

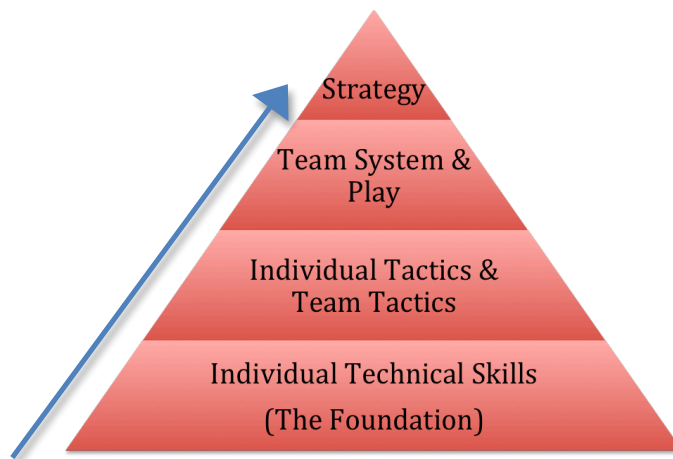
Youth Academy and Long-Term Training Philosophy, K-8th Grade*

Every athlete / coach / parent must understand the importance of Player Development as it pertains to volleyball. A big problem facing most volleyball players is the view their coaches and clubs have on the development of their athletes. Too often today, coaches and parents are too focused on the outcome and not the journey. They put a greater emphasis on winning and less on individual skill development, which leads to practices consisting of mainly scrimmages and playing. Because they place such an emphasis on winning matches, their focus is shifted to advanced system concepts at too young of an age.

- For example: in an average hour long, best-of-three set match, a typical player will: serve the ball 6x, attack the ball 10x (depending on player position), pass/dig the ball 12x, block the ball 1x, and set the ball 5-20x (depending on player position).
- Based on these numbers, clearly games or scrimmages are not the ideal setting for players to develop individual skills during practice. When these athletes are supposed to advance to the next level, they are lacking in basic ball-control skill.

Looking at the Athletic Development Pyramid below, the natural progression at the base of the triangle emphasizes the individual technical development. Ultimately, at the 11-14 age group, winning and competition take a back seat to individual skill development in order to ensure the athlete's long-term success.

At the Youth Academy level (K-4th grade) 80% of the focus is on individual technical development.



Age group Overview 10-12's

1. Development and refinement is 60% Individual Skill, 20% Individual Tactics, 10% Team Tactics and Team Play and 10% Physical Development.
2. There will be no positioning. Everyone will set, pass, serve, and hit. At this age it is too early to lock any athlete into a predetermined position. Doing so will hinder development of other necessary individual skills.
3. Physical fitness routines will be integrated into practices for coordination and physical development, focusing on motor-movement.

Age group Overview 13-14's

1. Development and refinement is 50% Individual Skill, 20% Individual Tactics, 20% Team Tactics and Team Play, and 10% Physical Development.
2. The setter will begin to be developed at this age group due to the amount of training required to fully master this skill-set.
3. Physical fitness routines will continue to be integrated into practices for coordination and physical development, focusing on stamina and speed.