**DS Goals and Themes**

**Overall Goal**

Our goal at CVUSC is to inspire our young athletes and develop a passion for the beautiful game such that they become fully invested in it for life! The focus of the DS program is to help players develop the technical skills to be able to dominate possession individually and in small groups, and to understand and utilize moments of transition to improve attacking skills. By improving technically, players will be effective at adapting to changing situations throughout a game, and by doing so, will have a superior experience in soccer.

**Coaching Goals**

1. Creating a positive environment: coaching with positive reinforcement
2. Improving ball mastery/confidence with ball handling
3. Providing opportunities to improve 1v1 skills
4. Coaching attacking principles
5. Encouraging/promoting “selfish” play with the ball
6. Embracing struggle: letting players problem solve with their play
7. Developing decision makers
8. Game based development
9. Instill a competitive edge early and foster it. Use short, small sided activities as a basis for this
10. Individual defending is also important! Use your attacking drills to also work on defending

**Themes**

1. Ball mastery
2. Transition: Repossession and Possession
3. Attacking the goal/positive play
4. Taking 1v1 attacking opportunities
5. Combination play

**Examples of drills**

1. Ball mastery/dribbling drills
2. 1v1 and 2v2
3. Numbers up games (eg. 2v1, 3v2)
4. 2v2v2
5. Small game with neutral player
6. 1 up (scoring vs maintaining possession)
7. 4 square (in corners)
8. 2v2 or 3v3 games with teammates on either side of grid (using target players)
9. Nets in different directions/multiple nets for decision making and changing point of attack
10. Games using gates/triangles of cones inside a grid
11. Game of thirds
12. Using a short/wide field to encourage switching play
13. Combination play (eg. triangles drill with a give and go)

**General coaching framework**

1. Primarily focusing on “coaching over the top” and limiting stoppages and/or long explanations. Coaches should focus on 1 or 2 techniques/skills only, using language which can be understood by young children for coaching points. (eg. instead of talking about dispersion or width/depth, use “spread out” or “get as high and wide as possible”)
2. When coaching your own group, outside of large group sessions, use freezes to change repetitive behaviors or trends. Maybe 1 or 2 per drill.
3. Remember to keep it light and make having fun the number one priority. Children learn through playing, rather than rigid practices so it’s vital to keep smiles on faces!
4. Keep the ball rolling as much as possible. Although it is difficult, try to limit demos/coaching/stoppages to 10-15 mins max.
5. Encourage your players to fall in love with the ball and do their own work at home. Although we don’t want kids overtraining, there is virtually no limit on the time you can spend with the ball at home. You’ll be amazed at what they can come up with on their own, and frankly, the best technical development happens in backyards, cages or even your living room!