

Coaching Philosophy

- I believe that kids gain confidence and a love for the game through positive feedback from parents, coaches, and other players. Skill level develops at different rates for kids, but effort and having fun can always be achieved. I try to always provide positive feedback for effort.
- I think it's important that a coach takes more than a casual interest in the players. I strive to talk with all the players 1 on 1 at some point during the practices and games. I may not be successful getting to every player each day, but I want them to know that I'm interested in what they have to say and more importantly, I want them to know that their coach likes him/her as a person.
- I believe in trying to make practices as fun and entertaining for the kids as possible, while providing the practice and instruction that they need to improve. I've found that kids expect and respond to well structured and organized practices. Attention span is often limited with this age group, so I will strive to keep them moving and active.
- Teamwork and developing friendships is an important part of any team sport. I always try to tell the kids how important it is for them to support each other and to always be positive towards their teammates.
- Competition is an important element of any sport and as kids grow they naturally become more competitive. I don't talk to the kids about "needing to win a game" or "how important it is that we win". I feel my role and that of the parents is helping the kids develop the ability to deal with competition in a healthy way. Effort and attitude is my focus. If we can achieve that, then chances are we'll win the number of games that we are capable of winning.

I will work on teaching fundamentals and skills during practice, but I believe the game is their time. I will give instruction during the game if I feel it will help with their performance during the game, but in general I try to let them enjoy the game. I don't think any of the kids want to be told what they did wrong during the game. I hope as parents you will do the same. At this age, one fumble or missed tackle can ruin the game for some kids. If this happens to your child, tell them how proud you were of the effort they made. Strive to make them feel good about their contribution. My goal is to have every child feel that they played a great game that day.

Objectives

With this age group, I have 5 primary coaching objectives which I believe are equally important.

1. Help your child develop the skills necessary to be successful at this level and to prepare your child for next season.
2. To have fun and have the kids develop a love for the game.
3. Learn about the importance of teamwork and sportsmanship.
4. Give positive reinforcement based on effort rather than results.
5. Provide a safe and healthy environment for all the kids on the team.

Playing Time and Positions

For this age group there is a drastic difference in skill level among the kids. I want to give the kids an opportunity to play a number of different positions and I'll make sure each player gets a chance each game to play. I will not have a player play a position that I don't feel has the ability to play the position at this time. This really is a safety issue as much as anything. Plus, I want to put kids in positions where I feel they have the best chance of being successful. That doesn't mean they won't have the ability by the end of the season and I will always work with the kids at those positions during practice if they are interested.