

Stage 2: Choosing to Play the Game (U7-U9: Ages 6, 7, 8)

Emotional – Loves the game: The next phase of emotional development focuses on fostering a love for the game. Young players are encouraged to develop a deep passion for soccer, enjoying the process of playing and learning. Coaches and parents create a positive and supportive environment that nurtures their emotional connection to the sport.

Social – Understands role on a team: Players begin to understand the importance of teamwork and their role within a team. They learn to communicate with teammates, respect coaches and referees, and cooperate effectively on the field.

Technical – Advanced skills: As players progress through this age, they're introduced to more advanced technical skills. They build upon the fundamental techniques learned earlier, such as passing, dribbling, and shooting, and begin to develop more refined techniques. The focus is on improving their ball control, coordination, and spatial awareness, gradually introducing more complex skills and encouraging players to apply them during games.

Physical – Motor skills meet natural talent: This stage encompasses the convergence of motor skills and natural talent. Players continue to enhance their motor skills, including agility, balance, and coordination, which are essential for executing soccer-specific movements. Motor skills meet natural physical attributes, such as speed or strength, and can contribute to a player's dominance on the field.

Mental – Knows structure of the game: The mental aspect of children at this age centers around understanding the structure of the game. Players start learning basic tactical concepts, such as positioning, off-ball movement, and game awareness. They begin to develop an understanding of the roles and responsibilities associated with different positions.