



# Long Term Player Development Framework

At Central Florida Soccer Club, our mission is to develop well-rounded athletes who embody the values of teamwork, discipline, and continuous improvement—both on and off the field. Our **Long-Term Player Development (LTPD) Framework** is designed to guide players, coaches, and families through a structured, age-appropriate pathway that emphasizes skill development, tactical understanding, physical fitness, and a love for the game.

Our player development framework provides a clear roadmap from early youth through competitive stages. Our approach balances individual growth with team dynamics, ensuring every player is supported according to their current stage and long-term potential.

By aligning our training methodology, and developmental benchmarks, our LTPD Framework sets the foundation for consistent growth, and the cultivation of lifelong passion for soccer.

Together, we are building not just better players—but better people.



# Little Fire (Ages 2 - 4)

**Coaching Focus:** Coaches should help players develop technical fundamentals, such as dribbling, passing, and ball control, through fun and engaging activities. Most importantly, coaches should foster a positive environment that encourages creativity, builds confidence, and nurtures a lifelong love for the game.

## Key Development Areas:

<b>Technical</b>	Ball familiarity and basic control through play.
<b>Tactical</b>	Directional Understanding: Learning where the goal is and that we go “that way.”
<b>Physical</b>	Build the physical foundation for future athletic development through just playing for fun.
<b>Psychosocial</b>	Building confidence, social interaction, and fun through soccer.



# Little Fire Coaching Priorities (Ages 2 - 4)

## 1. Create a Fun and Safe Environment

- Emphasize joy, laughter, and exploration over structure.
- Use bright colors, soft equipment, and imaginative games.
- Keep sessions short (30–40 minutes max) and simple.
- Ensure emotional and physical safety—avoid pressure or negative correction.

## 2. Focus on Fundamental Movement Skills

- Encourage running, jumping, hopping, stopping, and changing direction.
- Introduce basic ball interaction—dribbling, kicking, stopping.
- Design obstacle courses and movement games that enhance coordination and balance.

## 3. Encourage Social and Emotional Development

- Promote taking turns, sharing, and celebrating others.
- Reinforce positive behavior with encouragement and routine.
- Help players feel confident trying new things, even if they fail.

## 4. Introduce Simple Structure Through Play

- Use clear, consistent cues (whistles, hand signals, “freeze” game).
- Incorporate fun challenges that encourage following basic directions.
- Start establishing group identity (team names, cheers, jerseys) to introduce team concepts.



# Development Program (Ages 5 - 13)

**Coaching Focus:** Coaches should help players develop technical fundamentals, such as dribbling, passing, and ball control, through fun and engaging activities. Most importantly, coaches should foster a positive environment that encourages creativity, builds confidence, and nurtures a lifelong love for the game.

## Key Development Areas:

<b>Technical</b>	Ball mastery, 1v1 moves, passing and receiving, dribbling, and shooting
<b>Tactical</b>	Basic principles of play: width, depth, support, spacing. Intro to positional play.
<b>Physical</b>	Focus on building athletic foundation, and sport-specific fitness.
<b>Psychosocial</b>	Mental resilience, emotional intelligence, and character-building



# Development Coaching Priorities (Ages 5 - 13)

## 1. Player-Centered Development

- Provide differentiated instruction based on player needs and developmental stages.
- Encourage creativity and risk-taking in training and matches.
- Develop each player's potential, regardless of current ability level.

## 2. Age-Appropriate Coaching

- Tailor session design and coaching language to players' developmental stages.
- Ensure a progressive curriculum—building complexity with age and understanding.
- Emphasize fun and engagement at younger ages, while gradually introducing tactical discipline.

## 3. Game-Based Learning

- Use small-sided games to teach tactics, positioning, and decision-making.
- Replicate match conditions in training to promote transfer of learning.
- Promote guided discovery—allowing players to find solutions.

## 4. Holistic Player Support

- Promote mental toughness, leadership, and self-discipline.
- Support emotional well-being and encourage positive peer relationships.
- Foster a culture of accountability, respect, and sportsmanship.
- Communicate regularly with players and parents to align goals and expectations.

# 7v7 Program (Ages 9 - 10)

**Coaching Focus:** Coaches should prioritize building individual technical skills like dribbling, passing, and ball control in small spaces. Players should begin learning basic tactical concepts such as spacing, support. Coaches should create a positive, engaging environment that encourages creativity, confidence, and enjoyment of the game.

## Key Development Areas:

<b>Technical</b>	Ball mastery, 1v1 moves, passing and receiving, shooting with both feet, dribbling under pressure.
<b>Tactical</b>	Basic principles of play with focus on decision-making.
<b>Physical</b>	Agility, balance, coordination, speed. No endurance training. Emphasis on body control.
<b>Psychosocial</b>	Confidence building, teamwork, communication, listening skills, resilience through games.



# 7v7 Coaching Priorities (Ages 9 - 10)

## 1. Create a Fun and Safe Learning Environment

- Emphasize enjoyment: make sessions engaging and game-based.
- Encourage players through mistakes.
- Keep all players active; avoid long lines or elimination games.

## 2. Focus on Individual Technical Development

- Ball Mastery: Prioritize repetition of dribbling, turning, and ball control.
- Encourage use of both feet and various surfaces (inside, laces, sole).
- Promote 1v1 attacking and defending — dribbling to beat players, shielding, and tackling.

## 3. Teach Basic Principles of Play

- Help players understand spacing and avoid “swarming” the ball.
- Encourage off-the-ball movement (support play and passing lanes).
- Introduce simple attacking concepts: Width, Depth, Passing, and Supporting.

## 4. Encourage Creativity and Risk-Taking

- Reward players for attempting skills or making decisions, even if they fail.
- Avoid over-coaching or constant instruction during games.
- Let players make decisions and learn through trial and error.

## 5. Emphasize Development Over Results

- Focus on long-term growth, not game scores or standings.
- Rotate players through positions to give exposure and develop game intelligence.
- Celebrate individual progress and teamwork rather than winning.

## 6. Prioritize Small-Sided Games and Free Play

- Use 3v3 to 5v5 games in training to maximize touches and decisions.
- Include regular small-sided scrimmages with minimal interference.
- Allow free play to develop creativity, problem-solving, and love for the game.



# 9v9 Program (Ages 11 - 12)

**Coaching Focus:** Coaches should emphasize refining individual technical skills while introducing players to tactical concepts such as positioning, spacing, and team shape. Players should begin to understand their roles within different formations and develop decision-making in both attacking and defensive situations. Coaches should also foster communication, confidence, and a sense of teamwork, creating an environment that balances learning with enjoyment.

## Key Development Areas:

<b>Technical</b>	1st touch under pressure, passing accuracy (short/medium), aerial control, striking the ball with purpose, combination play.
<b>Tactical</b>	Build from the back, transition moments, compact defending, support play, switching play. Introduction to tactical roles and positional responsibilities.
<b>Physical</b>	Speed with/without the ball, coordination, reaction time. Introduce strength through bodyweight activities.
<b>Psychosocial</b>	Accountability, self-reflection, dealing with wins/losses, leadership, improved focus.



# 9v9 Coaching Priorities (Ages 11 - 12)

## 1. Strengthen Technical Skills Under Pressure

- Refine core techniques but now in tighter spaces and with more speed.
- Encourage technical execution in game-like scenarios.

## 2. Develop Tactical Awareness & Game Intelligence

- Introduce more structured team shape (e.g., 3-2-3, 2-3-2-1).
- Teach players how to:
  - Build from the back (goalkeeper, defenders, and midfield).
  - Recognize and execute transition moments.
  - Provide support, movement off the ball, and spacing.
- Start position-specific understanding (e.g., winger stays wide, center mid supports both sides).

## 3. Encourage Decision-Making and Problem Solving

- Ask players guided questions to help them learn through discovery.
- Promote player autonomy: allow them to manage situations rather than offering constant instructions.

## 4. Develop Principles of Team Play

- Reinforce fundamental tactical concepts:
  - Width and depth in attack
  - Pressure, cover, and balance in defense
  - Switching play, recognizing overloads

## 5. Prioritize Small-Sided Games for Learning

- Use 4v4, 5v3, or 6v6 in training to simulate different scenarios.
- Small-sided games improve decision-making, vision, and technique under realistic pressure.

## 6. Teach Game Roles

- Start introducing positional responsibilities.
- Rotate players through roles to build complete understanding of the game.
- Do not “specialize” players too early; development over results remains the focus.

# 11v11 Program (Ages 13+)

**Coaching Focus:** Coaches should focus on refining tactical understanding, including team shape, positional responsibilities, and game management across all phases of play. Players should be technically proficient and able to execute skills under pressure while contributing to a cohesive team strategy. Coaches should also emphasize communication, leadership, and accountability to prepare players for the demands of higher-level competition.

## Key Development Areas:

<b>Technical</b>	Advanced passing/receiving, playing under pressure, crossing/finishing, heading, long balls, weak foot use.
<b>Tactical</b>	Advanced team shape (4-3-3, 4-2-3-1), pressing, lines of confrontation, zonal vs. man-marking, managing game tempo, set pieces.
<b>Physical</b>	Endurance, strength, speed endurance, injury prevention. Player-specific conditioning begins.
<b>Psychosocial</b>	Emotional intelligence, mental toughness, self-regulation, motivation, leadership under pressure.



# 11v11 Coaching Priorities (Ages 13+)

## 1. Refine Advanced Technical Execution

- Develop technique under high pressure and game speed.
- Emphasize clean first touch, driven and lofted passes, crosses, finishing, weak foot proficiency.
- Technical repetition within functional and tactical settings.

## 2. Deepen Tactical Understanding & Team Structure

- Teach full 11v11 concepts:
  - Team shape (4-3-3, 4-2-3-1, 3-5-2)
  - Zonal defending, pressing triggers, compactness.
  - Tactical roles in each line (e.g., holding mid vs box-to-box, fullback overlap).

## 3. Teach In-Depth Position-Specific Roles

- Begin functional training for defenders, midfielders, and attackers.
- Focus on the “game within the game” for each position:
  - Center backs communicating and stepping
  - Midfielders playing between lines
  - Wingers timing diagonal runs

## 4. Implement Tactical Periodization

- Align weekly training to game demands.
- Integrate game-like intensity and cognitive decision making.
- Avoid isolated drills — always work in game context

## 5. Advance Principles of Play

- Solidify both attacking and defending principles:
  - Attacking: width, depth, combination play, etc.
  - Defending: pressure/cover/balance, defending in blocks, compactness
- Build on transitions — counter-pressing, counter-attacking, regrouping.

## 6. Prioritize Physical Development and Injury Prevention

- Implement age-appropriate strength, speed, agility, and mobility work.
- Educate on nutrition, recovery, and injury prevention.
- Focus on movement efficiency: running mechanics, change of direction.

# 11v11 Coaching Priorities (Ages 13+)

## 7. Develop Leadership and Mental Strength

- Encourage on-field communication, leadership in groups, peer feedback.
- Help players manage:
  - Performance pressure
  - Setbacks (e.g., mistakes, losses)
  - Mental focus and discipline
- Begin introducing video analysis and individual goal setting.

## 8. Define a Team Identity

- Teach a coherent playing style (e.g., possession-based, high pressing, counter-attacking).
- Players should understand their role in the tactical system when attacking, defending, and transitioning.



Integrating our Long-Term Player Development (LTPD) framework into practice schedules ensures that every training session is purposeful, age-appropriate, and aligned with the overall developmental goals of our players. By structuring practices around the key pillars of technical skills, tactical understanding, physical conditioning, and psychosocial growth, coaches can create a balanced environment that supports continuous progress. This approach allows us to progressively build complexity and challenge, tailoring activities to the specific needs and abilities of each age group while maintaining engagement and fun. Consistently applying the LTPD principles in practice not only maximizes player development but also fosters a culture of long-term growth, helping players reach their full potential both on and off the field.

