



Key Features of Developmentally Appropriate Soccer Programs:

Participants

- Are active and get lots of ball contact
- Taught age appropriate skills and basic team play.
- ALL players receive their own soccer ball, T-shirt, team picture with photo button, and medal

Coaches

- Receive training, mentorship and support from a Certified Soccer Coach Instructor.
- Can access free technical resources when they need them.
- ALL receive Game Day Clinic Manual.

Program

- Focus is on FUN!
- Program is overseen by a Certified Soccer Professional.
- Developmentally appropriate games played based on educational research.
- Models the Canadian Soccer Association's Long Term Player Development plan.
- Endorsed by MHSOA and Sanctioned by the Alberta Soccer Association.
- Children, Parents and Coaches protected by comprehensive liability insurance through Alberta Soccer Association.

Who we are:

Mission

The Medicine Hat Soccer Association exists to enable boys, girls and adults in the District of Medicine Hat to play the game of soccer at a level corresponding to their age and ability level.

Vision - Mini Soccer

The MHSOA Mini Soccer Program provides safe, enjoyable and developmentally appropriate soccer for boys and girls ages 3-8 years of age.

Board of Directors

The MHSOA is overseen by a 10 member Board of Directors responsible for governing all aspects of soccer in Medicine Hat.

Each program has a director responsible for overseeing its smooth running.

Tara Gentile is the point of contact for the Mini Soccer Program.

Staff

The MHSOA is staffed by a Head Coach, an Office Manager and an Office Administrator.

Association staff are responsible for the day to day running of the MHSOA.

Questions?

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MHSOA

MINI

SOCCER

U4, U5, U6 & U8

Developmentally Appropriate Soccer For
Children 3 to 8 Years of Age



“Worldwide training of soccer players is becoming more sophisticated while we stubbornly cling to outdated traditions.” - CSA Long Term Player Development Plan

Under 4 - Active Start

(First Kicks)

At this introductory level, the objective is to get children moving and active.

Research tells us 3-4 year olds...

- not ready for competition
- need to experience success
- understand idea of pairs or two
- are cautious around strangers
- have short attention spans
- can handle bursts of focussed activity
- run well, can balance better, start to skip on one foot and throw ball over head

That's why we...

- only play 45 minutes one time per week
- have no competitive games scheduled
- give each child their own ball
- encourage adult and child play together as teammates (1 with 1)
- teach fundamental movement skills of running, hopping, kicking and throwing
- play basic games of 2 vs 2
- allow adults to leave when their child has lost interest

Program Goals...

- to have FUN
- to introduce parents and children to the game of soccer in a non-threatening environment
- to help parents learn some games they can play with their child at home
- to introduce basic soccer rules
- to give potential coaches a “head start” for working with young children
- to introduce parents to the MHSA's focus on Long Term Player Development

Under 6 - Active Start

(First Kicks/Fun with the Ball)

The objective is to get children active and learning some soccer basics.

Research tells us 5-6 year olds...

- are egocentric
- are more comfortable around strangers
- can hop, skip, balance and have smoother muscle action when running
- do not catch well
- have short attention spans
- work better in small groups of friends
- ask lots of questions

That's why we...

- have scheduled games, but no league standings
- play basic games of 3 vs 3 (no goalie) in U5 and 4 vs 4 (no goalie) in U6
- do not emphasize winning
- give each child their own ball
- continue to teach fundamental movement skills of running, hopping, kicking, throwing and add in stopping the ball
- encourage relay races with or without ball, basic kicking games and overall body awareness

Program Goals...

- to have FUN
- to introduce parents and children to the game of soccer
- to introduce basic soccer rules
- to teach coaches the basics for working with young children
- to introduce concept of triangulation
- to remind parents of the MHSA's Long Term Player Development focus

Under 8 - FUNdamentals

(Fun with the Ball)

A stimulating learning environment that focuses on freedom and fun with the ball.

Research tells us 7-8 year olds...

- are still egocentric and learning to be better teammates
- have greater control of their body and can learn to do basic techniques well
- better at catching
- have improvements in attention span
- better understand groups of 4s & 5s
- have a competitive spirit
- continue to ask lots of questions

That's why we...

- have scheduled games, but no league standings
- play basic game of 5 vs 5 (with goalie)
- place low priority on winning
- give each child their own ball so that they can do soccer homework
- continue to teach fundamental movement skills of running, hopping, kicking, throwing, catching and dribbling
- encourage relay races with or without ball, basic passing & receiving games, shooting and overall body awareness

Program Goals...

- to have FUN
- to introduce parents and children to Fair Play and following the rules of soccer
- to teach coaches how to manage playing time within a larger team
- to introduce concept of diamond with width, depth and support
- to introduce parents and child to MHSA's on-field Skill Development Program