More Opportunities...
More Touches...
More Hours...
More Fun!

Football for a New Generation

Junior Framework Parent Information Guide

ASB

NEW ZEALAND FOOTBALL

THE JUNIOR FRAMEWORK

SMALL SIDED GAMES

Developing more technically skilled players and helping Kiwi kids fall in love with football

Young footballers around the world develop ball skills through constant informal play and practice. This 'street football' is not traditionally part of our culture in New Zealand, so we offer Small Sided Games (SSGs) to recreate this free-flowing, fun and exciting environment.

Through Small Sided Games we give children the opportunity to develop ball skills within a controlled framework. They get the chance to enjoy multiple touches of the ball, score goals and try out the skills they have been taught, in a stress-free environment.

"I really enjoyed the smaller games and smaller teams – it gave the younger children time to recharge and keep up their enthusiasm."

Giving Kids a Great Start in Football

New Zealand Football has created guidelines and supporting material to help clubs deliver junior football programmes matched to the needs of young players. This set of guidelines is called the Junior Framework.

The Junior Framework ensures that every child entering the game will take part in training and games tailored to his or her age and ability.

Drawing on proven football development programmes around the world, the Junior Framework provides children with a fun and rewarding experience at every stage, while developing their skills as football players.

Benefits of the Junior Framework for your child

Research shows that children have more involvement and enjoy football more when they play Small Sided Games.

MORE TOUCHES ON THE BALL	
Up to 5 x more touches in 4v4 than 11v11	50% more touches in 7v7 than 11v11

MORE 1 ON 1 SITUATIONS	
3 x more 1-on-1 situations in 4v4 than in 11v11	2 x more 1-on-1 situations in 7v7 than 11v11
280% more dribbling tricks tried in 4v4 than 8v8	

BALL IS IN PLAY SIGNIFICANTLY LONGER
Ball is out of play just 8% of the time in 4v4, compared to 12.5% in 7v7 and 32.8% in 11v11

MANY MORE PASSES
135% more passes in 4v4 than 8v8

MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO SCORE GOALS	
Goal scored every 1.5 mins in 4v4	6 x more shots on goal in 4v4 than 11v11
Goal scored every 3.6 mins in 7v7	3 x more shots on goal in 7v7 than 11v11
Goal scored every 8 mins in 11v11	

The benefits extend far beyond technical and tactical development. Children have more fun, feel included, develop an innate love for the game, and remain in the sport for longer.

Stages of the Junior Framework

The Junior Framework is part of New Zealand Football's first ever National Player Development Framework. Starting at the junior level of our game, we are building a foundation for the future and providing eager kids (and their parents) with their first taste of football.

"You certainly saw the skills develop over the season from more one-on-one time with a ball."

3 ASB MINI FOOTBALL (9-12 Years)

FOCUS	PLAYING FORMAT	GAME DAY 9-10 YEARS	GAME DAY 10-12 YEARS	TRAINING FOCUS
- Develop technical capabilities for long term participation - Motivational environment promotes a desire to continually improve - Learn to play within a team structure, although focus remains on the individual	9-10 Years **7v7** 11-12 Years **9v9** Girls Only Football **5v5, 7v7**	8-12 min Warm up **SSGs** 2 x 25 mins	8-12 min Warm Up **SSGs** 2 x 30 mins 1 x 60 mins	20% General Movement 20% Football Coordination 20% Football Technique 40% Small Sided Games

2 ASB FUN FOOTBALL (7-8 Years)

FOCUS	PLAYING FORMAT	GAME DAY 7 YEARS	GAME DAY 8 YEARS	TRAINING FOCUS
- Lots of variation in a fun and motivational setting - Players can try new things through 'just playing' - Individual development	**4v4** **5v5**	2-3 Skill Stations 6-10 mins each **SSGs** 4 x10 mins 3 x13 mins	1-2 Skill Stations 6-10 mins each **SSGs** 4 x 10 mins 3 x 13 mins 2 x 20 mins	20% General Movement 20% Football Coordination 20% Football Technique 40% Small Sided Games

1 ASB FIRST KICKS (4-6 Years)

FOCUS	PLAYING FORMAT	GAME DAY	TRAINING FOCUS
- Lots of movement, variety & fun - Environment that maximises a child's involvement - Plenty of opportunities to try what football has to offer - Individual development	**3v3** **4v4**	2-3 Skill Stations 6-10 mins each **SSGs** 4 x 7.5 mins 3 x 10 mins	25% General Movement 25% Football Coordination 25% Football Technique 25% Small Sided Games

As a parent, what is your role?

Your support and assistance helps create the right environment for your child to enjoy football and develop into the best player he or she can be.

- Let the children play the game and learn by doing. Limit constant instruction.
- Focus on your child's effort and improvement rather than whether they win or lose.
- Encourage children to try new things and keep control of the ball, rather than the big kick for the sake of results. In the long term this is much better for your child's development.
- Remember children learn best by example. Parents should appreciate good play and skills by all participants.
- Remain positive and relaxed when supporting your child. This promotes creativity and encourages players to try new things and learn.
- Show appreciation for volunteers such as Game Leaders, Coordinators and other parents. Without them, your child could not participate.

Become a Game Leader, Coach or Coordinator

The Junior Framework is easy to understand for both players and volunteers. As a Game Leader or Coach you will receive a curriculum that's carefully designed to meet the needs of young players. All you have to do is deliver it in an enthusiastic and energetic manner.

All volunteers receive free resources and training because New Zealand Football wants to create a positive experience for all involved in the game.

"The training philosophy and resources invested in the programme were great"

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do young players experience skill activities on game day rather than just playing a game?

Although station rotation is not at the heart of the day, it provides a valuable platform for players to continue developing the football skills that will be later applied into real game situations. Findings from the 2010 review found that coaches, parents and players all felt that the new format significantly increased a child's involvement on game day. ***Greater skill levels will only increase the child's love and appreciation of the small sided game.***

Why do players keep rotating rather than just playing the one game?

The Junior Framework places the needs of children at the heart of the structures. As you will be aware, young children have a limited concentration span and therefore require lots of variation in order to keep them engaged and interested. By offering an environment which has lots of variation with different components, we aim to maximise the limited time players experience football. ***The amount of time spent in a small sided game has not reduced from previous formats, it has simply been split into shorter bite size chunks to sustain motivation, as well as reducing the impact of over dominant players and teams.***

Why do game leaders stay on a station and not move with groups of players?

This format has specifically been designed to support both coach and player development.

Players are now exposed to different game leaders and therefore are not limited to the strengths and weaknesses of one game leader. Game Leaders work within a simplified 'coaching' experience with short sessions which can be repeated with a new group of players.

It also offers the chance for parents to share the load throughout the season with other like-minded volunteers. It's a flexible approach for volunteer parents offering a chance for parents to get active with their kids (by being a game leader). Parents who enjoy the experience and develop a passion for the game leader role may volunteer their time more often than others but it is key that all parents should be given equal opportunity to get actively involved with the junior football experience.

Why is the size of pitch much smaller than previously?

New Zealand Football's international research revealed that the size of pitches used in junior football throughout New Zealand were significantly larger than other leading football development countries. Although short term parents and coaches may see that players can easily kick the ball from one side of the pitch to the other, these smaller pitches will actually change the style of play to promote technical development, with players learning and adapting to operating in less space and time. The research into small sided games explained in this document heavily supports this new approach.

Why are there no goalkeepers until the age of 9?

The role of the goalkeeper is uniquely specialised and in the modern game goalkeepers are required to have fundamental skills such as ball control and passing. The decision to not include goalkeepers at the younger ages also relates to the motivation of young players who love being successful and scoring lots of goals and with a goalkeeper this is more difficult.

NEW ZEALAND FOOTBALL

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