

Why You Should Invest in Coaching Education

Research shows that educated coaches are more likely to use reinforcement and encouragement properly to develop task-oriented motivational environments that promote higher levels of effort and skill mastery and to have athletes who report greater levels of enjoyment.

The goal should always be to retain players and to grow the sport. To do that, we must educate coaches to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for children. In the words of Mark O'Sullivan, "As many as possible, as long as possible in the best environments as possible." To achieve this, coach and parent education is a critical factor.

Here are a few of the many reasons why coaches should be trained:

- Increase the amount of people interested in coaching.
- Empower volunteers.
- Set standards for coaches and the community.
- Children stay in sports longer.
 - ◊ Studies report that athletes who played for untrained coaches drop out at a rate of 26%; whereas those athletes playing for a trained coach resulted in a significantly lower dropout rate of only 5%. Other studies show an increase in self-esteem for young athletes (under 12 years old) who play for a trained coach.
- Positive experiences for young athletes.

How has coaching education evolved?

Coaching Education has improved greatly over the past 10 years. The new United State Soccer Federation (USSF) Grassroots Licenses focus on a more holistic approach, putting the person and their experiences first, and not just focusing on the X's and O's.

Broken into four game models, 4v4, 7v7, 9v9, and 11v11,

coaches can now start their journey with a two-hour online course for \$25 from the comfort of their own home and at their own pace. These low cost, convenient courses, remove some of the most frequent barriers for parent volunteer coaches.



The next step is a four-hour in-person course that goes deeper into the six tasks of a coach and provides a breakdown of the Play-Practice-Play training methodology. With low cost and convenience, the goal is for coaches to choose to attend.

Additionally, as youth players are used to participating in these courses, a more experiential learning environment is provided for the candidates. Previously, candidates had to play and often this was another obstacle in their journey.

The final step for the grassroots coach is the USSF D License. With the course two weekends in addition to a 6-8 week development period in-between, this is the most demanding course in the grassroots license pathway before we step into the elite performance pathway starting candidates with the National C, B and A Licenses.



Alan Lydiate
Director of Coaching