PRACTICE PLANNING TIPS

Get to the practice 15-20 minutes early
This is a great time to schedule a little extra one-on-one time with each of your players for skill development.

Start on time with a short team meeting
Have the players jog out with their gloves to meet with you on the outfield grass. Have them make a stack of gloves and share your plans for the day.

Start every practice with high five circle run
A great way to start your warm-up is to have the players run circles around 2 coaches standing about 15 steps apart. As the players jog by give them a hi-5 and call out their names.

Players learn by doing, not by sitting
Don’t ask your team to sit down and listen to you for more than 1-2 minutes at a time. Get them going with no lineups and use coaching cues during the activity or drill.

Short lines, no waiting turns
Keep lines to 4 or less during all practice drills and activities. Kids at this age don’t like to line up and shouldn’t have to very often in a well planned practice.

Focus on safety
Plan for safety in every aspect of your practice and teach safety along with every drill. This should be your number one concern at practices and games.

Every part of your practice needs to be fun
If players are bored and stop smiling, you need to look at what your are doing and change it. Your job is to create a passion for the game by making every aspect of the practice fun.

Trick them into learning
Players at this age cannot be taught in the more traditional way, so you need to get them active and trick them into learning the skills and the rules of the games along the way.

Bring energy and enthusiasm to every practice
Players will feed off your emotions and approach. If you are having a great day, and a lot of fun, they will too.

Be positive every chance you get
Look for positive things to say all the way through the practice. Make sure that you connect with every player in a positive way at every practice and game.

Close off every practice and game with a team meeting
First have the players stack their gloves on the outfield grass and hustle to help put away all of the equipment. When they are done they jog back to the stack of gloves for a quick meeting. Give the players a sticker or stamp, tell them how proud you are of them and off they go.