

EIYSA – Elite Club Soccer

Competency Based Long Term Player Development

The Essential Techniques Connecting The Dots To Form A Complete Picture Of The Game!

EIYSA – Competency Based Long Term Development

The EIYSA Long Term Player Development Model, for the U10 age group, progressively graduates players through the stages of technical development, helping them put in place prerequisite techniques before moving to the next level of performance. If you have these tools by age 14, your ability to work on varied tactics becomes greatly enhanced.

Many comparisons have been used over the years to this competency based process: in music (piano, you do not teach Mozart's Piano Sonata No. 11, without first learning scales and then progressing slowly), in figure skating (a triple toe loop without first learning a single), in math (how to multiply without an understanding of addition), in gymnastics (a somersault on the balance beam without learning the technique on the floor). However, sport, especially our sport, is divided by age and within a single year there exists a range of ability. It is understood by educators that maturity at a certain age will show a disparity of plus or minus 2 years in true maturational levels. Consequently, a team with all 14 year olds will have varied physical capabilities, technical abilities, tactical understanding and levels of maturity that are perhaps four years apart in one or more of these areas. It is difficult for a coach to maximize achievement in these environments.

EIYSA, through the member clubs, are able to organize our training groups in a manner based on competence, not age group. They will attempt to match players up in like groups according to physical maturity and if they are weaker technically, we encourage players to develop the skills of the group in front of them. This method of grouped training allows players to be successful at a technical level that is most appropriate for them. Therefore, the training is personalized and addresses the needs of the child ensuring that their technical development is maximized.

If a player is new to competency based learning, he/she will train in a group of like competencies at their age or close to their age. The young player will be provided with instruction and information needed to meet competencies. It is then up to their effort and application in our sessions and on their own to practice and reach their requisite competencies.

Why so much focus on technique? A carpenter needs tools to build a house. Limited tools, limited house. Technique acquisition is also maximized during the years represented in this program. With a full 'tool kit' of techniques then the tactical knowledge increases because more solutions are available to a player. Greater solutions and execution, typically leads to a greater sense of self-esteem and self-efficacy, thus keeping an individual in the game and hopefully pursuing a healthy and active lifestyle through their teens and beyond.

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What do the levels or Development Categories really reference?

These developmental categories provide an outline of where the emphasis of instruction is placed. At U10, we are not expecting Automation or Perfection/Improvisation. Many years of training will be required before automation in any technique/application is achieved. These categories give coaches an idea of the level of emphasis to place within a given year.

I = Introduce: This level is exactly what it states. Fundamental positions, stances, and patterns are introduced to the players and they develop an understanding of these areas. They can execute the various pieces of the techniques or tactics in the correct order but the movements look awkward and unsynchronized or delayed with regard to tactics. For the coach this means we provide a quick introduction of topics, essentially putting the 'jargon or language of the sport' in front of them and the valuable pictures that they need to model. However, we do not spend a great deal of time on these topics however we do expose the young player to these areas.

L = Learn: At this level players are able to change the techniques (movements) in order to find success under various conditions and in different areas of the field. This occurs with limited pressure in the beginning and then more pressure as experience is gained. Here a coach must match the level of ability to that of the player. Not a complete match, but a match that slightly exceeds the current competencies of the player. The coach must focus training sessions around these topics, not all at once, but systematically throughout the year. This is where the art and experience of coaching comes into play. A coach must recognize where an athlete stands today, and moves them day by day toward the end goal...the end goal being the next column in the LTPDM.

A = Automate: When players get to this level, their techniques (movements) are coordinated, consistent and efficiently performed under more complex conditions. Although limited to varying the way they perform the trained techniques (movements), players begin to create their own responses to the conditions they begin to see in games and training exercises. Coaches contribute to automation of an athlete's development in these phases consistently offering opportunities for repetition and variation. Growth occurs with every variation, slight or extreme, in an automated movement or tactical situation.

P = Perfect/Improvise: Players begin to create instantaneous responses that are their interpretations of techniques or combinations of techniques forming unique motor patterns. Much of the development here is experiential and it is mostly in the hands of the player, although coaches provide tactical information through instruction, video, and establishing an environment where the player's individual development occurs through their own exploration.

- Development categories modified from the CAC NCCP Theory

Movement Education

- Posture: Remains Consistent with most techniques (shoulders back and hips forward) = Good Body Balance
- Games: A great deal of our instruction is around movement education and as instructors we watch for change of direction, leaning body thus putting weight on different parts of the foot, balance and agility – especially in our warm up activities (high activity and great deal of change of direction or movement patterns)

What Are the Competencies?

Competency based development focuses on first establishing a base of movements that we refer to as 'The Essential Techniques'. Simultaneously taking techniques & adding decision making required when opposition is introduced. Below you will find the level focus placed in the U10 age group. Players may be beyond or behind in these areas so we modify continuously.

	Age	U10		Age	U10
Dribbling			Ball Striking (with the laces for passing or shooting)		I
• Basic 'Skipping' w/ ball or "touching every step"		L	• Plant Foot - "Heel to the center of the ball"		
• Change of direction		L	• Kicking Foot - "Pointed to the side and not down"		
• Change of speed		I	• Leaning Body - "Lean body to the side"		
• Rolls		L	• Shoulders Back/Hips Forward - "End up where you start"		
			• Opposite arm "Belly button to shoulder height"		
Turns					
• Slide / Slide with a Drag Back		L			
• Inside & Outside of Foot Twist Off or Hook Turns		L	• Avoid: Jumping through the ball		
• Stop Turn		L	• Avoid: Bending or leaning over top of the ball		
• Step Over Turn		L	• Avoid: Pointing the toe straight down		
• Cruyff Turn		I			
• Zidane or Maradona		I	Juggling (Makes the game three dimensional)		
1v1 Techniques			• Posture for juggling on all body parts		L
• Dead Touch / Dead Touch with a Step Over		I	• Hips forward and shoulders back		
• Matthew's Move		L	With Feet:		I
• Beardsley Move		I	• Lock ankle in so slight backspin is on the ball		
• Scissors / Double Scissors		L	• Every juggle is a kick (avoid juggling w/ straight leg)		
• Revellino		I	With Thigh (not knee):		L
			With Head: Posture (Avoid 'sitting down')		L
Shielding (Protecting the ball)		L			
• Shielding and using turns		I	Heading (10 year olds only)		
			• Maintain posture: hips forward & shoulders back		I
Passing & Control (Cannot Separate the Two)			• ALIHOOPS!		L
Passing:		I			
• Maintain posture of hips forward / shoulders back			Defending		
• "Step backwards" (happens if posture is right)			• Basic Individual defending of jockeying		I
• "Balanced & contact in front of non-kicking foot"			• "Step into the space between dribbler & the ball"		I
Control on the Ground:		I	• Principles of Goal-side, Pressure, Cover, Balance		
• Hop backwards & be in the air on your first touch					
• Avoid drawing foot back to absorb the ball			Attacking		
• Keep posture so head is up & can see the field			• Attacking Principles of Width, Depth & Penetration		I
Turns with First Touch (Inside & Outside of Foot)		I	• Combinations: 1-2, Overlap, Cross Over/Take Over		I
Control From Air (Using ½ Volley) "Find the Bounce":		L	• Playing Over, Through or Around		I
• Hop and be on way down when making touch			Mental Qualities of Club Players		
• Use of turns with inside or outside of the foot		I	• Activity Level (Training Capacity, Attitude & Focus)		I
• Control on Chest & Thigh		I	• Attentive (Attention Control & Goal Driven)		I
			• Correction from Reflection (Imagery & Modeling)		I
Opening Up			This outline is used for initial assessment, but can also be used by players & parents to monitor progress.		
• Allow the ball to run across your body to the back foot. Hop backwards – Be in air on touch		I			

*I=Introduce, L=Learn, A=Automate, P=Perfect (Not applicable at U10)
(Level of Development/Teaching: Category shown on following page)

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Competency Assessment Guide ... Player Name _____ Age Group _____

What Are the Competencies? Competency based development focuses on first establishing a base of movements that we refer to as 'The Essential Techniques'. Simultaneously taking techniques & adding decision making required when opposition is introduced. Below you will find an assessment form. The '?' indicates the athlete has no reference to the technique. The other levels 'I', 'L', 'A', are assessed by looking at the athletes and indicating a rough level of competence within each area. This is a tool which can be used by a coach or an athlete.

Level of Athlete	?	I	L	A	Level of Athlete	?	I	L	A
Dribbling					Ball Striking (with the laces for passing or shooting)				
• Basic 'Skipping' or "touching every step"					• Plant Foot - "Heel to the center of the ball"				
• Change of direction					• Kicking Foot - "Pointed to the side and not down"				
• Change of speed					• Leaning - "Lean body to the side"				
• Rolls					• Shoulders Back/Hips Forward -"End up where you started"				
					• Opposite arm "Belly button to shoulder height"				
Turns									
• Slide / Slide with a Drag Back					• Avoid: Jumping through the ball				
• Inside & Outside of Foot Twist Off Turns					• Avoid: Bending or leaning over top of the ball				
• Stop Turn					• Avoid: Pointing the toe straight down				
• Step Over Turn									
• Cruyff Turn					Juggling (Makes the game three dimensional)				
• Zidane or Maradona					• Posture for juggling on all body parts				
1v1 Techniques					• Hips forward and shoulders back				
• Dead Touch / Dead Touch with a Step Over					With Feet:				
• Matthew's Move					• Lock ankle in so slight backspin is on the ball				
• Beardsley Move					• Every juggle is a kick (avoid juggling w/ straight leg)				
• Scissors / Double Scissors					With Thigh (not knee):				
• Revellino					With Head: Posture (Avoid 'sitting down')				
Shielding (Protecting the ball)					Heading (10 year olds only)				
• Shielding and using turns					• Maintain posture: hips forward & shoulders back				
Passing & Control (Cannot Separate)					• ALIHOOPS!				
Passing:					Defending				
• Maintain posture of hips forward & shoulders back					• Basic individual defending of jockeying				
• "step backwards" (happens if posture is right)					• "Step into the space between dribbler & the ball"				
• "balanced & contact in front of plant foot"					• Principles of Goal-side, Pressure, Cover, Balance				
Control on the Ground:					Attacking				
• Hop backwards & be in air on your first touch					• Attacking Principles of Width, Depth & Penetration				
• Avoid drawing foot back to absorb the ball					• Combinations: 1-2, Overlap, Cross Over/Take Over				
• Keep posture so head is up & can see the field					• Playing Over, Through or Around				
Turns with First Touch (Inside & Outside of foot)					Mental Qualities of Club Players				
Control fr Air (Use ½ Volley) "Find the Bounce":					• Activity Level (Training Capacity, Attitude & Focus)				
• Hop and be on way down when making touch					• Attentive (Attention Control & Goal Driven)				
• Use of turns with inside or outside of the foot					• Correction from Reflection (Imagery & Modeling)				
• Control on Chest & Thigh									
Opening Up					This outline is used for initial assessment, but can also be used by players & parents to monitor progress.				
• Allow the ball to run across your body to the back foot. Hop backwards – Be in air on touch.									

*?=No Reference Point, I=Introduce, L=Learn, A=Automate, P=Perfect (not applicable at U10)

Introduction

This 16-week U10 Curriculum leads a U10 player toward achieving the competencies outlined in EIYSA's – **Competency Based Long Term Development** model. With two practices per week and a single game day, a player and coach are provided 48 Growth Opportunities. It is within these opportunities for growth where coaches will open many doors for the young player, but none more important than the love of the sport and the love of learning. At U10, it is important that we set expectations that establish a learning environment focused around individual development over team development. This learning environment will be dynamic, safe, supportive and enjoyable. These are the key components of learning and will establish the young players' ability to learn within the soccer environment for years to come.

A coach may follow the outline/guideline below and find games or exercises that bring out the suggested topics. Coaches may include practice time individually or with partners, small-sided games, stations, and low organization games that sometimes do not look like the game of soccer but are a great deal of fun for the players and often the coach.

The curriculum has a clear individual technique bias, and at U10 this is a bias that should not be changed. The ball is a toy for the young player and they each enjoy having their own. The young player wants their time with their toy before they look to share it with their friends and teammates. Use this desire to play with their ball by providing direction as to what the young player can do with the ball. After individual time, then it is time to share with a teammate

Heading – an introduction to heading through juggling is provided. At the U10 age group child/player should always be in control. No tosses from friends or coaches etc. Only the 10 year old should be introduced to heading through juggling. For further details re: heading refer to footnotes

		Individual Homework	Technical Focus	Decision Making / Application Focus
Week 1	1	Juggling – Feet (begin setting goals)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dribbling Rolls and Turns (Slide, Outside of Foot Twist Off) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of Turns to Keep Possession 1v1 (keep possession in area), 2v2, 4v4 (to 'start over' and use depth or 'help behind the ball') Games to End Line – 'Attack Least Protected Space'
	2	Juggling - Feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dribbling Rolls and Turns (Review Previous then add Inside of Foot Twist Off) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of Turns to Keep Possession 1v1 (use of gates to dribble through), 2v2, 3v3 (to 'start over' and use depth or 'help behind the ball') Games to Small Goals on End Line – 'Attack Least Protected Space'
	3	Juggling - Feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game
Week 2	4	Juggling - Feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dribbling Rolls and Turns (Review Previous then add Slide with a Drag Back) Change of Speed Following Turns Alloops* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of Turns to Keep Possession and Lose a Defender 1v1 (dribble through gates for goals), 4v4 (to create space for a pass) Games to 'Attack Least Protected Space'
	5	Juggling - Feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dribbling Rolls and Turns (Review Previous then add Zidane or Maradona) Shielding (to create) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shielding against a partner 3v3 – shield where needed with free players at ends Games to 'Attack Least Protected Space'
	6	Juggling - Feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game

48 Growth Opportunities

		Individual Homework	Technical Focus	Decision Making / Application Focus
Week 3	7	Juggling - Feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dribbling Rolls and Turns (Review Previous then add Cruyff) Control From The Air Introduction Alioops* with a partner (catch and throw while in the air) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Pairs - Toss, thigh juggle then Control with Half Volley Games with Throw-ins to Unopposed receiver to practice Half Volley Control
	8	Juggling - Feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dribbling Rolls and Turns (Review Previous then add Step Over Turn) Control From The Air – Half Volley Review Passing Introduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Pairs - Toss, thigh juggle then Control with Half Volley then Shield Games with Throw-ins to Opposed receiver to practice Half Volley Control
	9	Juggling - Feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game
Week 4	10	Juggling - Feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Dribbling Turns in Warm Up Passing & Control – Focus on Passing Technique (Balance) Alioops* with a partner (catch and throw while in the air) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support/Help on Either Side of Ball Short Help and Far Help
	11	Juggling - Feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Dribbling Turns in Warm Up Passing & Control – Passing Technique (Balance) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support/Help on Either Side of Ball Short Help and Far Help
	12	Juggling - Feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game
Week 5	13	Juggling – Thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Dribbling Turns in Warm Up Passing & Control – Focus on Controlling Technique (Balance) Alioops* with a partner (catch and throw while in the air) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4v2 in long narrow area ... Diamond Shape ... Wide (Wide), Depth (Support or Help Behind), Penetration (Depth up front or Help Forward) Like a plane...need a nose, two wings and a tail to fly...need that shape to fly in the game
	14	Juggling – Thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Dribbling Turns in Warm Up Passing & Control – Focus on Controlling Technique Opening Up Introduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4v2 in long narrow area ... Diamond Shape ... Wide (Wide), Depth (Support or Help Behind), Penetration (Depth up front or Help Forward)
	15	Juggling - Thigh	Game	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game
Week 6	16	Juggling – Thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Dribbling Turns in Warm Up Change of Speed (Slow to Fast to Slow) Passing & Control Opening Up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on Playing Around** ... i.e.6v1 Play around to play through ... Open up the Curtains to play through
	17	Juggling – Thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Dribbling Turns in Warm Up Passing & Control Opening Up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on Playing Around** ... i.e.6v1 Play around to play through ... Open up the Curtains to play through
	18	Juggling - Thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game

48 Growth Opportunities

		Individual Homework	Technical Focus	Decision Making / Application Focus
Week 7	19	Juggling – Thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dribbling (Review Previous Turns) • Change of Direction with Change of Speed • 1v1 Techniques (Matthew’s Move, Scissors) • Passing – One Touch Introduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attack Least Protected Goal • Play Around**
	20	Juggling – Thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dribbling (Review Previous Turns) • Change of Direction with Change of Speed • 1v1 Techniques (Review Previous then add Double Scissors) • Passing – One Touch Introduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attack Least Protected Goal • Play Around**
	21	Juggling - Thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Game
Week 8	22	Juggling – Thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dribbling (Review Previous Turns) • 1v1 Techniques (Review Previous then add Revellino) • Control from the Air (Half Volley) • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combination Play (Combining with a Teammate) ... 1-2 or Wall Pass Introduction (Through**) •
	23	Juggling – Thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dribbling (Review Previous Turns) • 1v1 Techniques (Review Previous then add Beardsley) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combination Play (Combining with a Teammate) ... 1-2 or Wall Pass (Through**) •
	24	Juggling - Thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Game
Week 9	25	Juggling – Head*** <u>Self Toss</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dribbling (Review Turns and 1v1 Techniques) • Juggling on the Head Introduction (Toss-Head-Catch to begin) ... Posture Introduction • Striking with the Laces • Passing with partner with laces • With partner each have goal (posts or cones) and shoot against each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central goal then cones goals on sides...pass through cone goal with laces from specified distance and it equals a goal
	26	Juggling – Head*** <u>Self Toss</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shielding with a Partner • Juggling on the Head*** Introduction (Toss-Head-Catch to begin then Toss-Head-Head-Catch) ... Posture Introduction • Striking with the Laces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central goal then cones goals on sides...pass through cone goal with laces from specified distance and it equals a goal
	27	Juggling – Feet & Thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Game

48 Growth Opportunities

		Individual Homework	Technical Focus	Decision Making / Application Focus
Week 10	28	Juggling – Head*** <u>Self Toss</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Control from the Air (Half Volley) Alioops* with a partner (catch and throw while in the air) Juggling on the Head*** ... Posture Introduction Turns with First Touch (across body, Outside of foot, no touch turn) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Throw-ins to Unopposed receiver to practice control from the air A point in games for a turn with first touch or no touch turn
	29	Juggling – Feet/ thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turns with First Touch Alioops* with a partner (catch and throw while in the air) Control from the Air (Half Volley with Turn) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Throw-ins to Unopposed receiver to practice control from the air ... Can you turn with your first ½ volley control? A point in games for a turn with first touch or no touch turn
	30	Juggling – Feet/Thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game
Week 11	31	Juggling – All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Turns Review Opening Up – Around Small Triangle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combination Play (Combining with a Teammate) ... Review 1-2 or Wall Pass then Overlap Introduction (Around**) Attack an end line with dribble 6v3...encourage an overlap before scoring
	32	Juggling – Feet/thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review 1v1 Review Opening Up – Around 10x10 Square 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combination Play (Combining with a Teammate) ... Review 1-2 or Wall Pass then Overlap (Through and Around**) Attack an end line with dribble 6v3...encourage a 1-2 or overlap before scoring
	33	Juggling – feet/thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game
Week 12	34	Juggling – All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combination Play Warm Up in Lines (Pass and sprint to end of next line = overlaps; short short long = 1-2; dribble and have player take off of their foot between two lines = take over) Review Passing & Control . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combination Play (Combining with a Teammate) ... Review 1-2 or Wall Pass & Overlap then Introduce Take Over (Through and Around**) Attack an end line with dribble 6v3...encourage one of the combinations
	35	Juggling – feet/thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Opening Up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combination Play (Combining with a Teammate) ... Review 1-2 or Wall Pass & Overlap then Take Over (Through and Around**) Attack an end line with dribble 6v3...encourage one of the combinations
	36	Juggling – feet/thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game
Week 13	37	Juggling – feet/thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Ball Striking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over, Through and Around** Possession Game
	38	Juggling – feet/thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Control from the Air (Half Volley) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over, Through and Around** Penetration Game
	39	Juggling – feet/thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game

48 Growth Opportunities

		Individual Homework	Technical Focus	Decision Making / Application Focus
Week 14	40	Sequence Juggling – feet/thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Opening Up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over, Through and Around** Possession Game
	41	Sequence Juggling - feet/thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Turns and Shielding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over, Through and Around** Penetration Game
	42	Sequence Juggling – feet/thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game
Week 15	43	Sequence Juggling – feet/thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Passing and Control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over, Through and Around** Possession Game
	44	Sequence Juggling – feet/thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review One Touch Passing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over, Through and Around** Penetration Game
	45	Sequence Juggling – feet/thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game
Week 16	46	Sequence Juggling – feet/thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Opening Up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over, Through and Around** Possession Game
	47	Sequence Juggling – feet/thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Opening Up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over, Through and Around** Penetration Game
	48	Sequence Juggling – feet/thigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game

Footnotes

* **What are Alioops?** A basketball player throws the ball up toward the hoop, when a teammate rises into the air catches the ball on their way up, and lays the ball into the hoop or dunks the ball before returning to the ground. This is an Alioop. This same movement can be used to teach body control and the timing required later in a young player's soccer adventure (12 or 13 years of age) to jump into the air and head the ball at its highest point. With Alioops a player is catching a ball as they rise into the air and they throw to a teammate on the way down.

** **What is Over, Through and Around?** When a player is making a decision on where to go with the ball in soccer, they are essentially making the decision to play Over, Through or Around. The choices of course are to 1. Keep the ball, 2. Move the ball closer to the opponent's goal, 3. Unbalance the opponent so the team can progress with the least resistance, and 4. Influence the positions and decisions of opponents. Can we play back and around in order to play through at some point because the passing has 'opened up curtains' to play through? Can we play through, into the middle of the opposition, influencing them to collapse in to defend the ball, only to then play the ball out of the middle to advance around the opposition? Over, Through and Around are the directions we choose in most team sports...can we facilitate the decision making of the young players at U10...the coaches challenge. :o) Exercises for Over, Through and Around can take the form of Possession in a large area or Pentrative, meaning attempting to get behind the opposition and toward a goal.



*** **Heading: Considerations for teaching/encouraging the technique of heading the ball:** Every coach should be cautious and not force a young player to head a ball when they are not comfortable. Heading should be introduced to the young player by the club Technical Director only! A few general guidelines:

- Only the 10 year old player should be introduced to heading through juggling,
- The 9 year old should not be introduced to heading – although they can do Alioops.
- Heading should be done by the individual, which means all tosses are self-tosses and the young player is in complete control of the height of the toss,
- Practice time at home; as on the field, is a maximum 3 minutes for this technique; More is NOT better,
- There are no throws to a partner or from a partner,
- If indoors, use balloons or volleyballs while introducing heading to young players.