



U11/U12 Coaches Handbook

Club Philosophy, Team Management, and General Information

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Values



Leadership

Modeling the way



Respect

One community with everyONE



Fun

We love the game and it shows!



Wellness

Social, emotional, & physical wellbeing above all else



Excellence

Going above & beyond

Long Term Vision



Each program from U4 – U18 will aim to help develop our future adult. It is important to make sure we zoom out and are often looking at the big picture of their 20+ year journey. Don't focus on their current circumstances or abilities, they will have lots of ups and downs on this journey and it's our job to be the support and the compass.

Our Adult Player

Marginal gains to eventual greatness.



The CMF adult player understands the importance of sport in a child's development and is involved (at whatever capacity) in CMF programs as part of the CMF family and the Coquitlam community.



Aims to achieve a good balance in life knowing the importance of good life habits to their mental and physical health.



Demonstrates the virtues of; Respect, fun, leadership, excellence, and wellness in everyday life.



Understands our game. Understands tactics, the importance of technical ability and physical literacy no matter the level of play they have or are playing at.



Our adult player is proud of their achievements in sport with no regrets. They achieved what they set out to achieve and are happy to still enjoy the game as adults.

4 Corner Model



Technical

Ball mastery and execution

- Receiving, turning, dribbling
- Passing, shooting and ball striking
- Pressing, tackling and shielding



Tactical

Game understanding

- Space, support and scanning
- Choices in possession
- Recovery runs and defensive positioning



Mental

Participation and mindset

- Engagement in training and games
- Coachability and resilience
- Consistency over time



Physical

Movement and capacity

- Agility, balance and coordination
- Speed changes and repeat actions
- Competitiveness and safe effort



U11/U12 Development Pathway



Tier 1 — Emerging

Secure core skills and build confidence in more structured team play.



Technical — Receives and passes with improving accuracy; uses first touch to keep possession; dribbles to escape.



Tactical — Understands basic team shape; finds space; recognizes when to pass, dribble or shoot.



Mental — Tries consistently; listens and applies feedback; stays engaged through mistakes.



Physical — Shows coordination, safe contact, agility and repeat effort in longer games.



Tier 2 — Developing

Apply skills under pressure and connect individual actions with team decisions.



Technical — Executes receiving, passing, dribbling and ball striking at higher speed with pressure.



Tactical — Creates angles; understands support, overloads and defensive recovery.



Mental — Shows coachability, resilience and responsibility; communicates with teammates.



Physical — Changes speed and direction efficiently; competes with balance and repeated intensity.



Tier 3 — Advanced

Stretch game intelligence, consistency and impact against stronger pressure.



Technical — Plays forward when possible; receives under pressure; uses disguise, combination play and varied ball striking.



Tactical — Scans before receiving; solves problems quickly; manipulates space; connects units; recognizes pressing and transition cues.



Mental — Takes positive initiative; handles challenge; leads standards while remaining coachable.



Physical — Repeats high-speed actions; competes strongly and safely; recovers between actions.

U11/U12 Age Characteristics

- Develop conscience, morality, and values
- Are usually very interested in group activities
- Begin to show some ability to deal with abstract concepts
- Can begin learning a few specialized techniques
- May display a competitive attitude and preference for competition, team games and challenging activities



U11/U12 Program Goals

Enjoyment through challenges

- Creation of an environment where challenges are valued and viewed as enjoyable.
- Understanding the difference between process and result and nurturing a true love for the game.

Development of Technical Ability

- Dribbling, passing, and shooting are emphasized. Preferably being coached within games with low numbers:
 - 1v1's
 - 2v1's
 - 2v2's
- If players do not express a growth mindset towards learning technique because of low success during games. Coaches may need to place further emphasis on isolated technique training.

Game Understanding Within 8v8 game play

- Ensure players understand formation, positional roles, and principles.
- Coach decision making after they have made a decision. This will lead to game understanding.
- Encourage good decision making even when their execution is letting them down. Then teach technique.

Before The Game

During the week prepare your line-up; make sure you alternate your goalkeepers through the season and have a substitution plan. Aim for equal playing time for every player, and never less than 50% in a league game, along with alternating who starts. It is also important for all players to try all positions during the season. Where a player is still learning a position, keep them there for half a game or a full game rather than changing every shift.

30 minutes before kick-off players should arrive. Make sure you are there early to greet players and set up a warm-up. As part of your team culture, you should have a designated activity players will do on arrival; this can be individual juggling, passing with a partner, a “rondo” or piggy in the middle, tag, or even a player led pick-up game. This is the players time to spend some unstructured time with each other.

15 minutes before kick-off is when you should start your warm-up. This is an activity that is led by you in a much more structured way. Some ideas for warm-ups can be found [here](#). Pick a warm-up players enjoy doing and repeat every game day as part of the routine.



Game Management

Playing Time: Aim for equal playing time for every player. It will never be exactly fair, but no player should have less than 50% playing time in a league game.

Subbing and Line Changes: Preparation is key. Prepare lines prior to the game for easy transition. Use an assistant coach or manager to help support you on line changes and timing shifts.

Positions: It is important that players try all positions. This will help develop their game understanding and build a more rounded player with a wider range of skills.

When players are still learning positions: If possible, have players stay in the same position for half a game or a full game rather than switching every shift. Be clear with parents that players will try all positions and that this will help their overall development as a player.



Creation of an Environment

Leading a team is very complex and challenging. We want to remind you of a few very important things.

Celebration of outside of soccer accomplishments:

Multisport athletes, musicians, and high academics may be reasons for missing sessions/games. We must learn to celebrate these while maintaining the desired environment within our team. If you are unsure on how to deal with a specific situation, please contact your Age Group Head Coach (AGHC).

Celebrate persistence and effort as much as mastery:

Rewards such as being on the starting line-up and playing time or praising in front of the group should not be limited to the players that have performed well but should be extended to the hard workers and persistent players. This will improve confidence, show your belief in them, and set them up to become our future adult player!

It's also what youth, parents, and coaches want. Players working hard within a positive environment that leads to learning, improving and team friendships. Remember that failing and trying again is much harder than succeeding and trying again. These should be appropriately praised.

Create opportunities to spend extra time together:

Kids make friends with the people they spend time with. Team events outside of soccer will nurture friendships and a team environment. – [Team Building Document](#)



Tactics: Game Principles

Attacking

1. First look to move ball towards opposing goal (this can be with a dribble, pass, or shot – players choice!)
2. If you can't, then look to move ball sideways
3. If neither are possible move ball back and look for another way

Defending

1. First prevent the opposition from moving the ball towards your goal
2. If you can also prevent them from going sideways that is better
3. If you can prevent them from moving the ball towards goal, sideways and backwards that is even better!

8v8 Formations: 1-2-1-3-1



Key Coaching Points:

Goalie plays everything for possession (roll ball to teammate or pass to teammate).

Defenders need to shift left and right depending on placement of the ball on the field, and dependent on which team is in possession. For example: When not in possession, if the ball is on the right side, the left defender should shift towards the middle of the field to cover/balance and the right defender should close space and mark tight.

Central Midfield needs to hold central area of the field. Central Midfielder should always be part of a triangle and encouraged to switch the play.

Left/Right Midfielders need to transition forward and back with the play. Focus on creating triangles with teammates when in possession of the ball. Create team defensive balance and shape when not in possession. Example: If the ball is on the left side of the field, the Right Midfielder does not mark tight, they shift towards the middle of the field to help offer cover.

Forwards need to shift with the play and keep the depth (stay high) to spread out the opponent.

8v8 Formations: 1-3-1-3



Key Coaching Points:

Goalie plays everything for possession (roll ball to teammate or pass to teammate).

Central Defender must communicate to team and hold the central area of the field. Central defender does not want to stay too far back and create a large gap for opposing team to attack into, close the space and stay close to your teammates.

Right/Left Forwards need to look to combine with winger and create 2v1 situations. The far side winger moves towards the middle to score goals but will also need to go wide if the ball starts to be switched.

Fullbacks need to transition forward and support quickly, but also retreat upon losing the ball and play a more defensive role. Only one should go forward at a time in order to maintain balance at the back.

Central Midfielders must hold the middle position to keep the team shape. Create triangles with teammates when in possession and create balance with the additional central midfielder when defending. Work with the other central midfielder to create balance and cover when defending (1st and second defender roles).

Forward player needs to stay deep (high) to force the opponent to stay spread out. Forward player needs to support on the side that the ball is on and look to form triangles with ball carrier.

8v8 Formations: 1-2-3-2



Key Coaching Points:

Goalie plays everything for possession (roll ball to teammate or pass to teammate).

Central Defender must communicate to team and hold the central area of the field. Central defender does not want to stay too far back and create a large gap for opposing team to attack into, close the space and stay close to your teammates.

Right/Left Wingers need to move forward into the attacking 1/3 to support their Forward and Midfielder players when the ball is on their side. The far side winger moves towards the middle to create cover with the central defender, and anticipate balls coming cross field and opportunities to attack and support.

Wingers need to transition forward and support quickly, but also retreat upon losing the ball and play a more defensive role.

Central Midfield needs to hold central area of the field. Central Midfielder should always be part of a triangle and encouraged to switch the play.

Forwards need to shift with the play and keep the depth (stay high) to help spread out their opponents. Forward player needs to support on the side that the ball is on and look to form triangles with ball carrier.

A diagram of a soccer field with green grass and white lines. The field is oriented with the goal at the top. The goal is marked with a yellow rectangle and a yellow triangle labeled '1'. The center circle is marked with a white circle labeled '9'. The center of the field is marked with a white circle labeled '8'. The right side of the field is marked with a white circle labeled '3' and a soccer ball. The left side of the field is marked with a white circle labeled '2'. The bottom center of the field is marked with a white circle labeled '4'. The bottom left of the field is marked with a white circle labeled '5'. The bottom right of the field is marked with a white circle labeled '6'. The top left of the field is marked with a white circle labeled '10'. The top right of the field is marked with a white circle labeled '8'. The top center of the field is marked with a white circle labeled '4'. The top left of the field is marked with a white circle labeled '1'. A solid blue arrow points from the center circle (9) to the soccer ball (3). Dashed blue arrows show movement paths: from the center circle (9) to the top left (10), from the center circle (9) to the top center (4), from the center circle (9) to the bottom center (4), from the bottom center (4) to the bottom right (6), from the bottom right (6) to the bottom left (5), and from the bottom left (5) to the top left (10).

This is because the players are playing the “game of their lives”. The importance of this game for them might be monumental. They cannot (and should not) comprehend the lengthy journey they are embarking on. Below are things we do as coaches to make sure they are on the right path:

- Aim for equal playing time for all, and never less than 50%, no matter attendance. For us this is training.
- Give players the opportunity to try all positions, including goalkeeper

Decision Making

An Integral Part of Development

Our decisions in the game and in life are based on our emotions and how we deal with them. Fear, frustration, anger, self-doubt, and ego can dictate what we do. This may lead to poor decision making and behaviours. The game is a great way to start introducing these to our young players, especially since they are starting to become aware of their emotions. As leaders, we must first make sure to not transfer these emotions to our players, such as fear of losing a game.

Instead create an environment where it's OK to have these emotions and where they can learn to understand them and overcome them. To do this we use team values.

The next slide has some examples that you can use or modify in your coaching

Team Values

Teach them about courage!

“Courage allows me to play and perform with heart, to be brave and overcome fear”

Some decisions are hard! Passing the ball sideways to a teammate when you are learning to pass is risky and may lead to a goal. But we won't learn how to do it unless we try. Conquer that fear of failure and if it's the right decision pass sideways! It's the only way to get better.

Teach them about compassion!

“Compassion from my teammates allows me to be courageous”

My teammates will make mistakes. But in order to get better they must be brave and continue to try things that they cannot do. I must support them in their journey and put myself in their shoes when they make a mistake because I hope they will do the same for me.

Teach them about respect!

“Go out of your way to make sure nobody feels beneath you”

Thank your parents and coaches. Value the opposition, without them you would not have a game. Thank the referee for teaching you the rules and making sure the game was played fairly. These are the people that will help you grow. Treat them accordingly.

Resources & Contacts

[CMFSC Technical Staff Contact Information](#)



Age Group Head Coaches:

Your AGHC is your first point of contact for guidance on delivering sessions and managing players and parents. Raise any concerns with them — they will help directly or bring in the right people.

[BC Soccer Mandatory Certification](#)



Check which certification is required for head coaches and recommended for volunteer coaches at each age group.

[MOJO Curriculum App](#)



Session plans are delivered through the MOJO App. If you have not set it up yet, watch the video for how to download the app and get started.

[CMFSC Curriculum](#)



We have also created 20 different sessions for you. You can access these sessions by clicking the link above and log in with the password **CMFSC#10** to view the full season curriculum.

[CMFSC Coaching Workshops](#)



We run coaching workshops throughout the year. Dates will be posted at this link once confirmed.