



## **Cherry Hill FC Soccer Parent-Tot Program**

### **Philosophy**

The parent-tot program is a child physical development program for kids aged 3 and 4 years old. It will use a curriculum of fun games and challenging experiences to teach basic soccer skills such as dribbling, shooting and passing. The activities in which the children will participate are designed to develop motor skills, promote physical fitness and create self-confidence as well as develop listening skills. We stress a non-competitive environment and promote fun above all else.

### **Overview**

We believe that this program is a perfect introduction for a child of any ability into the game of soccer. This program will be devoted to the instruction of the players on the fundamentals of soccer within a safe and enjoyable environment. The goal of this program is to introduce new players of the game into the environment, where they will learn to understand and master the foundations of soccer through fun based games.

Parents and kids, lead by their coach, play organized games together to develop listening skills, balance, ball skills and foot-eye coordination.

The objective of this program is to provide young players and their parents with a “pressure free” introduction to the beautiful and simple game of soccer. At this age players should be exposed to soccer by playing simple, fun activities and games that require little to no practice, and a minimal time commitment.

This program allows players to discover the game for themselves, while parents are given a soccer foundation on which to build and grow into future coaches, referees and administrators.

### **Organization**

Each child will be assigned to a team by the age group coordinator. Each player will have a parent (or other adult) working with them on the field. Each team will be led by coach. The coach will introduce a game/activity that will practice a certain skill or part of the game using explanation and demonstration. Each pair (player/parent) will then attempt the activity while the coach circulates between pairs providing specific help or suggestions so that the activities are performed as intended. After a suitable amount of time, the coach will bring the players and parents back together as a group and recap what they have done, introducing the next game/activity.

### **Session Schedule**

Sessions should last one hour including organizing time and breaks—NO MORE.  
10 minutes – Group Warm-Up and Activities



5 minutes – Water Break  
15 minutes – Training Activities and Games  
5 minutes – Water Break  
15 minutes – Training Activities and Games  
10 minutes – Cool Down

### **Player Equipment**

Shoes and shin guards, covered by the socks, are mandatory at the program. Soccer shoes, tennis shoes or similar type athletic shoes are recommended. The type and condition of cleated shoes must be inspected for safety before use. Each child should bring his/her own size 3 soccer ball. The coach will be provided a limited number of balls in the event someone forgets their ball occasionally.

### **Considerations**

Young soccer players need special consideration.

- They are children playing a child's game.
- They must be regarded as young children, not mini adults.
- They are essentially self-oriented and relate naturally to one or two others, not to large groups.
- Fun and activity factors must be a central part of a child-centered program.

Educators agree early learning experiences are the most important and produce the most retention.

- Most children cannot sustain prolonged activity.
- They function best in suitable starts and stops (rest periods).
- Concentration span is limited, so frequent changes of pace and activity are essential.

Children love to learn.

- They learn a great deal more when the ratio of teacher (coach) to student (player) is reduced.
- With small numbers and the simple nature of the game, the best teacher is the game itself.

Residual benefits.

- Parents are introduced to the game in smaller, more understandable doses.

### **Points to Remember for Coaches**

- These kids are 3 and 4 years old. Have fun and do not get frustrated.
- Keep teaching cues short and sweet.
- Focus on having fun.
- Have a team name.
- Have a focus for season.
- Make a snack rotation schedule.
- Make a lesson plan.



- Have a mechanism for control.

### **Activities & Exercises**

The activities that are used should focus on a specific skill or part of the game of soccer. As stated numerous times above, the focus of this program is to develop the foundations of soccer through fun based games. Listed below are activities and exercises that have been approved for use in you weekly sessions.

#### **Get the Coach(es)**

Coach, with or without a ball, goes around the field, trying to avoid the children. The children try to kick their ball at the coach. Each time the coach is hit (below the knees), he loses the use of a limb. Arms are held behind the back. Then, he has to hop on one leg, then he must go down on his knees, and then is finally knocked out. To make the game last longer, a coach can require two hits per limb. The more coaches the better.

#### **Relay Race**

Kids run from place to cone set up 10-15 yards away (adjust distance to fit kids). They may just run, or they may dribble a ball. A best out-of-three set will minimize impact of stronger kids.

#### **Red Light/Green Light**

The children dribble their ball around the field. When the coach calls out Red light, they stop with their foot on the ball. When the coach calls out Green light, they start running and dribbling. When the coach calls out Yellow light, they try to move the ball with small light touches.

Variations include super green light which is running off as fast as possible.

#### **Touch The Ball (With A Limb)**

The children dribble the ball around the field. When the coach calls out a body part, the children must stop the ball, and touch the ball with that body part. These include toe, knee, back-end, belly, elbow, and head. When the coach calls go, the children start up again. This could be expanded to recognize which children are the fastest to stop or the fastest to get going again.

#### **Dribble Around On Field**

Just as it says, kids dribble the ball anywhere on the field. If the kids are good, reduce the area they have to run around in.

#### **Kick A Cone**

This is a relay race. Children line up in teams. When coach calls go, the children run up to a cone and kick it. It doesn't matter where the cone goes, as long as it moves.



The object is to run, stop, and kick, quickly. The cone won't go very far, no matter how hard they kick it.

### **Kick A Ball ( Into Net?)**

This is another relay race. All the balls are lined up on the far side (distance doesn't matter). On go, the child is to run up, kick the ball, and then run back to the next child. If a net is available, kicking into the net will make them feel like they are scoring (and make it easier to get the balls back). The distance and direction of the kick does not matter. If a goal is not available, the kids can kick their balls in the general direction of their parents, and pick the balls up as part of a water break.

### **Foxtail**

This is a team game. Some of the children have pinnies stuck in their shorts. They dribble around the field. Kids without pinnies (with or without ball) dribble or run around the field, and try to pull the pinnies out. Kids whose pinnies has been pulled out becomes a chaser.

### **On Goal**

Form 2 teams. Each team member then shoots his or her ball towards a goal (two cones). If the ball goes through the goal without touching a cone, they get 1(2) points. If the ball misses, they get 0(0) points. If the ball touches a cone as it goes through a goal, they get 1/2 (1) point. This is a good time to introduce them to the concept of B.O.B. – “Body Over Ball” when shooting.

### **Through Cones (Solo)**

The coach sets up pairs of small cones around the field. The children then dribble their ball to a pair of cones, and shoot the ball through the goal. After the ball goes through, they must go to a different goal. The child with the most goals wins. Be prepared to hear numbers in the thousands...!

### **Shielding/Get the Ball**

The coach sets up pairs of children of approximately equal skill. After a brief shielding demonstration, one child tries to get the ball from the other. Switch after several minutes.

### **Numbers Game**

The coach sets up 2 lines of children. The lines of children face each other. Each child in the line has a unique number say 1 to 5 (assuming 5 children per line). So there should be a number 1 in each line. The ball is placed in between the lines. The coach then calls out a number and those 2 children (one from each line) try to get the ball and dribble back to their own line scoring a point if they do.

### **Kick/Trap Back and Forth with a Partner**

The coach sets up pairs of children of approximately equal skill. The children kick the ball back and forth working on trapping the ball as well as kicking it.



### **Shoot the Cones**

The coach sets a row of cones 4 to 6 cones wide such that the cones almost touch one another. The children will line up single file about 5 to 10 feet from the row of cones. The object is to shoot the ball and hit one of the 4 to 6 cones. This is a shooting accuracy drill. When the child is able to hit the row of cones, move him/her to a second line of children. These children have all hit the 5 to 10 feet row of cones and are now shooting at an identical row of 4 to 6 cones, only this row is placed 10 to 15 feet from the shooter. A third row of cones can be placed 15 to 20 feet from the shooter, etc. The idea is that once a child can hit the cones at a short distance, they move to a longer distance. All distances and number of cones can be adjusted according to the skill level of the players.

### **Sharks and Minnows**

Set up a small square field 10 yards long by 10 yard wide. Designate several children to be sharks. All the rest are minnows. Allow the minnows to dribble around the square. Then turn the sharks loose. The sharks must try to kick the ball of each minnow out of the square. When a minnow child's ball has been kicked out of the square, then that child is out of the game and must stand outside the square. The last minnow left wins. Repeat with new sharks.

### **Name Game**

The coach sets up 2 lines of children. The lines of children face each other. The ball is placed in the middle of the lines. The coach calls out the name of each child one at a time. That child must get the ball and dribble back to his line. If the children get the hang of this, the coach can try calling out 2 children at a time and let them compete for the ball.

### **Shadow Tag**

On a sunny day, coach runs around and children try to step on coach's shadow, good for warm-up.

### **Mr. Fox**

Kids ask "what time is it mr. Fox", and answer is how many times they dribble, then when midnight is said they have to run back without being tagged.

### **Pigs and Sweepers**

Set up a box, where the sweepers live and the pigs are outside the box. The pigs kick the ball in the box while the sweepers kick it out.

### **Red Rover**

Children say "red rover, red rover can we come over", coach responds "only if you are wearing blue", those wearing blue dribble ball to other side without getting tagged.



### **Steal the Bacon**

Two teams, when number is called you run get the ball and dribble back to your side before coach kicks the ball away

### **Ocean To Ocean**

Children run from one side to the other while coaches pass ball to each other and try to hit kids legs.

### **Ants in Your Pants**

Kids run around and when you give cue they must run to a cone or hula hoop and put pants on dance and then take them off, great for spatial awareness

### **Charlie over the Ocean**

Kids make a circle and sing song “Charlie went over the ocean, Charlie went over the sea, Charlie caught a big fish cant catch me, and whoever’s name is being sang must chase the person around the circle (good intro game the first day (can also do soccer ball song)

### **Wonder Ball**

Sing the “soccer ball goes round and round, do not let it touch the ground because if it does I am going to say your name is \_\_\_\_\_”.

### **Construction Workers/Bad Drivers**

Warm up game with some knocking down cones, some picking them up

### **Dribble Tag**

Dribble around and they try and tag each other

### **Choo Choo Train Game**

Team work game, hula hoops or hands on hips and they must navigate the course with a teammate.