



## **Durango Youth Soccer Association U12 Player Standards**

### **Characteristics of the U12 Player**

- Strength building activities require overloading muscles more than endurance
- Activities – still too young for strength training
- Flexibility training key to prevention of injury
- High intensity programs that fail to stress skill development, learning, and fun will produce overuse injuries, burnout and high attrition
- Begin to develop abilities to sustain complex coordinated skill sequences
- Increased ability to acquire and apply knowledge
- Movement and abstract thought extend 360 degrees
- Use of systematic approach to problem solving, game must present the opportunity to think creatively and solve problems while moving
- More TV and video, less structured play
- Spend more time with friends and less time with parents
- Popularity influences self-esteem
- Whether a child enters puberty early or late has important psychological effects
- Susceptible to peer pressure
- Developing conscience, morality and value scale

### **Focus of U12 Year**

Continuing **MASTERY** of all U9-U11 focuses:

- 1) FUN & Competition
- 2) Build general comfort with the ball (basic touches such as foundations, toe taps, rollies, pulls, start/stop)
- 3) Build **equal comfort in both left and right side** for dribbling, turns (pull backs, chop, cut, drag behind), introductory moves (rummenigge, scissors, inside/outside rolls, stepover), control (foot, thigh, chest, head), and passing (inside, outside, chips, crosses)
- 4) Focus on 1v1, 2v1, 2v2 situations—everyone shares role of defending and attacking
- 5) Creativity within the game—“find the game”
- 6) Increase of partner skills (passing, receiving, shooting).
- 7) Begin small group concepts including attacking and defending.
- 8) Process and performance versus outcome of competition.

- 9) Adding a more in depth understanding of small group skills and concepts of attacking and defending (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> defender, support play, attacking principles of heads up, committing, support, use of triangles).
- 10) Begin combining individual skills while introducing beginning tactics and set pieces (team focus)
- 11) **At U12**, ball skills and soccer instinct encouraged above results.
- 12) Dive into full tactical team concepts (awareness, positions, team shape, attacking/defending as a team) and working on set pieces (throw ins, kick offs, goal kicks, corner kicks)
- 13) Improve possession and transition during game play
- 14) Improve collective defending during game play

## U12 PLAYER STANDARDS

### **(ALL U9-U11 STANDARDS INCLUDED)**

#### **TECHNICAL:**

- Players should demonstrate accuracy and speed in individual and collective soccer techniques
- Players should be able to apply technique during game situations at game speed

#### **Dribbling/Footwork—**

- Player should have the ability to use all parts of the foot (inside, outside, sole)
- Player should be able to change speed and direction (creativity)
- Player should be able to stop with the ball under control-either foot
- Player should be able to perform 4 basic turns (inside/outside cut, drag back, stop turn)
- Player should be able to perform figure 8's under control using both feet
- Player should be able to dribble out of trouble
- Player should be able to use basic moves to dribble past an opponent
- Player should be able to incorporate shielding to protect the ball
- Player should be able to use basic sole moves during play (drag, across, behind, v's, rolls),
- Players should have proficiency in shield and escape dribbling, 1v1 attacking dribbles, and moves/fakes

#### **Running with the Ball—**

Player should be able to push the ball away from the body under control with head up and accelerate OR decelerate-either foot

#### **Passing—**

- Player should have ankle locked when contacting ball, look up when passing, - and have plantar foot pointing in the direction of intended target.
- Players should be proficient in push pass
- Player should be able to pass with the inside and outside of both feet

- Players proficient in push pass and weak foot push pass and laces/distance passing.
- Player should be focusing on **quality** of passing and receiving during as well as ball control during game play
- Players should begin to use 1 touch passing when appropriate

### **Control/Receiving—**

- Player should have a “soft” first touch
- Players should have body in line of ball, control the ball away from pressure, and be able to use different body surfaces to receive and control ball.
- Players should know multiple ways on how to receive to self, receive to new space, receive to turn, and perform spin turns.
- Players should be able to receive with disguise (out of back, letting ball roll)
- Players should be able to perform volleying skills and technique
- Players should be able to juggle with both thighs and feet
- Player should be focusing on **quality** of passing and receiving during as well as ball control during game play

### **Shooting—**

- Players should be able to shoot with both feet
- Players should be able to properly shoot with both the inside of the foot and laces
- Players should have laces contact with locked ankle and follow through (Hop, Load, Lock, See BOB (Body Over Ball), Swing, Step).
- Players should have awareness of goal (near/far post) and awareness of goalkeeper (looking up)—Shooting for accuracy
- Players should be implementing power with side foot shooting and strong and weak foot shooting.

### **Heading—**

- Player should have proper attacking contact (player contacts ball, NOT ball contacting player—“breaking through glass”), eyes open, hairline contact.
- Players should be able to perform standing and jumping headers.
- Players should have increased skills and technique for heading to pass and heading to score

### **Goal Keeping—**

- Players should demonstrate proper hands and body positioning
- Players should be able to initiate basic ball distribution (throwing, rolling, punting)
- Players should be able to have basic diving skills from the ready position
- Players should be able to collect the ball from the attacking players feet
- Players should be able to relate body position around the goal

### **Set Piece Organization—**

- Players should be able to throw ball in with proper technique.
- Player should be able to defend throw-ins and keep possession off throw-ins.
- Players should be able to demonstrate defending and attacking during kick off play and corner kicks.
- Players should show defensive organization of wall and free kicks, running attacking plays from free kicks, and offensive and defensive balance on goal kicks
- Players should be placing emphasis on playing quick restarts in attacking half and being aware of quick restarts in defensive half.

### **TACTICAL:**

- Players should be able to add more complex decisions into their 1v1 play
- Players should show deeper application of attacking and defending principles during game play while integrating regular uses of combination play
- Players should react to immediate transition from defense to offense or offense to defense

### **Defending—**

- Players should be able to have the proper defensive stance
- Player should be able to pressure close enough to touch ball, battle for ball, stay in play, no fouls
- Players should be able to use the 3 P'S (pressure, position, patience) while defending, be able to close down a player then break them down.
- Player should maintain position between opponent and goal
- Players should have basic skill and understanding of chase, transition, cover, and intercept.
- Players begin using "Pressure, Cover, Balance"
- Players should be able to apply small group tactics (2,3,4), use defensive rows, zonal defending, and provide shot blocking techniques
- Players can begin using "poke" and "block" tackles when appropriate

### **Attacking—**

- Application of basic attacking principles:
- Players should demonstrate mobility on the attack with support/balance.
- Players should begin using attacking runs while implementing various speeds based on pressure.
- Players should be able to track play and intended movement of ball.
- Players should demonstrate an "open body" facing the field.
- Players should be able to use short AND long wall passes ("give and go" or 1-2) to develop attack
- Players should be able to maintain team shape and roles on restarts,
- Players should begin playing game to maintain possession and focus on transition
- Players should begin using basic combination plays and build up as well as applying techniques of the counter attack-i.e. overlapping and takeovers.

-Players should be able to use Introductory techniques to rotating ball and using attacking patterns

### **Goalkeeping—**

-Players should call for the ball when receiving

-Players should communicate with teammates during the game

### **PHYSICAL:**

-Players should show continued growth of balance and agility, acceleration and sprinting, reaction, back pedaling, turning, jumping, lateral movement.

-Players should be able to demonstrate coordinated movements at speed

-Players should be able to demonstrate introductory techniques of physical confrontation against opponent (shoulders, bumping, use of arms)

-Players should be able to perform speed and agility movements with and without the ball

### **MENTAL:**

-Players should have the enjoyment of playing soccer/FUN.

-Players should be able to respect coaches and teammates.

-Players should be able to positively interact with teammates during training sessions and matches and feel confident within the team unit

-Players should feel confident and comfortable with the ball while having a positive self-esteem

-Players should be able to cooperate with teammates during collective tasks.

-Players should be showing mental and physical efforts during training and competition, commitment.

-Players should embrace Team Unity and Club Pride



**“CORE 16” AVERAGE 25<sup>th</sup>% STANDARDS  
U12 Year**

	<b>BOYS</b>	<b>GIRLS</b>
<b>FOOT SPEED</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>QUICK TOUCH</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>JUGGLING-strong foot</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>JUGGLING-weak foot</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>JUGGLING-head</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>MASTER DRIBBLING-strong foot</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>MASTER DRIBBLING-weak foot</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>SHARP TURNS</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>ATTACK DRIBBLING</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>CONTROL PASSING-strong foot</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>CONTROL PASSING-weak foot</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>PERFECT PASSING-strong foot</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PERFECT PASSING-weak foot</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>TOTAL CONTROL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>POWER SPRINT</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>PURE STRIKE</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>



**“CORE 16” AVERAGE 50<sup>th</sup>% STANDARDS  
U12 Year**

	<b>BOYS</b>	<b>GIRLS</b>
<b>FOOT SPEED</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>QUICK TOUCH</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>JUGGLING-strong foot</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>JUGGLING-weak foot</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>JUGGLING-head</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>MASTER DRIBBLING-strong foot</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>MASTER DRIBBLING-weak foot</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>SHARP TURNS</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>ATTACK DRIBBLING</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>CONTROL PASSING-strong foot</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>CONTROL PASSING-weak foot</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>PERFECT PASSING-strong foot</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>PERFECT PASSING-weak foot</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>TOTAL CONTROL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>POWER SPRINT</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>PURE STRIKE</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>



**“CORE 16” AVERAGE 75<sup>th</sup>% STANDARDS  
U12 Year**

	<b>BOYS</b>	<b>GIRLS</b>
<b>FOOT SPEED</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>QUICK TOUCH</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>JUGGLING-strong foot</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>JUGGLING-weak foot</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>JUGGLING-head</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>MASTER DRIBBLING-strong foot</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>MASTER DRIBBLING-weak foot</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>SHARP TURNS</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>ATTACK DRIBBLING</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>CONTROL PASSING-strong foot</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>CONTROL PASSING-weak foot</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>PERFECT PASSING-strong foot</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>PERFECT PASSING-weak foot</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>TOTAL CONTROL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>POWER SPRINT</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>PURE STRIKE</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>





**“CORE 16” AVERAGE 95<sup>th</sup>% STANDARDS  
U12 Year**

	<b>BOYS</b>	<b>GIRLS</b>
<b>FOOT SPEED</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>QUICK TOUCH</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>JUGGLING-strong foot</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>JUGGLING-weak foot</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>JUGGLING-head</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>MASTER DRIBBLING-strong foot</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>MASTER DRIBBLING-weak foot</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>SHARP TURNS</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>ATTACK DRIBBLING</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>CONTROL PASSING-strong foot</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>CONTROL PASSING-weak foot</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>PERFECT PASSING-strong foot</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>PERFECT PASSING-weak foot</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>TOTAL CONTROL</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>POWER SPRINT</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>PURE STRIKE</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>

