Philosophy Statement

**Player Development**
It takes about 10-12 years to produce an established soccer player.
While most young players are introduced to the game about the age of six or seven,
**It is unlikely that they will begin to master the skills requiring eye-foot coordination or fully understand the principles of play before they are about sixteen years of age.**

**Purpose:**
To develop technique and insight by playing skill-oriented games involving simplified soccer situations. Learning to become comfortable with the ball and develop coordination with the ball through age-specific soccer activities. The delicate balance of age limitation and age potential will be the guiding force in choosing appropriate learning activities.

**Philosophy:**
Keep it simple - learn how to play the game skillfully – a patient approach
Make it fun - skill-related activities and competitions that are age-appropriate
Good technique with a lot of repetitions -- good habits – quality and quantity
Gradually increase and change activities – combine variation with constants

**Program:**
Ball touch – use of both feet and all body parts used for soccer
Basic skills – dribble – pass, receive – heading – shooting – juggle – Coerver moves
Insight -- use soccer skills to solve soccer problems
Mobility, balance, coordination and appropriate running form for soccer
Speed, acceleration, and explosive movements for soccer
Goal scoring

**A Time for Winning ---- A Time for Learning**
There is a huge **over - emphasis** on winning at the younger age levels
Teams that are gung ho about winning at the U10 and under age groups, may be nowhere to be seen at U16 and U17. When winning is the emphasis at the young age, the short cuts taken are the physical abilities, **not skill and technique**

**Winning vs Learning**
When the top priority of the young age team is winning, it fails in its most important role --- **player development.** When winning becomes the focal point, it is hard to create a positive learning environment due to the stresses created from winning and losing.
The time for winning will come soon enough – **prepare the kids to win through good skill development and a positive learning environment**

**The main task of a coach**
To influence players to want to play soccer, and learn to play it better, for years to come.
**Being a youth coach is like working without a watch. Time is on your side**
A coach wants his team to win, **BUT -- Winning should be secondary to development**
Ages 7 – 10
Up to age 11, learn the technical skills
Apply the technical skills to the actual game situations

It is vitally important that initial training, in the earliest stages of development, do not simply seek short-term objectives. One eye on the present with one eye on the future. Inadequate progress at one level means that significant progress will not be made in the next level.

Continuity is particularly important in youth development. Everyone involved needs to be well informed and pulling in the same direction.

It is typical for the 8 to 10 age group that each child plays for himself rather than combining with the others. In addition, children move towards the ball and not away from it, and are inclined to play the ball forward and not to the side or backwards.

Training Objectives
Ability to use both feet to side-foot and semi—side-foot the ball and kick it with the instep, both along the ground and through the air, over short distances
Taking and cushioning the ball with all parts of the body
Juggling the ball with every part of the body except the arms
Passing accurately from a standing position and while on the move
Accurately shooting on goal

Expectations
Honest and responsible -- (respect norms --- ethical conduct )
Respect others
Tolerant, caring, generous -- ( accept weaknesses and help others )
Self critical -- accept mistakes and weaknesses and work to improve them
Accept success and failure in a balanced way

Parent Principles
Don’t talk too much about soccer with your son
No demands and don’t criticize
Don’t get angry about player’s mistakes
No blame during the bad times
Kids must feel your support
Be encouraging
Don’t judge, create a calm environment, observe as a neutral observer

Closing comment:
Ferenc Puskas to his father:
“ I want to thank my father for all the advice he never gave me"