouragement: "The incredible patience [God] has with us is the kind of patience he wants us to have with one another . . . It is a supernatural work of his Spirit when we try to understand why people act the way they do and then respond to their behavior with love, truth, and proper timing instead of hastily or with uncontrolled anger. Walking in the Spirit means that we listen to God and follow his instructions as we encounter various challenges throughout our day. When we continually walk in God's Spirit, God's character will find expression in our lives." Thomas E. Trask and Wayde I. Goodall, The Fruit of the Spirit
- Coach's Question for Reflection: Am I patient with the people around me? Am I patient in frustrating situations? Am I patient when waiting on God?

Practice Devotion | Share This With Your Team

KEY VERSE

Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. Ephesians 4:2b (NLT)

Bottom Line: I can be patient when I trust in God.



Today, we're going to switch things up a little bit. First, can anyone tell me what they think today's Fruit of the Spirit might be? (Let athletes answer) Patience is today's Fruit of the Spirit. Now, what do you think our mystery fruit might be? (Let athletes guess, but don't reveal the fruit.) Well, we've got some good guesses. But you'll have to wait until the end of the devotion to find out who's right!

ASK (All Ages): Who can tell me what patience is?

ASK (All Ages): What's an example of a time when you had to have patience?

Patience is all about reacting well to the frustrations we face in life. We need to have patience with situations—like having to wait your turn to get subbed into the game. We need to have patience with other people, like when your little brother is bugging you for what feels like the hundredth time that day. And we even need to have patience with God, like when you're waiting for someone sick to get better.

ASK (All Ages): Why do you think patience is so important?

ASK (3rd Grade and up): What are some situations that really test your patience?

When you have patience, it shows a few things. It shows that you trust God, His plans, and His timing. You know that in every situation, He is with you and will help you. It shows that you see other people the way God sees them. We all make mistakes. We all do annoying or frustrating things sometimes. But God created all of us and loves all of us. Every person is valuable and deserves your patience.

Jesus had patience like no one else. During His time on earth, He interacted with all kinds of people who were slow to understand what He was teaching, slow to trust God, and slow to obey. Jesus' closest followers, the disciples, were really bad about this! He had to keep teaching them the same things over and over and keep showing them what it looked like to love and serve others, but they still didn't quite get it. Jesus loved them anyway. He kept teaching them. He didn't lose His temper with them. He didn't kick them out of the group. He was patient and kind.

This is the kind of patience the Holy Spirit wants to grow in your life, too. But having patience isn't easy. It takes work! You can help train yourself to be more patient. When

PRACTICES (CONTINUED) PATIENCE

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you feel yourself about to overreact to something, try counting to ten or taking three big, deep breaths. When you find yourself getting really annoyed at someone and thinking bad thoughts about them, remind yourself that God loves them and try to see things from their perspective. When you are so tired of waiting on something, take time to read your Bible and pray. Focus on all God has given you and all you have to be thankful for.

ASK (All Ages): What other ways can you teach yourself to have more patience?

ASK (7th Grade and up): What are some benefits of being a patient person?



Okay, who's ready to find out what our mystery fruit is today? You all showed great patience by waiting! (Reveal mystery fruit)

LET'S PRAY

God, thank You for being patient with us. We make a lot of mistakes and need a lot of second chances, but You are slow to get angry, and You have so much compassion for us. Help us to be patient in tough situations and with other people. Help us to trust You. Amen.

Practice Card Reminder: If your league uses practice cards, remember to distribute the practice cards entitled "Practice 5" at the end of practice.

Green Practice Star Reminder: If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.



Scouting Report | Coaches, here's an inside look at this week's devotion.

- Background: Kindness is compassion in action. But kindness isn't just about doing the occasional nice thing. When we look at the kindness of Jesus, we can recognize that kindness was an ever-present aspect of His character, working hand-in-hand with His patience so that He was always ready to extend kindness to whomever He met. "Kind deeds are done by people who are themselves kind by nature and character. Kindness, in other words, is not just a term to describe actions, but a characteristic that describes people—people who habitually behave in a way that blesses and benefits others because that is their character." (Christopher J. H. Wright, Cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit) This isn't to say Jesus never did anything that made people upset—He most certainly did. But His harshest words were usually directed at those who scoffed at kindness toward the outcast or marginalized.
- **Big Picture:** For more insight, read Philippians 2:1-11; Acts 9:36-42; Ephesians 4:31-32; Luke 6:35-36.
- Encouragement: We want kindness to come naturally to us like it did to Jesus. But if it doesn't, we can help prepare ourselves to be kind. Make a habit of asking yourself questions like: "Who can I encourage today?" and "What is my plan if I encounter someone in need?" Get yourself in the mindset of kindness, so that kindness is your natural reaction when the opportunity arrives.
- Coach's Question for Reflection: Does kindness come naturally to me? If not, what can I do to cultivate a character of kindness?

Practice Devotion | Share This With Your Team

KEY VERSE

Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.

Philippians 2:4 (NLT)

Bottom Line: Jesus' kindness can inspire me to be kind.



By now, you know the drill! Let's hear some mystery fruit guesses! (Let athletes guess.) Okay, now what about today's fruit of the Spirit? (Let athletes answer.) That's right—today we're going to be talking about kindness!

ASK (All Ages): What does kindness look like? What are some things a kind person does? What are some things a kind person doesn't do?

Jesus is our best example of kindness. He wasn't just patient with people—He truly cared for them. When people were sick, He healed them. When people were hungry, He fed them. When people were lonely, He spoke to them. He never looked out for Himself. He was always looking out for others. What an amazing way to live.

But Jesus' kindness is also evident in His death. Jesus had so much compassion and love for us that He died for us so we could be saved from our sins and have a relationship with Him. A big part of being kind is forgiveness. And when Jesus died on the cross, He not only made a way for us to be forgiven of our sins, He actually asked God to forgive those who had put Him on the cross and those who were mocking Him. That's some amazing kindness.

ASK (7th Grade and up): What does Jesus' kindness tell us about why God sent Him to earth in the first place?

If we want to be like Jesus, we should be kind. There's a Bible verse that sums up kindness pretty well. It says, "Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too." (Philippians 2:4, NLT) Selfishness is the opposite of kindness. Kindness means looking out for others and doing what you can to show them you value them and care about them.

After Jesus died on the cross, rose again, and returned to heaven, His followers were spreading all over the area, telling everyone about Him. In one city, there was a Christian named Tabitha. The Bible says she "was always doing kind things for others and helping the poor." (Acts 9:36b, NLT) That's an awesome legacy.

ASK (All Ages): What would it be like to be known for being kind? Is there anyone in your life that comes to mind when you think about kindness?

ASK (All Ages): What are some ways you can be kind to your family? What about your classmates? What about your teammates? What about people in need?



God, thank You for Your incredible kindness toward us. We don't deserve it, but You are kind to us anyway. Thank You for showing us what kindness looks like through Jesus. Thank You for forgiving us. Help us to care about others the way You care about them. Help us to be people who are always doing kind things for others. Amen.

Practice Card Reminder: If your league uses practice cards, remember to distribute the practice cards entitled "Practice 6" at the end of practice.

Green Practice Star Reminder: If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.



Scouting Report | Coaches, here's an inside look at this week's devotion.

- Background: In a world broken by sin and darkness, goodness is the light that shines through. It's the wholeness that restores. We all know our own capacity for sin and how easy it is not to be good. Thankfully, when God sent Jesus into the world, His goodness outweighed all the bad. He defeated death with life. He will ultimately restore goodness to the whole world, and in the meantime, He gives us the ability to embrace goodness through the power of His Spirit. "Knowing Jesus and being united to him transforms us and gives us a capacity for goodness. Being made right with God will make our hearts right. We will be able to live and love in ways that are good, wholesome, and true." (Jonathan Landry Cruse, *The Character of Christ*)
- Big Picture: For more insight, read Matthew 5:14-16; James 1:17; Psalm 34:4-10; Genesis 1:1-31.
- Encouragement: "So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up. Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith." Galatians 6:9-10 (NLT)
- Coach's Question for Reflection: Does my life point people to God's goodness?



Practice Devotion | Share This With Your Team

KEY VERSE

In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly father. Matthew 5:16 (NLT)

Bottom Line: I want to reflect God's goodness.



Today, instead of just guessing a random fruit for our mystery fruit, I want you to tell me your favorite fruit, and that will be your guess. Everyone will get a turn, and then I'll tell you what it is. (Let every athlete share their favorite, then reveal the mystery fruit.) Now, who can tell me today's fruit of the Spirit? (Let athletes answer.)

Our next fruit of the Spirit is goodness! The Bible tells us that God is good. All the good things in the world and in our lives come from Him. He created everything and called it good. Things like our favorite fruits and other delicious food, waterfalls, panda bears, and you and me! God is also perfect, and He loves and cares for us. He never does wrong, and He will never let us down.

ASK (All Ages): How do you think we compare to God's goodness?

God created everything, including us, to be good. But we all know that we are not perfect, and we are not always good. You see, sin entered the world when the first humans, Adam and Eve, disobeyed God. Like them, we also choose our own way instead of God's way. We choose to be selfish. We choose to do what's easy instead of what's right. Sometimes, we even choose to hurt others.

If we're so bad at being good, then why are we talking about goodness? How could that be something that could describe us? Remember, we're talking about the fruit of the Spirit. When God's Spirit is at work in our lives, anything is possible. The Spirit can help us be good and grow in goodness.

ASK (All Ages): What do you think goodness looks like? What does it mean to be a good person?

You might be able to guess what I'm going to say next. Our best example of goodness is Jesus! Jesus obeyed God and kept His laws, and the whole time He did it for the right reasons. He blessed the people around Him with His goodness. He loved them, was kind to them, and treated them well. How Jesus lived during His time on earth pointed people to God and His goodness.

If you've ever looked at the moon at night, it looks like it's shining. Sometimes it's really bright. But the moon doesn't really produce any light. It's just a rock! Instead, it's the light

PRACTICE7 (CONTINUED)

GOODNESS

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from the sun bouncing off the moon that makes it look like it's shining. The moon reflects the sun's light.

When it comes to goodness, we want to be like the moon reflecting the sun. We want to reflect God's goodness. In Matthew 5:16, Jesus said, "Let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father." Goodness is about following God's way and pointing people back to Him.

ASK (3rd Grade and up): How does doing good point other people to God?

Next week's devotion time is going to be a little different. We won't have [a mystery fruit or] a fruit of the Spirit, but we're going to talk about the biggest way that Jesus showed God's goodness to us. In fact, it's called the *good* news. And it really is the best news you'll ever hear.

LET'S PRAY

God, You are good. We praise You for all the good things You have given us and for all the good You do in our lives. Help us to reflect Your goodness to the people around us. Let us shine brightly so that everyone praises You. Amen.

Practice Card Reminder: If your league uses practice cards, remember to distribute the practice cards entitled "Practice 7" at the end of practice.

Green Practice Star Reminder: If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.



This week's devotion includes a gospel presentation.

Scouting Report | Coaches, here's an inside look at this week's devotion.

- Background: Our devotion for this practice will reveal how we are able to have the fruit of the Spirit and why it matters. The answer to both is Jesus. Through His sacrificial death and victorious resurrection, our relationship with God can be restored. We can be connected to the source of all these good things in our lives. The fruit of the Spirit is a result of that relationship, not a prerequisite for it. So, why does it matter that we grow in these areas? Because if we have embraced Jesus as our savior and Lord, we should want nothing more than to be like Him, be connected to Him, and show the world around us who He is. This may be a lot for the athletes on your team to grasp, but the most important takeaway is for them to understand what Jesus has done for them and how they can respond.
- **Big Picture:** For more insight, read 2 Corinthians 5:14-21; Galatians 5:16-26; John 19-20.
- Encouragement: When you put your faith in Jesus, the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead lives in you and is working in you to make you more like Jesus. That's incredible!
- Coach's Question for Reflection: Have I considered the lengths that Jesus went to so that I could have a relationship with God? Have I trusted in Him to rescue me from sin and death?



Practice Devotion | Share This With Your Team

KEY VERSE

For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NLT)

Bottom Line: Jesus came to rescue us from sin and death.



We're not guessing a mystery fruit or fruit of the Spirit today because I have something else really important to talk to you about.

We've been talking about the fruit of the Spirit this season. Remember, the fruit of the Spirit grows in your life when the Holy Spirit is working to make you more like Jesus. The Spirit wants to help you be loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, and more because those are all things Jesus is. This is what happens when you become a Christian. Becoming a Christian means trusting in Jesus to save you from your sins and putting Him in charge of your life.

ASK (All Ages): What is sin? Why do we need to be saved from it?

Sin is choosing to do things our way instead of God's way. It's anything we think, do, or say that is disobedient to God. Just before the verse that lists the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5, there's another verse that says, "The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants." (Galatians 5:17a, NLT) So, you can even think about sin as the opposite of living with the fruit of the Spirit. Instead of love, hate. Instead of joy, bitterness. Instead of peace, violence. Instead of patience, anger. Instead of kindness, meanness. Instead of goodness, evil.

The Bible says we all sin and that the consequence of our sin is death and separation from God. You see, if sin is the opposite of the fruit of the Spirit, then it's the opposite of who God is. If how we live is completely the opposite of who God is, then we can't have a relationship with Him.

The good news is that God is so loving, so kind, and so good that He sent Jesus Christ, His Son, to earth to live with us. Jesus showed us who God is. He followed the Holy Spirit perfectly, and His life was overflowing with the fruit of the Spirit. Unlike us, Jesus never sinned. He always obeyed God. But some people didn't like Jesus and the things He said and did. They arrested Jesus, falsely accused Him, and sentenced Him to death. He was nailed to a wooden cross, where He died.

When Jesus died, it changed everything. You see, Jesus took the punishment for our sins. He paid the price. There's a Bible verse that says this: "For God made Christ,"—that's another name for Jesus—"who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ." (2 Corinthians 5:21, NLT) Because of what

Jesus did, when we believe in Him and ask God for forgiveness, God will forgive us for our sins. We can have a relationship with Him and will live forever with Him in heaven after we die

ASK (All Ages): Why would Jesus die for us?

Jesus knew we were helpless on our own and couldn't save ourselves from sin. But His love for us and kindness towards us drove Him to the cross, where He made it so that we could have peace with God.

But the story doesn't end there. Three days after Jesus died, God raised Him from the dead! He appeared to many of His friends and followers after He rose, and then He returned to heaven, where He's still alive today! He defeated sin and death forever. That's the power of God. That's the power of the Holy Spirit. And that's the same Spirit of God that wants to change your life and make you more like Jesus.

ASK (All Ages): What do you think it means to believe in Jesus? How can we let God know that we trust in what Jesus did for us and want to have a relationship with Him?

ASK (3rd Grade and up): How does this change how you think about the fruit of the Spirit?

If you have questions or want to talk more about what all this means, I'd be happy to talk with you after practice.

LET'S PRAY

God, thank You for loving us so much that You sent Jesus to save us by dying on the cross and rising again. We are sorry for sinning against You and doing things our own way. Please let everyone here accept Your gift of forgiveness through Jesus. Thank You that we can be made right with You through Him. We love You, Lord. Amen.

If someone has questions about following Jesus, let your League Director know and ask them about the follow-up process for your league. You can also let the parents know their child is asking questions. If the family does not attend church, this would be a great opportunity to invite them to come to church with you.

Practice Card Reminder: If your league uses practice cards, remember to distribute the practice cards entitled "Practice 8" at the end of practice.

Green Practice Star Reminder: If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.



Scouting Report | Coaches, here's an inside look at this week's devotion.

- · Background: Faithfulness does not mean simply having faith. Rather, "it is the fruit that makes you a person worth believing in. You are loyal, true, trustworthy, you keep your commitments, your bond, so that people can put their faith in you." (Jonathan Landry Cruse, The Character of Christ) Our illustration of faithfulness for this devotion is the Old Testament story of Ruth and Naomi. When the widowed and grieving Naomi is at her most broken and vulnerable, Ruth fights to stay by her side. Naomi's other daughter-in-law, Orpah, also offers to stay at first, until Naomi talks her out of it. "But Ruth is special. Despite Naomi's bitter tirade, she insists on staying. Orpah is a good person, but Ruth is beyond good—she possesses an extra measure of devotion and sacrificial love that is uncommon." (NET Bible Notes on Ruth 1:14) Ruth continues to prove her faithfulness once the women arrive back in Naomi's hometown of Bethlehem, providing for them and ultimately bringing about the restoration of this family's line. Not by chance, Ruth is the grandmother of King David. And it is from David's line that hundreds of years later, Jesus will be born—the one who will prove to be the most uncommonly faithful friend to us all.
- **Big Picture:** For more insight, read 1 Corinthians 13:7; Ruth 1; Lamentations 3:22-25: Philippians 1:3-11.
- Encouragement: "Faithfulness means you know what you really believe, whom you really love, and what you are ultimately committed to." Christopher J. H. Wright, Cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit
- Coach's Question for Reflection: Is faithfulness part of my character? Do I do the things I say I will do? Do I fight to be there for the people I care about?

Practice Devotion | Share This With Your Team

KEY VERSE

Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. 1 Corinthians 13:7 (NLT)

Bottom Line: I want to be faithful to do what I say I will do.



Alright, who's ready to find out today's mystery fruit? Let's hear your guesses. (Let athletes guess.) What about today's fruit of the Spirit? We've got three left. (Let athletes answer.)

Today, we're talking about faithfulness. Someone who is faithful does what they say they will do. They take care of their responsibilities. Their actions match what they say is important to them. They are loyal to the people they care about.

As your coach, I have the responsibility to be here and run practice. What if I just didn't show up? Or what if I showed up and said, "You kids just run around and do whatever you want. We're not working on anything today" while I laid down and took a nap? That's not doing what I said I would do when I volunteered to coach this team. That's not being very faithful!

ASK (All Ages): What's a way you've seen someone be faithful?

ASK (All Ages): How does it feel when someone lets you down by not doing what they say they will do?

There is a story in the Bible about a family who left their homeland to go live in a foreign country. The family was made up of a woman named Naomi, her husband, and their two sons. Naomi's sons got married to women from this new land. These women became part of their family. But eventually, Naomi's husband and sons died. All alone, Naomi decided to go back to her homeland. She told her two daughters-in-law that they could leave her and return to their own families. One of them did. But the other daughter-in-law, Ruth, refused to leave Naomi. She said, "Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God." (Ruth 1:16b, NLT)

Ruth returned with Naomi to her homeland. She left her own country and her friends and family to go live in a place she didn't know, surrounded by strangers. But she did this to stay faithful to Naomi. She knew the older woman was all alone and needed someone to watch out for her. And when they arrived in Naomi's hometown, Ruth had to work hard to make sure they were both fed and taken care of. Ruth is a great example of what it means to be loyal and faithful.

ASK (All Ages): How do you think Naomi felt when she realized Ruth was coming with

her? What do you think made Ruth do this?

Of course, Jesus also gives us an amazing example of faithfulness. He always did what He said He would do, even when that meant going to the cross to die for us. He did that because He was faithful to obey God and because He was a faithful friend to us. He had the ability to rescue us from sin, and He did. He didn't let us down.

Think about how you can practice faithfulness. You can be a faithful teammate by playing your position and giving your all during games. You can be a faithful student by paying attention in class and studying for tests. You can be a faithful son or daughter by obeying your parents when they ask you to do something. You can be a faithful friend by forgiving and apologizing when you get into an argument with your buddy. You can be faithful to God by spending time with Him by reading the Bible and praying, and by obeying what He says is right.

ASK (All Ages): What are some ways you have not been faithful in the past? What are some ways you can be faithful in the future?

ASK (3rd Grade and up): What are some responsibilities you have? How can you be faithful to do what you have said you will do?

LET'S PRAY

God, You are faithful. You never let us down. Thank You for being faithful to us even when we are not faithful to You. Help us be loyal, faithful friends to the people in our lives. Teach us not to be flaky or wishy-washy but to stick to what we say we will do. Amen.

Practice Card Reminder: If your league uses practice cards, remember to distribute the practice cards entitled "Practice 9" at the end of practice.

Green Practice Star Reminder: If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.



Scouting Report | Coaches, here's an inside look at this week's devotion.

- · Background: We've seen how Jesus exemplifies all the fruit of the Spirit in His words and actions, but when it comes to gentleness, Jesus not only shows us His gentleness, but He also directly tells us He is gentle. "Then Jesus said, 'Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light." (Matthew 11:28-30, NLT). In the midst of all the stress and pain we endure in life, Jesus tenderly invites us to come to Him and find rest. He describes Himself as "humble and gentle" and wants to teach His disciples (including us) to be like Him in humility and gentleness. True gentleness requires humility, and we must embrace both to be like Jesus. "Humility comes a lot easier when you really know yourself, when you know the weak and flawed person who is living inside the shell you have on the outside. Then, out of that deep well of self-knowledge and gratitude for the grace of God that has rescued you from your own sin and failure, comes humility before God and gentleness towards others." (Christopher J. H. Wright, Cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit) Gentleness is about handling others with care, in the same way we wish others would handle us with
- **Big Picture:** For more insight, read Matthew 11:28-30; Luke 8:40-56; Matthew 5:5; Proverbs 15:1.
- Encouragement: "Jesus' lowliness is precisely how he is gentle. He comes down to us and meets us where we are. He empathizes with us. When we come to Jesus we can be assured of his gentleness because we are not simply running into the arms of a god, which would be terrifying and would consume us. Rather, when we come to Jesus we are running into the arms of the God who became man. He associates with us so much that he became us." Jonathan Landry Cruse, The Character of Christ
- Coach's Question for Reflection: Do I reflect the gentleness of Jesus in my daily life?

Practice Devotion | Share This With Your Team

KEY VERSE

Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Matthew 11:29b (NLT)

Bottom Line: I can follow Jesus' example of gentleness.



Who has a guess for our mystery fruit today? (Let athletes answer.) What about our fruit of the Spirit? (Let athletes answer.)

Gentleness is our fruit of the Spirit for this practice. (Hold up mystery fruit if using one.) Now, what would happen if I took a piece of fruit and just slammed it on the ground? Or kicked it really hard? It would bruise, right? Fruit needs to be handled with gentleness. You have to be careful with it.

Raise your hand if you have a little brother, sister, or cousin. If you ever held them when they were really little, an adult probably told you to be gentle with them.

ASK (All Ages): Why do you need to be gentle with babies and little kids?

We often think about gentleness when it comes to how we handle something we can touch—like fruit, or a baby, or a new Pokémon card. But gentleness also means being careful with how we treat other people. You can be gentle or harsh with your words. And you can be gentle or harsh with your actions.

ASK (All Ages): What does it look like to be gentle with your words and actions? What does it look like to be harsh with your words and actions?

When Jesus was on earth, He interacted with a lot of hurting people. Some people had physical diseases or disabilities you could see, and others were hurting on the inside—from shame, rejection, sin, loneliness, and more. Jesus was gentle with all of them. He healed people, spoke with them, ate meals with them, and forgave their sins. Even when Jesus had tough things to say to people, He wasn't a bully. He was controlled. He offered people the chance to change their minds and their lives.

We can see Jesus' gentleness so clearly in how He interacts with those who are desperate for help. One time, a man pleaded with Jesus to come and heal his 12-year-old daughter, who was dying. While Jesus was on His way to the man's home, He felt power go out from Him. He stopped and asked who had touched Him in the middle of a crowd of people following Him. A woman came forward, shaking with fear. She explained that she'd had a terrible illness for twelve years, and nothing had made her better. She had reached out and touched the hem of Jesus' robe, and had immediately been healed. Jesus didn't get mad at her for interrupting Him or touching His robe. Instead, He spoke gently to her. He called

her "Daughter" and said, "Your faith has made you well. Go in peace." (Luke 8:48b, NLT)

Jesus finally reached the man's house, but it was too late. The girl had died. *Or was it* too late? Jesus gently took the girl's hand and told her to get up. She did. Jesus then told her parents she needed a snack!

ASK (K-6th Grade): How did Jesus show gentleness in this story?

There are many stories like this in the Bible, but they don't stop there. Jesus cares about each one of us so much. He knows we aren't as tough as we pretend to be. He knows our bodies and our feelings get hurt. He looks out for us and handles us with care. And that's the way He wants us to treat other people.

Jesus described His own heart like this: "Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls." (Matthew 11:29b, NLT) Jesus wants to teach us to have humble and gentle hearts like His.

ASK (7th Grade and up): This is the only place in the New Testament where Jesus describes His own heart. What does that tell you about the importance of this verse? Why do you think Jesus described His heart in this way?

ASK (All Ages): What might help you remember to show gentleness to other people? How can you see other people like Jesus sees them?

LET'S PRAY

God, it's amazing that You are so powerful and mighty that You created the whole universe, but You are still gentle with us. Thank You for loving us with such care. Help us to be gentle with one another and to have hearts that care about one another. We love You, Lord. Amen.

Practice Card Reminder: If your league uses practice cards, remember to distribute the practice cards entitled "Practice 10" at the end of practice.

Green Practice Star Reminder: If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.



Scouting Report | Coaches, here's an inside look at this week's devotion.

- Background: Our final fruit of the Spirit is self-control. This compound word is translated from two Greek words, en, meaning "in," and kratos, meaning "strength, power, might, or dominion." When you have self-control, you have the strength to rule yourself and not give in to temptation. However, in the context of pursuing the fruit of the Spirit and the character of Christ, it is less about avoiding sin by your willpower and more about letting the Spirit guide you in the decisions you make. "Self-control is ultimately the ability to be controlled, not by the sinful self, but by the Holy Spirit." (A. Craig Troxel, With All Your Heart) This week's devotion describes Jesus' self-control in the Garden of Gethsemane before He was taken to the cross. In Matthew 26:36-46, we can see how His Spirit-led obedience to God's will stands in contrast to the lack of self-control of His closest disciples. In their human weakness, they can't even keep their eyes open to pray. Meanwhile, in the power of the Spirit, Jesus chooses to face the unthinkable, wide awake and aware of the suffering He must endure.
- Big Picture: For more insight, read 2 Timothy 1:7; Matthew 4:1-11; Matthew 26:36-46; Proverbs 25:28; James 1:19-21.
- Encouragement: "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives." Galatians 5:24-25 (NLT)
- Coach's Question for Reflection: Am I controlled by my sin or by the Holy Spirit?

Practice Devotion | Share This With Your Team

KEY VERSE

For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline. 2 Timothy 1:7 (NLT)

Bottom Line: I can have self-control when I let the Holy Spirit take the lead.

(At some point before the devotion, tell two of the athletes what this week's mystery fruit is, but instruct them not to tell anyone else until someone else guesses it.)



Wow, it's hard to believe this is our last devotion! I've had such a fun time talking about the fruit of the Spirit with you this season. Today, we have some teammates who know the secret identity of our mystery fruit, and they're going to tell you if your guesses are right or wrong. (Let the rest of the team guess, and the selected athletes reveal the answer.)

Great job, everyone! Who can tell me our very last fruit of the Spirit? (Let athletes answer.) Our final fruit of the Spirit is self-control! Your teammates (use selected athletes' names) had to have some self-control not to tell you what the mystery fruit was right away!

ASK (All Ages): Does anyone know what self-control means?

Self-control is what it sounds like: controlling yourself. Sometimes, self-control means not saying the first mean thing that comes to mind when your sister does something you don't like. Sometimes, self-control means putting down your tablet to get your homework done. Sometimes, self-control means helping your teammates score in a game instead of trying to do it all yourself.

We all struggle to have self-control at times. It's always easier in the moment to do the thing you really want to do instead of the thing that is going to be better in the long run. That's true no matter how old you get! Good things take time and effort. If you want to be a doctor when you grow up, you can't goof around all the time and not pay attention in school. You have to study hard to get into college and medical school. If you want to be a great musician, you have to practice and take lessons. You can't leave your instrument sitting in your closet while you play video games every day.

ASK (All Ages): What are some other things that you have to work hard for and won't happen if you take the easy way?

Self-control can help us get far in life, but it also helps us obey God. Self-control helps us say no to the temptations we face so that we choose to do what's right instead of choosing to sin. Self-control is what happens when we follow the Holy Spirit's lead and

obey God's will instead of doing things our way.

We know that Jesus never sinned, but it's important to remember that He did face temptation, just like we do. Every time He had to make a decision, Jesus chose self-control. He never gave in to sin. He always did God's will—what God wanted Him to do. Even when that meant dying on the cross.

Before Jesus was arrested, He went to a garden to pray. He asked God three times to take the suffering He would have to face away from Him. He knew it would be a terrible, painful death. But each time, Jesus said to God, "I want your will to be done, not mine." God's will was for Jesus to go to the cross to save us from our sins. And Jesus did so. He could have called down an army of angels to save Him from those who arrested and tortured Him. But He didn't. He had the self-control to see it through. Because it was God's will and because He knew it would be worth it to save all of us.

ASK (All Ages): How do you think Jesus felt in the hours leading up to the cross? Why was it worth it to Him to go through everything He did?

ASK (3rd Grade and up): Why is it worth it to have self-control and choose God's will over your own desires?

Self-control is not easy. It goes against everything we really want in the moment. But it's worth it. It shows that we love God and are grateful for what Jesus did for us. It shows that we trust God to bring about good things that we can't see or even understand quite yet. It shows what our priorities are.

ASK (3rd Grade and up): How can self-control help you with the other fruit of the Spirit?

ASK (All Ages): What's something you learned this season?

LET'S PRAY

God, thank You for an awesome season. We are so thankful for all You've done for us and for how You work in our lives through Your Spirit to make us more like Jesus. Please help all of us to grow in the fruit of the Spirit. Help us to live lives full of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. We love You, Lord. Amen.

Practice Card Reminder: If your league uses practice cards, remember to distribute the practice cards entitled "Practice 11" at the end of practice.

Green Practice Star Reminder: If your league uses green practice stars, remember to distribute one to every athlete at the end of practice.

♦ NOTES	

SECTION 4

GAMES

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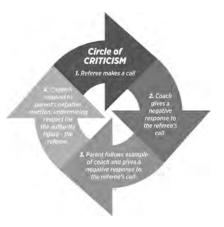
→ Circle of Affirmation

Game Day Attitude

Choosing the right game-day attitude is a key to being an effective Upward Soccer Coach. Actions and reactions on the field can either open or close the door to ministry. The Circle of Criticism and the Circle of Affirmation are simple diagrams that illustrate the results of a coach giving a referee either negative or positive feedback.

In Upward Soccer, coaches and referees work together as a unified team. Coaches have the opportunity and the responsibility to stop the Circle of Criticism by starting the Circle of Affirmation.





The Circle of Affirmation goes beyond the referee. A coach's affirmation of players inspires encouragement and praise from parents, family members and other players. Practicing the Circle of Affirmation makes the game a better experience for everyone. The rules of Upward Soccer are designed to promote healthy competition, skill improvement, fun and sportsmanship while also being challenging and teaching the objectives of gameplay. The three formats and rules for Upward Soccer are 4v4, 7v7 and 11v11. The sections below include not only the rules of play but also information on the field of play, ball sizes, game duration and overall game format.



4V4 GAME FORMAT AND RULES

Field of Play



4' x 6' recommended goal size

LIV LI RULES FOR PLAY

MAX. # OF PLAYERS	8 (recommended 7)
FIELD OF PLAY LENGTH	30 yards
WIDTH	20 yards
GOAL SIZE	4' x 6'
GOALKEEPERS	No
	Size 3 for K, 1st grade and 2nd grade
BALL SIZE	Size 4 for 3rd grade, 4th grade, 5th grade and 6th grade
	Size 5 for 6th grade and up
SUBSTITUTION SITUATIONS	At clock stoppage times every six minutes.
PLAYER EQUIPMENT	Shin guards required
NUMBER OF REFEREES	One referee
MATCH LENGTH	Matches consist of two (2) eighteen (18) minute halves with the clock stopping every six (6) minutes for substitutions. There should be an eight (8) minute halftime. There will be no extended time.

4V4 RULES FOR PLAY (CONT.)

A restart kickoff is taken from the center circle at the start of each half and after a goal is scored. The ball may go in any direction and must touch another teammate or opponent before the initial player kicker touches the ball again. If the pass/touch kick is touched a second time by the initial kicker before another player touches the START / RESTART ball, the kickoff should be retaken. A goal may not be scored from OF PLAY the kickoff, because all goals must be scored from the offensive side of the field. The opposing team must stay outside of the center circle. Both teams must be on their own half of the field and outside of the center circle until the first touch on the ball is made, after which they may attempt to win the ball. Fouls shall result in either a direct or indirect free kick. The referee must explain ALL infringements to the offending player. No cards shown for misconduct. Players who commit two (2) fouls resulting in FOULS / MISCONDUCT direct kicks (excluding handballs) in the same segment must sit out the remainder of that segment. Those players can return during their next scheduled substitution. INDIRECT / Opponents of team taking the free kick must be at least four (4) **DIRECT FREE** yards from the ball until put into play. KICK **PENALTY** None KICKS THROW-INS Opponents four (4) yards from ball until put into play. The ball should be placed on the end line, five (5) yards from the GOAL KICKS shooting arc on the side in which the ball was played out. Defenders should retreat behind midfield until the ball is put into play.

4V4 RULES (CONT.)

CORNER KICKS	Opponents of team taking the corner kick must be at least six (6) yards from the ball until put into play.
BALL KICKED IN WRONG GOAL	N/A due to no score kept
GOAL SWITCH AT HALFTIME	K5 Only: No 1st Grade and up: Yes
BALL IN/OUT OF PLAY	The entire ball must go out of bounds to be out of play. If part of the ball is still touching the line, play continues uninterrupted.
SCORING	Score is NOT kept in Kindergarten, 1st grade, or 2nd grade divisions.
SCORING REQUIREMENT	A goal may only be scored from a player's offensive end of the field. This prohibits a player from scoring a goal from the center circle on a kickoff or from a goal kick and encourages them to pass the ball and work as a team rather than attempting to kick the ball the length of the field.
TOURNAMENT PLAY	No tournaments.
SHOOTING ARC	There is no ball contact allowed within the shooting arc. If the ball comes to a stop within the arc, a goal kick is awarded to the defensive team regardless of who touched the ball last. Any part of the ball or player's body on the line is considered in the shooting arc. If the ball has broken the plane of the shooting arc and a defensive player touches the ball, but the referee determines that the ball would not have gone in the goal, a corner kick is awarded to the

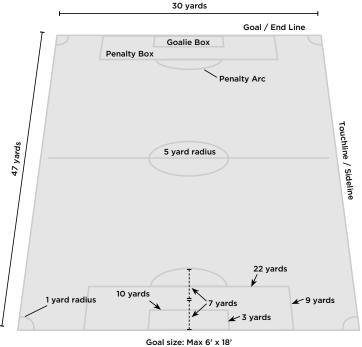
attacking team. If the attacking player touches the ball inside the arc, a goal kick is awarded. The plane of the shooting arc extends upward.

4V4 PULES (CONT.)

POSSESSION OF THE BALL	The team in possession of the ball at the end of the first, second, fourth and fifth substitution segments retains possession of the ball. The team with possession of the ball will start the next period with a throw-in at the closest point on the sideline when play was stopped. The team that did not start the game with the kickoff will begin the second half of the game with a kickoff.
SLIDE TACKLING	Slide tackling will NOT be allowed.
HEADERS	Headers will NOT be allowed. Although this technique is used in advanced levels of soccer, it can pose as a safety risk and is therefore not allowed.
OFFSIDE	Offside is NOT called.

7V7 GAME FORMAT AND RULES

Field of Play



7V7 RULES FOR PLAY

MAX. # OF PLAYERS	14 (recommended 10)
FIELD OF PLAY LENGTH	47 yards
WIDTH	30 yards
GOAL SIZE	Max size is 6' x 18'
GOALKEEPERS	Yes
BALL SIZE	Size 4 for 3rd grade, 4th grade, 5th grade and 6th grade
BALL SIZE	Size 5 for 6th grade and up
SUBSTITUTION SITUATIONS	At clock stoppage times every eight (8) minutes.
PLAYER EQUIPMENT	Shin guards required
NUMBER OF REFEREES	Two (2)
MATCH LENGTH	Matches consist of two (2) twenty- four (24) minute halves with the clock stopping every eight (8) minutes for substitutions. There should be an eight (8) minute halftime. There will be no extended time.
START / RESTART OF PLAY	A restart kickoff is taken from the center circle at the start of each half and after a goal is scored. The ball may go in any direction and must touch another teammate or opponent before the initial player kicker touches the ball again. If the pass/touch kick is touched a second time by the initial kicker before another player touches the ball, the kickoff should be retaken. A goal may not be scored from the kickoff, because all goals must be scored from the offensive side of the field. The opposing team must stay outside of the center circle. Both teams must be on their own half of the field and outside of the center circle until the first touch on the ball is made, after which they may attempt to win the ball.

7V7 RULES FOR PLAY (CONT.)

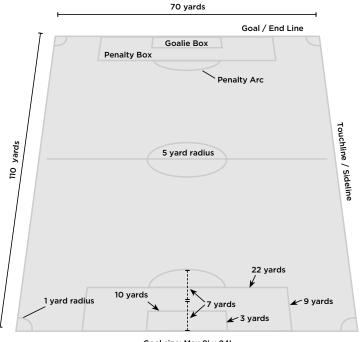
FOULS / MISCONDUCT	Fouls shall result in either a direct or indirect free kick. The referee must explain ALL infringements to the offending player. No cards shown for misconduct. Players who commit two (2) fouls resulting in direct kicks (excluding handballs) in the same segment must sit out the remainder of that segment. Those players can return during their next scheduled substitution.
INDIRECT / DIRECT FREE KICK	Opponents of team taking the free kick must be at least eight (8) yards from the ball until put into play.
PENALTY KICKS	The penalty mark is made seven (7) yards from the midpoint between goalposts and all players should be positioned behind the player taking the penalty kick. If the kick does not result in a goal and the ball is still in play, then play continues live.
THROW-INS	Opponents five (5) yards from ball until put into play.
GOAL KICKS	Conform to FIFA. It is recommended that opponents remain in their own half until ball is in play. The team taking the goal kick does not have to wait for the opposition to retreat and can restart beforehand if they choose. The ball is in play when it is kicked out of the penalty area.
CORNER KICKS	Opponents of team taking the corner kick must be at least seven (7) yards from the ball until put into play.
BALL KICKED IN WRONG GOAL	Treated as a goal for the opponent.
GOAL SWITCH AT HALFTIME	Yes
BALL IN/OUT OF PLAY	The entire ball must go out of bounds to be out of play. If part of the ball is still touching the line, play continues uninterrupted.

7V7 RULES FOR PLAY (CONT.)

SCORING	Score is kept in every game and recorded to reflect "points for" and "points against" for tournament seeding.
SCORING REQUIREMENT	A goal may only be scored from a player's offensive end of the field. This prohibits a player from scoring a goal from the center circle on a kickoff or from a goal kick and encourages them to pass the ball and work as a team rather than attempting to kick the ball the length of the field.
TOURNAMENT PLAY	End of season tournaments are encouraged.
SHOOTING ARC	No shooting arc exists.
POSSESSION OF THE BALL	The team in possession of the ball at the end of the first, second, fourth and fifth substitution segments retains possession of the ball. The team with possession of the ball will start the next period with a throw-in at the closest point on the sideline when play was stopped. The team that did not start the game with the kickoff will begin the second half of the game with a kickoff.
SLIDE TACKLING	Slide tackling will NOT be allowed.
HEADERS	Headers will NOT be allowed. Although this technique is used in advanced levels of soccer, it can pose as a safety risk and is therefore not allowed.
OFFSIDE	Offside is called. Teaching offside at this level is important.

11V11 GAME FORMAT AND RULES

Field of Play



11V11 RULES FOR PLAY

MAX. # OF PLAYERS	16
FIELD OF PLAY LENGTH	110 yards
WIDTH	70 yards
GOAL SIZE	Max size is 8' x 24'
GOALKEEPERS	Yes
BALL SIZE	U11/12 size 4, U13 and above size 5
SUBSTITUTION SITUATIONS	Allowed during any stoppage of play.
PLAYER EQUIPMENT	Shin guards required
NUMBER OF REFEREES	2 (one referee, one linesman)
MATCH LENGTH	U15 & U16: 2x40 min. halves U13 & U14: 2x35 min. halves U11 & U12: 2x30 min. halves Halftime: 5 minutes

FOULS / MISCONDUCT	Fouls will result in either a direct or indirect free kick. Referees will explain infringements to the offending player.
INDIRECT / DIRECT FREE KICK	Opponents of the team taking the free kick must be at least ten (10) yards from the ball until put into play.

11V11 RULES (CONT.)

- Awarded when any of the fouls that result in a direct kick occur inside the penalty area.
- Only the goalkeeper and kicker are allowed inside the penalty area.

PENALTY KICKS

- Opponents must be ten (10) yards away before the kick is allowed.
- The goalkeeper must stay on the goal line until the ball is kicked.
- The kicker cannot touch the ball twice until it has been touched by another player.

THROW-IN

When the ball goes out of bounds, the team opposing whichever team last touched the ball will throw the ball in from the sideline where it went out. The ball must be thrown in from directly behind the head and delivered in front of the head onto the field.

GOAL KICK

- Goal kicks are taken by a member of the defending team when the ball crosses the goal line outside of the goal and is last touched by a member of the attacking team.
- The kick is taken from anywhere within the goal area.
- The ball must leave the penalty area before it can be played/touched by any player from either team.
- If the ball is touched by another player before leaving the penalty area, the goal kick is retaken.

START / RESTART OF PLAY

A restart kickoff is taken from the center circle at the start of each half and after a goal is scored. The ball may go in any direction and must touch another teammate or opponent before the initial player kicker touches the ball again. If the pass/touch kick is touched a second time by the initial kicker before another player touches the ball, the kickoff should be retaken. A goal may not be scored from the kickoff, because all goals must be scored from the offensive side of the field. The opposing team must stay outside of the center circle. Both teams must be on their own half of the field and outside of the center circle until the first touch on the ball is made, after which they may attempt to win the ball.

11V11 RULES FOR PLAY (CONT.)

CORNER KICKS	 Corner kicks are taken by the attacking team when the ball crosses the goal line outside of the goal by a player from the defending team. The kick is taken from the corner arc on the side of the field where the ball went out of bounds. No defending player may be within ten (10) yards of the ball.
BALL KICKED IN WRONG GOAL	All "own goals" will be scored.
GOAL SWITCH AT HALFTIME	Yes
SCORING	Score IS kept. Regular season games may end in a tie. Tournament games will have overtime to determine a winner.
SCORING REQUIREMENT	A goal may be scored from either side of the field because goalkeepers are used in the 11 v 11 format. Teams may accidentally kick the ball into their own goal. At this level, those goals WILL be awarded to the opposing team.
TOURNAMENT PLAY	Tournament play will follow the same rules as the regular season but overtime rules will be used in case of a tie.
SLIDE TACKLING	Slide tackling is NOT allowed.
HEADERS	Headers are NOT allowed.

11V11 RULES (CONT.)

Offside IS called as defined in the following ways:

A player is considered offside if he is nearer to the opponent's goal line than the ball at the time the ball is kicked except in the following cases:

- 1. The player is in his own half of the field.
- 2. The player is not nearer to his opponent's goal line than at least two of his opponents.

OFFSIDE

A player is only penalized for being offside if the ball is played or touched by one of his team and he is involved in active play in one of the following ways:

- 1. Interfering with play.
- 2. Interfering with an opponent.
- 3. Gaining an advantage by being in an offside position.

Overtime rules should only be utilized in tournament play.

 If both teams are tied at the end of regulation, play one five-minute half to determine a winner. The first team to score in overtime wins.

OVERTIME

- If no team scores in the first five-minute period, play another five-minute half.
- If still no team scores, use penalty kicks.

Use only if teams are tied after 2 overtime periods. To the team make 7 many the bidden at the marking and the bidden at the b

- Each team gets 3 penalty kicks, alternating each kick.
- The "away" team will kick first.
- If teams are still tied after 3 penalty kicks, use sudden death kicks to determine a winner.

PENALTY KICKS

Commonly Used Terms

Direct Kick: If a player commits any of the following in a manner that the referee considers to be reckless or using excessive force: Kicking, tripping, pushing, tackling, or holding an opponent or deliberately handling the ball to prevent a goal being scored. Ball is placed at location of offense. Goal can be scored directly.

Throw In: When the ball completely passes over the sidelines, the last team to touch it loses possession and the opposing team takes a throw-in. The player throwing the ball back into play must stay behind the sideline and throw the ball over their head with both hands and keep both feet on the ground.

Indirect Kick: If a player commits any of the following: offsides, touches the ball more than once on a restart, keeper uses hands when receiving a ball from own teammate, stalling with the ball, and other "minor offenses." Ball is placed at location of offense and gaol can not be scored directly (has to touch somebody else).

Offside (7v7 & 11v11): An offensive player cannot be ahead of the ball and involved in a play unless there is a defender between the player and the goal. An offensive player cannot hang around the other team's goal (behind the opposing team's defenders).

Penalty Kick: If a player commits any of the following in a manner that the referee considers to be reckless or using excessive force AND in the penalty area: Kicking, tripping, pushing, tackling, or holding an opponent or deliberately handles the ball to prevent a goal being scored.

Goal Kick: Goal kicks occur when the attacking team plays the ball over the goal line, in the shooting arc, or if the ball comes to a stop within the shooting arc.

Drop Ball: Occurs between two players, one from each team, to restart the game anytime an official has to stop play for a no-penalty situation. The ball is dropped at the spot where it was last in play unless this happens in the goal arc, in which case it is dropped at the nearest point five yards outside the goal arc. The ball may only be kicked after it has touched the ground. A goal may be scored directly from a drop-ball.

Corner Kick: When the ball passes over the goal line by the defending team, the ball should be placed inside the corner arc on the side it went out of bounds.

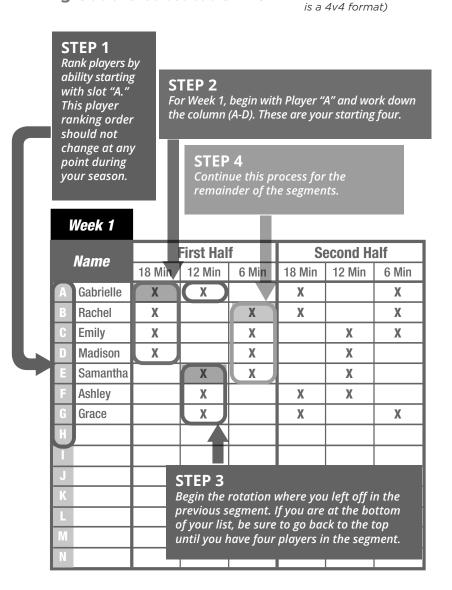
→ Substitutions

The substitution system is designed to provide every player equal opportunity for improvement. The substitution system ensures the following:

- ◆ Every player will play at least half of the game. This eliminates preferential treatment of players.
- No player will sit out more than one substitution segment at a time. This allows each player to be involved in consistent game action and assists in keeping players focused and engaged in the game.
- ♦ The starting lineup shifts down one player every game allowing every player to be in the starting lineup. This gives all players a time to be on the field first and no child feels as though they are used only as a reserve player.
- ♦ Coaches are not open to making unfair substitutions. Fair substitutions help to provide a positive sports experience for every player and not just wins and losses.
- ◆ Coaches are free from monitoring playing time for each player. The substitution system allows coaches to focus more on instructing and encouraging players than awarding playing time.
- Playing time for all players is virtually even over the course of the season. This gives all players game experience and to allows them to be a contributing teammate.

NOTES	

→ Filling Out the Substitution Form (The example below



For Week 2, begin with Player "B" and fill in four players for the starting lineup.

Week 2

	Name		Fir	st Hal	f	S	econd H	alf
	Naiii6	18 Mir	1	2 Min	6 Min	18 Min	12 Min	6 Min
A	Gabrielle							
В	Rachel	X						
C	Emily	Х						
D	Madison	Х						
Е	Samantha	Х						
E	Ashley							
G	Grace							
Н								
			Т					
J								
K								
М								
N								

Using the method we just learned, fill in the rest of the substitution form for Week 2.

Substitution Scenario

It's Week Three begin the rotation with the third player down on the list player C, Emily. Samantha has not arrived (she is supposed to be in the starting lineup for Week Three). She did not call prior to the game and inform you that she will not be

present.

Week 3						
Name		First Hal	f	S	econd Ha	alf
Wallie	18 Min	12 Min	6 Min	18 Min	12 Min	6 Min
A Gabrielle						
B Rachel						
C Emily	Х					
D Madison	Х					
E Samantha	_					
F Ashley	Х					
G Grace	Х					
H						
1						
J						
K						
L						
M						
N						

How to fill out the form:

Begin with your original starting two (Emily and Madison). For the first segment only, draw a line through the box for Samantha. Fill in the box for Ashley (this now gives you three players). To occupy the fourth spot, fill in the next person in the rotation (Grace). This is your new starting lineup for Week Three. For the second segment, start with the next person in the rotation (Gabrielle) and work down the form to include Rachel, Emily and Madison.

If by the third segment Samantha has yet to arrive, draw another line through her name and begin with the next person in the rotation (Ashley) to begin this segment. Continue this lineup with Grace, Gabrielle and Rachel.

Week 3

Name		First Hal	f	Second Half					
Naille	18 Min	12 Min	6 Min	18 Min	12 Min	6 Min			
A Gabrielle		Х	Х						
B Rachel		Х	Х						
C Emily	Х	Х							
Madison	Х	Х							
E Samantha			_						
F Ashley	Х		Х						
G Grace	Х		Х						
Н									
J									
K									
L									
М									
N									

If Samantha arrives during halftime, continue with the proper rotation including Samantha in the following segment. Then continue with the rest of the rotations through the end of the game.

	Neek 3						
	Name		First Hal	f	S	econd Ha	alf
	Naiii6	18 Min	12 Min	6 Min	18 Min	12 Min	6 Min
A	Gabrielle		Х	Х		Х	
В	Rachel		Х	Х		Х	
C	Emily	Х	Х		Х	Х	
D	Madison	Х	Х		Х		Х
E	Samantha				Х		Х
F	Ashley	Х		Х	Х		Х
G	Grace	Х		Х		Х	Х
Н							
J							
K							
L							
M							
N							

As you can see with the previous example, it is important to NOT fill out your form prior to the game. If a participant is absent, it is best to fill out your form segment by segment in case the absent player arrives at some point during the game.

→ Game Day Stars

If your league is using Game Day Stars, you have an Award Stars booklet These multi-colored stickers are given to each player at the end of every game. Star presentation should be an exciting time. Encourage parents to cheer as stars are distributed to each player. Make specific points why each participant receives a particular star. Notes you or your assistant coach take during the game should be used during this time as you encourage their efforts.

TIP: Find a location off of the field and take your time with this activity after the game.

Here is an example of how to conduct a star presentation:

"During the game today Quinn stopped the ball three times as the other team was trying to score. She made great decisions that put her in the right position to make the stop each time. Today, Quinn gets the red star for defense. Let's all give a hand for Quinn. Great defense today Quinn!"

Use the star distribution form on MyUpward in the Gameday area or in the back of your coach playbook to track which stars each participant has received. Make an attempt to award each participant all five stars throughout the season.

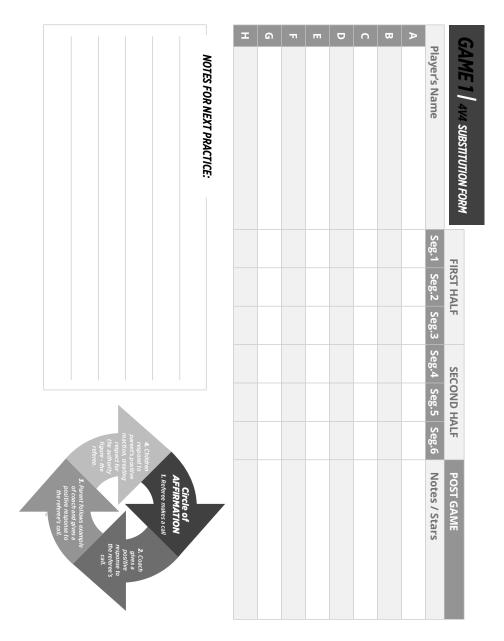
Encourage players to display the stars they receive on their posters. Here is a list of the game day stars and what they represent.



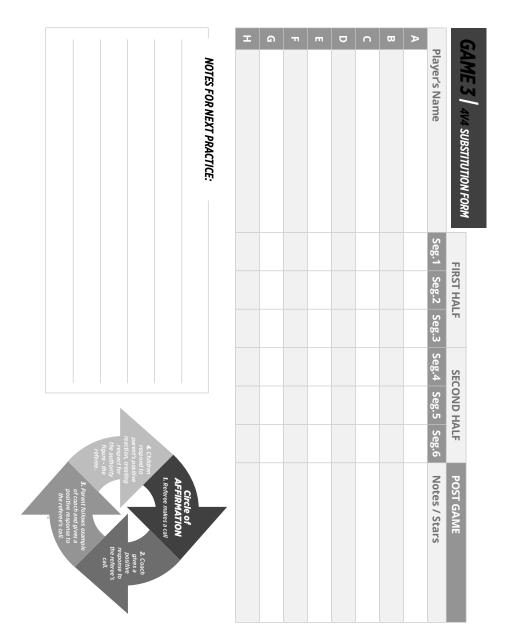
SECTION 5

FORMS

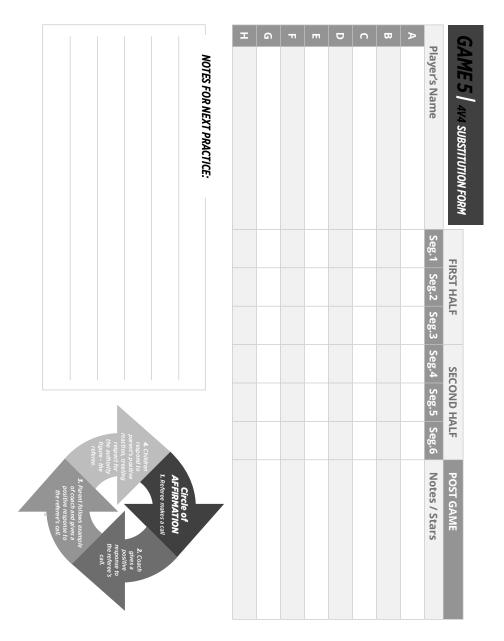
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7v7	or 11v11 Substitution Forms1	24
Star	Distribution Form1	32



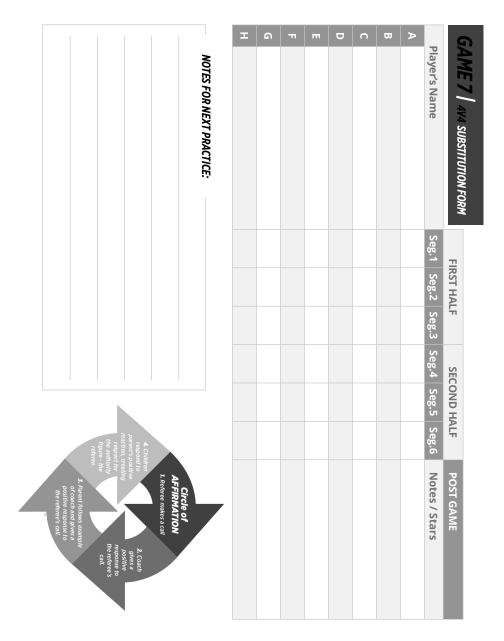
POST GAME	Notes / Stars									Circle of AFFIRMATION 1. Referve makes a call gives a sative frequence to gives a positive response to the referee's call. 3. Payent follows example call. the referee's call the referee's call the referee's call the referee's call.	12
SECOND HALF	Seg									4. Children (1. fr (1.	
FIRST HALF	eg.3										
GAME 2 4V4 SUBSTITUTION FORM	Player's Name	A	В	C	D	ш	IL.	9	Ξ	NOTES FOR NEXT PRACTICE:	



	POST GAME	Notes / Stars									Circle of	AFFIRMATION 1. Referee makes a call	Ito 2 Coach gives a		. Parent follows example of coach and gives a	positive response to the referee's call.
	SECOND HALF	Seg.1 Seg.2 Seg.3 Seg.4 Seg.5 Seg.6											4. Children respond to parent's posit	reaction, creating respect for the authority figure - the	refere	
	SECO	Seg.4 S														
	FIRST HALF	Seg.2 Seg.3														
	FIR	Seg.1														
GAME A AVA SUBSTITUTION FORM	A 444 SOBSITION TOKE	Player's Name									NOTES FOR NEXT PRACTICE:					
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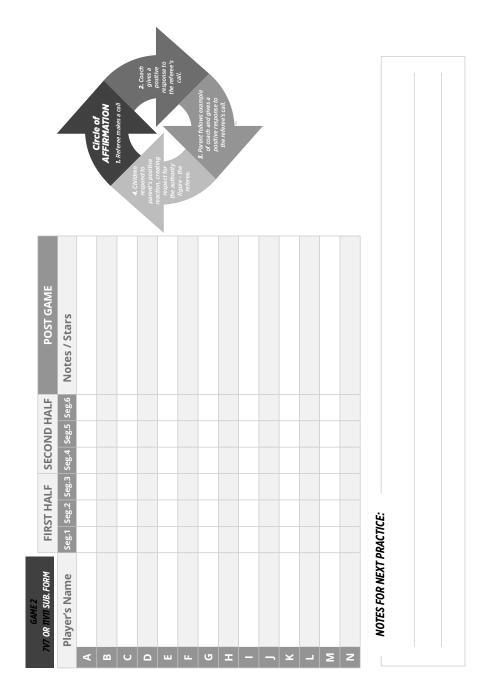


POST GAME	Notes / Stars									Circle of		or response to the referee's the relations and the referee's call.		positive response to the referee's call.
SECOND HALF	Seg.4 Seg.5 Seg.6										4. Children respond to	reaction, creating respect for the authority figure - the figure - the	referee.	
FIRST HALF	Seg.1 Seg.2 Seg.3													
GAME 6 4V4 SUBSTITUTION FORM	Player's Name	A	В	C	D	ш	IL.	U	Ξ	NOTES FOR NEXT PRACTICE:				



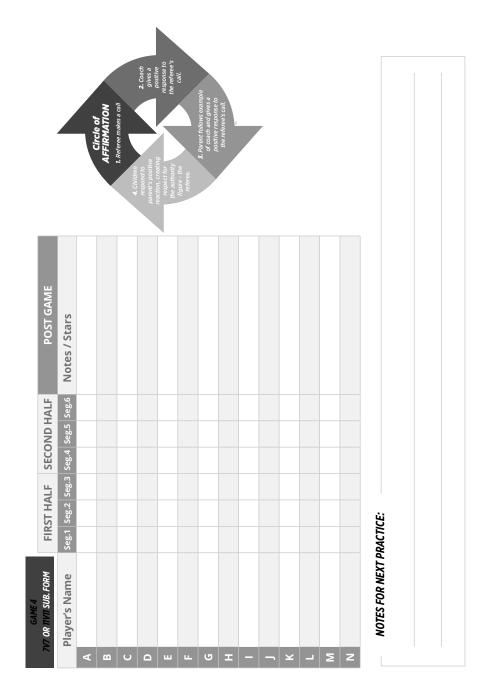
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GAME 8 414 SUBSTITUTION FORM	П	Players Name	А	В	C	D	ш	LL.	G	Ξ.	NOTES FOR NEXT PRACTICE:

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														Seg.1 Seg.2 Seg.3 Seg.4 Seg.5 Seg.6	FIRST HALF
														Seg.4 Seg.5 Seg.6	SECOND HALF
														Notes / Stars	POST GAME
				A		the referee's call.	3. Parent follows example of coach and gives a positive response to		respect for the authority the referee's S	2 Coach gives a positive	L. Keleree makes a call			PLA	увоок



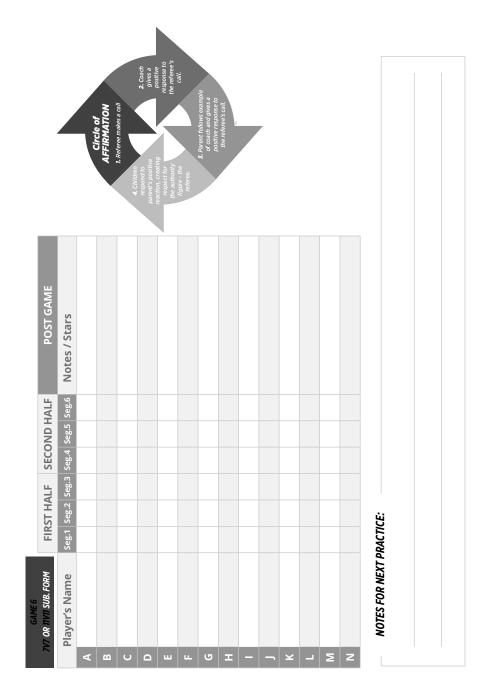
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													Player's Name	7V7 OR TIVTI SUB. FORM	4 14F 7
													Seg.1 Seg.2 Seg.3 Seg.4 Seg.5 Seg.6	FIRST HALF	
													2 Seg.3		
													Seg.4 S	SECON	
													eg.5 Seg.6	SECOND HALF	
													Notes / Stars	POST GAME	
			4		the referee's call.	3. Parent follows example of coach and gives a positive response to			respond to 2 Coach parent's positive satisfactors creating positive positiv	4. Children	AFFIRMATION	Circles		_	

SOCCER COACH PLAYBOOK



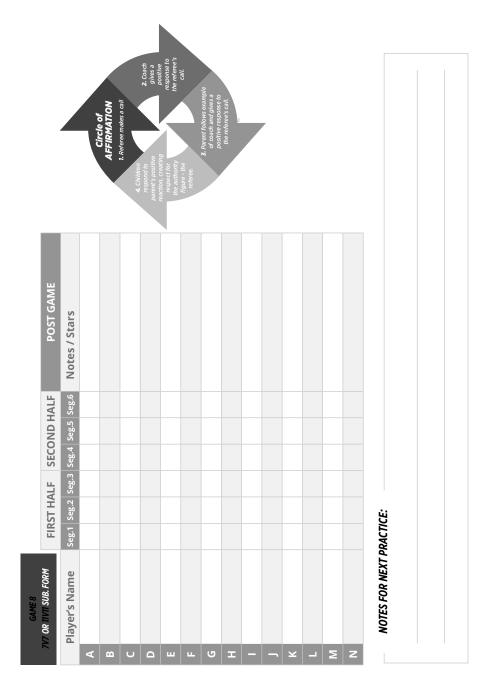
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Z	3	г	7	_	Ι	മ	77	т	D	C	₩	➤	P	71/7	
													Player's Name	7V7 OR TIVIT SUB. FORM	GAME 5
													Seg.1 Seg.2 Seg.3 Seg.4 Seg.5 Seg.6	FIRST HALF	
													Seg.4 Seg.5 Seg.6	SECOND HALF	
													Notes / Stars	POST GAME	
				A	the referee's call.	3. Parent follows example of coach and gives a positive response to			parent's positive parent's positive paction constitue positive positive positive positive	4. Children	AFFIRMATION	Circles			

SOCCER COACH PLAYBOOK



Z	S	г	7	_	Ξ	വ	77	m	o	C	₩	➤		7	
													Player's Name	GAME7 7V7 OR TIVIT SUB. FORM	
													Seg.1 Seg.2 Seg.3 Seg.4 Seg.5 Seg.6	FIRST HALF	
													Seg.4 Seg.5 Seg.6	SECOND HALF	
													Notes / Stars	POST GAME	
				A	the referee's call.	3. Parent follows example of coach and gives a positive response to		reaction, treating response to response to the authority the referee's	respond to 2 Coach parent's positive parent's positive po	4. Children	AFFIRMATION	Circle of			

SOCCER COACH PLAYBOOK



UPWARD SPORTS Soccer Star Distribution Form

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Game 8	Game 7	Game 6	Game 5	Game 4	Game 3	Game 2	Game 1	Name
			game.	s receive each	Use a pencil to record the color of the star that the players receive each game.	lor of the star	record the co	Use a pencil to

♦ NOTES

Find tools online at MyUpward.org to teach the sport and share the gospel.

Accept the invitation from your League Director to MyUpward.org and have access to:

- Team roster
- Practice and game schedule
- Practice plan and devotion material
- Videos for practice
- Communication Tools
- Game day management
- Tutorial videos

