



Nick Corrigan's Soccer Schools

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The Greatest
Game on Earth

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Welcome to the Web site.

As you read through this introduction to the soccer schools I hope it becomes clear to you what my hopes and aspirations are for all the children that join us at the schools. Being a soccer coach for some years now I have seen lots of children of various ages and levels of ability, true lots and lots of children with a great deal of ability and natural skill, but far more children who seem to have been thrown in to the soccer club at more the parents wishes rather than the child's. Far too often you see children just standing on a soccer pitch looking at their shirts or playing with their hair, as the game goes on frantically around them.

You do not have to be a professional soccer coach to see that these children need a little less competitive introduction to a team game. This is my objective with Nick Corrigan's Soccer School's.

THREE; S AND FOURS..

At the ages of three and four most littlies are just starting to develop their own characters. There need to be able to interact with other children whilst developing social skills is far more important than the ability to run through a line of markers and to go on to score a goal. This particular age group needs a lot of work on the development of their balance and co-ordination. Nearly every child in this age group needs a great deal of work on their Gross Motor Skills. My aim is to make sure the children gain a significant amount of co-ordination and balance, whilst understanding the importance of giving it a go, no matter what the final result. I try to concentrate more at making the children feel comfortable with a ball at their feet. The concentration spans at this age group is relatively short, so some children's ability to control a ball might be the only task a child might master in the first couple of weeks. And another child might be skipping through hoops and running through markers after only a couple of weeks. To see a look of satisfaction on a particular child's face when they have actually managed to complete a little task is so satisfying for me. As a parent you shouldn't be expecting a great deal from your child especially if your child is about to join the schools for the first time. Your child's ability to interact more with other children in there age group should be at the top of your achievement list for your child, I know it was for my daughter when she joined the schools.

FIVES to SEVENS,

With this age you can still find a few children whom's ability to interact with other children needs working on. Some children's Motor skills still need a little work on as well.

Working with this age group I try to concentrate more on the children's ability to kick a ball correctly, most children think they can kick a ball, most can't. Mainly because they have never been shown the basics of how to approach a



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ball, which part of the foot is required to gain an effect, that sort of thing. We use games like Red Light, Green Light or Cat and Mouse. These are simple games where the children have to maintain control of their ball in a small space, enforcing the use of their balance and co-ordination. By the end of the tenth week nearly every child has the ability to move a ball across a small grid, and keep control of the ball. Here once again the children have to get used to playing alongside other children that might be a little quicker than themselves, or perhaps have more of a natural balance.

Goal nets are used more frequently with this age groups, because some of the little exercises and drills require the children to kick a ball correctly into a goal at the end of the drill. Towards the end of the ten weeks we touch on things like heading a ball. A lot of children can be fearful of heading a ball, so once again if they are shown the correct way to head a ball, they soon gain confidence, and think nothing of getting a ball out of the bag to try and head a ball on their own. You might have heard your child referring to the way a chicken moves forward. I use the way a chicken moves as a way to introduce a child into heading a ball, perhaps you should ask your child what they should be doing with their elbows, shoulders and necks as they head a ball. The children think this can be quite funny, but it's a way of breaking the ice when a particular child might be afraid of heading a ball. Here I try to encourage the children not to take themselves so seriously and the tasks given to them so seriously, it's better to have given it a go even if they do make a hash of it. At the end of this session it's good to see the children running back to their parents laughing at what they have or haven't quite managed to achieve in the half hour period at least they have given it a go under no pressure.

EIGHTS to TENS

This age group is no different to 5s /7s, we can still have children joining us who have never kicked a soccer ball before. In this group I find more children want to go on and join a Sunday morning soccer team. So in recent terms I have leaned more towards getting children prepared for this. We do more ball skills, still the very basic of trapping, running and passing. The children are shown the correct way to take a throw in for instance. The correct way to strike a ball at goal, or to take a penalty. Games are introduced where taking throw ins are part of the task. The children work in a much larger grid and these games last longer, games like shooting through hoops, running around a square, back in to the square and trying to shoot their ball at an object in the middle of the square. I never play any full on soccer games with the children. My main objective for all of the age groups is that the children are having fun. Trying to play a full on soccer game would leave children standing at the side not feeling confident enough to get involved. I try to work very hard on the children's confidence at this age group. There's a lot of mucking taking out of me, I try to encourage the children to set me tasks, we have little wagers on the completion of drills and tasks, which invariably leaves me having to do pushups to the delight of the children.

I try to help the children not to take themselves so seriously, I know I don't, and as long as the children are laughing and having fun I know they are not under any pressure and most achieve a great deal from the soccer schools.



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We have children with us that have learning difficulties and handicaps. I try to teach these children in the same way as the other children, with the help of their parents the children gain just as much enjoyment and pleasure from exercises drills and little tasks completed. These children's needs are no different from any of the other children I find that they haven't kicked a ball much either, perhaps their group participation has been a little more limited than other children, but it isn't long before they are running around the outside of a circle playing Duck, Duck Soccer or Cat and Mouse games.

At all venues no children are turned away I encourage all children to express themselves to the best of their ability.

Nick Soccer Schools has a Logo of COME AND HAVE A BALL WITH A BALL. Hopefully every child follows that instruction to the letter, and goes back to their parent with a smile on their faces, full of confidence, and at the end of the tenth week who knows, your child might feel like he or she can cope on a large soccer pitch in a team game and wishes to play the game. That way I know I have achieved my objective with the schools.

I hope I have given you an insight in to what my objectives and goals are whilst trying to teach your children a little about the world game.

Thanks Nick Corrigan .



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