

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE: PREVENTION

The first and most important step in prevention is to support positive behavior. Many coaches dwell on behavioral challenges without thinking about the context for that behavior and what they are doing to get kids to behave positively.

90% of behavior management is about supporting positive behavior. Use the four key elements of supporting positive behavior by doing things "RITE."

Do Things "RITE"



Build positive **Relationships**



Provide clear **Instructions**



Transition from one activity to the next smoothly



Engage players with fun and appropriately challenging activities

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Relationships

Goal: Kids feel: "I am cared for."

TACTICS:



Build relationships with each youth

- Learn names quickly
- Get to know each player as an individual
- Use informal pre- and post-practice time to connect
- Give specific, positive, and constructive feedback
- Play with them, laugh and smile



Help youth build relationships with each other








- Use energizers, icebreakers, and games
- Have time for personal check-ins (e.g., thumb check-ins)
- Include relationship questions in your debriefing (e.g., "Who saw someone else trying hard? Who saw someone else improve?")
- Use unifying team rituals (e.g., counting out loud when stretching, team cheers)
- Teach players how to give positive and constructive feedback to each other
- React quickly to prevent put-downs, bullying, or cliques
- Know when to get out of the way and let kids play with each other

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Instructions

Goal: Kids feel: "I know what I am supposed to be doing."

TACTICS:






-  Give clear, easy-to-follow instructions
-  Make sure instructions are short and to the point
-  Give only 1-2 instructions at a time
-  Ask players to repeat back instructions as a whole group where appropriate (e.g., "Which group, group one or group two, is going to sprint to the cone first?")
-  Ask players if they have any questions
-  Use visual demonstrations
-  Establish clear and collaborative codes so players know "this is how we do things here"

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Transitions

Goal: Kids feel: "I am engaged at all times."

TACTICS:

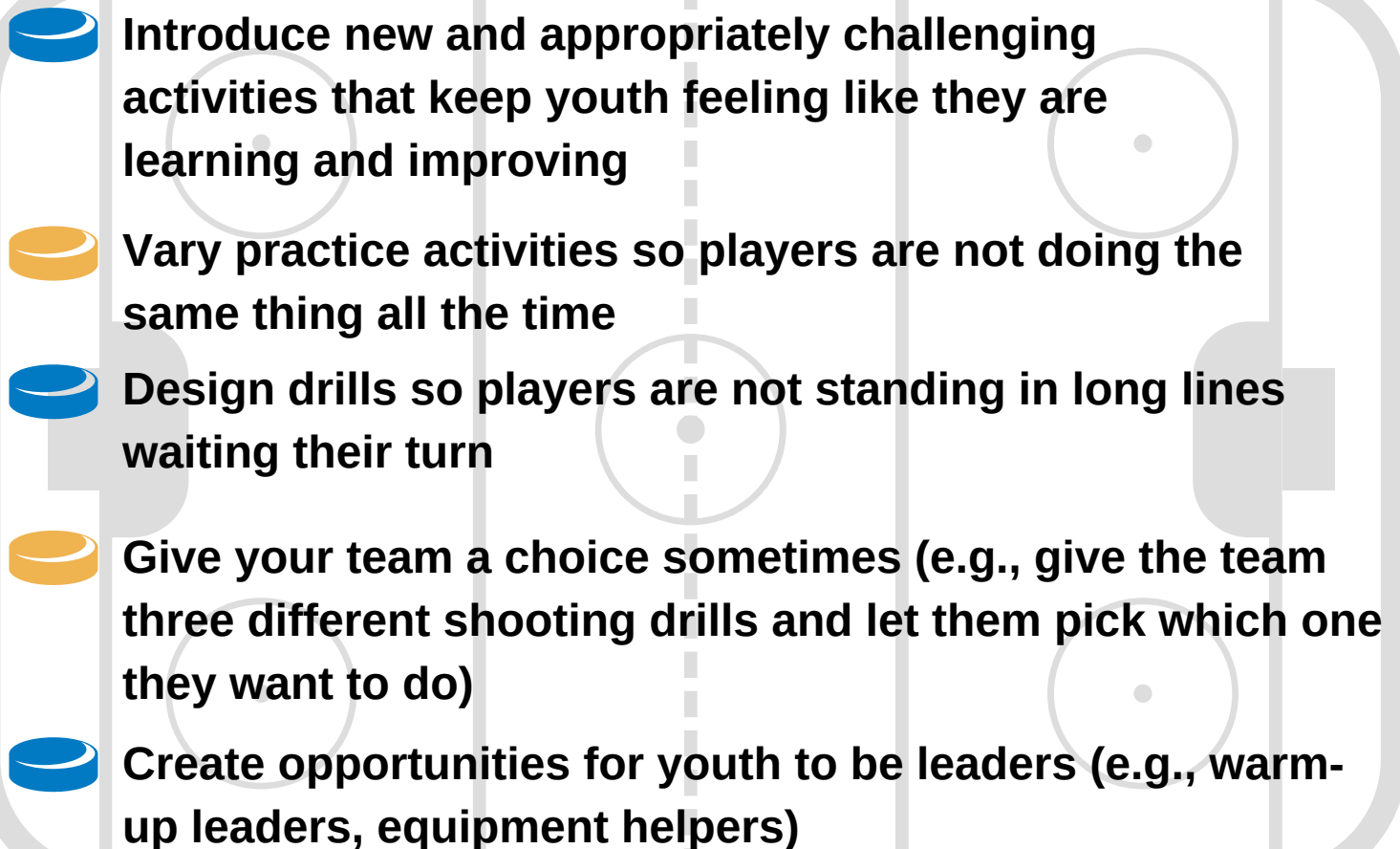





-  Use energizers, icebreakers, and games
-  Use attention getters instead of yelling for players' attention
-  Use games and activities as "fillers" (e.g., when players will be finishing a task at different times, have players juggle the soccer ball while other teammates finish)
-  Have a clear, ritualized way that you always begin practice (e.g., when players arrive at baseball practice, they always throw and catch with a teammate until the coach circles the team up to start)
-  Have a clear ritualized way that you always end practice (e.g., close with a team cheer)

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Engaging

Goal: Kids feel: "I am having fun, learning, and enjoying practice."

TACTICS:

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-  Introduce new and appropriately challenging activities that keep youth feeling like they are learning and improving
 -  Vary practice activities so players are not doing the same thing all the time
 -  Design drills so players are not standing in long lines waiting their turn
 -  Give your team a choice sometimes (e.g., give the team three different shooting drills and let them pick which one they want to do)
 -  Create opportunities for youth to be leaders (e.g., warm-up leaders, equipment helpers)