

Appendix 5.6: Sample Session Plan

Introduction

The following session plan is intended to illustrate how coaches working with a group of children may integrate the various elements of the *Curriculum* into their delivery. From that perspective, the sections contained within the planner are relevant to the particular context in which this session takes place (a community club), but may not be applicable to other environments. It is for the coaches and coach educators to take the principles portrayed by this example and apply them to their specific situation, where appropriate.

Key Considerations

The following sections within the plan are designed to support coaches as they customise their sessions to meet the needs of the children they coach.

- **Quick reminder:** This section aims to serve as a constant 'check and challenge' tool for the coaches, both in the planning and the review stages of their coaching.
- **Working on:** This section prompts coaches into the habit of consistently being able to articulate the principles and objectives they are working from and towards with each activity they set up. This will, in turn, allow coaches to quickly gauge the effectiveness of the activity and adjust or change it as necessary.
- **Time:** This section is optional. Some coaches will like to plan their sessions to a high degree of detail, while others will prefer to offer more open-ended session plans that allow them to go with the flow when appropriate. Some coaches will be somewhere in-between.
- **Review/comments/likely interventions:** This section supports the development of reflection in action (in real-time) for coaches and therefore allows them to adjust activities at the time of need. It will also support the process of reflection on action (once the activity is finished). It also allows the coach to plan for those key moments where they may have to intervene (likely interventions).
- **Overall comments:** This section supports the reflection on practice process from a very focused perspective (eg Were the session outcomes achieved? What was good about the session and what needs attention?)
- **Participant feedback:** This section tries to encourage coaches to seek feedback from the children they coach. The purpose for this is two-fold: on the one hand it ensures that coaches get as much information as possible about the way the sessions are working and how the participants feel about them; on the other hand and, most importantly, this process enhances the feeling of ownership in the participants and empowers them to take more control over their own development and participation in sport.

5.6 Appendix

Programme: Come 'n' Have a Ball		Date: Saturday 5 February	
Time: 10am Duration: 60 minutes	Age range: 7–9 Number of children: 15	Stage: FUNdamentals Equipment: Flat and high cones, soft balls, baseball/rounders bats, hoops, two mats, markers, bean bags and bibs	
Learning from previous sessions to be applied in this session: The children are becoming quite confident striking objects in a controlled environment, but they struggle when the games become competitive. They are quite happy running backwards and forwards but are struggling with sideways/diagonal movement and changes of direction. Some of them are still very self-centred.			
Quick reminder (What should be at the back of my mind while working with this group?): Participants' developmental stage: FUNdamentals Key words: Fun, play, fundamental movement skills, competence and confidence			
 Personal and Social: The 5Cs for Coaching (Coaching the Whole Child)			
Children should be: • allowed to develop competence in an environment that exposes them to high levels of success, promotes a sense of self-worth and rewards effort as much as performance • learning about the benefits of safe sport and enjoying playing with others • understanding and respecting simple rules and getting a sense for 'fair play' • encouraged to experiment and to find solutions to basic and intermediate problems • supported and reassured when dealing with failure and frustration.			
 Physical	 Technical	 Tactical	 Mental
At this stage, children should be:			
• experiencing basic movement activities and playing with objects.	• developing control over their own bodies and external objects.	• gaining basic awareness of rules, space and others.	• becoming self-aware, developing basic decision-making skills and learning to work with others.
Goals for the session (What are the main areas we will work on today?): • FUN • retaining technique/skill under 'pressure' • sideways movement and changes of direction (push off/spin) • connection between participants and helping each other.			

Session Content	Working On	Time	Review/Comments/ Likely Interventions
Introduction/Warm Up <i>Cone Chase – Arrange a large number of cones around the gym and call colours</i>	• Fun and dynamic start to session • ABCs • Mental focus	7 minutes	The kids really enjoyed it, particularly when different ways to travel were introduced and they worked in pairs.
Game/Activity 1 <i>Compass – On calling 'north', 'south', 'east' and 'west' the participants move in that direction</i>	• Sideways movement • Changes of pace and direction	7 minutes	If the children are comfortable, introduce carrying an object and some balance shapes.
Game/Activity 2 <i>Batting practice in threes (pitcher, batsman and fielder)</i>	• Striking an object • Helping each other	7 minutes	Three goes each and then change over. The child fielding has to hold a three-point balance in between strikes.
Game/Activity 3 <i>Free play – explore the equipment and invent games</i>	• ABCs • Creativity • Connection • Confidence	7 minutes	One condition: whatever they do has to include striking an object.
Game/Activity 4 <i>Small sided baseball 3v3</i>	• Striking under pressure • Start/stop, • Catching and throwing • Spatial awareness • Working with others • Coping with failure	14 minutes	If some children struggle, allow them to bat with their hand, use a bigger ball or a batting tee.
Wrap Up/Cool Down <i>Popcorn Game – All balls in the middle of the gym in a carrier bag. The coach chucks them out of the bag and the players retrieve them and put them back in the bag. It runs for a minute. If the coach manages to empty the bag, he wins!</i> <i>Stretch to cool down.</i>	• ABCs • FUN • Team work • Avoiding the space of others	7 minutes	Wrap it up with a summary of the skills worked on and ask for feedback from participants.
Overall Comments (Were the session outcomes achieved? What was good about the session and what needs attention?) • Some children were really scared of the ball. Find some soft balls instead of tennis balls. • The group is probably ready to start doing more tactically complex games.		Participant Feedback • A lot of children asked about playing football. Make sure next practice we do something related. • Some children thought baseball was boring.	