



# MASSACHUSETTS YOUTH SOCCER

**GOAL** Defending

**Key Qualities** Take Initiative, Be Proactive

**Age Group** 8-U

**Team Tactical Principles** Press the player with the ball, regain the ball

*Is Activity Organized? Game-like? Challenging?*

## PLAY - SMALL SIDED GAMES

*Does activity allow for Repetition? Coaching?*

**Objectives:** Players without the ball try to steal the ball from opponents to go and score.

**Organization:** Set up two to three 15W x 20L fields w/goal at each end. Goals, cones, pinnies, balls.

**Rules:** Start games with a kick off. Play local organization rules on out of bounds. Monitor player infractions. Play 1v1, 2v1, 2v2, 3v2, 3v3 game, up to a 4v4 game per field. Allow players the ability to have free play.



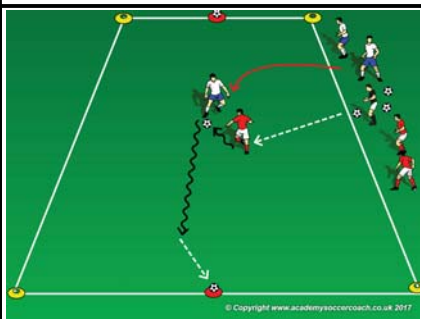
**Coaching Points:** Players closest to the ball go and pressure the attacker with the ball. Steal (regain) the ball from the attacker to go and score.

**Guided Questions:** How can you tell players are participating? They are playing the game with little to no distractions. When should players press the ball to steal it? Right after losing it.

*Is Activity Organized? Game-like? Challenging?*

## PRACTICE - CORE ACTIVITY

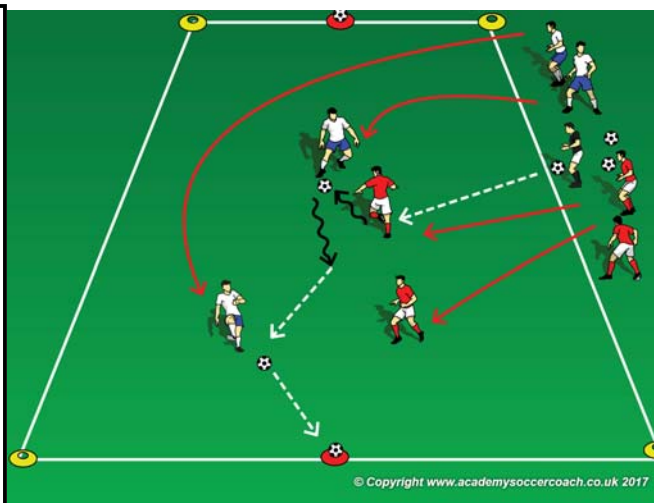
*Does activity allow for Repetition? Coaching?*



### Less Challenging Activity

**1v1 Defend:** Play 1v1 to score by knocking ball off the opponents cone.

**Rules:** Players in 2 teams on either side of coach at midfield sideline. Coach has all balls. Coach plays ball out onto field, one player from each team enters the field. Bonus pts for scoring after stealing the ball

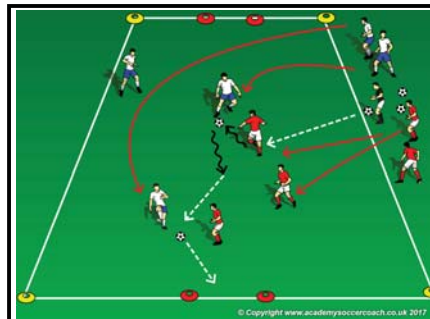


**Activity Duration** 20 min

**# of Intervals** 10

**Time Active** 1 min

**Active Rest** 1 min



### More Challenging Activity

**3v3 Defend:** Play 3v3 to score in opponents small cone goal.

**Rules:** Players in 2 teams on either side of the coach at midfield sideline. Coach has all balls. Coach plays ball out onto field, 3 players from each team enter the field. Bonus pts for scoring after stealing the ball.

**2v2 Defend:** Play 2v2 to score by knocking the ball off the opponents cone.

**Organization:** Set up a 15W x 20L grid w/a ball atop a cone on the middle of each end line.

**Rules:** Players in 2 teams on either side of the coach at the midfield sideline. Coach has all the balls. Coach plays a ball out onto the field, 2 players from each team enter the field and play to score. Bonus points for scoring after stealing the ball. Play until out of bounds, a goal, or 1 minute has passed.

**Coaching Points:** Closest player to the ball must go pressure the attacker with the ball. Prevent attackers from playing forward. Steal the ball to go and score.

**Guided Questions:** What is pressuring the ball? Quickly approaching the attacker w/the ball to slow down and delay the attack forward. How can you explain how to steal the ball from the attacker? Tell players to try stealing the ball when it is dribbled too far away from the attacker's feet. Show the defender how to block or poke the ball away from the attacker to steal the ball to go score.

*Is Activity Organized? Game-like? Challenging?*

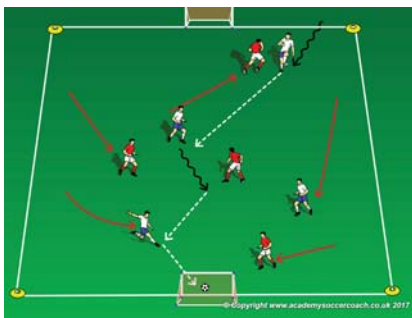
## PLAY - LET THEM PLAY

*Does activity allow for Repetition? Coaching?*

**Objectives:** Win the ball back quickly and restart the attack.

**Organization:** Make a 25W x 35L field w/ a small goal at each end. Create 2 equal teams of 4, and manage substitutions, fouls, water breaks and rest periods. Goals, cones, pinnies, ball.

**Rules:** All local modified 4v4 rules apply



**Coaching Points:** Help the closest player to the ball to recognize moments in the game when they should pressure the ball, to steal it and go forward and score.

**Guided Questions:** How can you tell if the practice worked? Players are trying to steal the ball from the opponents. When should a player try to steal the ball back? Immediately after losing it.