

REASONS FOR SMALL SIDED PLAY

Philosophical

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

Educational

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

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

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

Eight and nine year olds (U10 players) can play the game and enjoy the game. They need time and the appropriate environment to continue their technical development and begin simple tactical development (simple combinations with their teammates). Fewer players on the field provide ample opportunity to make quality decisions more often, reinforcing the tactical basics, so-to-speak. They enjoy being part of a team because it's a FUN environment!

game playing numbers: *6 versus 6 (5 field and 1 GK)*

maximum field size: *65 yards x 45 yards*

goal size: *6 ft high x 18 ft wide (use goals provided)*

ball size: *Number 4*

length of game: *Two – 25 minute halves, five minute halftime*

playing time: *every player is to play as close to 50% or more of game*

uniforms: *home team to wear pinnies in case of conflict*

start and restart: *opponent 8 yards from ball*

fouls and free kicks: *conform to USYSA rules (direct & indirect kicks)*

throw-in: *conform to USYSA rules (foul throw, explain and 1 retake)*

goal kick: *from anywhere in penalty area, opponents 8 yards away*

corner kick: *from 1 yard from corner, opponents 8 yards away*

offside: *none to be called*

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

scoring and standings: *none to be kept*

A referee will be provided for each game. If no referee present, coaches will assist or recruit a parent volunteer. All officials should be treated respectfully.

Safety Enjoyment Learning Sportsmanship Teamwork

Coaching Resources:

www.usyouthsoccer.org

www.nmysa.net

www.northernsc.org