GRASSROOTS: CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN
OVERVIEW

• Children pass through different stages of development
• They have different needs and behaviour depending on the different stages of growth
• Physical, physiological and psychological aspects
GROWTH RATE: GIRLS AND BOYS

Growth rate during different developmental stages
Growth spurt: difference between girls and boys

Growth rate (cm/year)

Infancy  Childhood  Puberty

Growth spurt

Girls: 12  Boys: 14

Puberty starts

Growth finishes
### Characteristics

- Fragile, developing quickly
- Short attention and concentration spans
- Excellent facility for imitation (visual memory)
- Love football, play for themselves
- Seek enjoyment above all

### Training content

- Basic techniques
- Games and simple exercises for beginners
- Small-sided games: 3v3, 4v4, 5v5 with or without a goalkeeper
- Alternating games and exercises
- Balanced groups or teams
THE COACH-EDUCATOR’S ROLE
6- to 8-YEAR-OLDS

• Organise matches and exercises and ensure safety

• Demonstrate the exercises

• Use simple, expressive language

• Limited intervention / let the children play

• Teaching by encouragement
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Training content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greater speed and endurance</td>
<td>Basic techniques (the basics of football)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved coordination</td>
<td>Basic team organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good visual memory</td>
<td>Speed, energy, reaction, coordination</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good self-confidence</td>
<td>Training games</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion skills</td>
<td>Small-sided games: 5v5, 7v7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curiosity and desire to learn</td>
<td>Alternating games and exercises</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team spirit</td>
<td>Balanced groups or teams</td>
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</table>
THE COACH-EDUCATOR’S ROLE
9- to 10-YEAR-OLDS

• Methodology and teaching techniques
• Emotional and technical leadership
• Organisational and communication skills
• Establishing team spirit
• General knowledge of football
• Demonstration, implementation, correction
• Teaching by encouragement
### Characteristics

- Significant physical changes
- Better balance and better coordination
- Improved visual and aural memory
- Critical faculties, discussion skills
- Improved attention
- A hunger to learn
- Assertiveness
- Development of competitive spirit
- Team spirit

### Training content

- Speed, energy and reaction
- Coordination
- Basic techniques
- Basic team organisation: 3-2-3
- General principles of playing matches
- Control of space
- Small-sided games: 5v5, 7v7, 9v9
- Promoting creativity
- Individual initiative
THE COACH-EDUCATOR’S ROLE
11-12 YEAR OLDS

- Methodology and teaching techniques
- Team spirit
- Quality of behaviour
- Knowledge of football
- Communication skills and techniques
- Learning through play
- Motivating the group
- Demonstration, implementation, correction
- Teaching by encouragement
TEACHING APPROACH

• **Preparing the session**
  - Written session plan
  - Objectives
  - Preparation in terms of location and schedule
  - Tailoring the session to the individual children

• **Organising the session**
  - Setting out the area for play
  - Equipment and first-aid kit
  - Organisation of teams/groups
  - Duration and development of exercises
TEACHING APPROACH

• **Leading the session**
  – Simple, comprehensive explanation of the aims of the session
  – Presentation of the contents
  – Organisation of groups/teams according to the characteristics of the group

• **Concluding the session**
  – Bringing the children back together and calming them down
  – Evaluation and introduction of the next session
  – Putting equipment away
  – Overseeing the children’s departure
MIXED-SEX PARTICIPATION

- Children are categorised by their age and level, not by their gender
- Up to the age of 12 the differences between boys and girls are minimal, except in cases of precocious puberty particularly in girls of around 10 years old
- Improved tolerance and education
- Mutual respect
- Positive effect on development