

(G) GAMES FOR UNDERSTANDING

Teaching games for understanding is taking a child-centred approach - one where every child is given the opportunity to succeed and to reach his / her own potential - and is games oriented - thus providing much greater motivation. If a teaching for understanding approach is to be recommended, then it is essential that modifications to games are needed. These modifications will provide a structure within which awareness of principles and tactics are learned and understood.

- (1) Provide more appropriate equipment for younger, small players (*e.g. smaller / larger / lighter / larger striking surfaces etc*).
- (2) Provide more appropriate playing or target areas (*e.g. shorter distances to aim, wider / narrower goals, reduce playing area etc*).
- (3) Provide a safe learning and playing environment (*e.g. lighter / softer equipment, no body contact, limit the type of hit etc*).
- (4) Provide maximum opportunity to practise the technical / skill elements in a game (*e.g work co-operatively, condition the game, reduce number in team, use unequal teams etc*).
- (5) Use tactical awareness to help development of playing ability (*e.g. make simpler rules; score points if children produce the movement practised; change the court / pitch size to encourage decision-making etc*).
- (6) Provide more opportunities for success and recognition of achievement (*e.g. make the goals wider, award points for interceptions as well as goals etc*).
- (7) Keep the games active to develop a skill but make them less strenuous, (*e.g. smaller playing areas, shorter playing time, restrict access etc*).

Not only should we modify games by changing equipment, changing the team number, altering the size of the playing area and changing the rules to aid learning but we should also be prepared to adopt a problem-solving approach.

By adopting this approach to games teaching we would expect children to understand what games are about and to be more interested and motivated to succeed. There will be less fear of failure and more chances for achievement when the activity is conducted through a number of small games all going on at the same time and there is much more individual involvement.

(e.g. In a group of 4 or 6 every child is more likely to touch the ball and be involved in the game than with teams of 9 a-side)