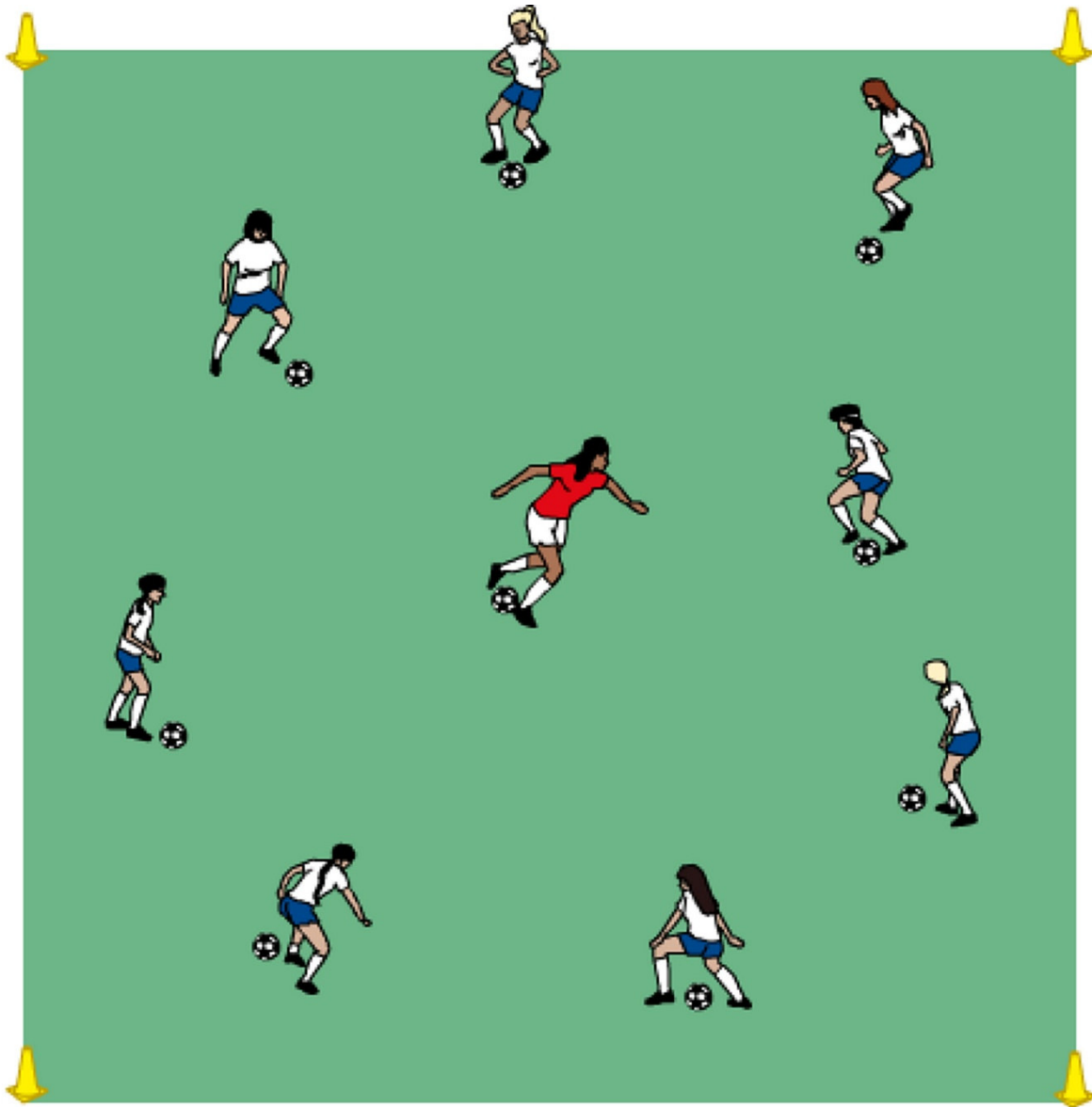


# An Introduction to Coaching TOPSoccer



## Training Session Activities

# Training Session Activities for Down Syndrome



## THE ACTIVITY – I CAN DO THIS, CAN YOU? (WHAT CAN YOU DO?)

The coach does something with or without the ball and the players copy what they see. Show only one action at a time and then give the players a chance to rehearse. Repeat the action slowly and several times if necessary. Once the players are trying the action then move among them to give individual coaching as needed. Demonstrate one action without the ball and one with the ball. Repeat for as long as the players hold an interest in trying the actions shown by the coach.

The activity can evolve into the players each having a chance to show an action to then be copied by the coach and the other players.

#### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINT

Modeling and the ability to visually comprehend an action and the repeat it occur during the activity. Trial and error are central to this activity and are crucial to learning physical movements. Creativity, self-confidence and a sense of accomplishment can surface during this activity.

#### GRID

15 x 15 yards and marked off with cones to clearly designate the training area.



### THE ACTIVITY - TAG

The coach picks two people who must chase everyone else and tag them. Tagged players can't move until you allow them. The taggers don't have a ball; all others do. The taggers can keep score of how many tags they get or not depending on how competitive the coach wants the activity to be. The coach could also put conditions on the taggers such as only a tag on the shoulder counts. A variation on the freeze format could be to let the players decide how a frozen player is thawed out and allowed to move again.

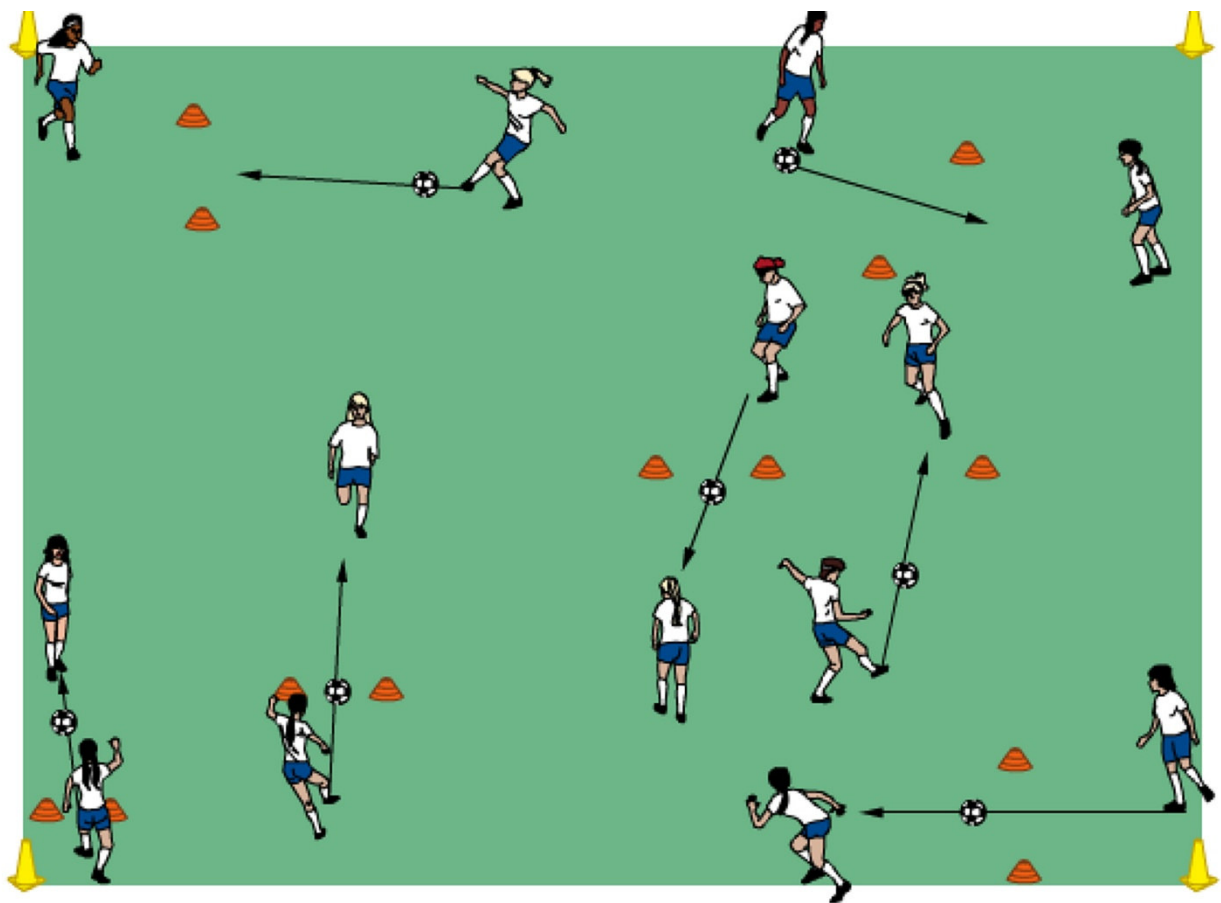
An alternative format is tail tag. Each player has a ball. Each player has a training bib tucked into the back of the shorts waistband. Players dribble and try to collect 'tails' from the other players. The activity is over when no one has a 'tail' left. To add a competitive edge to the activity a winner can be declared for the player who has collected the most 'tails'.

## EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

This game improves dribbling in a fun; competitive environment. Awareness of the playing situations is improved for all of the players. Agility along with quick starts and stops occur in the activity to improve the players' mobility.

## GRID

Use a 15 x 15 yard to 20 x 20 yard grid dependent upon player abilities. Use as many cones as needed to clearly define the grid to the players. Keep in mind that the younger they are the less likely they are to comprehend boundaries. Do not be overly concerned when they dribble out-of-bounds. Simply corral them back toward the grid.



### THE ACTIVITY – GATES (PASSING)

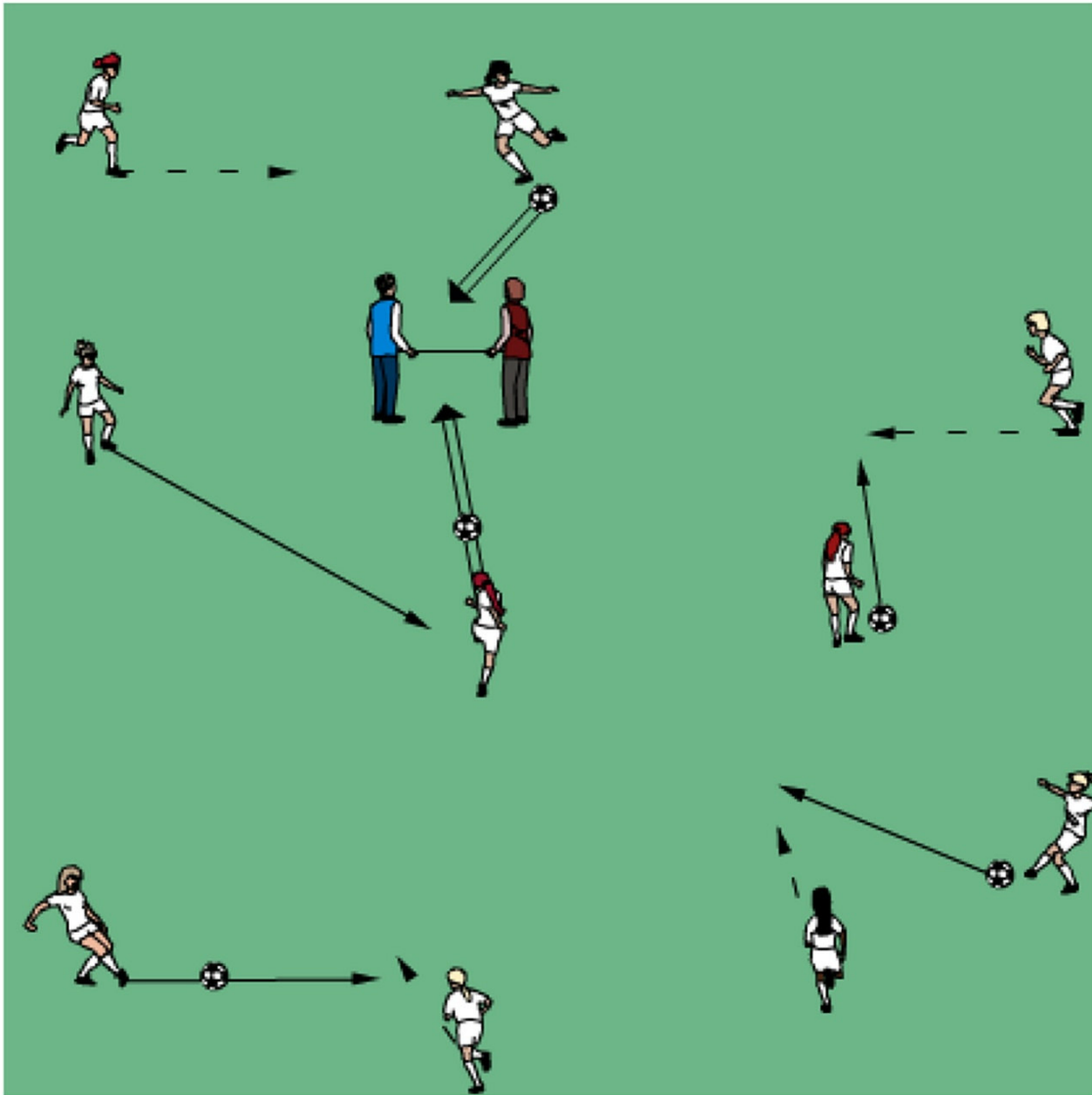
With one ball to a pair of players the players dribble and pass to their partner to move the ball around the grid and make passes through the gates. Gradually increase the skill demand by asking that passes made through the gates not touch the cone in order to count. The final progression is that the partner must be on the other side of the gate to receive the pass for it to count. Players should try to pass their ball through as many different gates as they can. To increase the competition give a set amount of time for the pairs to try and make passes at each gate.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

Dribbling and making passes while dribbling can be taught. How to make passes with the non-dominant foot or different parts of the foot can be introduced. Alternatively the coach can emphasize receiving of passes. The pairs must also communicate and decide together to which gate they will go to pass and then the next one and then the next one and so on.

### GRID

The space is 10 x 10 to 20 x 20 yards. Use tall cones to designate the corners. Use disc cones to designate the 'gates' and if possible use a different color cone from the corner cones.



### THE ACTIVITY – MOVING GOAL

The coaches or two soccer buddies hold a foam noodle or rope or corner flag pole to make a 'crossbar' and they move as the goal around the grid. They should alternate the pace at which they move from time-to-time. The activity can be played with each player having a ball or in pairs or as small teams of four. The players try to score on the moving goal. If playing as teams then use one ball and the team in possession tries to score and the other team defends until they can get the ball.

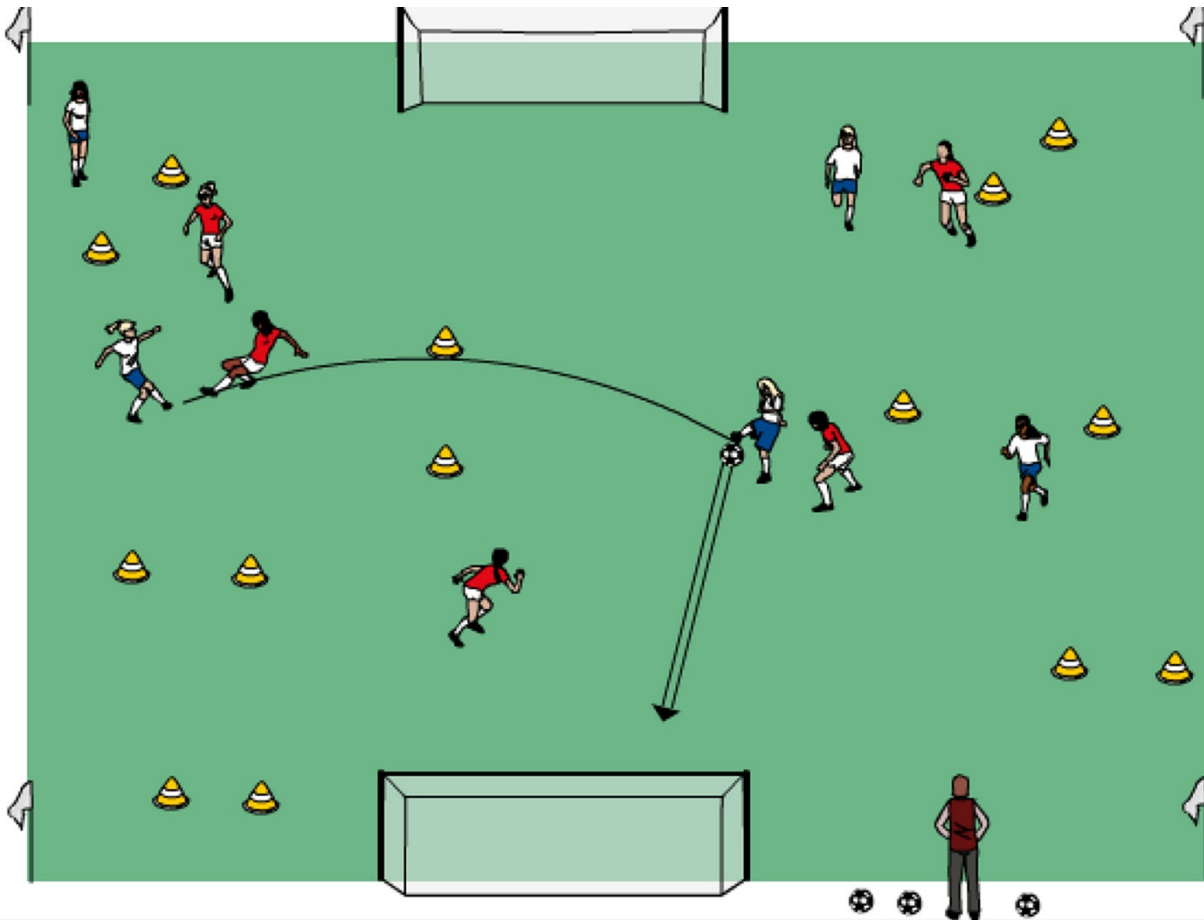
### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

Dribbling, passing, receiving and shooting are practiced in a realistic manner. All of the physical demands of soccer are met in the activity. In the team version of the activity transition occurs. In the

pairs and team version there may be changing the point of attack, combination play and communication. In all versions of the activity field vision is improved. This is a highly motivating activity.

#### GRID

Play in a designated grid or in one third or one half of the field. The grid size is dependent on the number of players in the activity and/or their abilities.



### THE ACTIVITY – GOALS GALORE

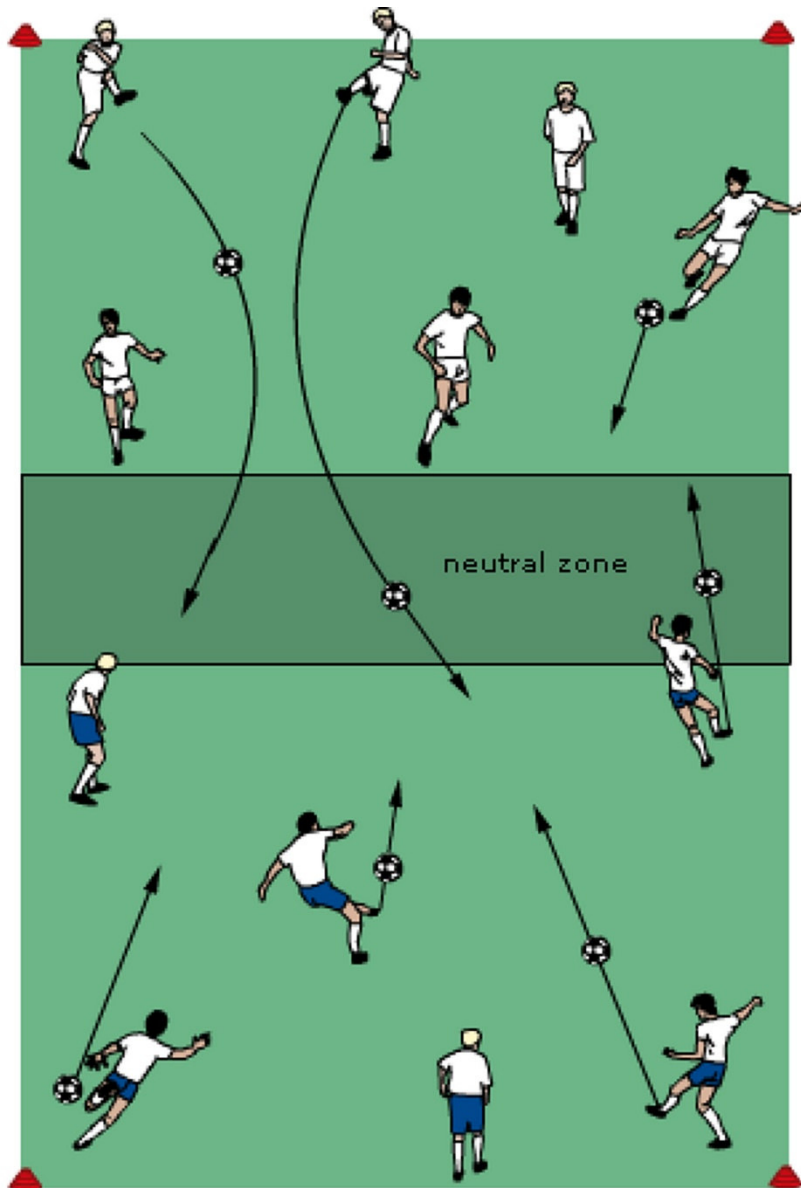
This small sided game is played for team possession and pass completion. The team in possession tries to score goals in the cone goals or the large goal. A goal scored in the cone goals only counts if a teammate is on the other side and properly receives the ball. Score one point for each goal scored on the cone goals and two points for the large goal. The activity can be played with or without goalkeepers.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

Dribbling, passing, receiving, heading, tackling and shooting all under pressure of opponents and at match speed. The full game demand on fitness is felt in this activity. Tactically individual and small group play occurs along with changing the point of attack, transition and support. Vision and teamwork are present.

### GRID

Play in a 30 x 20 yard grid up to one half of the field depending on the abilities of the players and the number of players in the activity. Use disc cones to mark the small goals in the grid and 6' x 18' goals on the end lines.



### THE ACTIVITY – JUNKYARD SOCCER

Two teams with a ball for each or at least one ball for every two players. On the coach's signal both teams begin to kick their balls to the other side. The objective is to kick the balls quick enough to get all the balls on one side. When this occurs award one point to the team without any balls. No one is allowed in the neutral zone.

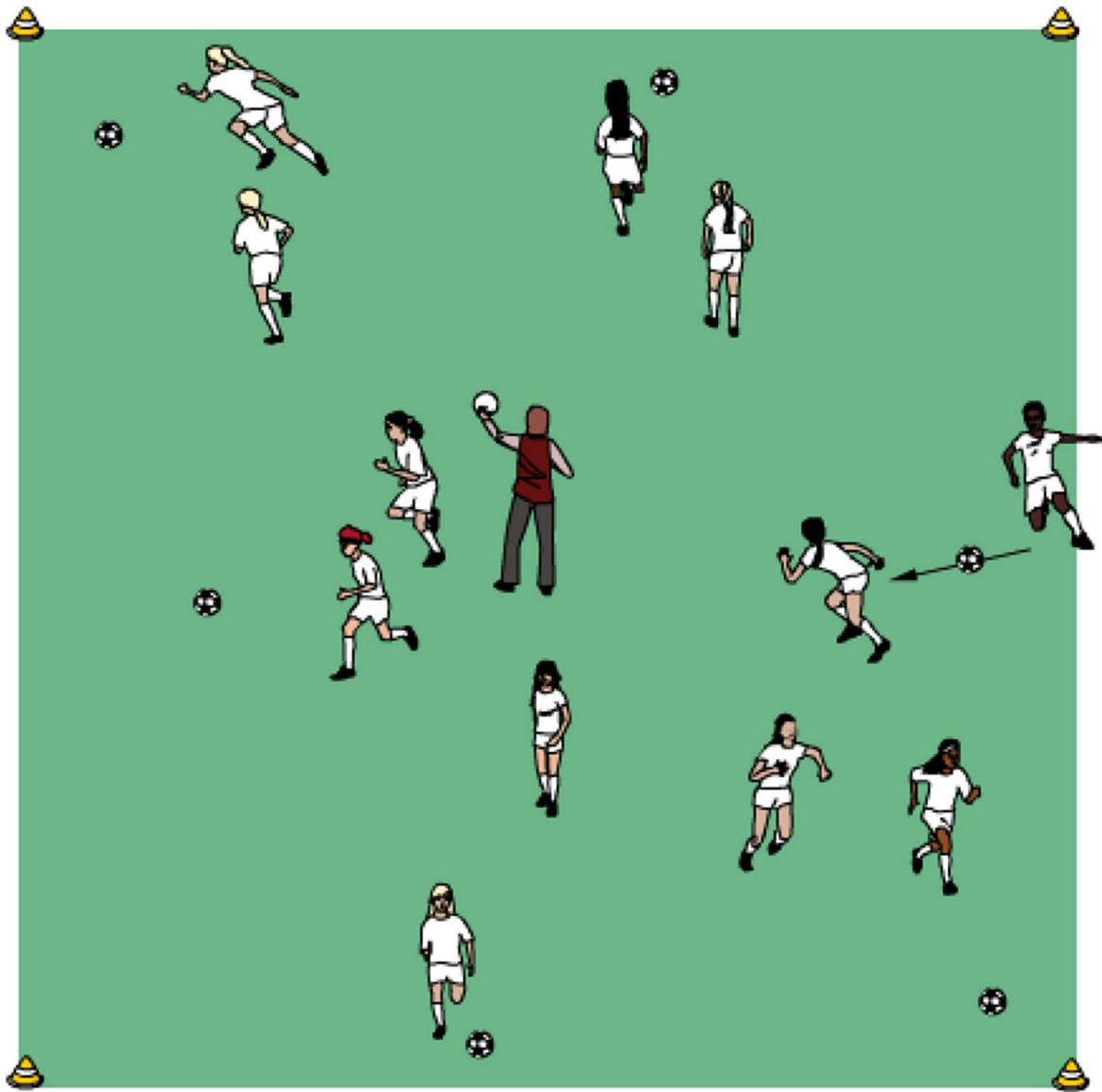
### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

The activity encourages one touch passing and striking the ball at different angles and speed. Strength, power and cardiorespiratory endurance are improved in the activity. Players should also try to place their passes in open spaces in the other team's half. Players

must work together to achieve the group goal and thus the activity provides a sense of teamwork.

#### GRID

The activity can be played in a rectangle grid or on one half of the field or full field. One team is in each half of the playing area. There should be a 10 yard neutral zone marked off with disc cones between the two halves. Each team begins with the same number of balls on each half.



### THE ACTIVITY – **BALL RETRIEVE (PAIRS)**

The coach has a pile of 6 or 7 balls. The coach kicks or throws these in all directions. The players should chase any ball and dribble it back to the pile at the coach's feet. Never letting the pile get down to zero is the player's objective. Balls are thrown or kicked 5-20 yards.

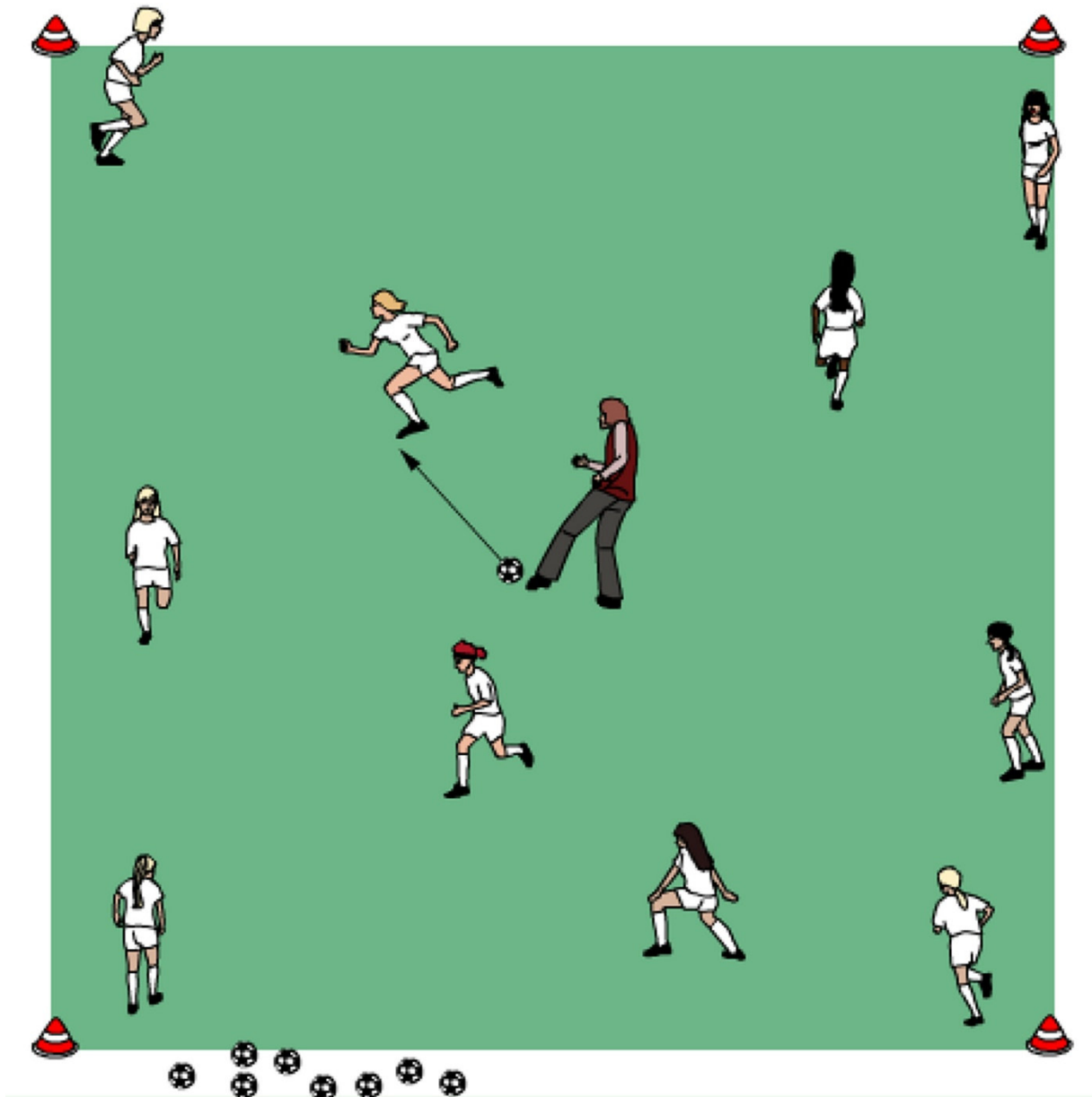
### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

The emphasis here is on visual tracking and dribbling to a designated place.

## GRID

The space is a 20 x 20 yard grid. Use tall cones to designate the corners. For some player groups more cones will be necessary along the boundary lines to concretely designate the grid.

# Training Session Activities for Autism & ADHD



## THE ACTIVITY – COACH PAC MAN

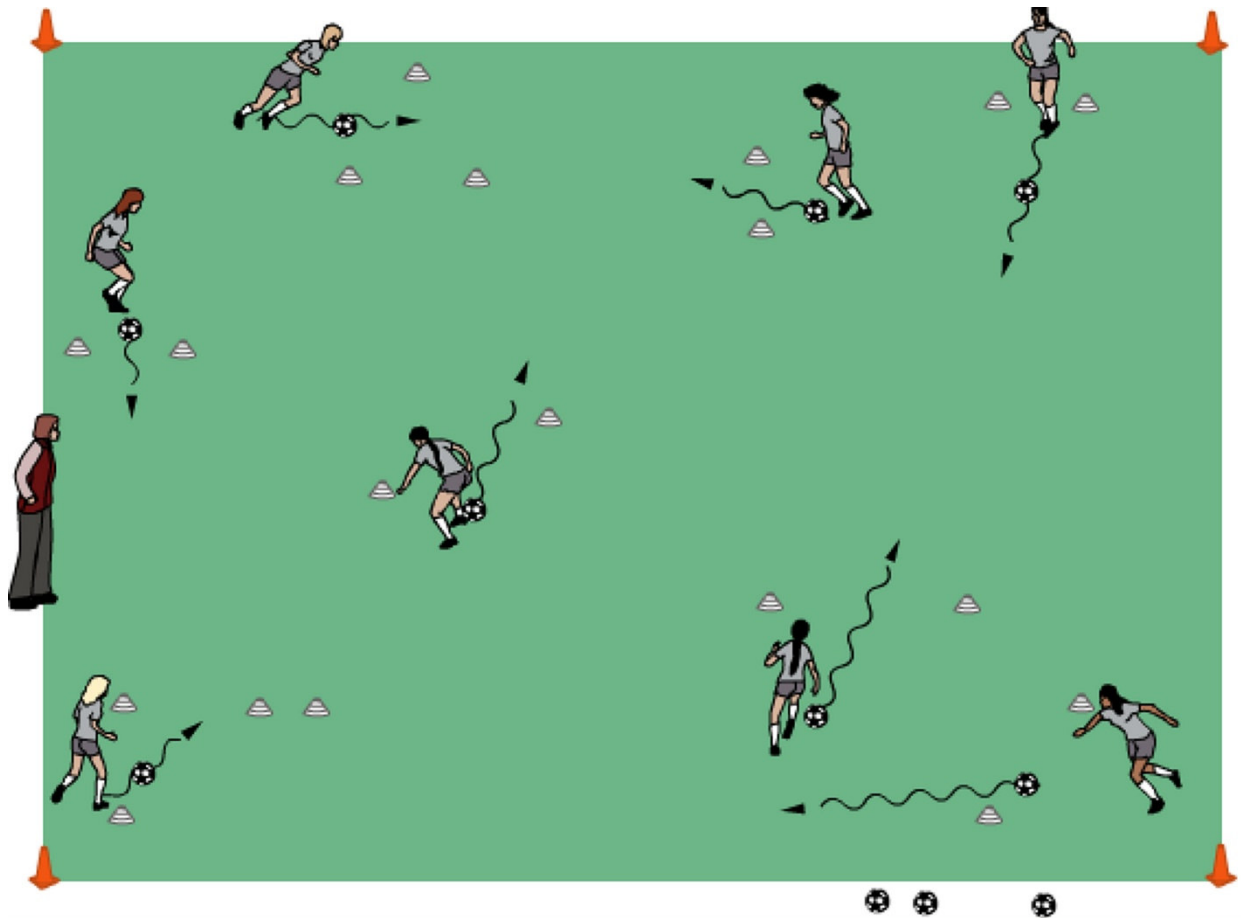
The coach plays the role of Pac Man while all of the players run freely in the grid. While dribbling the Pac Man tries to hit the players in the legs by passing at them. Players try to avoid getting hit with the ball. Once a player is hit he gets a ball and becomes a second Pac Man. The activity continues until all of the players have been hit. In some cases the coach may want to be the only Pac Man and in this case players who get hit must go off the field, do ten jumping jacks or five pushups and then come back into the game.

## EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

Dribbling and passing to hit a moving target. Cardiorespiratory fitness, agility and jumping to avoid being hit by a pass. Vision and awareness of the playing area are improved. The activity allows all ability levels to play equally and allows each player to be successful.

## GRID

Approximately 20 x 20 yards. Adjust the grid to be smaller or larger depending on the number of players in the activity and/or their ability level.



### THE ACTIVITY – GATES (DRIBBLING)

Each player has a ball to dribble in the grid and explore with different ways to dribble through the gates. Encourage the players to try to use either foot or different parts of the foot to dribble. They can also practice stopping the ball by controlling it on the imaginary line between the cones that make the gates. Challenge the players once they are comfortable with the ball to dribble at different speeds and to change direction while dribbling.

#### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

Starting and stopping with the ball. Changing direction with the ball. Using all surfaces of the foot to manipulate the ball. Once a good standard of dribbling is met then feints and fakes can be added to the activity. Body control to be able to control the ball.

#### GRID

10 x 10 to 20 x 20 yards. Mark the corners with large cones and use disc cones to mark the gates inside the grid. Vary the distance between the disc cones so that some gates are wider than others.

Also use these activities as described in the Down Syndrome section: I Can Do This, Can You?; Moving Goal and Tag.

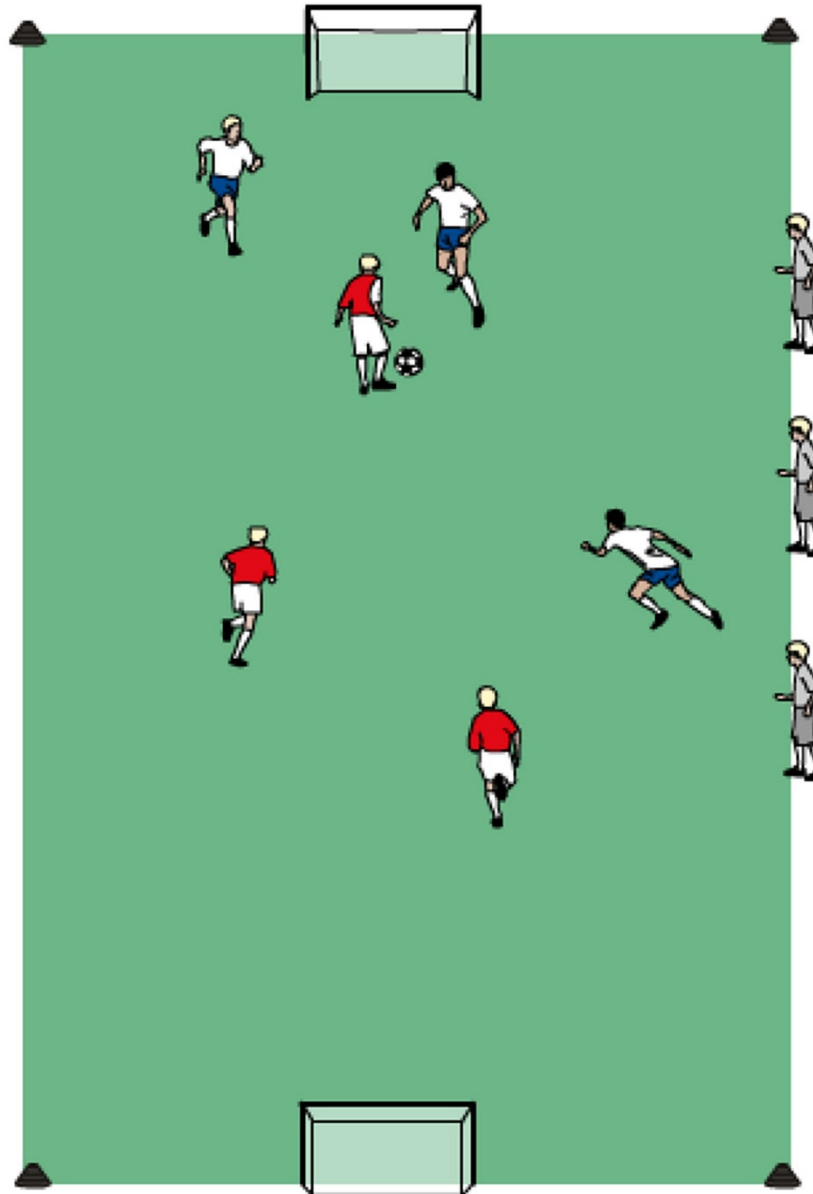


# Training Session Activities for Cerebral Palsy

As previously described use these activities: I Can Do This, Can You?; Tag; Ball Retrieve-Pairs; Junkyard Soccer; Gates (dribbling & passing); and Moving Goal.

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For all three groups of players use the following game formats.



**THE ACTIVITY - THE GAME 3 vs. 3**

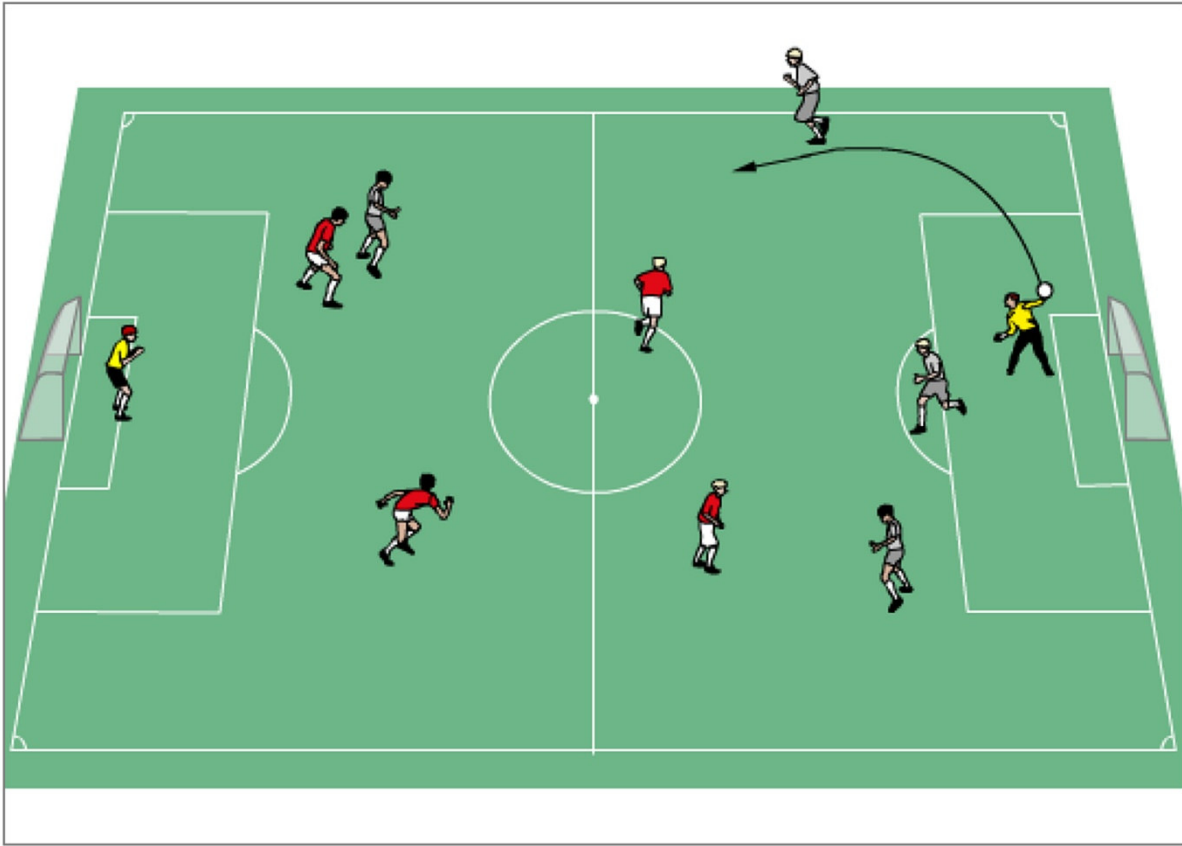
Play 3 vs. 3 or 4 vs. 4 with no goalkeepers. Have one extra team of equal numbers; who rest until you switch them. This allows for recovery. Rotate in the third team after a goal is scored or every three minutes, whichever comes first.

**EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS**

Let them play! Here they can learn everything! They should have a great time!

## GRID

Mark out a 25 x 15 yard playing area with cones and small goals. The smaller space allows for end to end action with shots on goal.



#### THE ACTIVITY – THE GAME 4 vs. 4 + GKs

The field should be – Length: minimum 45 yards to maximum 60 yards and Width: minimum 35 yards to maximum 45 yards. The goal should be 6' high by 18' wide. Play approximately 10-15 minute halves. The ball should be a size 4, but alternate sizes 3 or 5 are acceptable. The decision on ball size, length of play and size of the field should be based on player abilities.

The game can be played without goalkeeper (4v4) or with goalkeepers (5v5).

#### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

Attacking and defending in pairs can be emphasized. However most of the playing time should be without comment from the coach.

#### GRID

30 x 20 up to 60 x 40 yards with 6' x 18' goals. Use corner flags or bicycle flags or tall cones to mark the corners.

These activities and many more can be found in:

**The Official US Youth Soccer Coaching Manual**

**By Dr. Thomas Fleck, Dr. Ronald Quinn, Dr. David Carr, William Buren and Virgil Stringfield**

**The Baffled Parents Guide to Great Soccer Drills**

**By Dr. Thomas Fleck and Dr. Ronald W. Quinn**

**The ADHD Affected Athlete**

**By Michael E. Stabeno**

