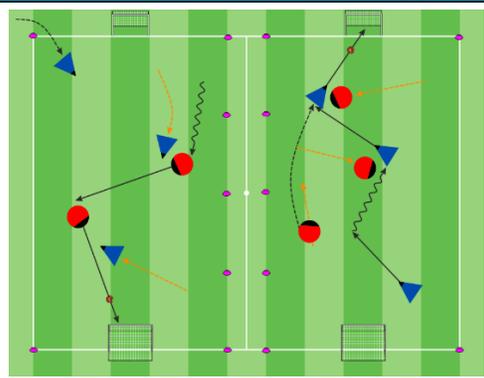




GOAL:	Improve defending in the defensive third			AGE GROUP
PLAYER ACTIONS	Protect the goal, steal the ball			8U
KEY QUALITIES	Read & understand the game, focus			
MOMENT	Defending	DURATION	60 Minutes	4v4

1st PLAY PHASE (intentional Free Play)	18 Min.-Play multiple 3-4 minute games
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Objective: to pass or dribble past an opponent then score goals

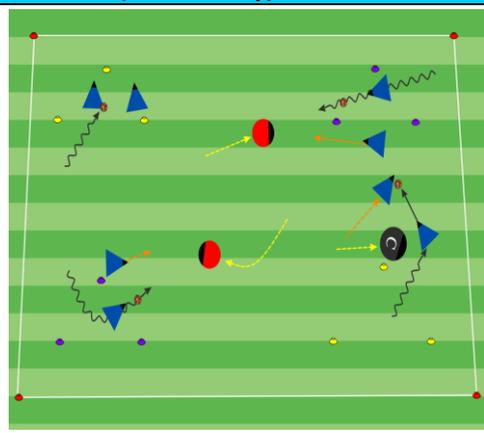
Organization: On your (25Wx35L) game field, set up two 17Wx25L fields with a small goal at each end. When practice is scheduled to start & as soon as 2 players arrive, start playing a game. The game will start as 1v1. As players arrive, the game becomes 2v1 then 2v2 up to 3v3. Once one field is at 3v3, start a second game on the field next to it.

Key Words: go to goal, score goals

Guided Questions: Are the players engaged? Are all the players getting challenged?

Answers: have one field with less players on it to encourage participation. Adjust the games so the stronger players may have less teammates (2v3 game).

PRACTICE (Core Activity): Guard the Goals	18 Minutes-9 intervals-1 min. play-1 min. rest
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Organization: In a 20Wx30L grid, with several 3 yard triangle shaped goals. Select enough defenders so there is 1 less defender than goals. The rest of the players have a partner and a soccer ball for each pair. The players with a soccer ball try to dribble or pass through as many goals as they can in 1 minute. The defenders must guard all the goals and tackle the ball away if a team tries to score. **Rules:** Defenders cannot enter the triangles so if an attacking player can stop the ball in a triangle they can rest.

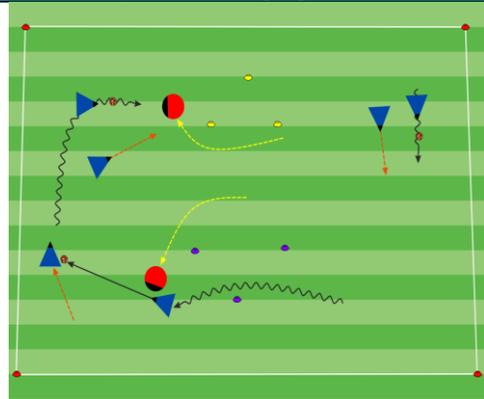
Key Words: win the ball, pressure the ball, tackle the ball.

Guided Questions: How do you know where the attackers are? What can you do if no one is attacking goal you are closest to?

Answers: Keep your head up and always look around to see if they are close. Move to help one of teammates to protect a different goal.

Notes: Don't worry if an attacking team stops to rest in a goal. The emphasis is on the teams without the ball. If a team is stopped in a goal, they cannot continue to score.

PRACTICE (Less Challenging): Guard the Goals-Tag	18 Minutes-9 intervals-1 min. play-1 min. rest
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Organization: In a 20Wx30L grid, with two 3 yard triangle shaped goals. Select 2 defenders; 1 defender defends each goal. The rest of the players have a partner and share a soccer ball. The players with a soccer ball try to dribble or pass through as many goals as they can in 1 minute. The defenders must guard his/her goal. If the defender can poke their ball away or even tag them, the attacker's score goes back to zero. **Rules:** Defenders cannot enter the triangles so if an attacking team can stop the ball in a triangle they can rest.

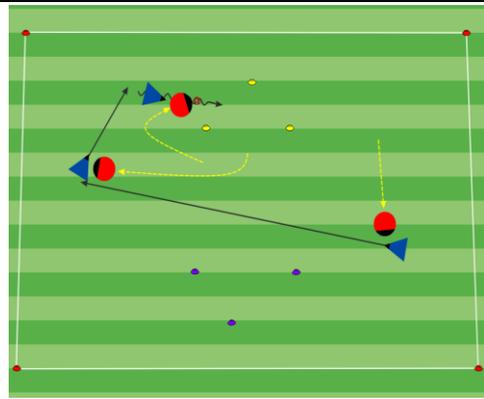
Key Words: try to win the ball, pressure the ball, tackle the ball.

Guided Questions: When should stay close to the goal you are defending? What can you do if the attackers kick the ball too far in front of themselves?

Answers: If the attackers are close to your goal, stay back. If the defenders are far away, step up. Step closer to the ball to see if you can poke tackle it away.

Notes: If too many goals are still getting scored, add another defender who can roam all over the field.

PRACTICE (More Challenging): 3v3 Guard the Goal	18 Minutes-6 intervals-2 min. play-1 min. rest
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Organization: In a 20Wx30L grid, with two 3 yard triangle shaped goals. Select 2 teams of 3 players each. Each team defends 1 goal and scores in the other. The team with a soccer ball tries to dribble or pass through the opponent's goal. If the defending team must win the ball, they can attack the goal at the other end of the field. **Rules:** Defenders cannot enter the triangles so if an attacking team can stop the ball in a triangle they can rest.

Key Words: try to win the ball, pressure the ball, tackle the ball.

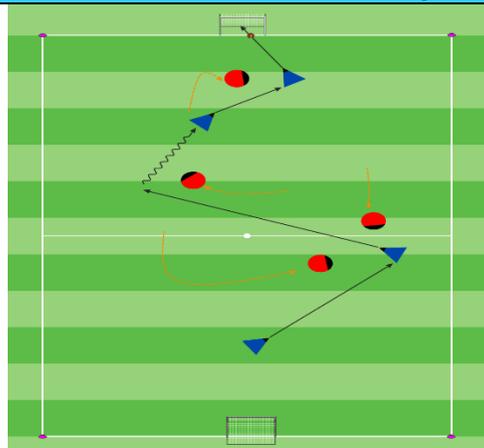
Guided Questions: When should 2 defenders be close together? What can you do if the attackers kick the ball too far in front of themselves?

Answers: If the other team has more players on one side the defending team can send a player over to help. Step closer to the ball to see if you can poke tackle it away.

Notes: If too many goals are still being scored, reduce the number of attackers on the team who is scoring the most so the focus will remain on defending.

2nd. PLAY PHASE: The Game – 4v4 (no Goal Keepers):

24 Minutes-2 intervals-10 min. play-2 min. rest



Objective: to pass or dribble past an opponent then score goals

Organization: In a 25Wx35L field and a small goal on each end line, play a 4v4. Play for 24 minutes – 2 intervals of 10 minutes with a 2 minute rest between intervals. Local rules apply. If the ball leaves the field, the coach should roll another ball onto the field and play continues. No goal keepers allowed.

Key Words: turn, get the ball, score goals

Guided Questions: Who should determine whether to dribble pass or shoot? What are successful practice indicators?

Answers: The players must be allowed to make their own decisions. Coaches can provide guided assistance only as needed. Players are engaged, enjoy practice and positive reinforcement was provided.

Five Elements of a Training Activity

1. **Organized:** Is the activity organized in the right way?

2. **Game-like:** Is the activity game-like?

3. **Repetition:** Is there repetition, when looking at the overall goal of the training session?

4. **Challenging:** Are the players being challenged? (is the right balance between being successful and unsuccessful?)

5. **Coaching:** Is there coaching based on the age and level of the players?

Training Session Self-Reflection Questions

1. How did you do in achieving the goal of the training session?

2. What did you do well?

3. What could you do better?