

## 3 - Learn to Train

**Chronological Age: 10-12 (M) and 9-11 (F)**

**Training Age: 1-4 years in football**

**Objectives: Basic Skills**

- This is a critical period for development of motor skills and coordination
- Participate in a wide range of sports. Develop speed, power and endurance using games
- Focus on development of general sport skills
- Introduce Football competition at local/club levels. Participate in several positions & disciplines to build a foundation of Football skills

**Development Opportunities:**

**Technical Skills:**

- Throwing, Catching, Kicking
- Ball skills: carry, pass, punt, kick, catch
- Ball exchanges (hand off, pass)
- Tackling, flagging, touching
- Blocking and block protection

**Tactical Skills:**

- Learning the Game- basic rules
- Pass routes
- Defensive coverage (person to person)
- Formation recognition and adjustment

**Physical Skills:**

- Priority on agility and movement, and speed
- Running + Backwards + w/change of directions
- Jumping, Twisting, Turning. Spinning
- Agility, Balance, Coordination
- Rhythmic Movement
- Speed #1 (Hand & Foot Speed),
- Aerobic Capacity
- Flexibility
- Visual Awareness
- Limited, body-weight-only strength exercises

**Late Stage:**

- Aiming & hitting (eye-hand)
- Strength 1
- Speed 1
- Aerobic power

**Mental Skills:**

- Visualization (Learn to Image)
- Learn Thought Stop
- Learn to Set Goals
- Learn to Breathe to Control Nerves
- Progressive Muscular Relaxation

**This stage** represents development of a well-rounded set of Football skills, complimented by participation in other sports, and for many athletes, using Flag/Touch Football as an ideal introductory experience. Skill athletes develop basic and integrated Football skills and utilize these in competitive game situations. Guiding principles are:

- Athletes have the opportunity to develop skills in a variety of offensive and defensive Football positions
- Training, competition and positional play is appropriate to the development and maturation of individual athletes
- Skill development is more important than winning

**Character - Life Skills:**

- Partnership/Teamwork, Problem-solving

**Game Options to Consider:**

- Continue development through Tackle/Flag/Touch participation
- **Alternate:** enter a Modified Tackle program. Modified Tackle game has reduced rosters (6 a side or 9 a side) and rule modifications to promote skill development and confidence
- **Modified Tackle Defense:** person-to-person coverage, no motion or stunts, limited numbers of defensive rushers (from 3 to 6 in different divisions), and no defensive line player opposite center
- **Modified Tackle Offense:** no motion, blocking restrictions, a fixed requirement for number of backs, and requirement to make at least one pass attempt every three plays, to help develop a range of skills and game-learning situations

**Figure 7 - Allocation of time in practice**

