

Characteristics of Recreational Play

Two year age groups are typical of recreational teams so there is a wide range between the most skilled player and the least skilled player.

- Wider age gaps create greater differences in physical, mental and social development
- Players new to the sport are constantly being introduced into the mix

Enthusiasm and dedication also varies widely from the highly motivated to the socially involved.

- Soccer for some is an outlet for energy and enthusiasm, the child wants to play
- For others it is an imposed activity, something selected for the child for parental perceived needs – socialization, fitness, or just for something for the child to do.

Physical and athletic skills span the range for each age group.

- Random selection process means, player skills are all across the spectrum
- Fit and unfit players play together
- Children with advanced motor skills mixed with others with physical challenges

Social maturity levels vary from highly advanced to the somewhat socially challenged. Players may be as much as three grades apart in school creating educational differences as well.

Participation stretches from the always there to when it is convenient. Parents often sign a player up for the next season without the child being involved in the process.

Many play because economic constraints preclude them from the “competitive game”.

Beginning of development.